

Middle East Call Centre Awards 2013

COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE



INSIGHTS

middle east

Call Centre

awards
2013





Middle East Call Centre Awards '13

Celebrating Another Outstanding Year
Of Growing Regional Competence

More Submissions Than Ever

More Returning Entrants Than Ever

More Awards Than Ever

**INSIGHTS Congratulates
The 2013 Winners For Their
Dedication & Achievement**

The Middle East Call Centre Awards '14 Competition Begins
December '13. For Entry Forms Go To www.insights-me.com

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Introduction

The 2013 Middle East Call Centre Awards were launched at INSIGHTS' "Middle East Competency, Certification & Collaboration conference 2012". In a special awards-focused presentation, INSIGHTS' Doctor Brownell O'Connor unveiled a series of significant changes to the awards for 2013.

in the public domain will never excel in the INSIGHTS awards. The INSIGHTS awards program is not based upon achieving notional standards, best practice or benchmarks. It is based entirely on a call centre's ability to drive, support and project a defined business strategy.

differentiation. Successful businesses are built on differentiation.

INSIGHTS support differentiation but differentiation cannot be leveraged without a defined strategy. Hence INSIGHTS continues to support the development of regional businesses by using the awards mechanism as a way for companies to self-evaluate and determine whether or not they have any strategy, the right strategy or strategically-congruent operations. INSIGHTS do not want to run a value-less competition that is based upon mere numbers. The INSIGHTS competition brings value to every participant because it forces them to analyse their entire business operations relative to their strategy. Some companies withdraw from the competition during the submission process when they identify strategic gaps and they take a year or two to bridge those gaps before re-entering. That, in the opinion of INSIGHTS Dominick Keenaghan "demonstrates one way that the awards program delivers value to every company who takes the time to self-analyse whether or not they enter the final awards and whether or not they win".

The awards program is not just rewarding the best of the best, it is also about providing a mechanism for aspiring businesses to excel.

Judging Panel

Until 2013 INSIGHTS have always leveraged a team of international consultants to judge the awards entries. INSIGHTS relationship with certification bodies around the world provides ready-access to a vast array of consultants and industry experts who have no connection with the Middle East. Thus, INSIGHTS was comfortable that choosing a different group of international consultants each year

“ The INSIGHTS Awards program is not based upon achieving notional standards, best practice or benchmarks. It is based entirely on a call centre's ability to drive, support and project a defined business strategy. ”

The most important of which included:-

1. Introduction of a new "HELPDESK" category
2. Public services / Government categories to be subdivided by "strategy"
3. Introduction of new areas of expertise
4. New rule, precludes winners of "title awards" from winning the same title, two years in succession.
5. New, single entry form
6. New online submission process
7. Implementation of new judging panel process

The presentation continued with a discussion of the judging methodology and once again attendees were versed in the fact that the INSIGHTS methodology is founded on STRATEGY. Companies that do not have a defined strategy or companies that state one strategy but project another

Many participants left that presentation with shock and awe written across their faces. There was a clear reaction to the fact that there would be no copy-paste approach to this year's submission and for many, the dawning realisation that their company did not have a defined strategy caused grave concern. Some voiced worries about the amount of work that would be involved while others suggested that the awards should be "easier" to win. In all cases, INSIGHTS stand by the principle that this is a COMPETITION.

INSIGHTS methodologies and the methodologies of all our partners are built around differentiation:-When all competitors apply "standards" models to their business the only deciding factor left for customers is PRICE. Whereas, when companies differentiate, their customers have REAL choice. BRANDS are built on

Introduction



ensured objectivity and non-disclosure. However, as the number of participants and the number of categories continues to increase, the burden of judging is become too great to be handled exclusively by a team of international judges and so in 2013, INSIGHTS changed the process to allow a regional panel to assess the nominees for the title awards.

The process relies on the external panels to nominate call centres. Thereafter the entry forms are "sanitised" (removal of all names, brands, logos etc.) and a local panel of industry experts makes the final decision. It is worth noting that some participants tried to take the "easy way out" with their entry forms and answered many questions with the response "see appendix XXX". This is not a good idea. The entry form should be completed. The appendices should be used to demonstrate proof that claims made in the entry form are factual. The external judging panel have access to the entry forms and the appendices but the local judging panel can only see the sanitised entry form that has been deemed factual by the external panel. Therefore, if the entry form is not well completed, a competitor will struggle to excel in the judging process.

