

## SPECIALTY BADGES

### Introduction

The Specialty Badge Program is NKBA's latest concept in education and professional development. It is designed around the popular micro-credentialing system, which is a type of personalized learning and an educational stepping stone within the kitchen and bath industry. The program was designed for and affords all NKBA members the opportunity to acquire knowledge in a particular area or strengthen their existing proficiency. This is true whether members are new to the industry, long-standing members or certified individuals. It represents an educational achievement which enables badge holders the ability to confidently represent and promote a service, product or brand.

This is not a certification program but rather a complement to our respected AKBD, CKBD & CMKBD programs. Think of it as... a Specialty Badge is "what you know" or the ability to retain the knowledge you have learned. Whereas a certification is "what you can do" or being able to take the knowledge and training you gained and apply this to design.

NKBA members will have the opportunity to earn as many badges as they feel necessary to aid in personal growth and business success. In the end a total of 15 specialty badge options will become available. Specialty badges currently available include Remodeling, Cabinetry, Living in Place, Floor Plans & Specifications and Sales & Marketing. They each consist of five specific objectives of "what we want the learner to know." Each of the five objectives are broken down into relevant competencies that "verifies the learner understood what was intended from the objective."

### Badge Features

One of the best features of this program is that all the content material has been developed, endorsed and will continuously be updated by recognized and respected subject matter experts within our association. The experts utilized NKBA's second edition Professional Resource Library as a foundation and through a collaborative effort made necessary changes and improvements ensuring the Specialty Badge educational information is current and in compliance with today's kitchen and bathroom industry standards.

This means the body of knowledge, study guides and exams were all generated from the latest products, codes, standards and regulations. This program demonstrates the NKBA's dedication and commitment toward expanding both the professional knowledge base for its members and our presence within the industry.

## Benefits

Badge recipients will be able to communicate focused knowledge in a single competency specific to the kitchen and bath industry. Credentialed members will be distinguished from their peers as being well-versed and educated in a specific aspect of the kitchen and bath industry.

Acquiring an NKBA Specialty Badge informs colleagues, as well as current and prospective employers of a professional life of active learning, engagement and ongoing improvement. The knowledge you gain will help you become a cross-functional employee and highly valuable asset to your employer.

The ultimate end goal for all professionals is to have a valued reputation and establish a customer for life and the key part of this equation begins with staff members. This program provides a foundation of knowledge and makes them feel comfortable and confident promoting your products, services and the overall business brand.

If all your employees seem knowledgeable this will create a positive client experience and a lasting impression. This can definitely influence a potential client's decision to pick your company versus a competitor.

## Additional Benefits

Participants are allowed to complete the program at their own pace over a period of one full year. Although it will vary depending on the individual, average study time is roughly 6 hours per badge. Also, material content, the study guides and exams are all accessible online anywhere and at any time.

The exam itself is a 60-minute timed, multiple choice exam consisting of either 50-55 questions. If a candidate does not pass the first exam, they will be given another opportunity in 7 days to retest a different version of the exam with all new questions. If they fail again, they will need to wait 30 days to retest a third time.

Once the participant successfully completes the exam, they will receive a visual representation of their accomplishment in the form of a digital badge. This feature allows for extensive networking and marketing opportunities on their NKBA profile page, company website, business cards, social media and much more.

Becoming a badge holder will only enhance a resume or portfolio. It can open doors and create employment opportunities such as an internship and advancement with your current employer. If you are a business owner or manager, there is potential to acquire more clientele and improve the company's reputation. Badge holders will also receive a certificate of completion with a seal that they can frame and display, as well as a badge lapel pin specific to the credential earned.

If you are certified, each badge credential you earn will count toward 6 continuing education units during the 2-year cycle.

## Continued verification

Becoming active and engaged will allow badge holders to stay up-to-date with the latest industry information. The requirements needed to retain a specialty badge is that each badge holder will need to either retest or become engaged in four NBKA events over a **two-year period**. This is true if you earn one badge or maintain all 15. A total of four NKBA events cover all earned badges.

If you prefer, all four can be in-person local NKBA chapter meetings. These chapter meetings need to include a speaker and be informative. The second option is to attend three in-person local NKBA chapter meetings and either one virtual NKBA free monthly webinar series or one Voices from the Industry session.

## Track your progress

We have made this process very easy. Both the NKBA and badge holder are able to track the verification progress right on the members profile page. There is a section on the right-hand side of the members newsfeed area that states, “report a badge event”. This is where badge holders will submit NKBA events for approval.

Once approved badge holders will be able to track how many in-person events versus NKBA virtual webinars or VFTI sessions they have attended. This “badge status” area of the website will clearly display i.e. (2 out of 4) and so on. We are currently still working on improving this function.

## To sign up

Please visit [www.nkba.org](http://www.nkba.org) then click on the Badges tab on top right-hand side of the landing page. This page includes program highlights and details. If you click on “earn a badge” you can sign up immediately using a credit card. If you prefer, you can always contact our Member Relations Department at 800-843-6522 or [info@nkba.org](mailto:info@nkba.org).