



# **LEADING** the CONVERSATION

## **Developing Guidance for Low Volume Exam Programs: A Foundation to Address the Challenges**

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Low Volume Exam Subcommittee

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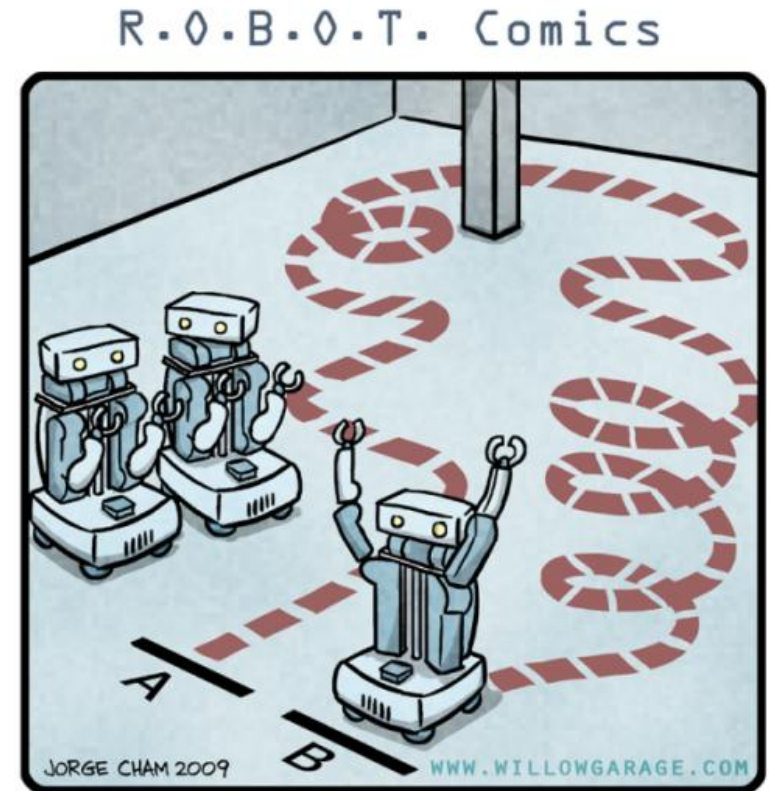
Founder and President  
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# Where is this session going to go today?

## LEADING the CONVERSATION

- Background
- Goals and Objectives
- Survey Responses
  - Discussion
- Next Steps



"HIS PATH-PLANNING MAY BE SUB-OPTIMAL, BUT IT'S GOT FLAIR."

# Background



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Part of C/L  
Division

Formed  
2014

Distinct  
Challenges

Wide  
Interest





# Low Volume Exam (LVE) Subcommittee



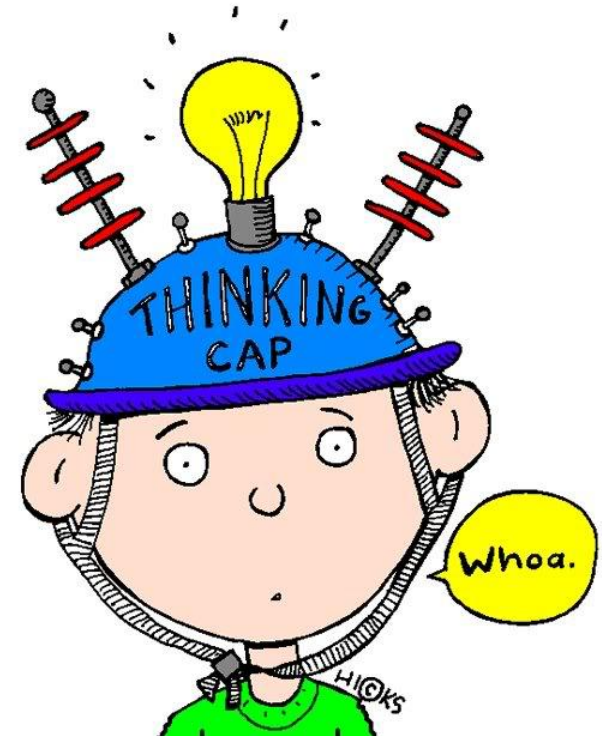
**Variety of member affiliations:**

- **Non-profit**
- **Testing Industry**
- **Education**
- **Government**

# LVE Committee Goals/Objectives

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- What is **Low Volume Exam**?
- What is a “good” **sample size**?
- How do we properly **frame inferences**?
- How do we provide **meaningful guidance** to low volume programs??



