



Program Overview

The Best of TechEd (BOTE) North America Awards, produced by *Windows IT Pro*, *SQL Server Pro*, *SharePoint Pro* and *Dev Pro*, recognize the innovative products and services showcased at Microsoft TechEd North America 2012. The winners of each product category, selected by a judging panel of editors from *Windows IT Pro*, *SQL Server Pro*, *SharePoint Pro* and *Dev Pro*, are evaluated based on each finalist's strategic importance, competitive advantage, and value to customers. The winner of the Attendees' Pick Award is the one receiving the most votes from TechEd attendees selecting their favorite products.

Participation Benefits

Participating in the Best of TechEd North America Awards program provides sponsors, exhibitors and Microsoft product teams with additional marketing exposure and accolades for their product's strategic importance to the market, competitive advantage, and value to customers. The BOTE page on the TechEd North America 2012 Website will feature nominated products, highlighting finalists, and allow attendees to vote for their favorite product. In addition, finalists and winners will be promoted on the TechEd and *Windows IT Pro* websites, in-booth signage, and digital signage located in the Exhibition Hall. After the event, finalists and winners may highlight their accolades on their websites and other marketing materials.

Product Nomination Submission Eligibility Criteria and Requirements

- The Best of TechEd North America Awards, produced by *Windows IT Pro*, *SQL Server Pro*, *SharePoint Pro* and *Dev Pro*, recognize the innovative products and services showcased at Microsoft TechEd North America 2012.
- Only official sponsors, exhibitors or Microsoft product teams participating in at Microsoft TechEd North America 2012 are eligible to nominate their products for consideration.
- Only products being showcased on the Exhibition floor of the event may be nominated for consideration.
- Nominated products may only be submitted for the official product categories.
- Nominated products must be currently available or release into market prior to **Monday, June 11, 2012**.
- Product nominations must be submitted electronically by completing all fields of the online form located at: [HTTP://northamerica.msteched.com/bote](http://northamerica.msteched.com/bote)
- A separate product nomination form must be submitted for each product being nominated.
- In cases where a product fits more than one category, please place it in the primary category for which the product was designed.
- Product nominations will only be accepted between **February 1, 2012 - April 27, 2012**.
- The submission deadline for product nominations is **5:00 pm (PST) on Friday, April 27, 2012**.
- Late or incomplete submissions **will not** be accepted.

Product Nomination Judging and Award Process

- A panel of distinguished and unbiased judges will evaluate all product nominations and select the finalists and winners. The Judging panel consists of editors from *Windows IT Pro*, *SQL Server Pro*, *SharePoint Pro* and *Dev Pro*. Microsoft is **not involved** in the judging of awards or selection of winners.
- Judges will evaluate all product nominations to confirm they meet the BOTE eligibility criteria (outlined above).

- Judges will reserve the right to not grant an award if, in their opinion, the submission(s) do not justify just recognition.
- After evaluating each nominated product, the judges will select three (3) finalists in each category to be judged in-person at TechEd.
- The judges will notify all finalists, via email or phone, the week of **May 21, 2012**, to set appointments for the product interview onsite at TechEd. However, the schedule of onsite appointments is subject to change.
- Judges will provide in-booth signage onsite to finalists and winners.
- Judges will visit all finalists on the Exhibition Hall floor at TechEd during exhibit hours. During that time, a representative of the nominee's organization (preferable a representative with technical knowledge and understanding of the product) must be available to meet with the judges.
- TechEd attendees will have the opportunity to review the BOTE products on the BOTE page of TechEd North America 2012 Website and on the Exhibition floor, as well as, vote online for their favorite products. The product with the most votes when voting closes on **Wednesday, June 13, 2012** will win the Attendees' Pick Award.
- Judges will announce the winners during an Awards Ceremony which will take place the evening of **Thursday, June 14, 2012**.
- Judges will highlight the winners on the *Windows IT Pro* website and other marketing materials after the announcement on **Thursday, June 14, 2012**.
- Judges will provide finalists and winners with accolades to use in their marketing materials and channels.

Product/Service Award Categories

Microsoft Product

This award recognizes the most significant Microsoft product at TechEd 2012. Products must be demonstrated at the show, discussed in sessions, or announced at the event to be considered for the award.

Backup and Recovery

This category covers backup and disaster-recovery software, as well as purpose-built appliances.

Business Intelligence

This category is for products that specialize in analyzing and reporting on business data. This includes products that enable the use of OLAP, data warehousing, or data mining.

Cloud Computing: Software as a Service

This award is for cloud-based products and services focused on the SaaS field.

