

APMG Deploys Remote Proctoring System to Meet Exam Accessibility and Security Needs



Challenge:

APMG began exploring options to help enable their candidates to take exams remotely while maintaining integrity. As part of their research, they needed the solution to satisfy two important criteria, first the ability to completely secure (or invigilate) an exam remotely and secondly, a secure method in which to gain access to the exam.

Solution:

APMG partnered with Software Secure to explore the potential solutions for securing their exams remotely. Their approach took into consideration the following:

Convenience - finding a solution model that enabled APMG to extend their testing options to candidates who could not access their examination centers

Completeness of the vision – solution needed to address all aspects of exam environment security – from audio/video capture to securing the computer and authenticating the candidate taking the exam.

Cost Efficient – delivering a flexible solution that maintained rigorous security standards with minimal resource requirements and costs

Results:

APMG is now able to provide greater access to its certification exams while ensuring security in its practice of conducting remote testing. The Secureexam Remote Proctor System addresses both accessibility and convenience needs while controlling the exam environment.

The company can extend its testing boundaries outside its examination centers, and have confidence that the candidate's testing environment is secure and meeting APMG's exam compliance standards.

Software Secure's system addresses security requirements while providing accessibility to more candidates, conveniently and with integrity.

Founded in 1993, APMG-International is a global business providing accreditation and certification services. Through its global network of Accredited Consulting and Training Organizations it helps end users develop their professional skills and organizations improve their processes through the adoption of worldwide best practice.

APMG is the only organization offering professional qualifications in Program and Project management with third party independent accreditation through the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). The company works closely with the UK Office of Government Commerce (OGC) and TSO (The Stationery Office Ltd), their official publisher, in running global accreditation schemes in PRINCE2®, MSP® (Managing Successful Programs), MoR® (Management Of Risk), P3O® and ITIL®.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

IT professionals needing to maintain certification standards frequently contend with scheduling conflicts. However, as important as it is, certification testing can be inconvenient, disruptive and costly. Going to testing centers requires time away from work, travel and associated expenses. But regardless of time and accessibility constraints, certification testing is an imperative.

With offices in ten countries, APMG administers approximately 2,000 examinations in its portfolio of qualifications each week. Recognizing that not all candidates are able to get to an exam center, APMG wanted to ensure it did everything possible to ensure that those unable to travel – for whatever reason – were not disadvantaged in terms of gaining their desired qualification.

APMG recognized that in order to make certification testing accessible to more candidates, it was going to have to offer options that extended beyond the limitations of its examination centers.

About three years ago, Mike Jenkins, Head of Information Technology at APMG began researching ideas for helping candidates to take exams remotely. Mike’s primary objectives for this endeavor were making exams accessible remotely to those who were unable to access APMG’s test centers and a method in which to invigilate (monitor) the exam environment.

SEARCHING FOR A SOLUTION WITH CONVENIENCE AND CONTROL

Mike began his search for a provider by doing a thorough analysis of the solutions that were available. The solution needed to do two things, first – a method in which to invigilate an exam remotely. It also needed to be able to record a session and listen to the surrounding environment. Secondly, they wanted to be able to have a secure process to authenticate the candidate that was accessing the exam. And that’s when APMG discovered a provider that seemed to have the technology vision they were looking for.

“Our typical process for finding a supplier is through a thorough analysis, considering several different vendors. But In the end, Software Secure was the only one that demonstrated the ability to provide a technology solution that met our project scope requirements.”

*Mike Jenkins, Head of Information Technology
APMG*

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

APMG selected Software Secure’s Secureexam Remote Proctor as part of a strategic pilot initiative. The features and capabilities that were attractive to them were the lock-down browser, the ability to record the sound in the room where the candidate is taking the exam and a 360 degree camera so that they are able to see the whole room and any suspicious activity. With Secureexam Remote Proctor, each test candidate installs patented Secureexam software on their PC before testing and connects the Secureexam Remote Proctor device to their PC via a USB port. At testing time, the device authenticates the test taker's identity and captures each student's testing experience through both audio and video recording. Meanwhile, Secureexam Browser locks down the testing tools within the company’s online exam solution. “We could not find anything else that had the same security features. It was the only solution that we could integrate to our own online exam solution,” Mike added.

USER ADOPTION AND EASE OF USE

One of APMG’s chief concerns surrounded the issue of whether the market was ready to use this type of technology. Before the system was fully implemented they were also concerned that it might have complicated processes for set up and install -- and that it would not be attractive to candidates as an alternative testing option. In their initial pilots of the product, feedback from test takers proved that these concerns were unfounded.

MEETING THE DEMANDS OF A GROWING NEED

“We had considered building our own solution, as we could not find anything else that met the needs of our project at the time. The solution would have consisted of webcam recording software and also integrating some kind of key stroke dynamic software. But the process of building our own solution would have been time consuming, complicated and costly to execute,” explained Mike. In the end, APMG decided that partnering with

Software Secure would help them achieve their objective of making exams more accessible in less time than if they had to develop it themselves. “Working with the experts at Software Secure, we were able to save a huge amount of effort, and ultimately the cost of delivering a solution to our candidates,” Mike said.

RESULTS

APMG is continuing to realize the benefits of remote proctoring, and has been very pleased with Securexam Remote Proctor. Industry trends suggest that providing exams electronically is on the rise. APMG estimates that in the last 12 months they have experienced upwards of 250% growth in computer-based tests vs. hand-written exams. Securexam Remote Proctor helps take APMG to the next level by offering secure, computer-based testing at the convenience of the test candidate – without sacrificing integrity. Mike explained, “Securexam Remote Proctor gives people working in remote locations the same opportunities to gain our professional qualifications as those who can get to examination centers easily.”

“Setting up the proctor was quick and straightforward. Using it for the exam was equally straightforward and, being in my own home, Allowed me to select exactly when I did the exam, fitting it conveniently among other activities and permitted a last minute change of schedule.”

*Denis Quigley, PRINCE2
Practitioner Examination
Candidate*

About APMG-International

APMG-International is a global examination institute accredited by The APM Group, OGC's official Accreditor. Other partners include The Association of Proposal Management Professionals (APMP) and the UK's Chartered Management Institute. Our portfolio of qualifications includes PRINCE2®, MSP®, M_o_R® and P3O®. Our Accredited Training Organizations have gone through the most rigorous assessment process in the industry. Our commitment to high standards means that all candidates can be assured the certification they have earned is consistent with every other candidate. For further details about The APM Group's qualification and accreditation schemes visit: www.apmg-international.com, or call + 44 (0)1494 452450.

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Software Secure is a pioneer and market leader in secure, computer-based testing solutions. With an unrivaled commitment to supporting its customers, Software Secure provides proven, patented solutions for traditional and distance learning environments, as well as professional certification organizations. Academic institutions, as well as organizations overseeing mid and high-stakes testing environments, rely on Software Secure's expertise for testing solutions that exceed regional and national accreditation standards as well as federal regulation requirements, and facilitate the responsible use of technology in education. Visit: www.softwaresecure.com