It should also be noted that once an entry is nominated, the process becomes a competition. Thus, the winner is the best of all the nominees. Hence, participants who fail to answer questions logically will never excel over those that provide a comprehensive entry.

The 2013 judging process was purposely contained in order to ensure rigour. The panel comprised of three industry experts:-

1. Mr. Ibrahim Gailani. Ibrahim is one of the "founding fathers" of the Middle

East Call Centre industry. He is most remembered for the way he shook the regional industry when he created the "Buzz" call centre in Dubai. Ibrahim went on to manage call centres with thousands of agents and is now consulting to Oman Arab Bank. Ibrahim's other passion in life is art. Ibrahim's paintings are highly sought and he now has his own art gallery in Muscat.

2. Mrs. Deirdre Hutchinson. At the time of the judging panel, Deirdre was the customer care manager of Vodafone Qatar but we were delighted to hear recently that Deirdre has been promoted and she is now the Director of Customer Care for Vodafone Qatar. Deirdre is also synonymous with the industry and has worked in call centres across Asia, in the UAE and now, in Qatar, she is responsible for operations in Qatar, Egypt and India.
3. Mr. Hani Masgidi is the Head of GCMU-AWR Holdings, one of the umbrella companies of A.W. Rostamani Group, which is among the most highly respected conglomerates in the Middle East. He has accomplished a professional and successful career spanning 15 years, managing diverse functions for reputed organizations such as Etisalat and Nakheel. A keen planner & implementer with demonstrated abilities in devising marketing & customer retention strategies and accelerating the business growth.
4. In addition to those three judges, INSIGHTS' Mohammed Sagheer and Aymen Battikh judged independently and contributed to group discussions. The INSIGHTS members' votes were only counted in the event that one of

the judging panel abstained and there was no deciding vote from the remaining two judges (This happened with one category in 2013).

5. INSIGHTS' Doctor Brownell O'Connor facilitated the process but did not have a vote.

The plan for 2014 is that the judging panel will be extended. At the present time INSIGHTS are considering:-

1. The nomination decision / factual verification process will be handled by a team of external judges.
2. Each participant will be required to provide a judge.
3. All the judges will meet in Dubai and will judge the sanitised entry forms to select a winner in each category.
 - a. The process ensures that judges will not know the winner until the Night of the Awards
 - b. The process further ensures that participants will not be judging their own entries in any competition
 - c. The process ensures anonymity and secrecy

In addition to the continued expansion of the regional judging panel, INSIGHTS are considering adding a small number of additional categories in the competition and will be combining the awards night with the FLAGS site certification awards and the Personal Certification awards for industry professionals. Once again, INSIGHTS will offer potential participants the opportunity to avail of advice from Dr. Brownell O'Connor when the 2014 awards program is launched in December 2013. Would-be participants are advised to check the INSIGHTS web site for further details.

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Winner Cameo



Ali Al-Khazali, Customer Service Manager at Bupa Arabia, receives the Call Centre of the Year Award

Call Centre Of The Year
(Strategically Aligned)

Best Recruitment Program

INSIGHTS FLAGS Pioneer



Bupa Arabia's call centre is based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The 80+ seat setup is, without any doubt, among the highest quality call centres in the region. Standing testament to the high standards at Bupa's call centre is the fact that they have won the title "CALL CENTRE OF THE YEAR 2013". In addition to winning the ultimate title award, Bupa also won the award for best recruitment campaign.

The first feature to strike any visitor to Bupa's call centre are the facilities. Bupa's call centre is based in the corporate office and as such is well branded and well serviced. Despite being in the midst of a corporate building, Bupa have made many strides to ensure that standardisation does not impinge call centre performance. The call centre is well designed, bright and motivating. The call centre and other business functions are conveniently located and well structured to provide for the complex communications that are required by the sometimes extremely urgent nature of patient contacts.

