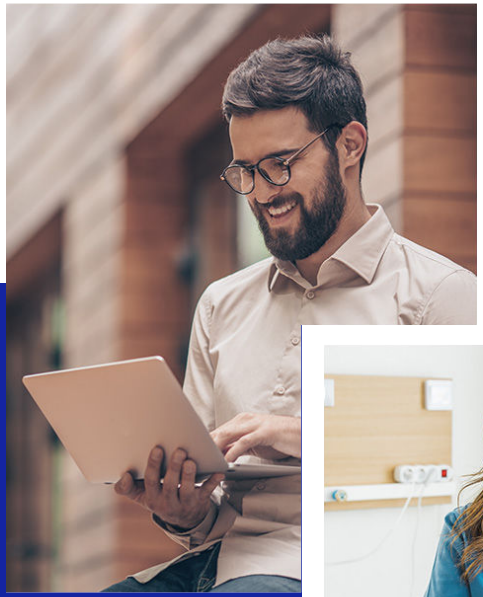
psi Testing Excellence



Tell me more about...

How to market to your test takers

psiexams.com

Contents

01

Introduction

Page 4

02

How to grow your testing program

Page 8

03

Start with the basics

Page 10

04

Broaden your appeal

Page 18

06

Demystify the unknown

Page 26

08

Extend your reach

Page 34

05

Uncover new opportunities

Page 22

07

Offer flexibility

Page 32

09

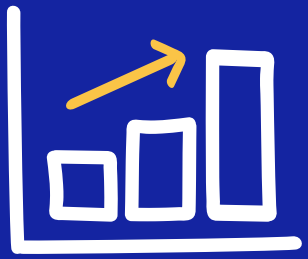
In conclusion

Page 42

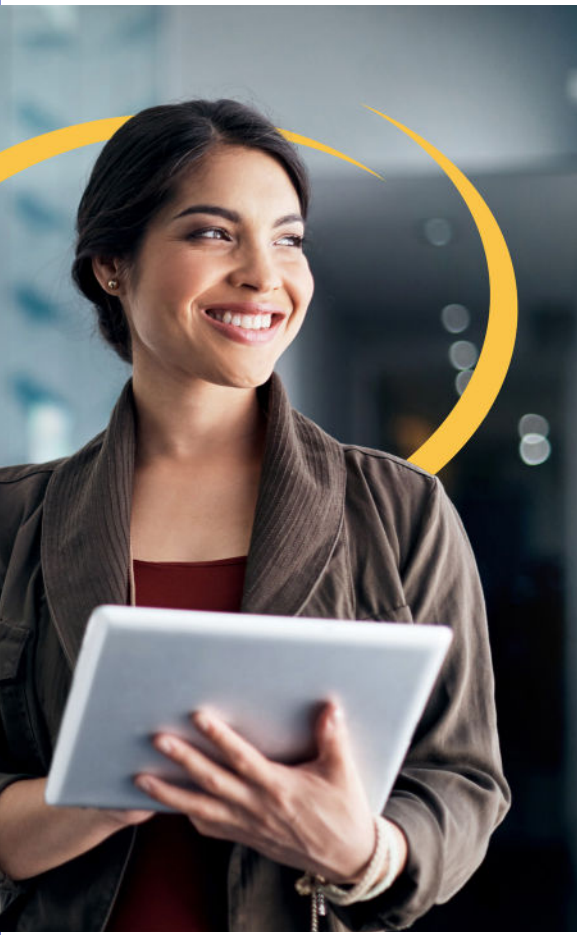
01

Introduction

Do you want to grow test taker volumes?



- Have your test taker numbers flattened out?
- Are you frustrated by a stagnation or lack of growth in your testing program?
- Do you want to expand into new markets and grow test taker volumes?



We've learned a lot from decades of experience supporting clients to grow their testing programs. And we've seen that adopting new technologies and innovative approaches is key. But just as important is how you tell your story and how effectively you communicate these innovations and their benefits. Not only to new markets and customers, but also your existing stakeholders and customers.

