

T Improving CMA and CFM Recognition

by Larry White, CMA, CFM, CPA, CGFM

The most frequent recommendation I get from members is: “Promote the CMA and CFM to employers. Promote the CMA and CFM in colleges.” Good advice, tough job! Even if IMA subordinated every other activity and service

and took every dollar it could after essential expenses for core services, the best it could muster would be less than \$1 million to launch an advertising campaign. How much impact would that have on just the U.S. market, much less internationally?

Buying our market share is clearly a non-starter. But much can still be done, and IMA is committed to building and certifying professionalism in management accounting and financial management. In September, IMA initiated a series of actions to build the foundation for the effective promotion of the management accounting domain with a focus on our certifications and certified members. The first effort will compare the CMA and CFM to similar certifications nationally and internationally; we want to have an objective evaluation of how our certifications and the certification process (pre and post) compare with other certifications. The second effort will focus on market research and the need for and perceptions of management accounting expertise from the perspectives of students, educators, employers, and potential members working in the field. We will get an updated understanding of how to market management accounting expertise and analyze the job skills and competencies required by the market. The third effort is the development of a brand and brand message. This is the critical component for me. IMA needs a con-

cise, action-oriented message that will be the centerpiece of all its activities. The message must resonate with employers and professionals by describing the value that management accounting and management accountants, particularly our certified professionals, bring to the table.

All of this is a great foundation, but the word needs to get out! Great work done in silence is of no value. IMA is also moving to build its business development capability for domestic and international markets. Domestically, the focus will be on employers and academia. We are in the process of studying our growing international market to determine how to continue that growth most effectively—it’s a big world!

When it comes to getting the word out, IMA has a great starting point—YOU! The

16,000 active certified members and 8,000 candidates must promote the certifications, must mentor others toward them, and must voice the sage advice that leads aspiring professionals to the CMA and CFM. Our certifications don’t take much selling—they truly encompass a broad set of business management concepts and evaluate an individual’s skill set in financial and management accounting and finance. These skills are needed inside organizations to build, advise, and report on the value-creating operations of the business. No other financial certification lends itself as directly to the business envi-



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ronment! In my mind, the closest match is the combination of a CPA and an MBA with a concentration in operations management, management accounting, or finance.

Fellow CMAs, CFMs, and candidates, help is on the way! IMA recognizes your investment, respects your achievement, and has every intention of making it grow in value! Please help us help you, and promote your achievement in acquiring the CMA or CFM credential. While you may need to explain it more than you'd like, a good explanation may win you the job or promotion.

If you want to share your thoughts, please contact me at

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