The Bupa building provides for both male and female employees. Enormous thought and effort has been invested in establishing an environment that provides for men and women to work in the same building whilst also adhering to the local cultural requirements. The judges commented, "we have seen similar environments in the Kingdom before but what we see in Bupa's case is exhaustive effort and extensive consideration to ensure the satisfaction and comfort of all."

Bupa is an extremely strong international brand in health insurance. Bupa Arabia's executive team work hard to ensure adherence to Bupa standards

of excellence with adherence to local laws and cultures. It is reasonable to assume that global corporate policies and local regulations are not always congruent and one area where this comes to the forefront is in the area of emotional experience.

Bupa's brand and the nature of their product are highly emotional services yet delivering a strong emotional service that complies with local requirements can be

and communicate it, the senior management team, the operations management team and the call centre team have been able to deliver the Bupa brand of service.

Ali Al-Khazali, Customer Service Manager at Bupa Arabia, has a fantastic brand-aligned approach to Key Performance Indicators and other forms of performance analysis. He has identified how KPI's can be leveraged to

“The judges commented that “BUPA have to walk many tightropes every day in order to deliver the truly phenomenal service that they are renowned for”.

“tricky”. Bupa focus more on empathy and in this regard, the call centre is doing a superb job. They understand the critical and stressful nature of their customer calls and deal with them as empathetically as possible while always being aware of the commercial impact of their decisions. The judges commented that “Bupa have to walk many tightropes every day in order to deliver the truly phenomenal service that they are renowned for”. Their efforts are paying dividends on many levels and INSIGHTS are truly delighted to have the opportunity to recognise and reward those efforts.

As mentioned many times previously, the INSIGHTS awards are based upon a call centre's ability to support the BRAND strategy of the wider organisation. Bupa's strategic model is truly superb. It is clear. It is documented. It is mapped, lived and trained. The executives at Bupa rank among the most strategically competent business leaders in the Middle East. As a result of their ability to develop a strategy

project the brand. He is not fighting with himself and his team in an attempt to achieve some notional standards. He is mandating that healthcare standards be adhered to and the Bupa brand be projected in each and every customer interaction.

The call centre staff project empathy well but even more interesting is the fact that they don't just project it. The staff go out of their way to truly understand the customers' plights and to adapt wherever possible to accommodate these needs. It's not about following a defined process, it's about understanding the customer's situation and tailoring a solution that helps the customer within any legal and commercial constraints applicable.

For their competence, confidence, dedication and focus the judges congratulate the entire Bupa Arabia team for being a shining, regional example of successful strategic congruence.



Bupa بوبا

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Winner Cameo



Team AW Rostamani receives their Award

Best Contact Centre Social Media Implementation

Best VOC Program - Small Company (<100 Employees)

الروستاماني
AWR ROSTAMANI

AW Rostamani (Arabian Automobiles Company) entered the INSIGHTS call centre Awards for the first time in 2013. One of the first comments made by the judges regarding the AW Rostamani submission was “absolute professionalism”. The submission was concise, well-structured and refreshingly transparent.

AW Rostamani’s Hani Masgidi championed their competitive efforts. Hani has built an extremely effective call centre operation with strong process control, effective Customer Relationship Management and comprehensive training and development programs. Perhaps the most impressive attribute of Hani’s operation is the fact that he has an unusually clear understanding of the concept of being “results oriented”. While many managers use this term as an excuse for over-zealous and ineffective people management and experience management processes, Hani clearly identifies the nature of a RESULT and achieves those results in an experientially effective fashion.

The automotive sector in the Middle East competes heavily on service. AW Rostamani therefore, face fierce competition. To excel in Middle East automotive customer service a business requires a strong brand, supported by competent and brave executives, but perhaps most importantly of all, it requires dedicated and talented staff. Without a doubt, AW Rostamani enjoy all of these benefits and as a result they have excelled in the 2013 Middle East Call Centre Awards.

