



Building a CE Program:
A Simplistic Framework for
Attracting and Retaining
Customers



Table of Contents

Why a CE Program is Beneficial to Invest In	4
How to Get Started	7
Determine Your Customers' Needs	7
Obtain CE Accreditation	8
Establish Your Program's Goals	9
Determine Course Topics	10
Case Study: Implementing Certification Courses for Member Organizations	12
Assign Responsibilities	13
Create Content	14
Promote and Publish Your Program	17
Case Study: Enhancing CE Opportunities with Customized Learning	19
Evaluate and Grow Your Program	20
How to Choose the Right LMS	21
How Konvert™ Can Help	24

Did you know that 54 percent of adults in the labor force said it will be essential for them to get training and develop new skills to keep up with workplace demands?*

A large majority of these individuals will look for continuing education (CE) programs to satisfy this need—meaning that developing a CE program can help retain current customers, attract prospects and establish your brand as a trusted resource.

Many organizations may hesitate to build out a program if they don't know where to start, lack the resources necessary to build one or still don't quite see the value. CE programs satisfy a prospect's need and attract new business as a result—and by utilizing a learning management system (LMS), you can easily create and establish an ongoing CE program.

Discover how to leverage an LMS to build an effective CE program that attracts new prospects while fulfilling your current customers' educational needs.



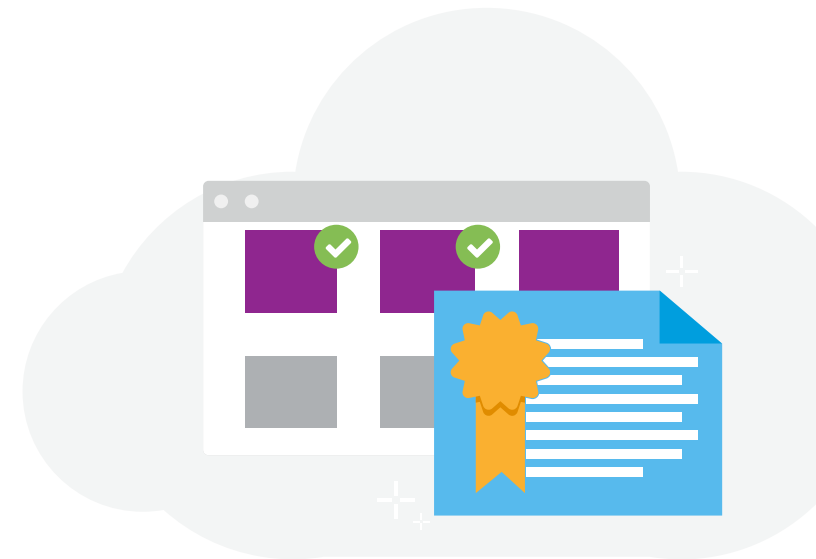
*Pew Research Center

Why a CE Program is Beneficial to Invest In

A CE program is an innovative way to engage new prospects and retain current customers. In some job functions, continuing education is required to maintain certification—so why not have these individuals come to you?

Consider these facts regarding continued education:

- 63 percent of adults with a bachelor's degree or higher level of education feel they will need to keep advancing their skills throughout their careers.*
- 94 percent of employees say that they would be more willing to stay in corporations that prioritize and invest in employee career development.**
- 87 percent of millennials and 69 percent of non-millennials consider career development an essential part of their jobs.***



Fortunately, an effective CE program can help address the above needs and support:

Stronger customer retention

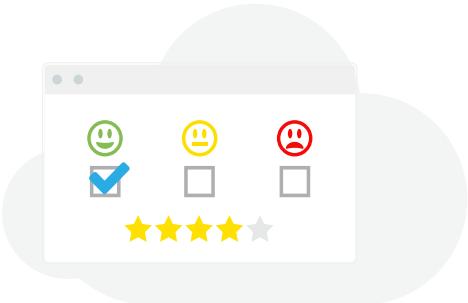
There’s a link between providing your customers educational opportunities and an increase in their loyalty toward your brand. Customers who feel knowledgeable and empowered are more likely to be satisfied and less likely to leave.

Loyal brand advocates

Developing CE opportunities helps show your customers how invested you are in them. In turn, this can help position your business as a trusted resource and support future lead generation.