# Test Development Lifecycle



ABOUT the  
PRESENTER



The background of the slide is a solid purple color. On the left side, there is a complex, abstract graphic composed of various shades of purple and blue. This graphic includes numerous arrows of different sizes and orientations, some pointing right and some pointing up, creating a sense of movement and direction. The arrows are layered and overlap, giving the graphic a three-dimensional feel. The overall aesthetic is modern and professional.

# Survey Results

# Gathering Insight and Information

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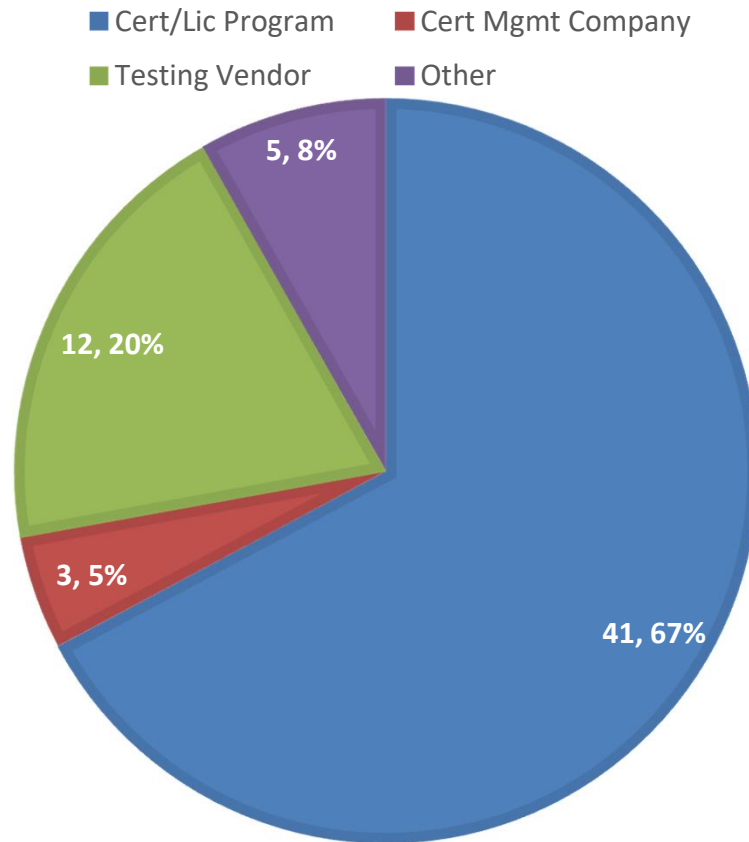
61

- 25 questions on survey.
- Posted to ATP member websites and LinkedIn outlets.

# Survey Results

## ■ Type of Organization?

- 67% Certification/Licensure Program
- 20% Testing Vendor
- 5% Certification Management Co.
- 8% Other
  - Included test development, consulting, and testing organizations