AW Rostamani carried home two Awards. They won the Award for best Social Media implementation and the

best Voice of the Customer (VOC) program in the small call centre category. The call centre boasts a mere 25 seats but they “pack a punch” greater than many larger operations. While many larger companies are debating and considering social media implementations, AW Rostamani are not just looking towards the future they have actually brought the future forward. They have one of the most advanced social

Rostamani’s Voice of the Customer program is extremely effective. Voice of the Customer is neither about dealing with every single customer complaint to the satisfaction of the customer nor is it about achieving overall customer satisfaction. Voice of the customer is about plotting the impact of product and service attributes in driving the desired customer behaviours (increased sales, retention, advocacy etc.) and

“ One of the first comments made by the judges regarding the AW Rostamani submission was “absolute professionalism”. The submission was concise, well-structured and refreshingly transparent. ”

media implementations in the region but it is also backed up by effective social media processes and customer relationship management. Implementing social media in the call centre is not about implementing another customer contact touchpoint. It is about seamlessly integrating legacy touchpoints, legacy processes, legacy systems and legacy interaction experiences into the emerging world of instantaneous resolution and brand position management. It is true to say that systems integration and data accessibility are more critical in social media than in traditional call centre CRM. AW Rostamani have overcome all these hurdles and implemented a Social Media touchpoint that definitively “stands out from the crowd”.

Congruent with Hani’s understanding of results orientation, AW

determining the potential ROI from any customer-focused / experience-focused initiative. AW Rostamani are not wasting time and effort chasing goals and targets that in themselves are not real results. At the end of the day, customer satisfaction is not a result. Repeat sales, retention, advocacy etc. are results. Customer satisfaction is a mere indicator.

For being visionaries, for being brave and for having a thorough brand strategy, the judges congratulate the executives of AW Rostamani. For his personal ability to take that strategic direction and mould an effective operation, the judges congratulate Hani Masgidi; and for leveraging all of the above to achieve truly fantastic results the judges congratulate all the staff at the call centre and look forward to seeing a lot more of AW Rostamani in the future. ●



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Winner Cameo



Luay Al Nimri, Call Centre Manager, Bank Al Jazira receives his Award

Call Centre Manager of the Year (31-70 Seats)



Bank Al Jazira, based in Riyadh, are yet another shining example of strategic capabilities. The 50+ seat call centre managed by Luay Al Nimri is a welcome return participant to the Middle East Awards program. In 2012 Bank Al Jazira won the award for the region's best new call centre and this year, 2013, Luay Al Nimri carried home the title "Call Centre Manager of the Year" in the medium-sized call centre category.

Luay is one of the region's most experienced, most qualified and most capable call centre managers. He has charted a career in financial services call centres but has managed to avoid the trap that so many other managers fall into; Luay is highly results-oriented and performance management is a critical part of his management ethos but his management methodology is not based on industry comparisons and regional benchmarks. Instead, Luay has focused on building and managing a call centre that uniquely projects "Bank Al Jazira". From Key Performance Indicators to Training, from Quality Assurance to Workforce Management, Luay has tailored each and every aspect of his operation to support the defined strategies and commercial requirements of the wider organisation.

Luay benefits from a superb team. The team are highly motivated and well structured. Perhaps one of the most notable attributes of the Bank Al Jazira team is transparency. The communications structure is truly magnificent. Everyone on the team knows exactly what Luay is trying to achieve and why. While Luay is, in return, fully informed of what the team is actually achieving relative to the established requirements.

In addition to a fantastic team, Luay's success is of course built upon the senior management competence within the bank and in particular, the insightful strategic leadership of Khalid Ramadan. Khalid is another well-known industry personality who has been at the helm of many of the region's award-winning operations. Khalid's strategic vision and his ability to act as a communications channel between the executive

A tour of Luay's call centre quickly reveals a key component in the bank's arsenal of competitive weapons, the frontline agents. Whether discussing customer experience with the agents or listening to calls, the agents' passion for the bank and the bank's customers is clearly evident. This is not the sort of passion that comes from procedural enforcement. This is passion that comes from "the heart". Bank Al Jazira have

“Luay benefits from a superb team. The team are highly motivated and well structured. Perhaps one of the most notable attributes of the Bank Al Jazira team is transparency.”

management and the operations management team ensures that Luay is provided with the information, the resources and the motivation required to ensure his team deliver a Bank Al Jazira brand of customer experience.

