The Quality Certification Alliance (QCA) is an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit accrediting organization for industry suppliers. QCA certification helps protect suppliers' brand and reputation by offering compliance with the highest product standards in the market.

**Quality Certification Alliance has three membership types:**

**Certified Member** is a company that has signed an agreement attesting that all merchandise manufactured for promotional purposes under their auspices complies to the Quality Certification Alliance’s Standards for Compliance, has provided self-assessments of their own facilities to the Alliance’s Program Administration and maintains self-assessments of the facilities in which their work is contracted. Additionally, this company actively engages in developing and implementing corrective actions to continuously ensure all facilities are upholding compliance standards; and, most importantly, engages third party auditors to validate self-assessments. Only Certified Members may use the QCA Seal of Approval. Certified Members are also eligible to use QCA marketing materials.

**Member** is a company who has signed an agreement attesting that all merchandise manufactured for promotional purposes under their auspices complies to the Quality Certification Alliance’s Standards of Compliance, has provided self-assessments of their own facilities to the Alliance’s Program Administration and maintains self-assessments of the facilities in which their work is contracted. Additionally, this company actively engages in developing and implementing corrective actions to continuously ensure all facilities are upholding compliance standards. Companies may not exceed an initial 1 year membership in this category. Members are eligible to use Quality Certification Alliance marketing materials. Members are *not* eligible to the QCA Seal of Approval.

**Associate Member** is a company not engaged directly in the manufacture of promotional merchandise, who has signed an agreement to adopt and adhere to the Quality Certification Alliance’s Standards of Compliance as related to the work engaged in on behalf of Members and Certified Members. Associate Members may use only the QCA Seal of Approval through signed release on a case-by-case basis.
QCA Membership Benefits

Membership in the Quality Certification Alliance brings a number of benefits that in addition to improving the safety of your product lines will enhance the credibility of your organization. These benefits also directly impact both your top and bottom line results. Among the many QCA Membership Benefits are:

Industry Leadership

- Leadership role in improving industry standards
- Differentiate QCA Member safe product from competing product offerings thereby increasing demand for your products
- Greater ROI for new or existing safe product efforts via independent 3rd party accreditation vs. self certification
- Searchable QCA field in ESP, Sage and Buttonwood sourcing tools

Compliance Program Development and Education Cost Savings

- Reduction of audit fatigue - harmonized industry standards will result in an overall reduction of the number of audits required of your organization
- Compliance program development – dramatic reduction in the costs of developing supplier a specific independent solutions:
  - Reduction in consulting and/or compliance officer costs.
  - Speed to delivery and ROI of legitimate 3rd party audited compliance program
    - Document storage capabilities
      - Testing documents
    - Certificate of conformity documents
- Frequent updates and education on all rapidly changing regulatory requirements and how they specifically impact our industry.
  - QCA Executive Director attends and reports back on CPSC and other industry product safety conferences.
  - CPSC and product safety networking
  - Legal updates from product safety attorney’s

Cost Reductions

- Advertising cost reductions
  - ASI Chicago July announcement of early adopting new members. (Deadline for inclusion is July 10th)
  - Benefit from all QCA Marketing to promotional products industry
    - Benefit from all QCA Marketing to end users
- QCA Membership cost reductions for (among other things):
  - Factory audit cost
  - Product testing costs
QCA Accreditation Scope

Recognizing industry accountability to assure clients and end users that product in their hands meets applicable measures of compliance, QCA Accreditation tests for the presence of and completeness of compliance programs, the effectiveness of those programs in detecting noncompliance, as well as the effectiveness in deterring noncompliance in the following five areas:

Product Safety

Certified Members have policies and procedures that are robust and able to deter, detect and prevent non-compliant product from shipping to a customer. Those processes include:

- Commitment to assuring consumer safety and brand security
- Design requirements - legal, product, performance, raw material
- Testing and inspection - internal, third party, corrective actions
  - Regulatory requirements - traceability
  - Evaluating communication and documentation
  - Recall protocol

Social Accountability

A Certified Member’s policies and procedures ensure that those facilities that are part of its supply chain adhere to legal and ethical standards that are based on internationally agreed upon protocols of the UN Global Compact and include:

- Worker’s rights
  - Fair pay
- Physical working and living conditions
  - Worker’s safety

Environmental Stewardship

A Certified Member’s policies and procedures promote an ongoing stewardship of the environment including:

- Recycling
  - Restriction and monitoring for banned substances
  - Resource management

Quality
A Certified Member has in place standards governing product quality, from design through manufacturing, and procedures to monitor and verify that quality standards are maintained throughout. Members create an expectation of quality with:

- Quality manual - measures of quality, quality monitoring systems
  - Inspections - pre-shipment, post-shipment
  - Supplier qualification program

**Supply Chain Security**

A Certified Member’s policies and procedures meet the security criteria established by US Customs’ C-TPAT program to protect our borders, encompassing both domestic and offshore process and facility review and including:

- Seals management on containers
  - Physical plant security
  - Supply chain visibility
    - Security guards
    - Access control