

PPT OVERCOME SCOTTISHPOWER PRE-PAYMENTS CALL CHALLENGE

OVERVIEW

ScottishPower is an international company that supplies electricity and gas to over five million homes and businesses in the UK. PPT Solutions worked with ScottishPower for a 20 month period, handling pre-payment customer service calls.

CHALLENGE

Pre-payment customer service calls arguably present the most challenging issues dealt with by ScottishPower. Primarily inbound, in most instances calls relate to billing and supply issues, and are often confrontational in their nature.

ScottishPower approached PPT in late 2005 to provide additional support to its own call centre function as PPT had both the capacity and established infrastructure available.

SOLUTION

Initially, ScottishPower utilised PPT's services on a short-term contract. However, due to the strong working relationship that developed between the two companies, this period was extended.

Before the contract started, all PPT agents undertook a minimum of four weeks intensive training to get them up to speed with ScottishPower's sophisticated systems. Accuracy of data capture was extremely important to ScottishPower as information, which can be related to billing, is input directly into the its systems.

All staff were given bespoke call handling training to deal with the complex call types. PPT's Operations Director Phill White himself undertook the training and answered customer enquiries himself to understand the unique nature and type of calls received.

Said Phill: "Within the utilities sector there is a high attrition rate among call centre staff who can literally be 'ground down' by the confrontational nature of these calls. I am responsible for making sure we have the right people to do the job, so I felt it was important enough for me to have that experience, so that we could be sure that we recruited and trained only those people I believed would last the course."

BENEFITS

PPT handled an average of 600 complex data transactions per day via Scottish Power's systems, achieving a 98% service level continuously over the period of the contract.

Sue Reece, ScottishPower Customer Service Manager, said: "A short term contract was put in place to provide ScottishPower with additional support handling our customer service enquiries. However, due to the commitment and continuous flexibility shown by the PPT team we extended the contract far longer than originally anticipated.

"This provided our customers with a more positive experience during a very busy time both in terms of speed of answer and understanding of their enquiry.

"There was an excellent relationship throughout this period, with ScottishPower and PPT working closely together as a team. Diane and Phill were keen to ensure that their agents provided the highest quality service, with in-house training and upskilling regularly taking place.

CONCLUSION

Sue Reece added: "The whole experience was very positive one for us."