The judges commented that "Bank Al Jazira's is a the bank that clearly knows what it wants to be. They are not just seeking to be bigger, better or more profitable. They have a succinct business strategy that balances growth and development against resources and commercial considerations. They have their feet firmly on the ground and are dealing with reality. While other banks fall over themselves in the race for supremacy, Bank Al Jazira have derived tactics that will deliver SUSTAINABLE growth and development. When many of their competitors fall short of the finish line, we expect Bank Al Jazira to continue to accelerate for a long time to come".

clearly mastered the art of recruiting call centre agents with a customer service attitude that can be developed in training. The agents are lively, enthusiastic and encouragingly proud of what they do. The fact that the agent population is so engaged cannot be attributed to any one factor but is perhaps one of the strongest indicators of successful, strategic congruence in operation.

INSIGHTS congratulate and applaud Luay for achieving outstanding success and for his on-going dedication to this industry. Luay would also be quick to highlight that his success has been achieved as a result of the strategic abilities of Bank Al Jazira's executive, the leadership of Khalid Ramadan and the effort and motivation of his entire call centre team.





The INSIGHTS Call Centre Awards '13 Night

The “regional call centre calendar” ends each year when the industry’s elite gather at the Crowne Plaza Dubai to collectively celebrate and acknowledge the benefits we bring to businesses and organisations across the Middle East. The atmosphere was perhaps a little more strained than in previous years as the Awards program matures and rewards are more highly coveted; participants are under increasing pressure from their senior management to achieve success. But it must be remembered that INSIGHTS do not host an evening of reward and recognition, they host an evening of celebration and above all else the host’s objective is for everyone to recognise that the people in attendance represent the most successful customer operations in the region and regardless of who wins, everyone deserves to celebrate.

growth rates among regional outsourcers.

Keenaghan went on to congratulate all those who had been nominated for awards and provided some eye-opening statistics: - the regional industry is growing at 15%-20% per annum. Commensurate with that, the number of entrants and the number of attendees at the awards night has also increased by 20% while the number of award submissions has increased by 40%. Keenaghan unveiled INSIGHTS plan to kick-off the Awards 2014 program in December 2013. He highlighted that this would provide participants with maximum opportunities to prepare timely submissions for the 2014 Awards and to ensure that their submissions meet the judging requirements. In closing, Keenaghan congratulated regional call centres for outstanding achievement within the global industry.

- He highlighted the plight of the company who claim that their only mission in life is to win the INSIGHTS awards.
- Then there was the company who claimed they deserve to win an award because their working hours are 8 to 9!

O’Connor also advised that there are no marks for quoting books or following standard practice. Winners win because they do something valuable that reflects their brand strategy and is creative, novel and/or unique. Thus, an agent of the month program does not do anything to help a participant win. There is nothing inherently wrong with an agent of the month program



Dominick opens the proceedings

INSIGHTS’ Dominick Keenaghan opened the awards night and delivered his annual industry address. He pointed out that the awards program is free to enter and that it would be unsustainable without the support of sponsors. This year, the awards program was sponsored by Saudi Arabia’s leading Contact Centre Outsource Service Provider, Smartlink and BPO+, the Oman and Qatar-based OSP that, as a result of delivering a regionally consistent branded experience has enjoyed one of the fastest

In keeping with tradition, the evening’s Master of Ceremonies was INSIGHTS’ Dr. Brownell O’Connor. O’Connor was quick to follow Keenaghan’s statistics and highlighted that the attendees represented the top 5% of Middle East call centres. That is something that EVERY nominee should be proud of. The strict judging methodologies and the fact that INSIGHTS, above all else, need to protect their brand position ensures that only truly worthy call centres are nominated for awards. The region is filled with good call centres but there are only a few GREAT call centres and the best of the best, the top 5% were gathered in the Crowne Plaza’s Jumeirah ballroom.

In a light-hearted address O’Connor shared some of the more humorous answers provided by participants in this year’s awards submissions:-





We all know that call centre managers are not used to wasting money so this particular illusion had many participants close to cardiac failure. In fact, more than one accountant left the room with an anxiety attack. Thankfully, in the end, the money was safe and the remaining participants were able to revive their accountants.

In his grand finale, Sharp returned to the subject of money and once again destroyed someone's hard-earned dirhams. In the end he invited his volunteer assistant to cut open a lemon and the bill was re-discovered inside the lemon. This prompted the previously resuscitated accountants to rush out and buy tons of lemons but alas, without Sharp's intervention, no further dirham-bearing fruit was ever found.