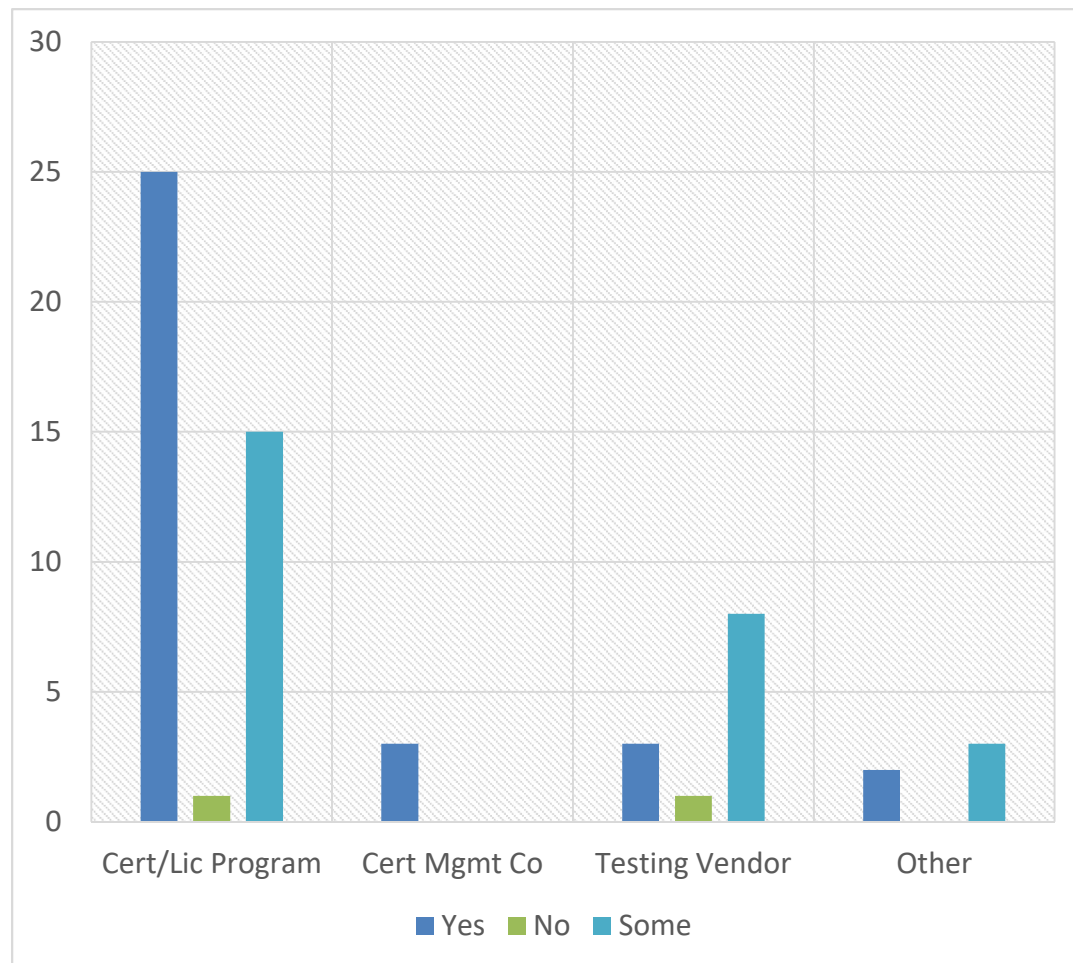


# Survey Questions and Responses

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## ■ Do you consider your program(s) to be "low volume"?

- Overall
  - Yes: 33 (54%)
  - No: 2 (3%)
  - Some of each 26 (43%)



Let's talk about low  
volume exams...

What defines a Low  
Volume Exam?

List top 2 definitions  
within your groups.

5 minutes

# Survey: What defines Low Volume to you?

- As with the Low Volume Subcommittee discussions, definitions are all over the board.
- Range from  $<10$  to  $\leq 5000$  annually.
  - One response of  $<50$  per month.
- Some said they weren't sure.
- Many had definitions other than numbers:
  - Does not pay for itself.
  - Does not update exams frequently due to exposure.
  - When classical item stats cannot be trusted.
  - Pool of potential candidates is small.



# Survey Questions and Responses

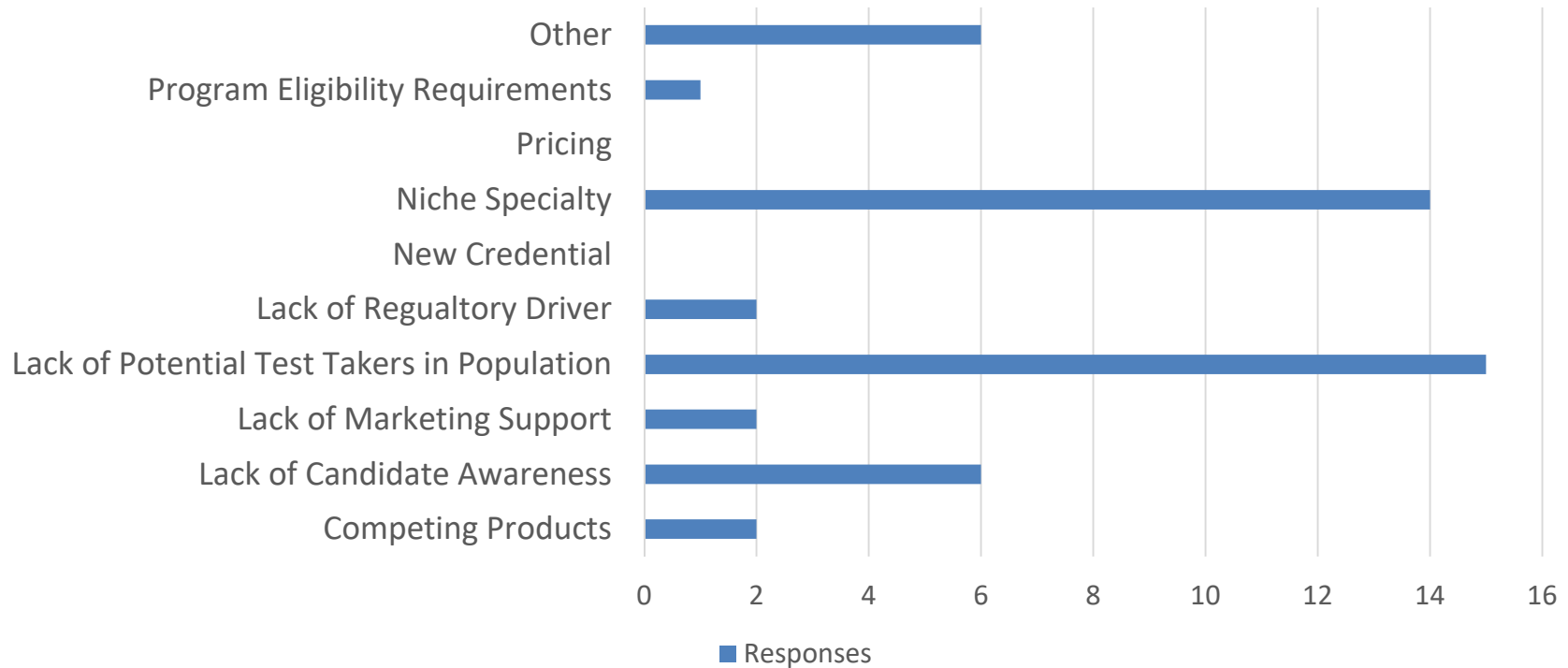
- What are the annual volumes of the smallest low volume title and the largest low volume title?