Ongoing engagement

Through continuous development of your program, you can keep customers coming back by offering additional courses. We recommend trying to establish a cadence where customers can expect a new course within a certain timeframe, like once a month.



Increased competitive advantage

If your business is offering CE courses, you hold an advantage over your competitors who may not offer comparable learning opportunities. This makes your brand more attractive to prospective customers.

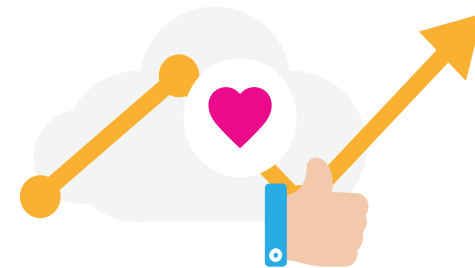
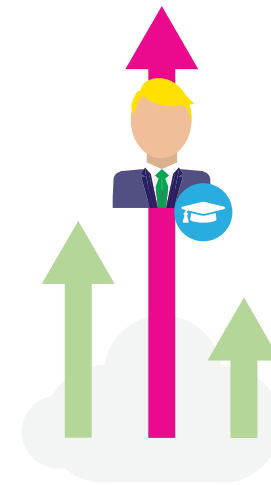
Stronger lead generation

This ties in with an increased competitive advantage. For prospective customers looking for CE opportunities, if your company has an established program, you're more likely to attract more leads.

Increased engagement with your product

If you have a product that you want to showcase, you can incorporate it into your program; customers will then have the chance to interact with your product and become familiar with it. This could also spark an interest in your customers to research your other product offerings.

Seize the opportunity for your business and offer CE courses before your competitors do—or you may start to see a decrease in customer retention. Offering CE courses isn't just about the here and now; it also impacts the long-term success of your business.



How to Get Started

Creating a CE program requires thorough planning and execution, but it doesn't have to be overly complex. Let's break down step-by-step how you can build a CE program that generates interest—starting with determining your customers' needs.

DETERMINE YOUR CUSTOMERS' NEEDS

What do your customers need from you? Answering the following questions can help guide you throughout the development of your CE program:

- Do customers need to obtain CE credits to maintain certification for their jobs?
- Which type of CE credits do they need to maintain certification for their jobs?
- How frequently do customers need to obtain CE credits?
- Do customers want to learn more about a certain subject?
- Do customers need to have access to learning materials within a certain timeframe?



Be sure to conduct upfront research before building your program to fully understand what it is your customers want. A few ways to do this include:

- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Secondary research
- Competitive analysis

Gaining a deep understanding of who your target audience is will enhance the health of your program moving forward.

OBTAIN CE ACCREDITATION

No matter which industry your organization is associated with, you must obtain accreditation to offer CE courses. Typically, there is a board or higher organization that oversees the process of obtaining accreditation. For example, to become an accredited CE provider for the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), you must follow these steps*:

1. Submit application and pay the application fee
2. Allow 4-6 weeks for the ASHA to review the application
3. Answer any follow-up questions from the ASHA
4. Receive application approval or a rejection letter
5. Begin registering CE courses on behalf of the ASHA (if approved)



*American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

Depending on which organization you wish to become accredited with, there may be a different set of requirements listed. Be sure to conduct research on organizations within your industry that you can obtain accreditation from and what is required on your part.

ESTABLISH YOUR PROGRAM'S GOALS

After determining your customers' needs, you'll want to make sure your business has a set of clear objectives for your CE program. Going in with these established can lead to organizational alignment and a program that is effective.

When formulating your goals, try using the SMART acronym*:

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Relevant

Time-bound



*HubSpot

Examples of goals could include:

- Generate 100 new leads from the program within six months
- Become the number one resource for CE courses in your industry within one year
- Build out five different skill-building courses within one year
- Receive a 90 percent satisfaction rating for your CE program in the first year

Defining your program's goals beforehand helps you measure your overall effectiveness over time.

DETERMINE COURSE TOPICS

What will your program cover? You must figure out what you will be teaching throughout your program and how this will satisfy your customers.

