

How customer satisfaction surveys work

The new ISO 9000 standard requires some form of customer feedback. This can be achieved either by posting out a survey to customers and hoping that more than 10% of the forms will be returned or by telephoning the customers and asking 'Do you have five minutes to answer a few questions, please?'

Unusual technique

A number of Vita businesses are taking the idea of best practice much further and are using a technique that has been described as the most cost-effective, dynamic and actionable business-to-business customer satisfaction survey available, provided worldwide by InfoQuest CRM. The unusual technique, which involves a deck of cards and a plastic segmented box, works all around the world and achieves a staggeringly high response rate (averaging between 70 and 75%) on up to 62 business-process related questions and statements.

Satisfaction surveys are used to maximise existing relationships with customers. They can identify not only problem areas that need to be addressed but also opportunities for up selling and cross-selling, thereby driving profits higher.

VTC has used the InfoQuest CRM survey to good effect. Business manager at Silvergate Plastics **Tony Bestall** took the opportunity to compare and contrast

the opinions of **VTP, Jackdaw Polymers** and **Silvergate Plastics** customers by using the same customer questions and the same survey methodology for all three businesses.

Speaking about how he tackled the issues, Tony said *'The reason I chose InfoQuest was the uniqueness of the approach coupled with a professional analysis of the information that would enable me to take some specific actions to effect a positive change. The idea of repeating this exercise on an annual basis, being able to directly monitor progress year on year will be an invaluable tool in ensuring the plans we have within the business translate to improvements in the services we offer our customers.'*

'The report completed in 2002 has assisted in targeting areas for improvement in a number of areas. The structured analysis enabled us to focus directly on the customer/supplier interface, looking closely at the attitudes and styles of all members of the team. The best skills being communicated to the rest of the team. Training needs have been highlighted and a subsequent survey will enable us to monitor the effectiveness of any training we carry out.'

VTS Doeflex is another Vita business that uses InfoQuest to measure customer satisfaction. Their survey, which consisted of 40 questions and statements relating to



Business manager at Silvergate Plastics **Tony Bestall** took the opportunity to compare and contrast the opinions of VTP, Jackdaw Polymers and Silvergate Plastics customers by using the same customer questions and the same survey methodology for all three businesses.

a wide range of Doeflex's business activities, had a 77% response rate from their customers. Business manager **Steve Ratcliffe** and his team held an internal workshop to review the results of the survey.

After the workshop, Steve said *'The InfoQuest survey will be an invaluable management tool which should enable us to run our business more profitably. The overall response from our customers was very positive but the survey also highlighted opportunities to improve our service levels at our larger accounts.'*

Appealing

Vita's quality manager **Gary Corbett** has supported companies in taking this approach, he said *'I believe that formal and innovative ways to complete customer surveys are the first step to understanding your customer expectation. If you don't ask, you will never know! The InfoQuest method is different and therefore appealing, the added 'customer intelligence' it offers will help us perfectly match customers' expectations in the future.'*

InfoQuest has already been used by **Jackdaw Polymers, JGP Perrite, Silvergate Plastics, Vitamol, VTP, VTS Doeflex** and **VTS Plastech**. For more information please email Gary Corbett at Vita Services gcorbett@britishvita.com or visit www.infoquestcrm.com for InfoQuest's worldwide contacts.



At VTS Doeflex, **Steve Ratcliffe** and his team are pictured in an internal workshop, reviewing the results of the customer satisfaction survey and planning changes.