

# Justifying the Value of a Certified Business Partner

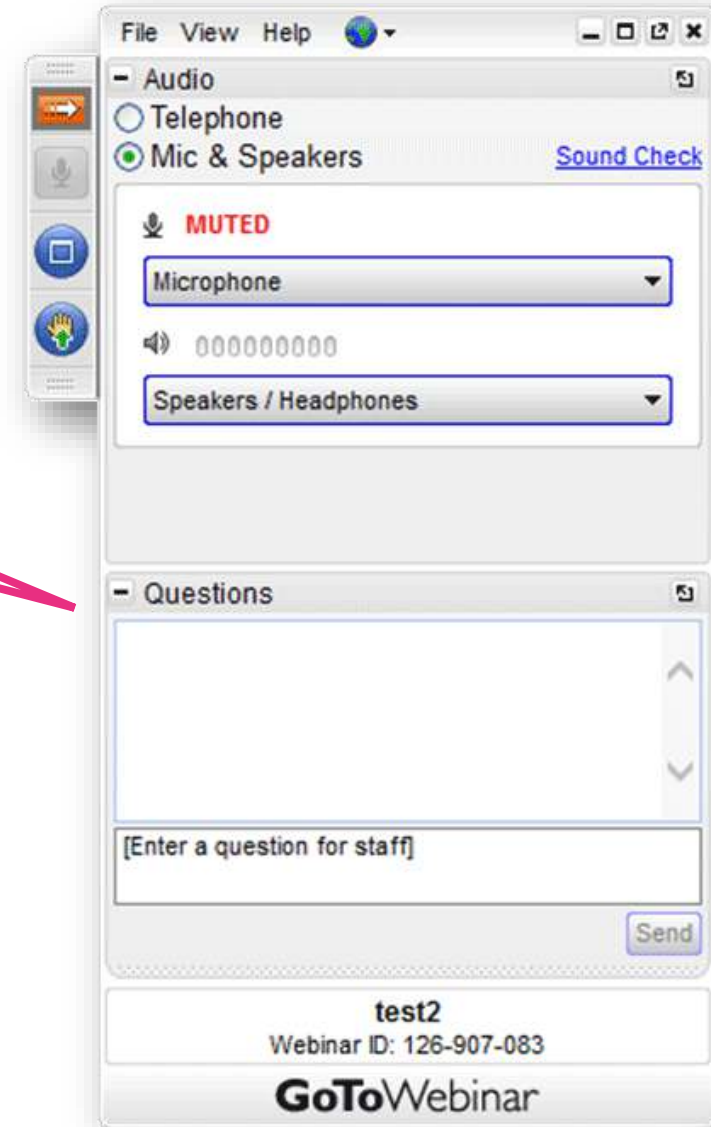
Chuck Cooper, *ITCC*

Kristin Bernor, *Questionmark*

To ask questions,  
use the “Questions”  
feature

**Watch for an email after the webinar:**

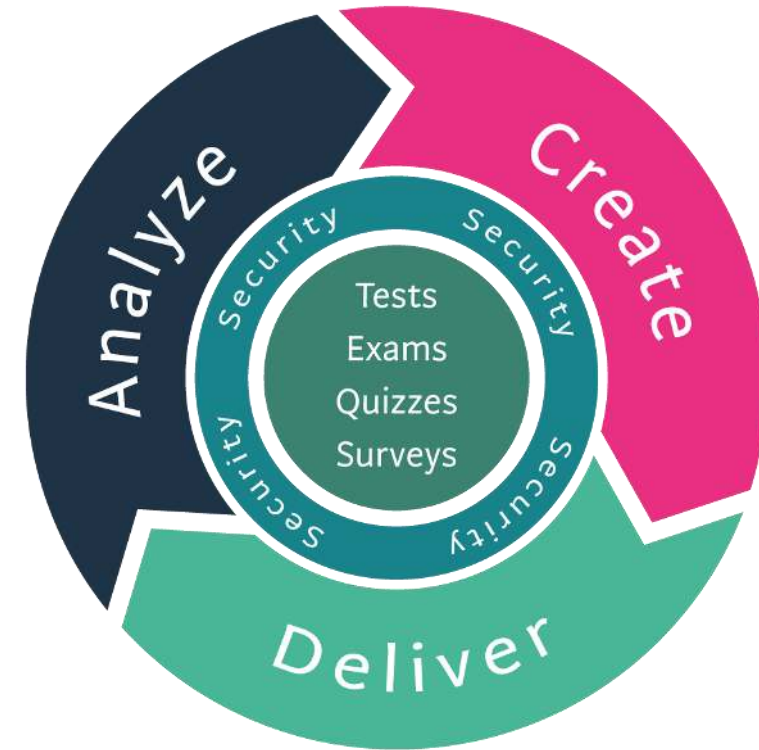
- Download slides (PDF)
- View a recording
- Answer a survey