For a medical device company that distributes surgical equipment, topics could include:

- Advances in specific surgical procedures
- How-to videos regarding equipment
- The importance of teamwork in the operating room
- Guidance on cleaning and sterilization of equipment



These topics cover key facets of surgical equipment and can help satisfy the CE needs of your target audiences. It's important to ensure your course topics are specified like this and relate back to the research you've conducted and who your target audiences are. In the case of the medical device company, the CE courses were tailored to what medical professionals wanted or needed to learn about surgical practices, curating educational opportunities specifically for this target.

Take the time to understand what your audience needs from you, then build out comprehensive courses that align with these needs. Additionally, you can directly ask your audience what they want from you through surveys or firsthand conversations. If you receive a lot of input on a specific course idea, move forward with developing that course.



CASE STUDY

Implementing Certification Courses for Member Organizations

As North America's largest automation trade association, the Association for Advancing Automation (A3) has more than 1,100 member organizations. To ensure the advancement of automation technologies, A3 partnered with Konvert™ to offer CE opportunities to its members.

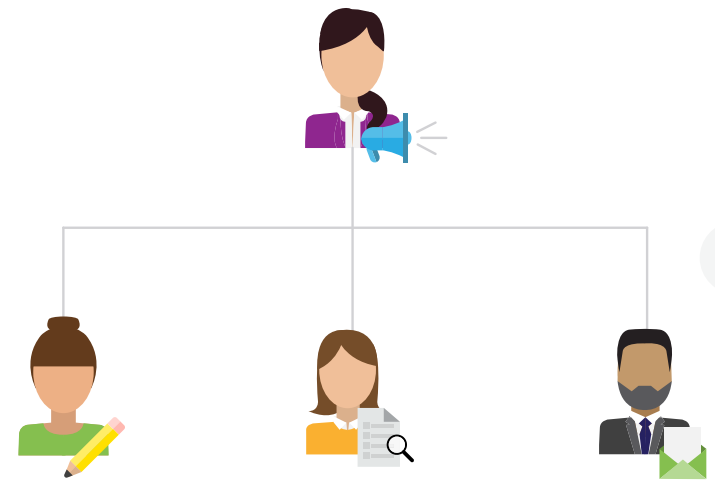
With the help of Konvert's LMS, A3 can offer training and certification in different areas of automation, and Konvert's LMS also allows A3 to track usage, including course completion rate, average proficiency of users and the number of courses purchased. Additionally, through a custom-built solution, Konvert provides A3 the ability to ensure timely completion of courses and accountability of organizations.



ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITIES

Internally, it's important to assign a team to carry out your CE program. We'd recommend a director or other executive member oversees the entirety of the program and have this individual make any final decisions—whether they're strategy related or just approving content for a course. From there, members of your marketing team can be individually tasked to handle assignments such as conducting ongoing research, developing content for the program and monitoring performance periodically.

The long-term health of your program is a multi-department effort, as sales can also contribute key insights from customers as they interact with them. Ultimately, aligning your sales and marketing teams to ensure they're on the same page of your program's strategy is to your benefit. By not having responsibilities assigned for your program, prospects could begin to lose interest in it and ultimately unsubscribe from future courses. Ensure that you invest the time in setting up an organizational structure that keeps all applicable employees on task and aligned around the same goals.



CREATE CONTENT

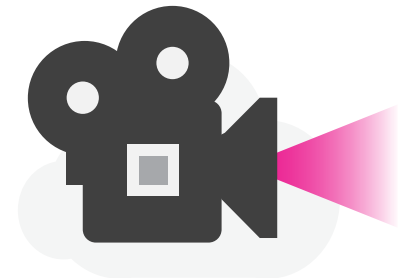
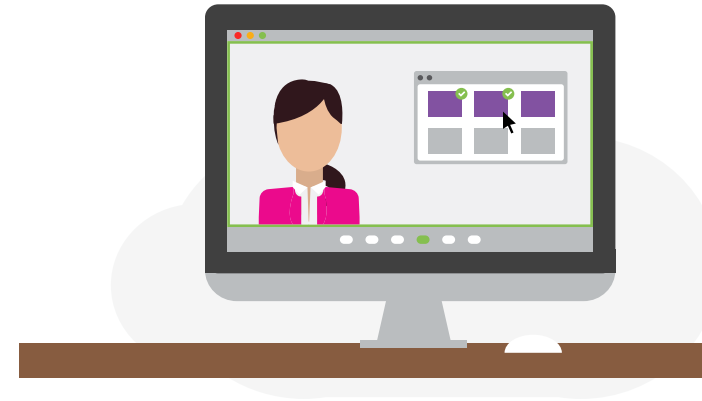
There are many forms of content* that your business can integrate into its CE program. Remember, it's not just about what your CE program is offering; how you present the content is critical, as well. If your program is to succeed over the long term, consider these content formats:

