

American Safety & Health Institute®'s low-hassle training programs have saved Bluegrass Health & Safety valuable time and money

Bluegrass Health & Safety

Wilmore, Kentucky

Business type

Health and safety training

Business size

One employee: Marcy Thobaben, President/CEO

Primary ASHI products used

Basic First Aid for the Community and Workplace

CPR-AED for the Community and Workplace

Wilderness Emergency Care

Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)

Bloodborne Pathogens

Intro

Marcy Thobaben founded Bluegrass Health & Safety in 1997 after her then-40-year-old brother suffered a sudden cardiac arrest. Her brother survived the encounter with no residual damage, but only because a bystander with no prior training was able to administer CPR under the instructions of an ER nurse on the scene who was unable to provide care. Thobaben runs the business out of a centralized office, but works with a number of subcontractors to fulfill training contracts. Her goal is to teach basic first aid and CPR to 50,000 citizens — both lay and professional — before she retires; she's currently up to roughly 30,000.

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— Marcy Thobaben

Challenge

Thobaben has been associated with other training providers, but has found them expensive and cumbersome. Aside from the providers' cost, she's most critical of the huge amount of paperwork these agencies require, their territorial limitations, and the rigidity of the training procedures. Because Bluegrass Health & Safety is a one-woman show, she can't afford to spend the bulk of her time talking with administrators over the phone, or filling out dozens of forms in order to satisfy an agency's administrative requirements.

Thobaben believes that each of her clients is unique, and that some may fare better with a more flexible training approach. In short, Thobaben believes her clients are better served if she can spend less time on the phone, and more time actually training customers.



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Solution

Thobaben jokes that she introduced herself to American Safety & Health Institute® over the phone by asking, “What’s wrong with your stuff that it’s so affordable?” After purchasing and using several of the training programs, however, she came to believe that ASHI’s competitive prices stemmed to a large degree from the trust it places in its customers. “By allowing us to be responsible for maintaining our own paperwork and files, it saved us countless hours and dollars in administrative hassles,” Thobaben explains, a philosophy that also saves ASHI money by lowering its own administrative costs. “ASHI has literally helped me keep my sanity as a one-person business owner.” Bluegrass Health & Safety uses most of ASHI’s training programs, including Basic First Aid for the Community and Workplace, CPR-AED for the Community and Workplace, Emergency Oxygen Administration, Emergency Medical Response, and PALS (Pediatric Advanced Life Support). One of Thobaben’s favorite attributes of the ASHI programs is the trust they place in their Instructors. While some training organizations won’t let trainers teach without using a pre-approved DVD or video — going so far as to cancel classes when the A/V equipment malfunctions — ASHI encourages an opposite tack, letting Instructors adapt the program to meet the needs of the target audience. This flexible approach, which still adheres to municipal, state, provincial, national, or federal regulations on workplace safety and occupational licensing, recognizes that different students learn differently, and that a one-size-fits-all training philosophy is often counterproductive.

“ASHI’s materials let Instructors follow the ‘watch while practicing’ format that others use, but also customize the program to meet a client’s specific training needs,” explains Thobaben. “Boy Scouts usually fare better when learning CPR and first aid skills out in the woods rather than in the classroom, just like military personnel typically learn best on location rather than in an office building.” Thobaben firmly believes that good training stems from the proficiency of the Instructor and the quality of the information, not from following a rigid checklist.

Although ASHI offers a variety of Student and Instructor Guides, Thobaben’s favorite ASHI product is the organization’s Pocket Skill Guide, which she offers to students. The Pocket Skill Guide — which summarizes the most crucial training info yet fits handily in a glove compartment or purse — is one of many ASHI products designed with the students’ long-term interests in mind. Thobaben says that many students are too busy to reference their full-size textbooks, but can benefit from a well-placed pocket guide. “I like the Pocket Skill Guide because it’s a reference piece that people will actually use,” she says.

Benefits

- Relaxed paperwork standards save small business owners time and money
- Flexible program trusts instructors to train how they see fit
- Products are designed with students’ actual needs in mind

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