# About Questionmark

## Background

- Founded in 1988
- Assessment solutions to measure knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes securely for certification, regulatory compliance, workforce learning, sales-force readiness and higher education
- ISO/IEC 27001 Certified (Learn more: [www.questionmark.com/trust](https://www.questionmark.com/trust))



- *Questionmark OnDemand*
- *Questionmark OnDemand for Government*
- *Questionmark OnPremise*

# Presenters

## Chuck Cooper



- 46 years at IBM managing the Certification program before retiring
- Helped found the IT Certification Council, served as Vice Chair and headed the Securing Certification project
- Currently, part of Marketing team at ITCC and has driven three editions of the document on The Value of IT Certification

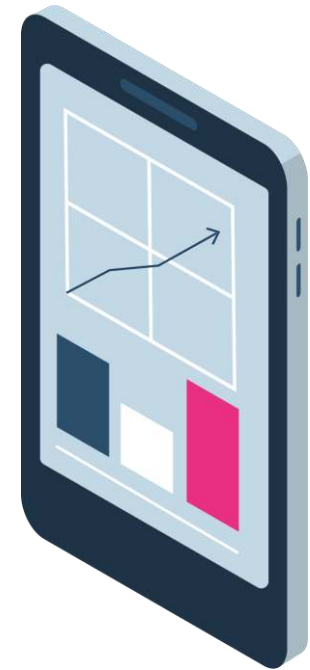
## Kristin Bernor



- Head of External Relations, Questionmark
- Marketing Director at the IT Certification Council
- Co-authored "Justifying the Value of a Certified Business Partner Channel" with Chuck

# Agenda

- The purpose and key components of a Business Partner Program
- The role of skills and certification in the program
- The value of certifying your BP to each of the following:
  - The vendor company
  - The BP company
  - The BP's employees
  - The BP's customers





# The Purpose of a Business Partner Program

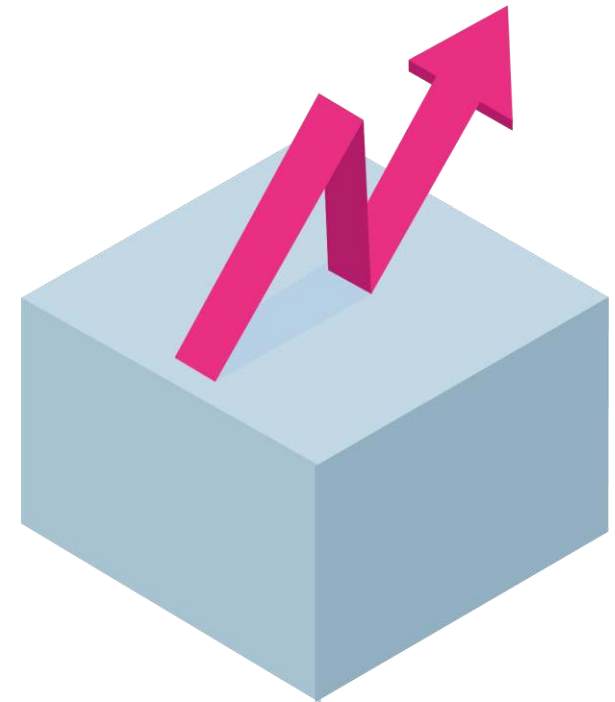
# Who Are Your Partners?

- **Partners** = any company or individual who is charged with taking the vendor product to market
  - Can include:
    - Resellers
    - Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs)
    - Distributors
    - Consultants
    - Value-Added Resellers (VARs)
    - Even the vendor's direct reps



# Purpose of a Business Partner Program

- Ensuring success of your products in the marketplace
- Reaching more of your customers, in different segments and geographies
- Complementing your direct sales force, if appropriate
- Gaining firsthand insights into your customers' requirements
- Making customers more successful, more satisfied and more likely to continue and increase use by providing onboarding and service
- Scaling up and out efficiently
- Increasing revenue