- How does your program deliver value to test takers and enable them to enhance their skills and careers?
- How do your tests make access to credentials more convenient and flexible for test takers?

This guide shares some of the ways we have worked in partnership with our clients to respond to the opportunities and challenges they face. These are just some examples where credentialing organizations have successfully shared and promoted program benefits – to effectively grow their testing programs and their organization.

Keep pace with change

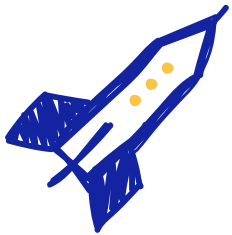
Whatever sector or industry you operate in, from healthcare and IT to insurance and real estate, the world is changing fast.

Individuals need to constantly develop fresh skills and acquire new knowledge to stay relevant in the workplace.

Credentialing organizations have a vital role to play in supporting people to re-skill and up-skill – for the here and now, and to prepare for the future. Equally, credentialing organizations need to respond and adapt themselves. Not just to survive, but to grow into new markets and thrive.

"Credentialing organizations must change and adapt in a competitive market. This includes the use of new approaches and emerging technologies, but it also involves effectively communicating the benefits of these innovations to their target markets – whether that's different geographics, age groups or experience levels."

Heather Richards
Vice President, Client Success, PSI Services



02

How to *grow* your testing program

Into new and different markets

Audiences

Promote the value and benefits of your program.

Geographies

Highlight the increased reach of secure remote testing and multi-modal testing options.

Groups

Demonstrate accessibility with new technologies and testing options for diverse groups.

Generations

Focus on meeting the different needs of multiple generations with different test types and delivery options.

Qualifications and tests

Feature flexible and convenient micro or stackable credentials.

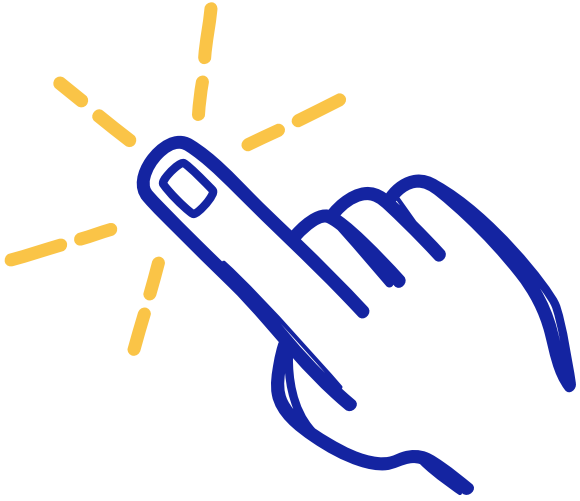
Experience levels

Offer credentials for test takers at every stage of their career.

03

Start with the *basics*

Highlight the value of your credentialing program



Relevant to:

There are likely to be specifics about your testing program or programs that you want to share with test takers. Not least the convenience, security and flexibility that comes with the move to secure remote testing and multi-modal testing options.

However, when you first communicate with people, they aren't yet test takers. They are potential customers. Don't assume they know and understand the value offered by your credential. That's why it's a good idea to start with the basics and clearly explain the benefits.

The value of *Credentialing*

There are numerous advantages for credentialed individuals and the organizations that employ them. This is different for every industry, however some benefits are shared across nearly all credentialing programs.

During recruitment

- **Compulsory ticket** to entry for many jobs and professions.
- **Validated and verified evidence** of competence, knowledge, skills, or experience.
- **Visible point of value** to support hiring decisions.
- **Differentiator** for test takers and employers.
- **Demonstrates work ethic and skills** such as project and time management.
- **Shows test taker is prepared** for the demands and challenges of the job.

Reputation and confidence

- **Enhanced breadth and depth** of specialised knowledge and experience.
- **More effective performance** on the job.
- **Continued access** to work related tools, proprietary information and peer support.
- **Keep pace** with new technologies and skill requirements.
- **Enhanced opportunities** for career growth and progression.
- **Increased knowledge** beyond on the job experience.

