

HC CASE STUDY:

APIC Launches Three Certification Preparation Programs and Recoups Development Investment in 13 Months.

"Developing one certification prep course was daunting so the fact that we were able to successfully launch three robust prep courses within 14 months is something we are incredibly proud of. This partnership is nothing short of magical. It's allowed us to create materials and resources our members had been requesting for years."

***Devin A. Jopp,** EdD*
Chief Executive Officer
APIC

THE CHALLENGE:

The Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) is the leading professional association for infection preventionists with more than 15,000 members. Serving nurses, physicians, public health professionals, epidemiologists, microbiologists, and medical technologists, APIC's mission is to advance the science and practice of infection prevention and control.

In 2022, APIC's certification body, the Certification Board of Infection Control and Epidemiology (CBIC), offered two credentials: the Certification in Infection Control (CIC®), with 8,600 life-to-date (LTD) earners (Jan. 2022) and the Associate – Infection Prevention & Control (a-IPC™), with 316 LTD earners (Jan. 2022). A new third credential, the Long-Term Care Certification in Infection Prevention (LTC-CIP), was to be introduced in 2023 based on the critical market need following the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the existing credentials, APIC offered a textbook and a variety of other preparation materials, but candidates had to sort through those resources to find what topics were applicable to each exam. APIC realized an investment was required to improve the quality, consistency, and exam applicability.

Two major factors influenced them to make significant improvements. First, they were driven by their internal strategic plan. In particular, one of APIC's three strategic priorities was to foster the development of the next generation of infection prevention and control workforce. Second, they were driven by market demand. Exam candidates and instructors were asking for better study resources. APIC was also approached by numerous state Departments of Health to provide training.

It was clear that APIC required complete, efficient, and high-quality preparation resources for certification candidates and instructors, across all three certifications. The more difficult question was, "How?" They didn't have the time or internal resources to create, deliver, support, and maintain these training programs.

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Published September 2024

THE SOLUTION:

APIC looked for external help to overcome their challenges and found Holmes Corporation (HC). In September 2022, HC kicked off the first of three development projects, the APIC Learning System for LTC-CIP™, followed by CIC in January 2023 and a-IPC in December 2023. All three projects followed HC's proven development process *(see figure 1)*.

Each of these programs would serve as an all-in-one foundation for in-person, live virtual and online courses, including reading materials and online study tools for individual candidates and additional class resources for instructors.

With a targeted LTC-CIP launch date just six months after kick-off, and no pre-existing study tools for this new certification, the first priority was to create clear and focused content to teach and reinforce the exam topics. HC's researchers and writers worked with APIC subject matter experts to review existing resources and develop new content as needed. A foundational concept taxonomy was established, learning objects were tagged, and a relationship map was created. This process allowed topics to be written or updated once, then pushed out to all products, saving time and resources.

Once the content development was underway, work began on the design and development of online learning toolsincluding an initial knowledge assessment, quizzes, flashcards, glossary, resource center, post-test, and progress reports. Instructor materials were created, including a learning analytics center to track the progress of class participants, class slides, and an instructor resource book to aid in teaching, and made available to instructors via an online portal.



As the product development team approached the quality assurance stage, HC and APIC worked together to ensure these new products would result in business success. To generate awareness and demand, the HC marketing team created an online visitor's center to host information and a variety of lead generation tools including a product demo, sample practice questions, and an interactive tool helping candidates choose the right certification. They also developed sales tools and conference materials for ongoing promotion. To support future customers and candidates, HC's customer care team was on-boarded and briefed on APIC certifications and exam prep so they could answer questions, fulfill orders, and troubleshoot issues.

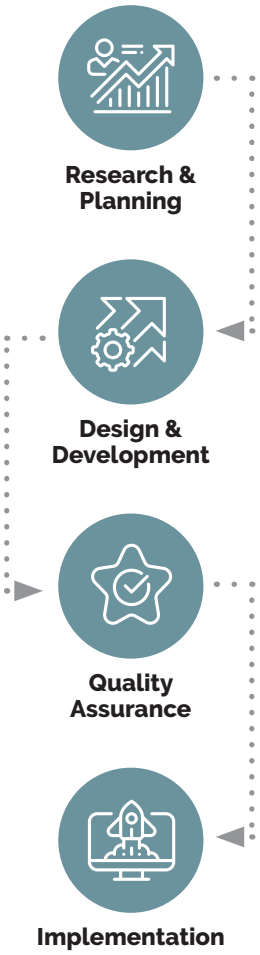

Figure 1: HC Product Development Process

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"I'm so thankful APIC released this learning system! I was lost trying to navigate studying on my own. The learning system organized the material based on my existing knowledge and provided sufficient, but not overwhelming, content. The quizzes were incredibly helpful in preparing me for the exam. I can confidently attest that the learning system was my key to successfully passing the CIC on the first try!"

***Alissa Lorchick**, BS, RD, CIC*

THE RESULTS:

The first of APIC's three new certification preparation programs, the APIC Learning System for LTC-CIP™ launched on schedule in March 2023, with the APIC Learning System for CIC™ following in June 2023, and the APIC Learning System for a-IPC™ in May 2024.



Three APIC Programs Launched in 14 Months

Reaction from the market was incredible and initial product goals were quickly met and surpassed. The APIC Learning System for LTC-CIP met its first-year sales and revenue goals in less than 10 months. Second-year goals were increased more than 25%, then swiftly exceeded in just 5 months. There was great demand for this program from US State Departments of Health who had COVID relief funding available for training. As of May 2024, more than 1,000 long-term care professionals had elevated their knowledge and skills with this program.



12%

Surpassed LTC-CIP revenue goal by 12% in first 12 months

The APIC Learning System for CIC achieved similar success, reaching 30% of its yearly goal in the first month. As of May 2024, nearly 1,200 infection control professionals had utilized the program. From Jan. 2022 to May 2024, the number of CICs grew to over 9,960, representing 9.5% net growth.

APIC was able to recoup its development investment for all three products in 13 months. As a result of this success, APIC is now in a position to begin expanding internationally and exploring other distribution channels.



439

439 individuals earned the new LTC-CIP certification within 12 months of introduction

100%



100% of development investment for all 3 programs recouped in 13 months

Holmes Corporation Can Elevate Your Association's Certification Program!

If your certification program could use a boost, HC can help! We work with leading industry associations to increase access to, demand for, and achievement of their certification programs to elevate the careers of their members.

Let's talk! Whether you'd like to brainstorm ideas, talk about best practices, or collaborate on your next big project, we'd love to talk! Choose a time on our calendar for a 30-minute call with Kelly Quinn, VP, New Business Development

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