# Key Components

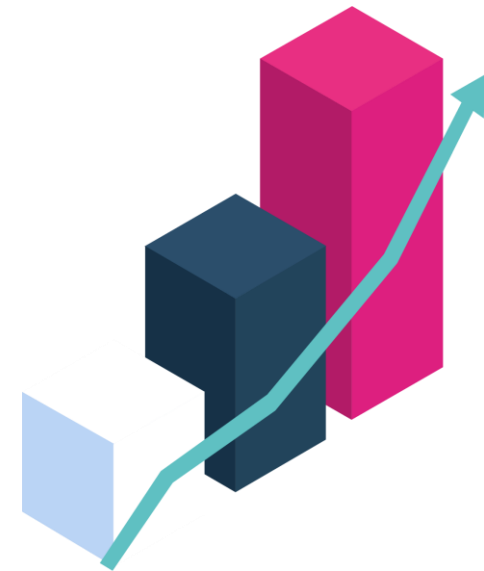
# Setting Product Sales/Support Strategies

- Variety of products in your portfolio = variety of partner types
- Partner strategy should match products and different customer segments
- Knowing the right product in the portfolio to match the customer, means building your skills on those products and why they will best address customers' needs



# Recruiting Business Partners to Match Strategy

- Different products and different customer segments, will best be served by recruiting partners that best match those elements
- Many partners bring their own value add to the customer in the form of services that complement or extend the base products



# Building the Skills Plan to Prepare Business Partners

- Partners have a huge dependency on the vendor for building their skills
- Courses must be developed to impart the skills needed by the partners
- Training strategy must develop the skills needed for sales and implementation
- Should provide tiered learning for the intermediate as well as advanced student



# Measuring the Success of the Business Partners

- Assess costs vs benefits (ROI) of building and certifying the skills of each partner
- Allows for corrections and improvements to be made to the strategy, and possibly even the product strategy
- Recognize and reward the best performing partners
- Motivate other partners to reach for improved skills/certification levels of the proven leaders



# Support Structure for Business Partners

- A successful partner needs a resource to come to when a customer problem arises beyond their skill
- Support needs to be responsive
- Prioritize the form of the support, the response time with which it's provided and whether there is any cost for the support



# Marketing (to Business Partners and Their Audience)

- Business Partners are much like your customers
- Keep them informed and motivate to strive to increase achievements:
  - Share new products, new courses, certification schedules, etc.
  - Promote success stories through case studies
  - Document and promote ROI of partners





# The Role of Skills and Certifications



# The Role of Skills and Certifications in Your Business Partner Program

- Getting your partners fully skilled in all your products: sales and technical
- Measuring the effectiveness of a particular Business Partner
- Guiding lead passing to your best Business Partners
- Promoting your most successful and most skilled Business Partners, often a way of giving incentives and/or entry into tiers



*“Fully certified teams have a greater awareness of project intentions, including key project milestones, scope, and the client’s success measures.”*

*IDC InfoBrief, sponsored by ITCC: Benefits of Certification for IT Partners and Consultants*



# The Value of Certifying your Business Partners:

*to the Vendor company*

# Growing Measurable Sales/Technical Channel Skills

- Faster/quality implementation of your products

*“We always staff our implementations with a professionally certified lead consultant for each module. This makes us stand out from the crowd and position us as the experienced and safe partner choice.”*

**-- SAP**

[SAP News Center, The Value of Certifications: Learning as a Sustainable Competitive Advantage](#)

- Reduced support costs around customer installs

*“Fully certified teams are 20% more likely to properly scope projects and execute projects to the plan.”*

[IDC InfoBrief, sponsored by ITCC: Benefits of Certification for IT Partners and Consultants](#)

# Growing Measurable Sales/Technical Channel Skills

- Demonstration, to your customers, your commitment to quality in their solutions

*Lead with your certifications in your proposal*  
**-- IBM recommendation**

- Increased customer satisfaction for your products

*“There’s a direct correlation between professional, certified consultants on a project and satisfied clients. Projects with professional, certified consultants are more likely to be successful, resulting in happy and referenceable customers.” -- SAP*

[SAP News Center, The Value of Certifications: Learning as a Sustainable Competitive Advantage](#)

# Growing Measurable Sales/Technical Channel Skills

- Skilled Business Partner feedback on required/suggested improvements to your products
- Build relationship with Business Partner employees
- Increased mindshare for your products vs competitors
- (If you get it right) industry excitement about your products





# The Value of Certifying your Business Partners:

*to the Business Partner's company*

# Business Partners are Only Successful if They Can Build a Team with Deeply Developed, Certified Skills

- Multiple skilled teams available for opportunities

*“More certified individuals in teams, means the ability to address multiple opportunities in parallel, and results in more revenue.”*

*Questionmark white paper: Justifying the Value of a Certified Business Partner Channel*

