

Exporting Your Credential

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A top strategic priority for many certification programs has become the globalization of their credentials. Reasons for this interest may include a desire to: create global standards for the profession/occupation, facilitate the portability of credentials in an increasingly global economy, or increase revenue through targeting new markets.

Whatever the reason, global expansion is a daunting and expensive undertaking. Since 1993, the National Institute for Automotive Service has introduced its certification programs in several different countries using a variety of models. Here are some lessons learned from our international experience:

Carefully assess feasibility. Don't rely on assurances by local contacts that demand for the credential will be high. Conduct your own market research to verify there will be sufficient local participation to justify the financial risk.

Validate your examination locally. Although the credential may be desired in other countries, the content of your domestic examination may not be consistent with local or regional practices. Perform local or global job analyses to identify points of commonality and difference.

Protect your intellectual property. Even if you tailor your content to meet regional needs, it is critical that you protect the ownership and usage of your most valuable assets – your certification mark, exam questions, content outlines, and preparation/study materials