The evening was another resounding success. Participants, award winners, organisers and staff were all happy and as the guests filed out of the ballroom many

BUT... because almost everyone does it, it is not unique, creative, novel or specifically brand strategy aligned.

Before commencement of the meal, the artistic award winners were announced along with the innovation award winners and the FLAGS site certification pioneer awards. The artistic award category included awards for music videos, photography, essays, art etc. The innovation awards were designed to recognise businesses and individuals who had been particularly innovative but in an area/method that fell outside the normal award categories. The FLAGS pioneer awards recognised the first operations in the region that were on course to be the first to be certified under INSIGHTS FLAGS certification scheme.

As the evening continued the "BEST" in category awards were presented. These are the awards given for specific facets of contact centre performance such as Quality Assurance, Training and IT. A number of special awards were also announced, recognising unique contributions by individuals and businesses. The awards were presented by Dominick Keenaghan.

As Brownell continued to focus on adherence to schedule, he announced the winners of the "BEST of the BEST" awards. These are the awards for the Best operations such as the BEST (small) call centre, BEST (large) OSP etc. Once again, the awards were presented by Dominick Keenaghan.

The Awards presentations culminated with the announcement of the winners of the "ultimate" awards for call centre of the year, OSP of the year etc. Keenaghan, once again, presented the awards.

“ Sharp created a Sudoku-like matrix of numbers that demonstrated mathematical mastery in addition to mind-reading skills. ”

In the middle of the proceedings, Brownell introduced the evening's entertainment. This year's entertainer was Frederic Sharp. Frederic is a master magician who amazed attendees in 2011. He returned this year, by demand and managed, once again, to baffle the audience.

In his opening performance, sharp demonstrated "mind magic" but as always he went a little further. Rather than just reading the mind of an individual, Sharp created a Sudoku-like matrix of numbers that demonstrated mathematical mastery in addition to mind-reading skills. In fact, with the skills he demonstrated, one would imagine that there is a new career waiting for Sharp as an adherence manager. Not only can he plot adherence trends but he can read minds to understand if excuses are real or... less than real!

In another display, Sharp, assisted by a number of volunteer assistants, came extremely close to shredding real money.

took themselves and their awards to other locations to continue the celebrations. Many celebrations continued straight through to the next morning and beyond. Some of us had to appear at the conference the next morning so we were more constrained than them but we were all delighted at the fact that we had been part of something that brought so much happiness, so much celebration and so much pride.

Our MC reverted to his role of conference chairman the next morning and our host continued in his role as exhibition director but one thing was evident – they couldn't help but smile and they took the time to congratulate all the Awards participants because without the participants' determination, their vision and their ability to rise up to a challenge this industry would not be as successful as it is and the Awards program would not be growing at such an incredible rate.

Winner Cameo



Ahmed Salloum, Call Centre Manager, QualityNet receives his Award

Helpdesk Manager of the Year (<31 Seats)



Ahmad Salloum is the call centre manager for the Kuwaiti Internet Services Provider Qualitynet. Ahmad won the title “Helpdesk Manager of the Year” in the small helpdesk category. The helpdesk category was added in 2013 in order to account for the fact that helpdesk performance dynamics are very different from call centre performance dynamics. Judges had difficulty each year in comparing the performance of call centres and helpdesks so it was decided that these two categories would be better separated in order to allow for more equitable comparisons.

Qualitynet in Kuwait (Qnet) handles some 30000 calls each month. As usual, for helpdesks the calls are quite long and many of the calls require complicated resolution processes. As a result, agent recruitment, training and development mechanisms are critical to success. One common temptation in the helpdesk industry is to focus on hard and technical skills in recruitment and the result is always a lack of effectiveness. Qnet have a greater understanding of the importance of attitude in agent recruitment and they have implemented numerous recruitment mechanisms to leverage this.

Qualitynet enjoys a unique position in the Kuwaiti market and Ahmad clearly understands this. He works hard to educate and inform his senior management team about why it is better for the brand to achieve some KPI's and not achieve others. He has a definitive understanding of Branded Experience delivery and he is adept at

communicating and reporting upon strategic service delivery to the highest levels of the organisation. The judges were particularly impressed with Qualitynet's demonstration of congruence in reporting. In fact, the business values communication so much that their communications charter is published on their web site.