- Faster/quality implementations for customers yielding more profit

*“Ultimately, fully certified teams are 35% more likely to finish projects ahead of schedule, finishing on average more than two weeks ahead of schedule.”*

*ITCC white paper: Why Get IT Certified? The Value of IT Certification*

# Business Partners are Only Successful if They Can Build a Team with Deeply Developed, Certified Skills

- Reduced support costs on your implementations

*“84% of partners believe that certified IT consultants provide better service and support and are more valuable to their clients than their noncertified colleagues.”*

*ITCC white paper: Why Get IT Certified? The Value of IT Certification*

- Gaining top leads from the vendor
- Promotion/recognition, by the vendor, as a top Business Partner company, and customers more likely to choose

*“Two recent sales wins with net-new customers specifically called out our consultant certifications and the depth of knowledge we have in our organization as reasons for choosing us as the vendor of choice.” -- **SAP***

*SAP News Center, The Value of Certifications: Learning as a Sustainable Competitive Advantage*



# Business Partners are Only Successful if They Can Build a Team with Deeply Developed, Certified Skills

- Higher likelihood of repeat or growth business for a satisfied customer
- Certifications provide overall value to the partner company

*“82% of IT consultants recognize the value certifications offer clients.”*

*ITCC white paper: Why Get IT Certified? The Value of IT Certification*

*94% say certified individuals provide value far beyond the cost of certifying; 50% say the incremental value is >\$10,000, and 16% say that incremental value is >\$30,000”*

*Global Knowledge 2020 IT Skills and Salary Report*

Having Certified Staff Adds Value to My Company (Strongly Agree Ratings)				
Having Certified Staff	Sol Prov	SI	ISV	SVC Prov
Generates more business for us	65%	37%	48%	44%
Generates higher staff productivity	70%	44%	29%	42%
Helps generate business with new customers	65%	44%	33%	33%
Differentiates us from our competition	56%	44%	29%	49%

IDC Industry Perspectives on Certification



# The Value of Certifying your Business Partners:

*to the Business Partner's employees*

# Business Partner are Only as Strong, Skilled and Successful as the Employees They Hire, Train, Deploy

- Job security

*“77.8% of (partner employees) agree they have experienced greater demand for their skills since becoming certified.” – **Certification Magazine***

*ITCC white paper: Why Get IT Certified? The Value of IT Certification*

- Advancement and marketability

*“IT Professionals who obtained a new certification saw salary increases of \$13,000.”*

*Global Knowledge 2020 IT Skills and Salary Report*

# Business Partner are Only as Strong, Skilled and Successful as the Employees They Hire, Train, Deploy

- Salary/bonuses after getting certified

*“47.8% of their Salary Survey respondents got bonuses or incentive pay; 61.9% of those got a raise; and 74.9% said getting their certification was the key.”*

**-- Certification Magazine**

[ITCC white paper: Why Get IT Certified? The Value of IT Certification](#)

- Women in IT

*“86% of the women surveyed have at least one certification; their annual salaries increased 8% year over year, and their 2020 salaries were 9% higher than men (up from 6% less in 2019)”*

[Global Knowledge 2020 IT Skills and Salary Report](#)

# Business Partner are Only as Strong, Skilled and Successful as the Employees They Hire, Train, Deploy

- Recognition
- Professional credibility & personal resume showing skills in key products for future jobs

*“55% of IT managers said certifications increase the credibility of IT consultants.”*

ITCC commissioned research, IDC: Four Ways Certifications Help Organizations Achieve Their IT Strategies

- More certifications can accelerate an employee's value

*“IT professionals with 6+ certifications see salaries 8% higher than the worldwide average.”*

ITCC commissioned research, IDC: Four Ways Certifications Help Organizations Achieve Their IT Strategies

- Confidence



# The Value of Certifying your Business Partners:

*to the Business Partner's customers*

# The Benefits to Customers

- Comfort of knowing/buying from a reputable source
  - Cost and schedule components of a bid are less important than the confidence that is in those numbers
- Projects with professional, certified consultants are more likely to be successful
- Less support issues, faster path to value
- Shows customer that the vendor cares about quality



