



Name: Claudia Piano

Affiliation: ApotheCom, an Inizio company

Role: EVP, Business Unit Lead; Chair, 2025-2026 ISMPP Certification Board

Do you have any prior experience that you feel significantly impacted or shaped your career?

I actually started out as a traffic coordinator at a promo agency, then crossed over into Program Management at a medical education (med ed) agency, doing lots of Advisory Boards, Speaker Training, Symposia, and live Congress events (both CME and non-accredited). I worked my way through the ranks of client services to VP level, then leadership, looking after the Client Services function for a global medical communications (med comms) agency for a number of years. That led to a General Manager position for a US division of a global med comms agency, then a global Business Unit lead role. About 20 years ago, my career focus shifted from medical education to publication planning and execution. Because of all my prior experience, I was immediately able to appreciate the critical role of publication planning. I really felt like it was the piece of the puzzle that had been missing. It truly is the roadmap for the success of a product in the market.

What motivates you professionally?

At this stage of my career, I am mostly motivated by the desire to make a difference in the lives of patients, healthcare providers, my clients, and my colleagues. I try to apply my vast experience to help younger, newer medical communications professionals. I always strive to be a significant contributor to the solution, whatever the problem might be.

How has receiving your CMPP™ certification impacted you?

I was around back when 'ghostwriting' was not just an accusation, but in some instances, a practice. I saw our industry maligned in the press (and in Congress) because of unethical publication practices, and I often found myself having to defend our industry. Most of my clients were ethical and did absolutely nothing wrong. Some made errors in judgment that led to practices that we'd definitely condemn today. But they did not have guidelines—GPP was not even an idea yet—so it wasn't entirely their fault. So, when ISMPP was founded to create a unified, trustworthy voice for publication professionals and address the need for transparency and high standards in publishing research for our industry, I immediately joined. I was even more excited when the CMPP Program was born, because the credential

was a tangible way to demonstrate that the individual CMPP had the expertise to ensure ethical practices in publication planning, and it provided a level of credibility and trust that had previously been missing. A few years later, I sat for, and passed the exam, and I've been an active CMPP ever since. To me, the CMPP is so much more than a 'certification' or a badge. It is a demonstration of how far we have come in the past 20 years—I know new publication professionals who have never seen or heard any of the negative press around unethical publication practices in our industry—which to me is just proof that all of our efforts have paid off!

What advice would you give someone new to the industry, interested in obtaining their CMPP?

Go to www.ismpp.org/Certification, check out the CMPP Handbook, and find out what the certification requirements are. Talk to colleagues who already have their CMPP and ask their advice. Join ISMPP and avail yourselves of all the ISMPP U webinars and educational activities that you can. The more you do this, the more convinced you will be to get the certification. And once you have attained the 2 years of equivalent experience required, follow the suggestions on the website for preparing for the exam. Read all of the critical materials and study. Do not register for the exam unless you are sure you have sufficient time to prepare and study. You will be glad you decided to do it!

What ISMPP/industry projects or initiatives are you currently excited about?

I am very excited about how the CMPP credential has evolved, just since I've been on the ISMPP Certification Board. There were 2 significant unmet needs when I first joined. One, the recertification process was cumbersome, and we really saw a need to streamline it. Last year we launched LearningBuilder, which has literally cut out all the admin work for the CMPP, so they can focus on completing their required education. Two, we wanted to find ways to help bring the CMPP community closer together and keep CMPPs informed of the latest happenings in the CMPP world. This year the CMPP™ Newsletter Committee launched, and they are already doing some very exciting things. I am very pleased about that!

What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

Traveling! Also, I live in a real foodie town, so I love to go out to eat in downtown Charleston, where the options are limitless. My husband, friends, and I are always game for trying out a new restaurant.

Coffee/tea order or favorite snack at work?

I am a Nitro drinker (cold brew with no ice, infused with nitrogen). It's got more caffeine but less acid than cappuccino (my former favorite) and provides me with a much-needed afternoon jolt! I am a remote worker and have about 6 Starbucks locations in short driving distance from where I live. So, every day I find a 30-minute mid-day slot between Teams meetings, place my mobile order on the app, jump in the car, and go get a Nitro!