Webinars

Webinars are comprehensive resources for customers that give viewers the opportunity to learn new materials without having to travel long distances or interrupt their schedules. If you're doing a live webinar, speakers can interact with the audience and field questions or conduct surveys. Ensure that you incorporate a post-session test or quiz that gives learners the opportunity to earn their CE credit(s).

Video

Video allows you to execute storytelling throughout your CE courses and more effectively present your messaging to customers. Depending on the topic, integrating both short- and long-form video could benefit the learning experience.



Visuals

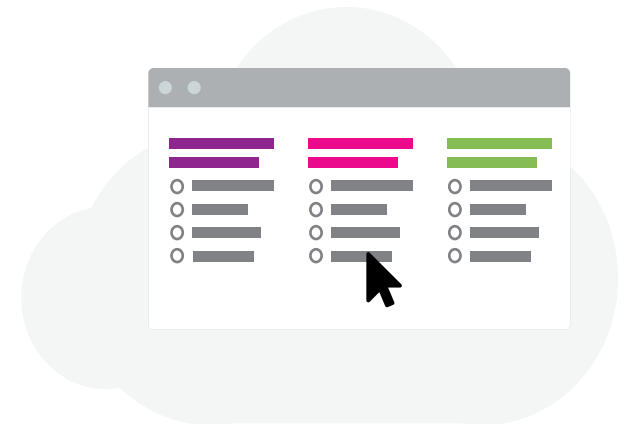
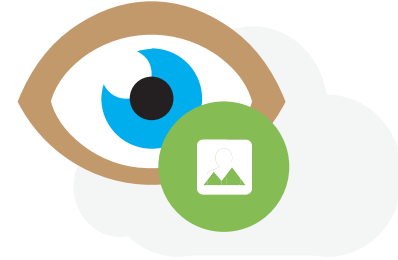
Including imagery in your courses can help learners envision what it is you're teaching them. Accompany product or process descriptions with visual illustrations to help drive your message home.

Presentations

Slide presentations can be a solid training tool. You should consider adding audio of a presenter to the slides or add copy that highlights the most pertinent information. We recommend creating simple, clear-cut slides so that the audience can focus on the information you're trying to convey.

Exams and quizzes

Participants may need to pass an examination before earning their CE credit. If this is the case, then you'll need to ensure that your CE courses offer exam or quiz functionalities to fully certify any attendees. Some LMS platforms offer a variety of question types, including true/false or multiple choice.



Mobile

The demand for learning materials that are accessible on a mobile device is growing—and 70 percent of users felt more motivated while learning on their mobile device compared to their computer.* When developing your CE program, be sure to incorporate opportunities such as a video course that customers can access anywhere via their mobile device.



On-demand

Your customers have busy schedules, which could make it hard to attend live webinars or other courses. By providing on-demand CE content, you're giving your audience the flexibility they want. With an integrated LMS platform, you have the ability to easily house your content for on-demand learning opportunities.



PROMOTE AND PUBLISH YOUR PROGRAM

With content now produced, it's time to publish your program; however, prior to launch, you need to promote your new CE program to attract new leads. Encourage prospects to sign up ahead of time to really drive traffic to your program at its launch.

During your promotion, try to incorporate all pertinent information, including:

- Launch date of program
- Potential schedule of courses being released
- Instructors and courses they're teaching
- Discounts or other special offers for signing up

When promoting your program, feel free to get creative—but remember to only run ads on applicable channels, such as publications within your industry.