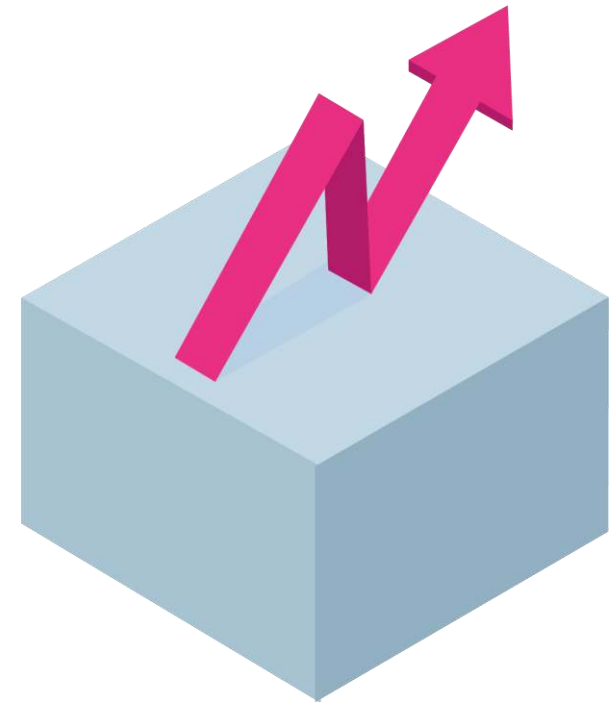


# Summary



# Summary

- If Business Partners are a key component of your strategy, building a highly skilled, measurable set of BPs, will grow product revenue
- There are numerous, key benefits of certifications to both the BP company, as well as their sales and technical employees... and therefore to your customers
- The value of certifying your channel far outweighs any cost of providing skills, certification programs and exams, or getting the BPs certified



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Your Questions?



# References

- [ITCC white paper: Why Get IT Certified? The Value of IT Certification](#)
- [Global Knowledge 2020 IT Skills and Salary Report](#)
- ITCC commissioned research, IDC: Four Ways Certifications Help Organizations Achieve Their IT Strategies
- [SAP News Center, Creating Competitive Edge Through Skill Certification: Why Recognizing SAP Skills Matters](#)
- [SAP News Center, The Value of Certifications: Learning as a Sustainable Competitive Advantage](#)



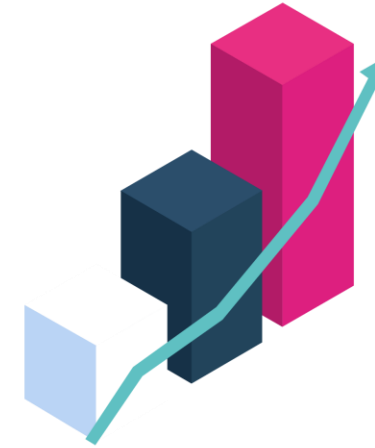
# Get the White Paper

## Justifying the Value of a Certified Business Partner Channel

- To download the white paper, visit:
  - <https://www.questionmark.com/resources/whitepapers/download-justifying-the-value-of-a-certified-business-partner-channel/>



# White Papers, Infographics, Reports, eBooks and More!



**Visit our resources page**  
**[www.questionmark.com/resources](http://www.questionmark.com/resources)**

# Upcoming Webinars

## Introduction to Questionmark's Assessment Platform

◆ November 30, 2021 - 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm (EDT)

Learn the basics of authoring, delivering and reporting on surveys, quizzes, tests and exams. This introductory webinar explains and demonstrates key Questionmark features and functions.

[Click to Register](#)

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## Legal Considerations for Workplace Testing

◆ December 1, 2021 - 11:00 am to 12:00 pm (EDT)

Ensuring that your workplace testing program meets requirements imposed by various government agencies is extremely important. Presented by consulting partner, Jim Parry of Compass Consultants, LLC and Jamie Armstrong, Legal Counsel for Questionmark, this session will cover the general legal considerations associated with workplace testing.

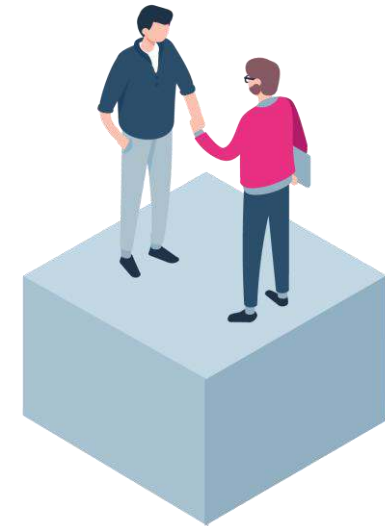
[Click to Register](#)

# How to Evaluate Questionmark

## Request a one-on-one demo

*The Questionmark team will contact you to arrange a demonstration tailored to your needs and questions*

**[www.questionmark.com/request-demo](http://www.questionmark.com/request-demo)**





# Thank you for attending!

*Get in touch:*

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