Qualitynet's brand promise is “Leadership through Quality” and once

- To become a Total Integrator and Solution Provider for the services offered to its customers

Ahmad has built a helpdesk operation that clearly supports all the stated strategic objectives of Qualitynet. Winning an INSIGHTS award is not about achieving some notional perfection; it is about balancing real world requirements to deliver brand-congruent customer services. Ahmad



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again, their submission demonstrated congruence with a thorough and concise helpdesk quality assurance process in place. The quality assurance process belies Qualitynet's stated corporate objectives:-

- We are committed to provide quality services to all our customers through innovative and technological leadership.
- Ensure customer satisfaction through quality service and good customer care.
- Understanding the power of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Qualitynet is committed to bringing the benefits and convenience of technology to our customers.

has definitely achieved that. His achievements might not have been so effective were it not for the concise definition of strategic objectives communicated by the business' senior management team and he certainly would not have delivered the end result without the dedication and support of a motivated, educated, skilled and determined team of helpdesk agents.

INSIGHTS congratulate Ahmad and the entire Qualitynet team for being pioneers in the INSIGHTS helpdesk awards and for demonstrating how the principles of strategic congruence extend beyond call centres into the most technical helpdesk environments. The judges look forward to future developments at Qualitynet as regional industry leaders. ●



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Qualitynet is Kuwait's No.1 provider of Internet, Data Communication and ICT Solutions, adhering to the needs of both Corporate and Residential customers.

Operating with a vision to be the leading telecommunication solutions provider, Qualitynet today stands at the forefront of the industry. Through constant innovation, strategic management practices and adherence to world-class quality standards, Qualitynet has not only helped revolutionize the way people communicate and run their businesses, but has also helped in making Kuwait one of the favourable business hubs in the Middle East.

With the year 2013 marking the company's 15th anniversary, Qualitynet strengthens its commitment to technological development in the country, and will continue to cater to the interests of the nation.



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Winner Cameo



Humairah Majid, COO, Cupola receives the Best Large OSP Award

Best Large OSP (>300 Seats)

Best OSP Longevity Award (Longest Customer Contract)

Best Lead Generation Program



Since the Awards program was launched Cupola have possibly featured more than any other Outsourcer in terms of the number of awards they have won and the consistently high standard of submission. The judging process has always mandated that a submission must demonstrate some unique, strategically aligned attribute to be worthy of nomination AND a call centre cannot win for the same attribute two years in succession. In other words, Cupola worked very hard over the years to ensure that they could demonstrate a dynamic, novel and creative approach to strategic congruence.

That dynamism is part of Cupola's brand and in fact their ability to adapt to changing conditions and dynamic requirements is probably best identified by the fact that they won the OSP longevity award every year – meaning that they can boast the longest continuous outsourcing contract in the region. That contract happens to be with a large multinational and being able to sustain a large contract with a large multinational for such a long period of time demonstrates the robustness of Cupola's approach and the reliability of their service.

This year, Cupola were faced with multiple competitive challenges, They had to maintain the dynamism that they are renowned for but they were also prohibited from winning the same title awards that they won last year AND they

had an entirely new submission form and process to deal with.

With all those challenges and with the outsourcing industry remaining as tough and challenging as ever, Cupola could have understandably exerted less effort than before. However, hard work is not something the Cupola brand are shy of. In fact, the judges commented "It seems that Cupola love a challenge and

considered by the judges to be a superior performer in this regard.

It is worthwhile to take a step back from the glitz of winning awards and consider what the awards actually mean for the winners, their staff and their customers:-

In consideration of the Longevity Award, Cupola have been serving one

“ This year, Cupola were faced with multiple competitive challenges, They had to maintain the dynamism that they are renowned for but they were also prohibited from winning the same title awards that they won last year ”

they are both willing and capable of moving mountains to rise to any worthwhile challenge. They are strategic in every sense of the word and their operational success demonstrates the effective bond between their strategic and operations management team”.