Ongoing professional development

- **Heightened credibility** and trust among members of the public and peers.
- **Visible demonstration** of proficiency with a certificate, designation or badge.
- **Increased self-confidence** on the job and personal satisfaction.
- **Evidence of a commitment** and strong connection to the profession.
- **An important achievement** and accomplishment to be proud of.
- **Contribute knowledge** to a team, organization, and wider profession.

Promote your programs by sharing positive facts and figures

Examples of the value of a credential:

- Of those who earned an IT certification, within the first five years **61.9%** earned a raise and **47.8%** received a bonus or incentive pay. [i]
- More than **90%** of credential holders believe a credential is valuable in their profession. [ii]

  Most credential holders feel certification increases their professional confidence (**83.9%**) and enhances their confidence in professional interactions (**83.7%**). [iii]
- **84%** of IT business partners believe certified IT consultants provide better service and support and are more valuable to their clients than non-certified colleagues. [iv]

Case study

The American Board of Perianesthesia Nursing Certification (ABPANC)

The ABPANC certifies perianesthesia nurses across the US. To market their certification programs to nurses, the ABPANC devised a campaign to highlight the benefits of certification in the complex specialty of perianesthesia care. For example, the certification demonstrates excellence and knowledge to employers, patients, and the public. As well as offering an opportunity to gain confidence and advance in their chosen career.

ABPANC partnered with administrators in hospitals to showcase posters in high traffic areas where the perianesthesia nurses frequented, with QR codes to easily access further information. They also used the campaign to highlight a partnership with PSI that provides secure, convenient testing for certification and practice tests.

ABPANC
American Board of Perianesthesia Nursing Certification, Inc.

"The greatest benefit I've received by becoming a certified perianesthesia nurse has been a boost in my self-esteem and overall career enhancement."

From an ABPANC brochure: Enhance your perianesthesia nursing career

04

Broaden your appeal

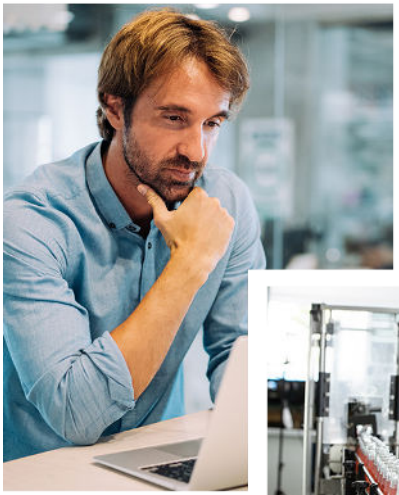
With a flexible approach to credentialing

A micro or stackable credential is a professional qualification that can be earned by completing component parts over a set period. This is an innovative approach to credentialing, and we have supported the successful introduction of stackable credentials into both the IT and healthcare sectors.

An increasing number of professionals are now choosing flexible stackable credentials over a more expensive degree or similar qualification that can take a long time to earn. Stackable credentials are well suited to help individuals keep up to date with the skills and technology needed to thrive in a rapidly changing workplace. As well as meet the demand for up-to-date career development opportunities.

Relevant to:

"Could you successfully grow your market with a stackable credential?"



Case study

ISACA

ISACA is a global non-profit professional association for individuals and enterprises in the IT governance sector. The team at ISACA wanted to expand into new markets and diversify the organization's learning and credentialing portfolio. They were also looking for ways to connect with the next generation before they enter the workforce, and support those wishing to switch to a career in IT.

ISACA created five hybrid 'stackable' certificates, including cybersecurity and data science. On passing all five tests, an Information Technology Certified Associate (ITCA) Certificate is awarded. Secure, flexible multi-modal testing, through global PSI test centres and innovative testing kiosks, is vital to delivering this new stackable credential.