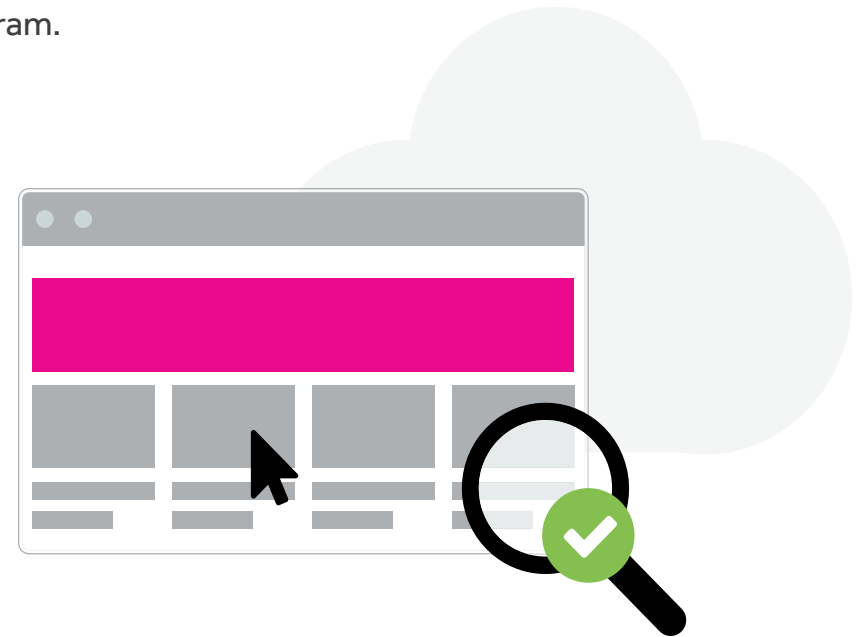
Consider the following options for promoting your CE program:

- Run an ad in a popular industry-specific publication
- Email prospects using your existing email database
- Utilize Google Ads to target users related to your industry
- Leverage social media channels, especially LinkedIn for B2B audiences



Be sure to integrate multiple tactical touchpoints in your promotional strategy to improve frequency of reach and more comprehensively engage your target audiences.

Now that you've promoted the program, it's time for launch. Be sure to review all your course content to guarantee accurate spelling and grammar, as well as check the quality of your visual assets. Also, double check your website and LMS to ensure all links and other technical functions are working properly, as well as go over each team member's role so they are prepared to support the ongoing growth of the program.



CASE STUDY

Enhancing CE Opportunities with Customized Learning

As a prominent endodontic technology company, Sonendo® has prioritized being a leader in educational opportunities. Through the creation of its Sound Science® Academy, the company offers high-quality courses to engage and educate target audiences.

The Konvert™ team worked to build a CE extension through Sonendo's existing Customer Portal in Konvert, providing endodontists with opportunities to gain required CE credits directly in the Portal. Through live webinars, Sonendo is able to directly engage with participants and offer higher levels of CE credits. Additionally, the company can send a post-webinar questionnaire directly within Konvert. This allows for feedback on the webinar, providing Sonendo insight with which training opportunities are beneficial—and which may need adjusted to best suit the needs of their audience.



EVALUATE AND GROW YOUR PROGRAM

Once developed, you should look to evaluate your program and grow your audience through your new CE program. You've worked hard to build your program to where it's at now; continue to keep your audience engaged.

Use these questions as a guide to evaluate the state of your CE program:

- Which pieces of content are performing the strongest?
- Which topics are the most popular?
- Are any courses not consistently being engaged with?
- How many leads were generated from each course?
- How have customers interacted with each course?
- What is the completion rate of each course?
- What is the company's return on investment?

We recommend at a minimum completing quarterly evaluations; however, your overall priority should be to establish a consistent cadence for evaluating LMS metrics. By taking the time to analyze key aspects of your LMS, you can ensure that users are seeing the content they want—and the health of your CE program remains strong.

