

Boost your Career this Summer with a PCM Certification

By Monica Varner



Summer's here and AMADC activities will be slowing down. This could be the perfect time for you to take the plunge and become a **Professional Certified Marketer**. With a certification, you'll prove to employers you have the modern skills to manage today's marketing challenges.

You'll receive the AMA PCM® designation, which you can display on your social media pages.

"PCM is a self-paced, affordable way to measure and demonstrate critical skills in the marketing profession," says Christopher Bartone, Director of Digital Content, American Marketing Association.

Up-To-Date Skills from Real-World Practitioners

Studying for the certification is also a great way to fill holes in your background.

Intimidated by SEO optimization or formulating an editorial calendar? Here's your chance: master the course work for the Content Marketing track.

Missing some of the more traditional marketing foundations that might be taught in business school? The Marketing Management track materials will help you fill these gaps.

AMA works with a wide range of subject matter experts to develop and maintain the preparation resources for each track to ensure accuracy and relevance to today's workplace. The certification exams are also written, reviewed and updated as needed.

How It Works

The PCM certification is available in 4 different tracks (see more on the various tracks below). The American Marketing Association offers online materials to help you prepare.

When you're ready, you'll take the online certification exam in your selected track at a time convenient for you. It is a 2-hour exam consisting of approximately 120 multiple choice questions. You must answer 80% of the questions correctly to pass.

Afterwards, you're on the hook to keep your certification current by completing 10 continuing education credits (https://myama.force.com/s/article/How-to-Maintain-Your-Professional-Certified-Marketer-PCM-Certification?_ga=2.3916729.864747937.1559003304-1980828368.1559003304) per year and recertifying every 3 years.

Exam cost is \$249 for AMA members and \$349 for non-members. **PLUS: AMADC members can use coupon code AMADC20 to receive \$20 off your PCM exam registration.**

Four Certification Tracks Available

Based on career data and customer feedback, AMA has determined these areas-- in particular digital marketing and marketing management--as highly sought-after skill sets:

- PCM®, Marketing Management (<https://www.amadc.org/pcm-exam>): shows mastery of a broad spectrum of topics including marketing strategy, global, ethical, and sustainable marketing and pricing decisions
- PCM®, Digital Marketing (<https://www.amadc.org/pcm-exam>): includes in-demand topics such as analytics, social media, user experience, SEO, online advertising, email and content marketing
- PCM®, Sales Management (<https://www.amadc.org/pcm-exam>): covers selling, organizational buying, customer relationships, marketing strategies and organizing a salesforce
- PCM®, Content Marketing (<https://www.amadc.org/pcm-exam>): teaches the skills needed for strategy, planning, production, promotion and measurement of your organization's content

Certification in Action

The certification was a big draw in bringing member Aaron Chusid, Chief Communications Officer, Boy Scouts of America, to AMADC. He completed the certification in Marketing Management at the end of 2017.

He didn't have a formal background in marketing and went in search of credentials to get more grounded in the language. "With my background in the construction industry, I know certifications are very important. I felt that completing a professional certification in marketing would help me," says Aaron.

He set aside 6 months to finish the professional materials and spent a Winter break preparing. Overall, he pleasantly found the coursework to be easier to get through than he expected, taking only about 30-40 hours in total.

"After doing the coursework and obtaining the certification, I came out with a lot more confidence and it's changed the way I approach conversations with others in the field."

PCM certification can help you, too! To get a better sense of what it's all about, go to the American Marketing Association DC chapter website (<https://www.amadc.org/pcm-exam>), review the coursework and take a practice exam.

Go For It In 2019: Certificate Programs

By Monica Varner



In the first post in this series, “New Year, New Skills (<https://www.amadc.org/blog/new-year-new-skills>),” we explored how marketers can further their careers through education. We looked at three different options, including AMA certifications, professional certificates and graduate degrees. In this post, we’ll dive deeper into professional certificates.

Getting a marketing certificate could be a smart way to refresh your skills without spending hordes of money or tons of time. The certificates are carefully crafted to provide real-world experience in a schedule that’s manageable for full-time workers.

There are many programs that offer professional certificates, including the Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies (<https://scs.georgetown.edu/academics/professional-certificates/#marketing-and-communications>), one of AMADC’s partners. They offer various certificates that can be completed in 6 months to 2 years at a cost of a few thousand dollars. The monetary commitment is much lower than for a graduate degree or MBA.

“We offer opportunities to really build your skills in a short amount of time. We frequently revise the curriculum so students are learning skills they can immediately take back and use on the job,” says Stacey Corcoran, Executive Director of Marketing at Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies.