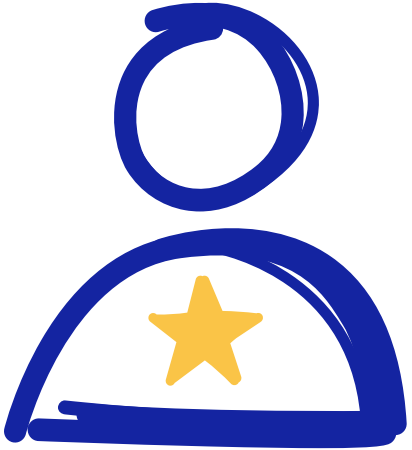
"Flexibility – for consumers and for ourselves as a certifying body – is a major benefit of the stackable credentials we have created. We identified a need amongst entry level professionals and students for relevant and easily consumable learning. The ITCA Certificate enables us to bring them into our community and guide their career from the outset."

Kim Cohen
Director of Credentials, ISACA

05

Uncover new opportunities

With credentials for different ages and experience levels



Relevant to:

Have you considered broadening the reach of your programs to more diverse age groups? Or those with different levels of experience? For example, a younger entry-level market or later life career changers.

Defining the different career pathways potential customers might take within your industry is a good way to identify opportunities. For example, are there underserved markets or unmet needs within your industry? Or has the environment changed and created a new need you weren't aware of? Working with Subject Matter Experts from your industry, as well as PSI's expertise in areas such as portfolio reviews and psychometric consultation, will support you to identify gaps and possible new routes of access into previously untapped markets.

Another way to look for additional opportunities is through Journey Mapping. This looks to examine the customer experience during every step of the credentialing process, with an eye to removing friction and improving satisfaction – as well as finding opportunities where test takers might benefit from other services.

Case study

The Linux Foundation

The Linux Foundation mapped the IT career path to determine where their organization fits in. This identified a need – and an opportunity – for the Foundation to better engage with emerging IT talent. A new qualification, the Linux Foundation Certified IT Associate (LFCA), was developed to meet this need by allowing test takers to demonstrate expertise and skills in fundamental IT concepts. The Linux Foundation worked with PSI to administer this new credential.

LFCA is the first certification of its kind and is useful for those new to the industry and those considering starting a career in IT. The knowledge-based test is conducted remotely with an online proctor, allowing test takers to take LFCA in their own home. Successful test takers receive a verifiable badge that can be shared with potential employers.

For the Linux Foundation, LFCA is an opportunity to begin long-standing relationships and support IT professionals throughout their career.

"LFCA will help aspiring professionals gain confidence in their choice to pursue an IT career and enable hiring managers to identify promising entry-level talent."

Clyde Seepersad

SVP and GM of Training & Certification, Linux Foundation

06

Demystify the unknown

Be clear about the benefits of online proctoring

Online learning and remote working have become the norm and your potential customers are increasingly spread out. At the same time, we all use technology to make daily life more convenient, from doing the shopping to video calls with family. Consequently, people expect convenient access to credentialing programs – with the option of remote testing that eliminates the need for expensive and time-consuming travel, and technology that delivers a positive test taker experience.

Relevant to:

The good news is that with secure online proctoring, geography is no longer a limiting factor when it comes to the reach of your credentialing programs. However, many test takers are still more used to sitting tests, tests, and assessments in a physical test centre with an in-person proctor. Remote testing with online proctoring may be new and unfamiliar, which can lead to increased anxiety. That's why it's important to explain the benefits of online proctoring, and what it involves, in a bit more detail.

If you already use remote assessments with online proctoring...

- If your organization has used technologies such as online proctoring for a while, you might be fully up to speed with how it all works.
- Don't assume your new test takers have the same knowledge.

