



Heads Up

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To: ANAB-Accredited and Applicant CBs and Accreditation Assessors

From: Penny Gamaché, Communication Manager

Re: Marketing the Value of Accredited Certification

ANAB's most recent customer satisfaction survey included questions about our public relations (PR) efforts, specifically with regard to marketing the value of accreditation certification. The response to those survey questions, while light, was less than enthusiastic. Our customer satisfaction team, which analyzes the survey results and recommends improvements, concluded there appears to be both limited awareness of our PR efforts and opportunity for improvement. This issue of Heads Up is to let you know some of the efforts we have made - and plan to make - to promote accredited certification.

ANAB engages in ongoing public relations efforts that draw on tools typical of a corporate PR toolbox. This includes developing and maintaining relationships with reporters and editors and providing them with news releases about ANAB-specific news, such as personnel changes and new programs, and also story ideas and feature releases related to topics of current interest that relate to standards and conformity assessment.

While ANAB is a primary source for publications that follow our industry closely, it tends to be a challenge to get others to care about and understand what we do. We have had some success with the general business media and trade publications but we also encounter publications that are very blunt about not wanting to write about anything that they can't explain in 500 words or less.

In addition to news and feature releases, we also draft letters to the editor and op-ed articles, again with a close tie-in to current events. We've had some success in these efforts. For example, a letter from our president, John Knappenberger, published in *USA Today* and *The Business Journal of Milwaukee* has devoted some paper and ink to what ANAB, CBs, and certified companies do.

Last year, ANAB participated in developing a white paper on "The Value of Accredited Certification: Waste of Resources or Added Value?" This was a cooperative effort with representatives of ASQ, ANSI, and RABQSA International. The white paper is posted on ANAB's Web site (www.anab.org/HTMLFiles/docs/Value.pdf). In addition, ASQ has printed the white paper as 12-page four-color brochure; we have copies available, so if you'd like to share them with others send a request to anab@anab.org.

ANAB's management staff seeks out opportunities to speak to a variety of audiences about the value of accredited certification. Our president has recently been to China to speak on this topic, but he also addresses audiences closer to home; one recent engagement was with a committee of construction equipment executives. Sometimes presentations are a group effort, particularly when the audience is interested in developing new accreditation and certification programs.

We post much of the information relating to our PR and marketing efforts on our Web site. It's an economical way to get additional exposure and it makes the information readily available to CBs, their clients, and other interested parties. One area that we've improved on is the information posted on our site about new programs. We're now updating the information at least monthly to ensure it's up to date.

We hope you find the ANAB site a useful resource. Please feel free to use the information on the site in your own efforts to promote the value of accredited certification.

You may be aware that ANAB participates in the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) in a big way. Randy Dougherty is chair of the IAF Technical Committee and I assist as secretary of the TC. Randy and Kevin Breitzmann, our controller, serve on the IAF Executive Committee and Scott Richter is on the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement Committee.

This level of involvement with IAF puts ANAB in the thick of international efforts to promote the value of accredited certification. I have seen firsthand the challenges of getting worldwide cooperation to increase the value of services both ABs and CBs provide and I feel strongly that ANAB is working to increase cooperation and improve the way we all do business.

Our involvement internationally has also helped us drive home the need to do more closer to home. To that end, we also try to market the value of accredited certification by participating in the Independent Association of Accredited Registrars (IAAR) PR sub-team.

Our Accreditation Council has also taken up the challenge and formed several task groups to deal with specific topics. One of these groups has developed a Certification Client Bill of Rights and Responsibilities. IAAR input is to be sought on the document, which is intended to be used by CBs with their certified clients.

The growth of our organization as a whole (both the ANAB and ACLASS brands) depends on increasing revenue. To that end, our PR focus going forward will be oriented more toward sales and marketing in support of revenue growth. That doesn't mean past and current efforts will cease, but it does mean we'll focus more effort on getting the message to individuals, organizations, and sectors that we feel are ripe for our services and yours.

We expect that our acquisition of ACLASS and our connection with ANSI will benefit our efforts to build new business, as we're now able to offer a broader array of services under the ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board banner. We already have some experience in marketing our combined line of accreditation services (management systems, testing and calibration laboratories, personnel certification, and product certification) in areas that may have need of management systems certification and more.

We hope that you understand that ANAB firmly believes that promoting the value of accredited

certification is good for everyone involved in conformity assessment, and we welcome your input and participation in these efforts.