Conveniently Learn Today's Must-Have Skills

The certificates offer exposure to skills you may not be able to learn on your current job. "The message today in the world is that you need to be multi-skilled and you need to keep honing these skills and going and learning new things all the time," says Shashi Bellamkonda, an instructor in Georgetown's digital marketing certificate program.

To keep up with the ever-changing workplace, Georgetown brings in seasoned industry experts who bring their professional expertise directly to the classroom to teach students the latest skills.

"All of the faculty are practitioners in the field - working professionals in the DC area," says Corcoran. "There's also a great networking opportunity to connect with the breadth of faculty teaching in the program." The marketing certificates also end with a capstone project that allows students to show mastery of the concepts taught and build their professional portfolio.

Find the Program That's Right For You

Each certificate comes in at less than \$6,000 and includes about 6 classes, which are offered to conveniently fit into busy professional schedules. Programs that are currently available include:

- Business Administration (<https://scs.georgetown.edu/programs/371/certificate-in-business-administration/>)
- Budget and Finance (<https://scs.georgetown.edu/programs/370/certificate-in-budget-finance/>)
- Digital Marketing (<https://scs.georgetown.edu/programs/376/certificate-in-digital-marketing/>)
- Social Impact Storytelling (<https://scs.georgetown.edu/programs/480/certificate-in-social-impact-storytelling/>)
- Social Media Management (<https://scs.georgetown.edu/programs/395/certificate-in-social-media-management/>)

To accommodate working professionals, courses are offered evenings, weekends and online.

Get More Information

Visit the Georgetown School of Continuing Education's website (<https://scs.georgetown.edu/academics/professional-certificates/#marketing-and-communications>) for more information. It lists open-house events and upcoming webinars. It also features a Career Finder Tool (<https://scs.georgetown.edu/career-finder/>) that offers insights based on your interests and real-time data on industries, job growth and salaries.

They also have webinars planned for later this spring. Please check the website in the April-May timeframe for more information.

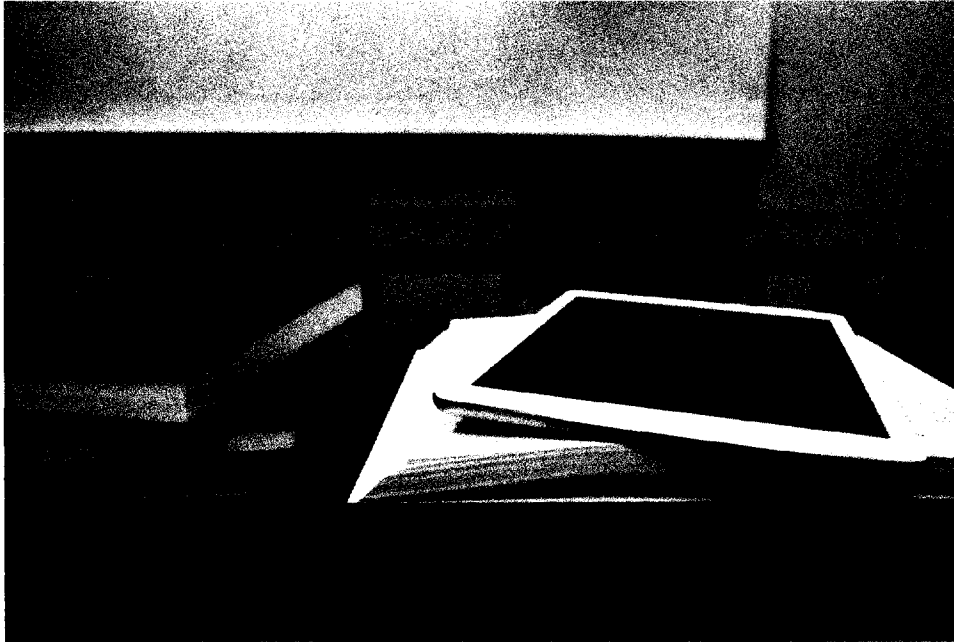
This is part 2 of our blog series on continuing education opportunities for marketers. If you missed part 1, check out the New Year, New Skills (<https://www.amadc.org/blog/new-year-new-skills>) post to get an overview of several options, including graduate degrees and AMA certificates.

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New Year, New Skills

By Monica Varner



Hello, 2019. It's the start of a new year and time for resolutions and goal setting. Maybe you're targeting a new position or just looking to add a new skill to your portfolio.

Keeping up with the skills required by our modern workplace is critical to career success. One way to do this is to add an official educational credential - it backs up your work experience and could help you beat out the competition for a job and/or client.

