



# CONNECTION

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## National AMP Assessment Center Network

*Working as Promised*

By William D. Hogan, ME

Vice President, Marketing and Business Products

In the late 1990s as AMP was discussing options for establishing a nationwide network of computer-based testing centers, the naysayers were hard at work too. When the idea of partnering with H&R Block, the world's largest tax preparer, was announced, many quickly said, "Oh, that will never work!" or, among other not-so-flattering comments, "It'll never survive tax season!" Well, guess what? Now into its seventh year of operation and having tested nearly 800,000 examination candidates at more than 150 locations, the national AMP Assessment Center Network works *exactly as promised!* That's *eight hundred thousand* examinees by the end of 2006, far more than just a few successful repetitions of a process.

Not only has the relationship between AMP and H&R Block worked, it has proven highly effective, economical and readily expandable. For those who may not be familiar with this working partnership, let us provide a few facts. The idea to create AMP Assessment Centers inside offices of H&R Block came from the idea H&R Block once had to install tax offices inside Sears stores. With more than 10,000 individual locations nationwide and headquarters in Kansas City, also AMP's home, H&R Block understood the concept when AMP approached them. A contract was signed in 1998 authorizing AMP to establish a national network of AMP Assessment Centers inside selected H&R Block offices. AMP would own the computer hardware, software and fixtures. H&R Block would provide office space and personnel to be trained and certified by AMP to proctor examinations. The AMP Assessment Center Network opened in January 2000 at about 72 locations personally selected and visited by AMP staff. Currently at more than 150 sites, AMP is expanding the network further each year, and soon more than 200 locations may be a reality.

One significant reason AMP recognized that its alliance with H&R Block would be successful is our shared attitude toward customer service. Proctors trained by AMP have proven to be friendly, courteous and helpful, while maintaining vigilance regarding security procedures and undergoing a detailed certification process created by AMP. Fears about working with franchisees have also proven to be unfounded. Actually, most AMP Assessment Centers are in one of H&R Block's more than 5,000 company-owned locations rather than franchises. However, in the few instances where franchisees have been selected as testing locations, they have readily agreed to all conditions and followed the same AMP training and certification procedures used

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People Who Care



# AMP

on the **ROAD**

AMP is committed to staying current with advancing professional standards and annually attends, exhibits and presents at industry conferences. An additional bonus to attending these conferences is the opportunity to meet and share with our clients, other credentialing organizations and associations. Please visit with us at an upcoming event:

## **ARELLO DISTRICT 1 (EAST)**

June 25-26, 2006

Mystic, CT

## **ARELLO DISTRICT 2 AND 3 (SOUTH AND CENTRAL)**

July 20-22, 2006

Oklahoma City, OK

## **ASAE/IAAMC ANNUAL MEETING**

August 19-22, 2006

Boston, MA

## **CLEAR ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

September 14-16, 2006

Alexandria, VA

## **ARELLO NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

September 24-27, 2006

San Antonio, TX

# Need Marketing?

## Let *AMP* Help!

Whether they manage professional associations or certification boards, many executives today are concerned about "marketing" their organizations. "How do I grow my membership?" "Where will I find examination candidates?" "What direction should my board be going?" "What opportunities for revenue generation exist?" These are examples of but a few of the questions with which the experienced and talented AMP Management Team and staff can assist not-for-profit organizations and agencies.

For nearly 25 years, AMP has been engaged in the business of offering a full range of assessment and association management services to its customers. More than 100 organizations now consider AMP their provider, including 16 professional membership associations or certification agencies that are managed by our AMP Management Services division. During this time, AMP has gained a wide variety of experience, from helping start new certification organizations or develop new examination programs to assisting established certification agencies and professional associations design and implement new strategic plans or take advantage of new revenue-generating opportunities. Several current AMP business partners had only the idea of beginning a certification program when they first came to AMP. Now, they have firmly established, recognized and growing programs. Others came to AMP with an existing, but weak or inconsistent organization. With guidance and expertise provided by our staff, many are now thriving and seeking additional opportunities to be of assistance to their certificants or association members.