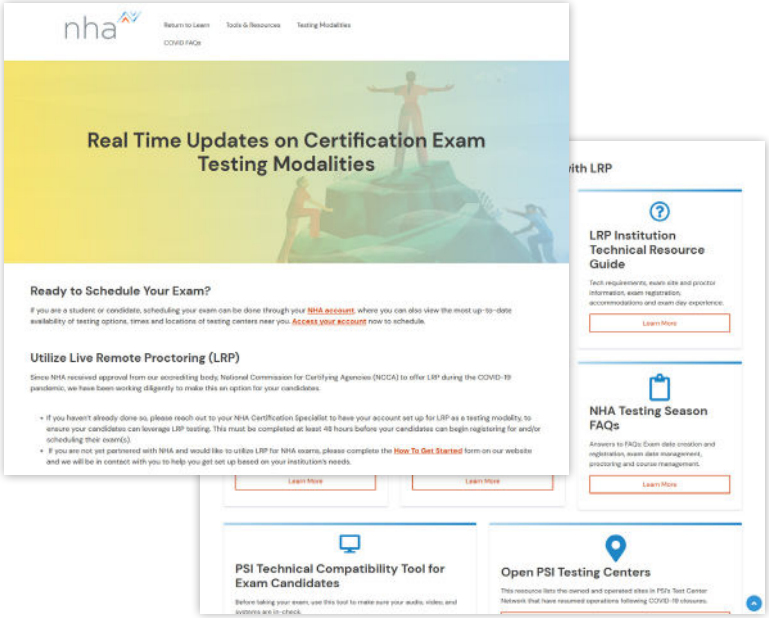
If you are moving to remote assessments with online proctoring...

- Change can be unnerving for many people, even more so when new technology is involved.
- Be clear about the reasons you are making the move to online proctoring as well as the benefits, for individuals renewing a credential and those taking additional credentials as part of their continuous professional development.

Convenient scheduling and rescheduling

The ability to easily schedule and reschedule tests is one of the major benefits of remote testing with online proctoring. Test takers lead busy lives and are often juggling their studies with work, caring responsibilities and a social life. This offer of flexibility is very appealing to many individuals.

With up-to-date availability of testing options and times, a test taker can schedule or reschedule their test at very short notice, depending on the rules of the testing organization. This page from the National Healthcareer Association (NHA) website is a good example. It provides guidance for test takers to view availability and reschedule a test.



Tools to promote the benefits of online proctoring

Dedicated webpage, or link on your website to information on your provider website.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs), that address any concerns or queries.

Marketing emails, explaining the benefits and reasons for adopting online proctoring.

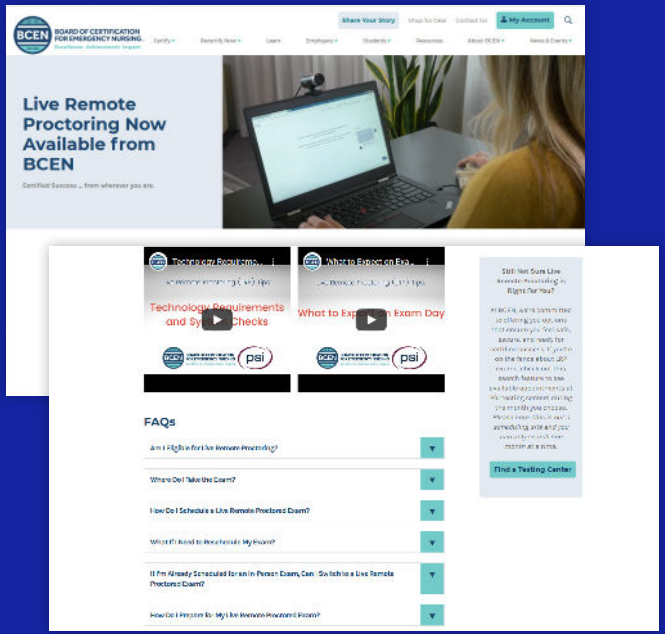
Test taker experience film, shared on your website and in emails.

The team at PSI have resources and templates that you can adapt for your own use.

Case study

The Board of Certification for Emergency Nursing (BCEN)

The BCEN website is a great example of positive communication about online proctoring. This dedicated web page promotes the benefits of live online proctoring – including a seamless process, safety and security, and online scheduling – as well as informational videos and frequently asked questions.



Effective communication is vital at every stage – from potential customer through to credential renewal and continuing professional development.

To deliver an outstanding online proctoring experience for your test takers, download our guide:

How to prepare test takers for online proctoring

07

Offer flexibility

With multi-modal testing options

Many testing organizations now offer multi-modal testing, giving test takers the option to take a test either remotely with an online proctor or in a physical test centre with an in-person proctor.