What educational options should you consider for 2019? Here are some options:

- Certification through the American Marketing Association
- Marketing Certificates
- Advanced degrees (MBA, MA)

AMA Certification

The American Marketing Association offers the **Professional Certified Marketer (PCM®)** certification (<https://www.amadc.org/pcm-exam>). This is a low-cost, low-time commitment credential that will show employers you have up-to-date skills. Plus, AMADC members get a special discount!

You'll be able to display the (PCM®) behind your name and receive a badge to display on your social media.

AMA offers certification in four areas, \$249 per exam:

- Digital Marketing
- Marketing Management
- Sales Management

- Content Marketing

Graduate Certificate

Obtaining a certificate can be an affordable, manageable way to increase your marketability. These programs are intended for working adults and range in cost from under \$2,000, such as the University of Vermont's Digital Marketing Fundamentals ([https://learn.uvm.edu/program/digital-marketing-fundamentals-professional-certificate/?campaignid=71700000030117879&adgroupid=58700003704574435&adgroup=DMI-TM+-+Digital+Marketing+-+Certificate+\(b%2B\)&creative=242655467900&kwid=43700029150374500&matchtype=b&network=g&adposition=1t2&target=395764463409&utm_source=GOOGLE&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=DMI-TM+-+Digital+Marketing&utm_term=%2Buniversity+%2Bvermont+%2Bdigital+%2Bmarketing+%2Bcertificate&gclid=E](https://learn.uvm.edu/program/digital-marketing-fundamentals-professional-certificate/?campaignid=71700000030117879&adgroupid=58700003704574435&adgroup=DMI-TM+-+Digital+Marketing+-+Certificate+(b%2B)&creative=242655467900&kwid=43700029150374500&matchtype=b&network=g&adposition=1t2&target=395764463409&utm_source=GOOGLE&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=DMI-TM+-+Digital+Marketing&utm_term=%2Buniversity+%2Bvermont+%2Bdigital+%2Bmarketing+%2Bcertificate&gclid=E) online program for \$1695, to several thousand dollars.

In the DC area, we are located near many exceptional universities and you can attend part or all the classes in person. Georgetown School of Continuing Studies (SCS) certification degree program (<https://scs.georgetown.edu/academics/professional-certificates/>) offers several certificates, including Social Media Management and Digital Marketing.

Some of these certificates are offered entirely online. You can learn about other programs at [bestmarketingdegrees.org](https://www.bestmarketingdegrees.org) (<https://www.bestmarketingdegrees.org/>).

Graduate Degree

Graduate degrees could be a great choice, especially for younger marketers who may have more time to devote to studies and/or fewer family commitments.

"It can be a lot harder to get a degree once you get out of the college-learning mode and the habit of taking classes, doing research and taking tests," says Mike Gardner, current AMADC Board member who has served as a recruiter and career coach. He's currently Exec VP, Business Strategy at Three Seas, a collective of small creative companies.

In addition to regular, full-time programs, many options today won't require you to give up your day job. Take our current AMADC President's example: Stephanie Sikorski obtained a Masters in Integrated Marketing Communications (https://scs.georgetown.edu/programs/410/master-of-professional-studies-in-integrated-marketing-communications/overview?utm_source=Google&utm_medium=Search&utm_campaign=FY19_Search_IMC&gclid=EAlalQobChMIltim0-Dr3wIVl4rICh00DACKEAAYAAEgIS2vD_BwE) from Georgetown University while working full-time. She was one of the first 50 graduates of this program.

Stephanie benefitted beyond the classroom lectures. "It was exciting to network with the other participants- all marketing and communications professionals- while gaining hands-on skills," she says. She values the relationships the program enabled her to build.

Do Your Research

It can be expensive and time-consuming to get a degree. To determine your best next step:

- Review the different types of programs
- Research graduate degree program rankings
- Attend Open House and informational sessions
- Ask about networking opportunities and internship placement
- Investigate what sort of job search support the program offers
- Work with your employer: can they pay for all or part of it? If not, is there another program they will pay for?

Make Your 2019 Plan Today

Decide what sort of commitment (time, money) you can make and go for it.

Whether you obtain a master's degree or a certificate, once you have the credential, you'll always have it in hand. "Once you get it, you'll have a sense of achievement: you'll know - I got it and I did it, and I feel really great," says Gardner.

Read more about education programs for marketers in the next post in this series, Go For It In 2019: Certificate Programs (<https://www.amadc.org/blog/go-it-2019-certificate-programs>).

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