



Case Study

The **Right** Approach for USGBC Certification Management

Background

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is a 501 c3 non-profit organization committed to a prosperous and sustainable future for our nation through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. With a community comprising 79 local affiliates, more than 16,000 member companies and organizations, and more than 160,000 Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Professional Credential holders, USGBC is the driving force of the LEED certification program and of an industry that is projected to contribute \$554 billion to the U.S. gross domestic product from 2009-2013. USGBC leads an unlikely diverse constituency of builders and environmentalists, corporations and nonprofit organizations, elected officials and concerned citizens, and teachers and students.

Challenge

As the world's collective environmental conscience rapidly expands and places an increased focus on eco-friendly and sustainable building practices, the leadership and vision of the USGBC and its LEED program are becoming more valuable every day. The sheer demand for the USGBC's expertise and the LEED program — while welcomed by the organization — would prove to be a unique challenge as it tried to determine the best way to accommodate the growth of its LEED certification program.

Because of the rapid growth of the program, the USGBC was finding the task of creating, administering and scoring the LEED AP exam on a larger scale more difficult, especially as the organization needed to simultaneously maintain its leadership position in the green building industry. The USGBC decided that it needed an experienced and proven third-party testing company to help create, facilitate and grow the certification exam to meet the evolving needs of its candidates.

Strategy

The USGBC's challenge was in finding a third-party resource that could not only administer the exam securely over a wide geography, but also act as a partner in the continued development of the exam's content and, in doing so, the future growth of the LEED Accredited Professional program. The USGBC found the answer to its dilemma when the leadership enlisted Prometric, the global leader in technology enabled testing and assessment, to become its testing partner for the LEED Professional Accreditation program.

Solution

To accommodate the increased topical interest in its certification exams, the USGBC contracted with Prometric to offer the exam through a global network of test centers. Since Prometric test centers are in

USGBC Fast Facts:

Location: Washington, D.C.

Challenge: Accommodating growth while creating, administering and scoring the LEED AP exam on a large scale.

Outcome: A well supported program, available through Prometric centers, and a seat for any candidate who wants to go "green."

nearly every market worldwide, the exam would now be available to a vastly larger and geographically dispersed candidate base. Prometric's test centers are also staffed by trained exam proctors and equipped with the latest forms of testing technology, ensuring that the integrity of the LEED AP exams and its candidates would remain intact regardless of the increased administration scale.

Prometric's biggest contribution to the USGBC, however, came in its ability to use its experience in testing and certification to help the USGBC identify new opportunities.

The USGBC enlisted Prometric to guide Job Task Analyses on a global and exam-level scale, essentially reviewing the organization's goals, strategy and existing credential offerings to identify potential new content or entirely new certifications. After identifying opportunities, Prometric assisted in the design of certification blueprints, or the roadmaps that a redesigned or brand new certification will follow, from concept to creation. Prometric then helped the USGBC in developing the questions (or items) for the exams and used its psychometric experts to determine whether or not the newly crafted exams are both legally defensible and consistent with the goals of the certification.

From soup to nuts, Prometric helped the USGBC determine what aspects of green building it needs to examine, how it can use psychometric analysis to best measure these traits in candidates, what questions to ask, how to ask them and how to score them. Going beyond that, Prometric also handled the computer-based delivery, scoring and management of every exam, allowing the USGBC to continue innovation and thought leadership for the greening of construction.

Outcome

The LEED program certifications are available to any candidate who wants to take them at Prometric secure test centers. Partnering with Prometric has helped the USGBC accommodate the rapid and high demand for its certification in a healthy and sustainable way.

In 2008, the USGBC announced the creation of the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI) to manage the LEED Professional Accreditation program and potential future green building credential programs.

Prometric's work with the organization continues, now partnering with the GBCI directly. By partnering with Prometric to help craft and administer the LEED AP exam, the USGBC (and its GBCI testing wing) is poised to continue its leadership in the green building space, through not only best practices and standards, but a sound and legally-defensible certification program.

Find Out More

Learn more about our *Test Development and Delivery Solutions* by visiting www.prometric.com or by calling toll-free 1-855-855-2241.