AMP realizes that different organizations require different approaches. Depending on the individual needs of an organization, AMP experts evaluate and help identify areas where organizational development or advanced mar-

keting strategies might be employed. Organizations just beginning a certification process clearly have special needs, different from those of established agencies. Budgetary concerns are typically paramount, as are ways to rapidly produce sustaining revenue or assess the feasibility of new ventures. The "basics" such as incorporation of the organization, selection of the board and development of essential structure, as well as a business plan may be very important. Established programs have broader concerns, including new product/service development, maintaining effective communication with members, getting "new blood" in the board of directors, extending a successful strategic plan to the "next level," or simply identifying ways to make a good organization even better.

Perhaps the best example of what the AMP staff can do to help an organization grow is AMP's parent company, the National Board for Respiratory Care, Inc. (NBRC). Since 1974, the NBRC has grown from a population of less than 10,000 certificants to nearly 300,000 today. Three new certification programs have been established and a new examination method, branching-logic simulations, was introduced. Comprehensive self-assessment examinations were developed for five respiratory care areas and a performance evaluation system was created. The NBRC transitioned smoothly from paper/pencil to computer-based testing in 2000 and was the first customer for the national AMP Assessment Center Network. The NBRC's Board of Trustees has been a focused, goal-oriented group, completing several strategic plans in a fiscally responsible manner. The organization is known in respiratory care as a responsive, caring agency that does its best to provide excellent service at all times. The NBRC is also the only agency to have continuously maintained accreditation by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) since the Commission was formed in 1977.

at all other sites. Regardless of the H&R Block location, AMP has complete control over our Assessment Centers.

Of course, the “proof of the pudding” is in the actual “doing,” that is, delivering a secure, computer-based test to a candidate who expects a comfortable, quiet, convenient and “user-friendly” assessment experience. From the start, AMP has surveyed candidates at the end of each examination administered, asking about his/her view of the AMP Assessment Center experience. Specific questions are asked about the performance of proctors, as well as the facilities and computer system. Responses from each testing location are reviewed by dedicated AMP staff members who communicate daily with the sites.

After more than six full years of successful operation, the statistics regarding candidate satisfaction with the AMP Assessment Center Network are outstanding. For example, nearly 98 percent of respondents indicated that the AMP proctor was “friendly and helpful,” while 99.5 percent rated the overall appearance of their test location as adequate to excellent. About 99 percent of all respondents indicated that the AMP proctor was “helpful in resolving problems” and another 99 percent indicated that AMP’s computer-testing software was “easy to use.” An overwhelming majority (more than 99 percent) of respondents rated the noise level as acceptable, deflating any lingering tax season concerns. And finally, in response to a key question about their view of the “overall computer-based testing experience” at an AMP Assessment Center, 99.6 percent of candidates answered “adequate to excellent,” with 95.3 percent in the “good” or “excellent” range. While it may be difficult to please 100 percent of the people 100 percent of the time, AMP comes as close as possible!

The preceding satisfaction statistics speak volumes in answering the initial questions and doubts about AMP’s decision to partner with H&R Block in establishing the national AMP Assessment Center Network. Through AMP’s “hands on” approach to doing things, it has indeed proven possible for AMP staff to carefully select test sites, train and certify proctors, and develop a computer-testing system within offices of H&R Block that is more than responsive to the needs of our clients. More innovation is coming from AMP with the development of our new Assessment Center Command and Control System, affectionately nicknamed “HERB.” HERB will soon allow online, real-time video monitoring of all AMP Assessment Centers, and currently permits our home office staff to routinely control more than 100 conditions indicating the operational readiness of the network and specific testing locations.

