



Top 10 Tips on Marketing Your CIW Skills

You've heard the saying: "If you've got it — flaunt it." Well, if you have become a CIW Associate, Specialist or Professional, you deserve to let the whole world know about your achievement. Certification is not an easy process. It takes a lot of time, effort and dedication to commit yourself to becoming one of the Internet industry's best through CIW certification. We have some suggestions about how to make your CIW credential work for you in a variety of way — to further your career, to help you get that much-deserved raise, and to show people that you have what it takes to be the best.

1. Consider Yourself a Product

You are a commodity with a valuable set of knowledge and skills. And now you have a unique, new "feature" to help sell yourself to your current or potential employers. Show off your new feature: Use CIW logos on your business cards, résumé, cover letters and Web site. The CIW brand is reaching wider audiences all the time. CIW is recognized as the Internet industry standard for certification. Employers will recognize and commend your new CIW status.

2. Up-Sell Yourself

So what if you're not a slick salesperson? It's easy to up-sell yourself by leveraging your in-demand Internet skills. Give employers a list of your new skills. Better yet — show them an example of your new skills by pointing them to a Web site you designed in a CIW course. Not only will they be impressed — they will also take action to utilize your impressive skills to their advantage.

3. Create Your Own (Not-Too-Obvious) Marketing Program

If your company funded or helped pay for your CIW certification, tell them "Thank You." Your company's Accounts Payable department received a friendly reminder that you attended and fulfilled your CIW course requirements. Now it's time to remind your boss. Send him or her a thank-you note, and include your new CIW logo with your signature. This will start the boss thinking about the difference that s/he has made in your life, your career and the company's future success.

4. Plan for Your Future

Okay, so you've never written a business plan, and it doesn't sound like much fun. But try it — you'll like it. At least you will like the future outcome of your well-thought-out plan. Develop a simple yet effective business plan for how your certification can improve inter-departmental Web development. Develop a plan to implement an e-commerce site for your company to interact with its key customers. Develop a plan to show your career path, listing every step you will take to achieve your ultimate career goals (first on the list should be completing your CIW certification).

5. Sell Your Certification

Be sure to sell the fact that you have validated skills. Include copies of your CIW certificates with any résumé packages you send out. Most people we speak with who are unaware that a Web skills certification program exists respond with a resounding, "we need one!" The response you will get by educating them will be positive.

6. Volunteer Your New Skills

Try to donate or broker out your time to get some real-world experience. Some people design Web sites for non-profit organizations, churches, shelters, etc. This helps those organizations get much-needed services, and helps you to build a real portfolio.

7. Validate Your Résumé

Have your résumé reviewed by a non-biased third party to make sure it is selling your validated skills, any experience you have and your "can-do" attitude. It has been established that a prospective employer spends just under 5 minutes reading a resume. Usually, the reader forms an impression about you in roughly 1 minute. Listing your certification allows you to catch the reader's eye and suggest true mastery of your Web design and Web development experience.



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8. Consider Teaching

Have you ever considered teaching? If you have attended courses and passed exams, then you are on your way to becoming a CIW Certified Instructor. Due to our growing channel, there is much demand for people that have technical proficiency and can teach those skills to others. We suggest contacting the ATPs, colleges, etc., in your area to see if they might have a need for additional instructors. Full info on in the requirements for becoming a CIW CI can be found on the CIW-certified.com site.

9. Back Up Your Facts

The CIW program is growing, as are most IT certification programs. Many surveys convey the importance of having at least one IT certification. More and more employers are requiring certifications as proof of continuing education. Also check out our Letter To Employers — you can include this letter with job applications, bring it to interviews, and submit it when asking for a raise.

10. Shine

Talk about CIW. Wear a CIW t-shirt. Get the CIW logo printed on your business cards. Refer to your CIW courseware to help solve a problem. Recruit other team members to attend CIW courses and get CIW-certified. Shine so brightly that everyone asks how you know so much about Internet technology. The rest will follow.