Relevant to:

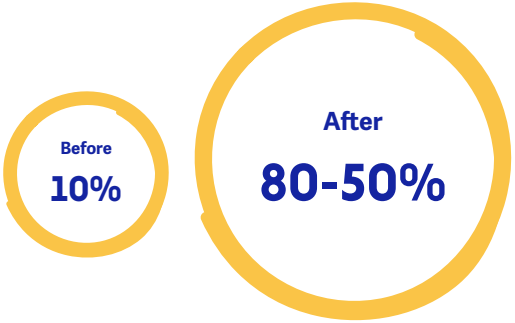
If your organization does offer multi-modal testing

Don't forget to promote the benefits this delivers. For example, many test takers value the convenience and accessibility of taking a test at home. While others may benefit from accessing the technology available at a test centre.

or

If your organization doesn't currently offer multi-modal testing

Have you considered it? Test takers appreciate the opportunity and flexibility to choose the testing approach that works best for them.



Multi-modal testing is becoming the norm.

Before COVID-19, 90% of testing was in-person. Now test centres have re-opened, only 20-50% of testing has returned in-person.

08

Extend your reach

With a move to continuous testing

Secure remote testing and multi-modal testing options allow credentialing organizations and their test takers to move away from the rigidity of a fixed testing window to the flexibility of continuous testing.

Relevant to:

Continuous testing gives test takers the opportunity to schedule or re-schedule a test at a time that is convenient to them, often at short notice, meaning test takers can fit testing around their lives. This significantly reduces anxiety around 'test day' for your test takers.

Moving away from a fixed testing window also reduces the administrative burden on your organization. Pressure is reduced by eliminating the need to support large numbers of test takers through a small number of testing windows during the year, especially if your program is global.

What's more, the flexibility of continuous testing means more people will have access to a test and your testing volumes are likely to increase as a result.

Case study

Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM)

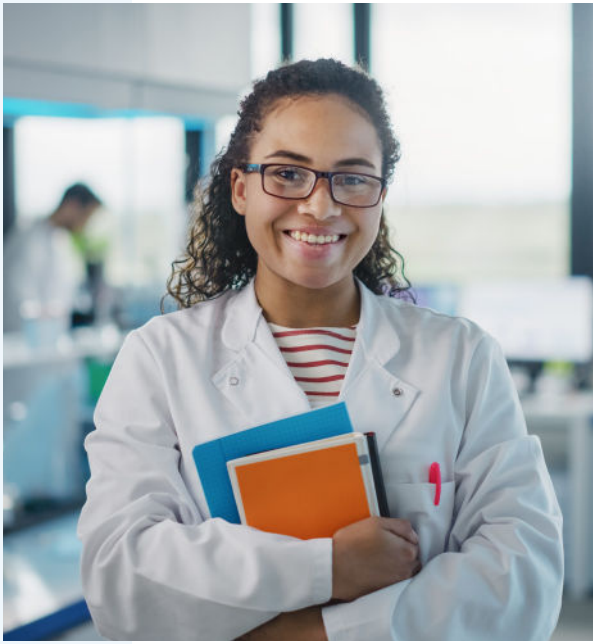
ABRSM is a global music education charity. The ABRSM offers a music theory test that validates a test taker's understanding of the language of music. Traditionally tests have been paper based and delivered at physical venues during a small number of testing windows per year.

Plans to move to computer-based testing with online proctoring were accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. ABRSM worked with PSI to meet the challenges of an aggressive delivery timeline and adapting online proctoring to the needs of a younger audience. Communication and building a positive perception of change were also vital.

Windows based testing commenced in March 2021, with a move to continuous testing in May 2021. Full continuous tests are now available to all test takers, with plans underway to increase digitisation of core ABRSM services and extend to more markets.

"Communication was a key success factor for this project. Learners, teachers, and parents needed to understand the need to shift to online theory. And all stakeholders needed to feel consulted and engaged. Throughout this change we wanted to maintain belief in a quality qualification from a leading music awarding organization."

Helen Coleman
Chief Operating Officer, ABRSM



A little bit more about

Test security

Remote and multi-modal testing options extend your reach to more people, but it's important to promote the steps you take to constantly protect test security.