In short, regarding the national AMP Assessment Center Network—*It Works!* Just ask the hundreds of thousands of satisfied examinees about their AMP experience or contact any one of our more than 100 clients, who we value as business partners. The AMP Assessment Center Network not only works, it is *here to stay!*



## You Can **DEPEND** on



Acquisitions continue in the assessment industry, with another of AMP’s competitors once again being acquired by a large education/publishing conglomerate. While management always attempts to put a positive spin on these events, anyone who carefully considers such matters realizes that yet another corporate takeover may cause chaos, complete with organizational instability and personnel insecurity.

Outside the fray, AMP remains one of the few assessment companies that money can’t buy. You see, AMP was not created to build wealth for its shareholders or owner. Rather, the company was founded to provide quality assessment services and administrative control for its owner, the National Board for Respiratory Care, Inc. (NBRC), as well as other clients, who we treat as our business partners. These purposes continue to drive AMP today and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

**AMP business partners and prospective clients can depend on AMP staying AMP!**

This means more than simply in name only. The AMP Management Team collectively has over 240 years of assessment experience and *averages 18 years* with AMP. They are individually committed to the future of AMP and will not be “gone with the wind” in an unexpected corporate takeover.

You may have noticed that clients stay with AMP as well. We now have over 100 satisfied business partners (most of who were once customers of others) and long-term retention unsurpassed in the industry. A few years ago, an AMP client reported a conversation they had with another association executive who was unhappy with his testing company and looking around. The AMP client indicated that they had just moved their business to AMP from another firm and were concerned about how the move would work out. The executive responded, “Yes, but now you are with AMP, and when organizations go to AMP, they stay!”

If you are like this unhappy executive and are concerned about the service you are receiving from your assessment company, or the possibility of your provider being acquired by a bottom-line oriented mega-firm, we invite you to consider AMP. You’ll find unmatched corporate consistency and leadership, as well as the quality service you expect. *At AMP, you can depend on it!*

# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Technology  
That Works

People  
Who Care

■ Since 1990, the *American Society for Pain Management Nursing (ASPMN)* has been dedicated to advancing and promoting optimal nursing care for people affected by pain. ASPMN strives to educate the public, ensure that all people have access to quality pain management resources, and provide recognition to healthcare providers. We are pleased to announce that ASPMN has chosen AMP Management Services as its association management company. Services will include executive leadership, executive office services, board and executive committee support, financial services, membership recruitment and support, meeting management, and publication support. We look forward to serving ASPMN and its membership.

■ The *Pediatric Nursing Certification Board (PNCB)* is dedicated to developing certification examinations and certification maintenance programs to support the delivery of quality healthcare to children and their families. PNCB's examination programs are developed and maintained through interdisciplinary collaboration among pediatricians, pediatric nurses, pediatric nurse practitioners, educators and clinicians, and are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). In February, AMP launched all three of PNCB's nationally accredited examinations, Certified Pediatric Nurse (CPN™), CPNP™-Primary Care and CPNP™-Acute Care, in the national computer-based AMP Assessment Center Network. The PNCB examinations are now available Monday through Friday at more than 150 locations across the United States. In addition, AMP is providing PNCB with strategic planning and marketing services.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT AMP'S MARKETING DEPARTMENT.

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**Need Marketing?** ■ ■ ■ *continued from page 2*  
**Let AMP Help!**

When the NBRC formed AMP in 1982 to be the testing agency for respiratory care, the experienced AMP Management Team first applied itself to creating excellence in credentialing for the NBRC. AMP has now grown to 106 clients, including the NBRC, and has applied its expertise to the business problems of many certification boards and professional societies. In fact, the AMP Management Team averages over 25 years of experience in the certification industry. The great track record of growth and success they have achieved speaks for itself. As consultants, they are individuals who can help you as well. Whether your organization needs strategic planning, leadership development, board structure and process modifications, a marketing plan, new product ideas or just the basics of delivering quality service, one of the talented members of the AMP Management Team can assist you. To discuss your needs and find out more, contact a member of the AMP Marketing staff. *Put AMP to work for you today!* ■



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