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Life-long learning for IT professionals - experiences from three online courses in Big Data

The three online courses Digital image processing (5 ECTS), Machine learning for streaming data (5 ECTS) and Virtualization and DevOps (5 ECTS) have been developed and delivered twice during the period 2019 to 2021. All of these courses are on the advanced level, and they were delivered in English. Most of the students were working as IT professionals in parallel to studying on these courses. The content of the courses was developed based on input from industrial partners and colleagues at three universities in Italy and Germany. The project was financed by the Knowledge foundation, with the goal of spreading knowledge from a six-year research project in Big Data to IT professionals. In this presentation we will discuss the experiences from developing and delivering these courses. We will focus on the challenges and possibilities associated with having a number of IT professionals on the courses, e.g., how we created synergies between the work that the students do as IT professionals and the activities we had in the courses. We will also discuss some general ideas and alternatives for life-long learning for IT professionals and similar categories, including the possibilities and challenges of mixing normal master students with students doing life-long learning in parallel with their normal work.