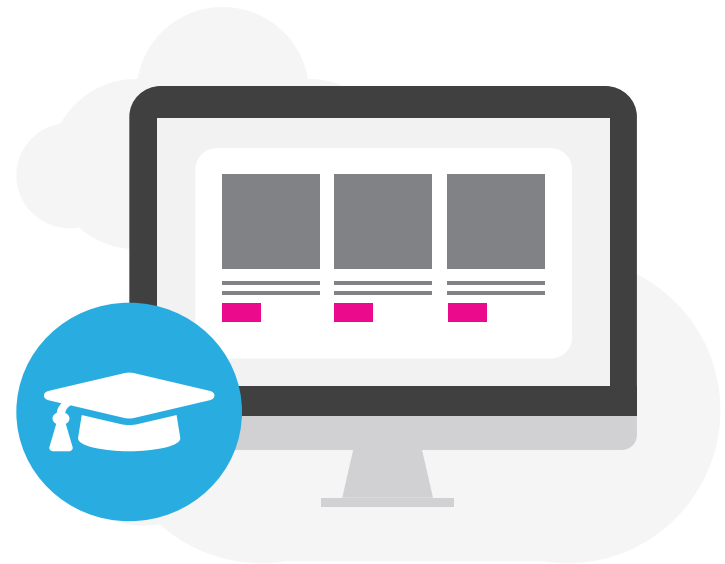
PRO TIP: Ongoing revenue doesn't come from one course but instead several that are built out over time. Start to think of new courses that you could publish, then work to create content on a regular basis. Depending on demand, we would recommend establishing a cadence for new content. That way, your audience is aware of when new courses will be available.



How to Choose the Right LMS

An LMS is the foundation for CE programs—and can help measure your learning initiatives while compiling information into one central location. With an LMS, customers can enjoy the luxury of self-guided and easy-to-use courses that are ready whenever they can fit learning into their schedules.

Once an LMS is in place, courses can be updated at any time to include changes or additional documents. Some LMS platforms even allow admins to monitor user learning progress, so they know if users are actively engaged with the curriculum.



Not all LMS options are the same, so consider investing in one with the following features:

Trackability

With metrics reporting and tracking capabilities, you'll be able to see which educational content is most engaged with in your platform.

Multi-device access

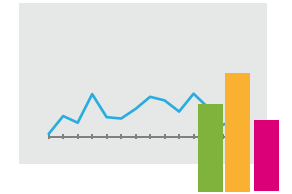
Your target audiences may want to access through desktop or mobile, and an LMS expands opportunities for multi-device access to applicable content.

Multiple content formats

You can thoroughly engage your target audiences with text-based and dynamic content, including videos, PDFs and presentations.

Module-based learning

Organize your learning content to a granular level and even assign out learning courses to users or groups to ensure course completion.



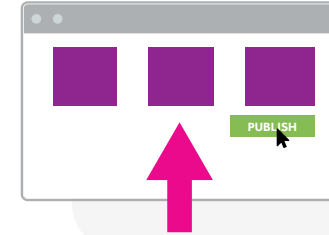
Easy-to-use module management

Gain the ability to quickly and efficiently publish learning content to keep up with the demand of your audience.

Roles-based permissions

Enhance the security of your program through the ability to grant access to learning content or other digital assets for both internal and external users.

The digital assets that go into an LMS are the key to the platform's versatility and usability—and some LMS platforms can be combined with a digital asset management (DAM) platform. DAM platforms are ideal for many organizations, especially those that are building a CE program, which can incorporate a number of digital assets. DAMs are centralized digital libraries where users both internally and externally can find photos, files, presentations, audio recordings, video clips and more. Combining the power of a DAM with an LMS can pay dividends for your CE program and help launch it to the next level.

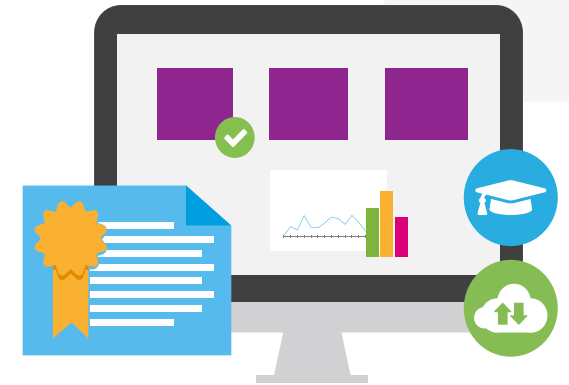


How Konvert™ Can Help

Konvert™ combines the power of LMS and DAM platforms to create a unique learning environment for your customers. With built-in module-based learning, it's easy to organize your learning content and assign out courses to users. Our LMS enables you to track a user's learning progress, quiz scores and the number of certificates earned. With Konvert, you can easily create and manage CE courses tailored for your desired audience.

Rethink how you're using digital tools for B2B growth. **Contact Konvert today.**

konvertapp.com



»Konvert™