Relevant to:

This includes steps to ensure tests are fair and every test taker gets the result the deserve, whether they take a test remotely or at a physical test centre:

Multi-step identity checks and verification to ensure a test taker is who they say they are.

Clear rules about appropriate conduct during a test and the potential repercussions e.g., the use of electronic devices or other unauthorized materials.

Clear guidance on behaviours that are not acceptable e.g., sharing test content with educators or other test takers, during or after a test.

Construction techniques that make it harder to share test content, such as Linear On The Fly Testing (LOFT), item randomisation, and alternative randomisation.

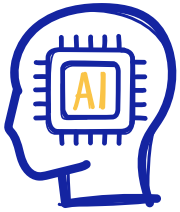
And measures that protect test taker data during online proctoring:

A secure browser that prevents unauthorized access to programs.

No access to a test taker's personal device by the online proctors.

Secure collection, storage and transfer of data to the highest possible standards.

Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) and an Application Programming Interface (API) that **protects personal information with single sign-on**.



A little bit more about

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

With the rapid move to remote testing and widescale adoption of online proctoring brought about by the pandemic, some test takers had understandable concerns. Much of this was related to the use of fully automated proctoring that relies solely on AI to monitor for potential dishonesty. Reassure test takers that:

- Your use of technology will always be as an enabler and never a panacea. The technology you apply will not only be innovative, it will also be appropriate.
- Any decision about test outcomes will always involve a human proctor who is trained to know the difference between innocent behaviour, even if it is out of the ordinary, and malpractice.

Relevant to:

A little bit more about

Technological advancements

Relevant to:

By highlighting that your organization involves the latest and most innovative testing technology you'll stand out and appeal to a broader market. This might include:

Data forensics that use statistical detection methods to recognize anomalies in testing data that might indicate malpractice.

Web crawlers that systematically search the internet for compromised test content.

09

In conclusion...

We are used to convenience and flexibility in almost every area of life. At the same time the world is changing fast. If credentialing organizations are to develop and grow, they must respond to this transformation and meet the changing needs of their test takers and potential customers.

In this document we have outlined how we work with clients to embrace the opportunities and meet the challenges that inevitably come with change. Including expanding into new geographies with secure remote testing, offering convenience and flexibility with multi-modal testing options, and serving new markets with innovative credentials.

Whether you are marketing to new and entry-level test takers, or more experienced professionals renewing or seeking further credentials, how you tell your story and market your programs is vital. To engage test takers, reach new customers, and grow your credentialing programs and organization.

The marketability of your credentialing programs depends on *innovation, flexibility, and secure technology.*

References

i IT Certification Council, Why Get Certified? The Value of an IT Certification, 2021.

ii ICE External Stakeholders Working Group, Value of Certification, 2019.

iii ICE External Stakeholders Working Group, Value of Certification, 2019.

iv IDC Research, Benefits of Certification for IT Partners and Consultants, 2021.

Your trusted *testing partner*

Every day our clients support millions of people to realize their dreams, reach their potential, and improve their life chances. They care about their test takers – and we share that responsibility.

Our unwavering focus is on delivering frictionless and fair test taker experiences, without compromising test integrity, through...

Secure test delivery

- Authorized global **test centre** network.
- Secure and scalable **remote testing** Live and Record & Review **online proctoring**.
- Flexible **multi-modal** test delivery.
- Testing **windows or continuous testing** on-demand.

Rigorous test development

- Legally defensible and **valid test content.**
- **Job analysis** and **test** content specification.
- **Subject Matter Expert** (SME) recruitment, training and management.
- Secure **item authoring, banking and test generation** software.

Expertise in testing science

- Experienced **psychometricians.**
- Specialist **test developers.**
- **Data forensics** and web crawling.

Our willingness to listen and adapt means clients can either benefit from a full testing service, or access solutions at any stage of their testing journey.

Dreams deserve

We understand every test is about more than the result. It's about a dream. A dream the test taker believes is worth striving for. And we believe that too. Their dreams deserve trusted science, technology and operational expertise. They deserve PSI.

Connect with an expert today.

psiexams.com

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