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APICS Product Price Change

Webinar questions and answers for channel partners

On July 26, APICS announced updated product pricing for channel partners, members, and customers. The questions and answers below were raised during a series of webinars on this topic held for APICS chapters, International Associates, and Authorized Education Providers on August 5, 2010.

The questions are organized by subject, including

- the price change in general
- product shipping costs and protected PDF availability
- specific information on APICS courseware offerings.

The price change

Q: Why are you changing prices now?

A: We understand this is a very difficult time for a number of channel partners; however, we see many chapters thriving. Over the past three years, we have spent significant resources to not only improve the APICS CPIM review workshop products, but also put a process in place that would enable us to make ongoing updates instead of major upgrades. This process has been in place and working very well for the first APICS CPIM module, Basics of Supply Chain Management.

The strategic plan has focused on ensuring that our products are of high quality and are relevant for members and customers. The feedback we've received from the various district meetings that we've attended indicates a higher level of satisfaction with the quality of the courseware.

It's important to note that we continue to make investment in our products and that we will need to recoup these investments in the future.

Q: Do you think the market can support a price increase during this recession?

A: Based on current sales trends for APICS CPIM certification, more candidates are paying the higher nonmember rate—clearly an indication that individuals see the value of certification and are willing to pay more.

Additionally, when we raised our dues prices in 2007, we did not see any significant reduction in membership until the recession affected us in October 2008—seven months after the increase and almost six months after the recession began.

Q: I have to pass on this price increase to my customers. What should I tell prospective participants who are concerned about the increase?

A: Education is an investment. The value of APICS education and certification has been validated both internally and externally and has shown that individuals who gain APICS certifications earn more, on average, than their uncertified counterparts.

In fact, the Operations Management Employment Outlook data show APICS CPIM designees earn 10 percent more, and APICS CSCP designees earn 19 percent more, than professionals without the certifications.

- Q: In international markets, where professionals have reduced purchasing power, this price increase will add more pressure and decrease participation in these programs. Have you considered international pricing based on the per capita purchasing power parity index of the World Bank and IMF?
- A: We understand that APICS product pricing—in some markets—makes it difficult for some professionals to participate in APICS education. We are continuing to assess this to ensure we are providing pricing that is affordable and appropriately scaled to the purchasing power in these markets. Our certifications continue to grow in the international marketplace, so we are continuing to review this pricing to facilitate that growth.
- Q: Will there still be discounted rates for bulk purchases of test vouchers and books?
- A: Yes. If you have a bulk need for these products, we can negotiate bulk pricing.
- Q: How should we address the price increase when we've already published our prices?
- A: The prices will go into effect January 1. We wanted to get this information to you as soon as possible, and we have about six months of lead time for you to communicate the change to your customers.
- Q: In some cases, nonmember customers don't see the value of membership, where they may see some value of APICS certifications. What can we do to address this? Why are people paying more and not becoming members?
- A: We at APICS need to do a better job of communicating the value of membership to our customers. The recession has had a significant impact on our membership numbers. Additionally, we believe that social media has provided different venues for individuals to connect. We are surveying these customers to determine why they choose not to become members.

Shipping costs and protected PDF

- Q: You may not have raised prices recently, but chapters previously received free shipping on orders. When this was eliminated, the effect was a price increase equal to the cost of shipping. What are you doing to minimize this?
- A: Although in 2008 shipping costs were passed along to chapters, this didn't affect the product price. It's also important to note that our international partners have always paid shipping—and at a much higher rate.
- Q: If protected PDF files will be updated continually, will any printed copies be updated throughout the year, as well? Or will they only be updated once a year?
- A: While you will not receive an updated file, APICS will make available via the APICS website a summary of changes and updates made in the new version.
- Q: Will the protected PDF work on wireless reading devices such as the Amazon Kindle?
- A: Yes. In 2011, we will offer this feature.

APICS courseware offerings and specific product pricing

- Q: I just purchased the 3.1 version of Basics. Is the rewrite included in the 3.1 version?
- A: Yes. The rewrite is included in the latest version (3.1) of Basics.
- Q: The Lean Enterprise Workshop Series materials seemed to have gone up significantly in price. Can you explain why that is the case?
- A: The 2010 pricing for the Lean Enterprise Workshop Series reflects discounted pricing valid during the product's introduction to help it take hold in the marketplace. The price indicated here is the actual cost of the materials before the 2008–2009 discount.
- Q: Is there a quantity discount schedule for participant workbook and exam cost for workbooks available online?
- A: The protected PDF files will follow the same quantity discounts followed by the current hard copy of the participant workbooks. The discount begins when you order a quantity of 25 or more of the same product. There are no quantity discounts on exam cost for workbooks.

- Q: Are there any plans to make more definitive information about the pass/fail numbers for the CPIM and CSCP tests, including self-study versus instructor-led pass rates?
- A: We're looking at these data currently. We are committed to releasing this comparative information once per year.
- Q: When will APICS restructure the project management portion of training to align with the Project Management Institute body of knowledge?
- A: The APICS CPIM curriculum is based on reference text, and the exam committees are planning to address this moving forward.
- Q: APICS CSCP materials are currently only available from APICS, which makes it easier for channel partners to sell that product in the marketplace. Because the Fundamentals courses are being rewritten, has any consideration been given to delivering those new classes only through APICS?
- A: This is something that is still being discussed. Our pattern is to offer items through our partners first. We will have more information on-site at conference.