



Add to your qualifications

With the holiday season fast approaching, you may be experiencing a slower period for your business. If so, or even if you are not, you may want to consider using this time to take a course or otherwise advance your area of expertise, especially if it results in additional credentials that you can post - and boast - about in your Kudzu profile and additional marketing communications.



Get credit for your credentials

Setting your business apart from competitors

The surge in small businesses in the United States in recent years, along with consumers' growing desire to "buy local" from small business owners like you means, most likely, there are other businesses out there that offer services similar to yours. Differentiating yourself in a crowded marketplace, especially during a tight economy, is always a challenge. Sure, great reviews tell a lot about your business (and, in fact, are the number one feature that Kudzu users tell us helps them when deciding which business to choose), but what happens when you and your competitor both have great reviews? Consumers are going to look deeper into your profile to ensure they are making a safe, risk-free choice when they choose your business.

If you have third-party credentials, be sure you are displaying them on your Kudzu profile. Examples of credentials include industry accreditations, education or advanced training degrees, manufacturer training certifications, industry or community awards, and memberships in industry or community associations or organizations.

If you don't have any credentials, consider joining your local Chamber of Commerce or Better Business Bureau. Membership in these organizations requires a commitment to uphold business ethics and helps to give consumers additional confidence in your business. What's more, membership in these organizations may give you access to certain networking tools and events that can help to forge valuable long-term relationships as well as open up additional business opportunities for you.

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Join professional and industry organizations

By Pattie Baker

If you barely have time for your family and friends after running your own business all day, the last thing you probably want to do is join a professional organization. But you know what? It might not be a bad idea to check them out as many professional and industry organizations offer great benefits, including:

- **Connection.** Meet others in similar jobs and share news and insights, forge partnerships, and build a powerful network.
- **Education.** Attend conferences and classes or access online learning tools that advance your skills within your industry for a reasonable charge (or perhaps even for free with membership).

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Consumer review spotlight

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Unsurpassed quality service and care

[Parkman Home Inspections](#) inspected two different properties during my home search. Their inspections are thorough and precise. They are not only highly credentialed, but they inspect your home with great care and educate you with regard to the different aspects of the home inspection, thereby allowing you to make a wise decision during the negotiation process of home buying. They are able to immediately provide you with a copy of your inspection once it is complete. Additionally, they are polite, professional and punctual. They are also available to answer any questions for you regarding the inspection even after you have moved into the home. I would highly recommend Parkman Home Inspections to you, your family, and friends for your [next] home inspection.



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