

### Introduction

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Congratulations on achieving ISO 9001:2008 certification! This is not only a major milestone for your company; it is also an accomplishment that you and your entire company can truly be proud of.

Having achieved your goal of ISO 9001:2008 certification, you should start seeing its many internal benefits and marketing advantages soon.

In order to enjoy the internal benefits (e.g., lower costs, fewer customer complaints, greater efficiency etc), you now need to keep the quality system alive. Aside from the documented requirements in your ISO 9000 Quality Manual, you should consider additional means to maintain and/or increase the ISO 9000 awareness of management and employees.

The (external) marketing advantages of your ISO 9001 certification (e.g., increase in sales and market share etc), however, can only be enjoyed if your successful ISO 9001 certification is adequately publicized outside of the company. This short guide will help you optimize the return on your investment.

### Defining the Target

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It is important to first establish who should be targeted before committing to means of marketing. The following list should give you some **ideas** about who should be targeted and what the potential benefits are.

- Your employees and management in order to increase internal awareness and commitment to ISO 9001.
- Existing customers in order to strengthen existing relationships and to obtain higher sales volume and/or new contracts.
- Former customers in order to gain them back.
- Potential customers (also for new projects) in order to either achieve just favorable awareness or to add more clout to your proposals.
- Customers of not-certified competitors in order to make them aware of the benefits of changing to your company.
- Companies and individuals that have contact to (potential) customers in order to achieve favorable awareness of your company.

- Business partners who are also dealing with (potential) customers in order to strengthen ties with those business partners, as well as to utilize unbiased parties to make (potential) customers aware of your commitment to quality.
- Customers and business partners of non-certified divisions or subsidiaries because those divisions or subsidiaries could profit from a spillover effect and positive PR.

## **Reaching the Target**

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After having defined the target, you should explore all possibilities to reach the target. Employing several ways to communicate your ISO 9001 certification will serve as a constant reminder of your commitment to quality and innovation, which are some of the attributes that set you apart from your competition. Here are some ideas:

- **Giveaways**

Giveaways include pins, hats, T-shirts, pens etc showing the ISO 9001:2008 certification mark. They could be custom made or ordered from various companies that can be found on the Internet.

“We are ISO 9001:2008 certified” giveaways could be used for both, increasing internal awareness and motivation, and reaching external targets: As a reward for employees, those giveaways could motivate coworkers and create public awareness when taken outside of the company. A pin worn by management in a meeting with business partners or (potential) customers could be a subtle way of publicizing your ISO 9001 certification. Externally, those giveaways could be used as presents, as souvenirs from a fishing trip etc.

- **Banners and Flags**

Banners and flags can be custom made or ordered from your registrar. Banners and flags could be used to increase internal and external awareness.

- **Certificates**

Framed certificates could be created in-house. Handed out to all employees as recognition of their contribution to the ISO 9001 Quality System, they could increase awareness, motivation and commitment.

- **Plaques**

Most registrars offer presentation plaques. In the reception area or a conference room, a plaque might be a good way to communicate your commitment to quality to any visitor.

- **Company Newsletter**

Your ISO 9001 certification should be publicized in your company newsletter to increase internal awareness throughout your entire company. Anecdotes about the development phase and descriptions of some of the benefits that you have already noticed could be included in such an article.

- **Customer Contact**

All sales and marketing people, as well as members of management who have customer contact need to be aware of your ISO 9001 certification; they also need to have a working knowledge of ISO 9001. A copy of your ISO 9001:2008 certificate could be a useful tool for sales and marketing personnel.

It will be beneficial to find out if the contacted customer is also ISO 9001 certified. Companies that have gone through the difficulties of getting certified might better relate to the benefits of ISO 9001. Even more importantly, some companies state in their ISO 9001 procedures that ISO 9001 certified vendors must be favored over those that are not certified.

- **Announcement Cards**

You could mail small printed cards with the certification mark, a message like *“It’s with great pride that we announce our successful achievement of ISO 9001:2008 certification. We truly hope that our commitment to quality is apparent in everything we do!”* and a business card.

- **Press Release**

A press release announcing your ISO 9001 certification could be used for several purposes: for release to local newspapers and industry publications, as an email attachment to all employees, as a stand-alone mailer to customers and as an addition to the company brochure.

- **Stationary**

All letters, faxes and emails could be used to publicize and to remind of your ISO 9001 certification. The certification mark could become part of your pre-printed letterhead and of your computer fax templates. As an alternative, small ISO 9000 decals could be used. A text block announcing your certification could be pasted at the end of all correspondence; for email, a text message (i.e., “signature” in MS Outlook) could appear automatically at the end of each email (see “About Signatures” in Answer Wizard in Outlook’s Help). A possible statement could read *“The XYZ Company has taken its commitment to quality to the next level and is now ISO 9001:2008 certified.”*

- **Business Cards**

The ISO 9001 certification mark could be shown on all business cards.

- **Company Brochure**

Your ISO 9001 certification should be mentioned in the company brochure. If a large number of brochures has already been printed, you could use a loose insert (e.g., the above mentioned press release), and ISO 9000 decals could be attached.

- **Company Video/Multimedia Presentation**

ISO 9000 should be mentioned in any company video or multimedia presentation. If existing videos and multimedia presentations that do not yet include your ISO 9001 certification are distributed, add a printed announcement that informs of your certification (you could use the above mentioned press release or a specially printed announcement).

- **Web Site**

The certification should be announced in your web site in form of a press release and possibly in the history or milestone section.

### **Conclusion**

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The above ideas are by no means a complete list for all companies. However, this guide should help you get organized for a well-planned marketing campaign that helps you reach all benefits from your ISO 9001 certification.

Please keep in mind that there are strict rules on how to use the ISO 9001 certification mark. Your registrar or our ISO 9000 Marketing Tips (part of our comprehensive ISO 9000 Forms Collection) can provide additional information.