Cloud Computing: Platform as a Service

This award is for cloud-based products and services focused on the PaaS field.

Cloud Computing: Infrastructure as a Service

This award is for cloud-based products and services focused on the IaaS field.

Hardware and Storage

This category is for computers, laptops, KVMs, switches, and storage solutions like DAS, NAS and SAN. (Purpose-built appliances should go in their respective categories.)

Messaging and Unified Communications

This category is for email, Exchange add-on, instant messaging (IM), fax, mobility, unified communications (UC), and Voice over IP (VOIP) solutions, as well as both server and client technologies. (Messaging security products fall under the Security category.)

Mobile & Wireless

This category is for smartphones and accessories, as well as the applications that run on mobile platforms. It also includes products geared toward managing mobile devices within the larger IT environment.

Networking

This category is for network management, monitoring, and mapping products, as well as purpose-built appliances.

Relational Database

This category is for products that help manage and develop data and databases. This includes both relational database products and products used to manage databases or replicate database data across between platforms.

SharePoint Administration

This category includes a wide range of SharePoint solutions that are aimed at helping SharePoint admins and end users make the most of their SharePoint implementation. These tools help admins with migration, access management, security, auditing, backup and recovery, performance, social computing, content management, and search. These tools also encompass user, client, and functionality solutions.

SharePoint Development

This category includes all SharePoint-specific tools SharePoint developers use in their SharePoint development environments.

Systems Management and Operations

This category is for systems management products. This includes products that are used to manage systems, monitor event logs, manage Active Directory, perform patch management, perform server provisioning, automate server operations, and deploy client software.

Security

This category is for firewalls, security scanners, and intrusion detection software. This category also includes products that might be related to other categories. For instance, a product focused on securing e-mail would belong in this category rather than messaging.

Software Development

This category is for products that enable users to create applications—editors, debuggers, testing and interactive development environments. It's also for products that facilitate building software applications, including middleware, as well as .NET components, Java, ActiveX, COM and class libraries.

Virtualization

The products in this category can focus on any aspect of virtualization technology, including desktop virtualization, server virtualization, application virtualization, and OS virtualization.

Additional Award Categories

Breakthrough Product

This award is for the best single product of TechEd 2012, and can be from any award sub-category.

Attendees' Pick

Attendees vote online to select their favorite product from among the finalists in each product/service category.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I contact the *Windows IT Pro* judges directly about my nomination?

No, in the interest of fairness, please use only the BOTE survey to send information about your product.

Who are the judges and what organization(s) to they represent?

The Judging panel consists of editors from *Windows IT Pro*, *SQL Server Pro*, *SharePoint Pro* and *Dev Pro*. Microsoft is **not involved** in the judging of awards or selection of winners.

If our product becomes a finalist, can I send extra materials to the judging team?

No, please send any relevant links to pertinent information, such as overviews or videos, in the nomination form.

If we are chosen as a finalist, what are we expected to communicate at the judging interview on the Exhibition floor?

You will be asked to provide a high-level overview of the product and, ideally, a hands-on presentation. Be sure to communicate its unique features and how it stands apart from the competition.

What are the judges looking for?

A winning product will show technological evolution from past versions, unique functionality in the market, and financial value compared with competitors.

How many products can we enter?

You may enter as many products as you wish, as long as they are released in the time frame of eligibility, and as long as you submit a separate form for each product. However, be as precise as possible with your nominations. In cases where a product fits more than one category, please place it in the primary category for which the product was designed.

Who do I contact to modify/delete an entry?

Please contact Julie Thomas-Barnett at xpoadmin@microsoft.com prior to the nomination deadline of April 27, 2012. Modifications will not be accepted after April 27, 2012 at 5:00pm PST.

BOTE Program Contact

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Key Dates/Deadlines

Activity/Action	Date/Deadline
Call for product nomination opens	Tuesday, February 1, 2011
Call for product nomination closes	Friday, April 27, 2012 – 5:00 pm (PST)
Judges notify submitting companies to confirm finalists	Week of May 21, 2012
Judges contact finalists to schedule onsite product interviews	Week of May 21, 2012
BOTE product nominations published on BOTE page of TechEd North America 2012 Website	Week of May 28, 2012
Attendees' Pick Award voting opens	Week of May 28, 2012
TechEd Exhibition opens	Monday, June 11, 2012
Attendees' Pick Award voting closes	Wednesday, June 13, 2012 – 2:00 pm (EST)
Evening award ceremony for finalists	Thursday, June 14, 2012