# of Candidates	Smallest Volume	Largest Volume
<25	24	7
25-50	20	3
51-100	5	13
101-150	4	8
151-250	2	3
251-500	2	4
>500	2	21

# Survey: What do you think is the main cause for your exam(s) to have low volumes?

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Causes for Exams to be of Low Volume



# Challenges and Risks

- What are the risks inherent to low volume exam programs?
  - Confidence
  - Reliability
  - Quality
  - Security
  - Lack of Accreditation
  - Financial



Let's talk about low  
volume exams...

Using the list on the next  
slide, what are the top 3  
challenges in exam  
development for low  
volume?

5 minutes

# Survey Questions and Responses

Rank order the areas in which you face the biggest challenges running a low volume exam from greatest to least.

- Accreditation Issues
- Administration/Test Delivery
- Executive buy-in/Sponsorship
- Financial Performance
- Marketing
- Psychometrics
- Program Management
- Recertification
- SME Management/Volunteers
- Scoring
- Security
- Test Development/Maintenance
- Other (list)

**Rank order the areas in which you face the biggest challenges running a low volume exam from greatest to least.**

### Top Challenge

- Financial Performance
- Budget issues

### Second

- Test Development/Maintenance
- SMEs/Volunteers

### Third

- Psychometrics
- Followed closely by Marketing

### ■ Lowest Challenge was Security

- Scoring and Accreditation issues also showed up as low challenges.



Let's talk about low  
volume exams...

How have you overcome  
the major challenges?  
5 minutes

# Survey: How has your organization overcome your #1 challenge?

- Many stated that they have not overcome the challenges.
- Trying to manage challenges:
  - Manage costs
    - profit/loss analysis to determine feasibility of continuing the exam or break-even point.
  - Marketing of the credential (also a challenge).
  - Use of revenue from higher volume exams or other ventures.
  - Expand geographic specific exams to larger markets, i.e., regions or national.

Let's talk about low  
volume exams...

What deliverables would  
you like to see?

5 minutes

# Survey: What would you like to see in the way of information, tools, or help on low volume exams?

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- Cost effective programs
- Security risks
- Marketing/VoC
- Psychometric guidelines/metrics
- Managing programs
- Delivery

The background is a solid purple color. Overlaid on this are various geometric shapes and arrows in shades of blue and pink. The shapes include large, dark blue chevrons pointing right, smaller blue arrows of various sizes, and some pinkish-purple geometric forms. The overall effect is a dynamic, abstract pattern suggesting movement and progress.

# Next Steps

# Comments and Insight from the Low Volume Subcommittee

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- Adequately define “Low Volume” and build consensus to support the definition.
- Understand and document the following for Low Volume Exams:
  - Types of analyses that can be used with low N exams.
  - Inferences and limitations that frame those inferences.
  - Risks due to small volume.
- Accessibility/ability to use tools such as CBT, IBT, IRT, etc.



# Where to from here?

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- Respond to the need for guidance to those managing low volume exams.
- Provide a framework in which to provide information and understand the inferences and confidence surrounding the data,
- Publish white paper as a start and view the document as dynamic and something to be reviewed and updated.
- Input, experiences, ideas and examples are welcome!

# Thank you for participating!

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## Contact Information

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