This year, once again, Cupola needed a small army to carry home their numerous awards. In addition to the Longevity Award they also won the award for best Lead Generation program and ultimately, the best Large Outsourcer award. The lead generation program was ranked as one of the most competitive categories in this year's competition so Cupola were definitely

client since their inception, some 12 years ago. Winning the Longevity Award confirms that this is the longest, continuously running call centre outsourcing agreement in the region. Thus this Award stands testament to professional and robust account management teams in addition to the obvious competence that must exist at the agent level in order for a multinational to renew their contract with Cupola year after year. For prospective clients it means that you can trust Cupola. When they offer advice and recommendations they do so because they know how to improve results and in so doing they believe they can forge long-lasting relationships.

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Outstanding Industry Expertise*



Iftikhar Kathawala, CFO- Cupola Group, receives the Best Lead Generation Program Award

One key factor that every outsource client should evaluate before choosing a particular Outsource Service Provider is to seek references from the OSP's longest, continuously engaged clients.

In consideration of the Sales Lead Generation award, Cupola fought off fierce competition in this category and they are truly "at the top of their game". No business can survive without sales leads but, as part of the acquisition process, lead generation is not inexpensive. Companies are often loathe to invest in effective lead generation for fear of wasting money but failure to invest in lead generation eventually leads to stalled businesses. Cupola have demonstrated not only success in lead generation but also a positive return on investment. Thus, once again, this Award confirms that Cupola's agents are top class. They are competent, energetic and results oriented. It confirms that Cupola's account management teams understand the nature of lead generation, can tailor their capabilities to the needs of their clients and that they can communicate effectively to their clients in order for their clients to maximise lead conversions. From a client perspective, Cupola's Lead Generation Award demonstrates that you do not need to fear ROI in lead

generation investments. Cupola will not allow you to over invest because they want to demonstrate a positive return to further add to their longevity status.

Ultimately, Cupola walked away with the award for best Large OSP in the Middle East. The analysis criteria for the OSP title awards are, like the call centre

awards, based upon strategy. In the case of OSP's however, there are two levels of strategy:-

1. How well does the OSP adhere to its own brand strategy
2. How does the OSP adapt and/or adopt the strategy of its clients.

In both of these areas, Cupola have excelled. The Cupola brand is clear for all those who care to look. Cupola are transparently obsessed with adhering to their brand values hence staff, clients and customers know what to expect in each and every engagement. Perhaps more critically, however, Cupola's team structure and management meth-

odologies are designed with strategic dynamism in mind. Their internal methodologies provide bridges between Cupola's strategy and the strategy of their clients. In other words, Cupola is not a "delusional factory" that has some notional idea of the singular perfect way of managing customers. Cupola understand strategy and they embrace it. Their agent teams and account management teams are trained and structured to understand that different strategies require a different approach and Cupola have been extremely successful with all sorts of campaigns and projects as a result. As a client of Cupola you can be assured that they are capable of projecting your brand, your way. You can rest assured that your customers will experience you, not Cupola. You can be satisfied that when they offer advice and suggestion it is done with your customers and your strategy in mind.

Thus Cupola have carried home a number of Awards. Awards that highlight the capabilities of their agent

“As a client of Cupola you can be assured that they are capable of projecting your brand, your way. You can rest assured that your customers will experience you, not Cupola.”

teams, the robustness of their account management teams, the transparency and reliability of their brand and perhaps most of all, the focus that Cupola have on building long-term sustainable, value-based relationships with their clients. In the words of the judges: - "Cupola are an outstanding example of all the great things this industry can offer across the region. They are renowned for success and quality. It is a pleasure to see them return year after year with renewed dynamism and renewed energy. Cupola will remain as the region's guiding force for a long time to come".



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Team RTA 8009090 receive their Award

Best Government Call Centre (Lifestyle)

Best Employee Retention & Motivation Program

هيئة الطرق والمواصلات
ROADS & TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

RTA

Dubai's Road Transport Authority (RTA) 8009090 call centre returned to the awards this year and demonstrated, once again, outstanding professionalism within the public sector in addition to showcasing a call centre operation that would be just as competitive in the private sector as it is in the public sector. RTA 8009090 carried home two awards for

levels of service in order to encourage increased utilisation.

On the other side of the scale, however, Government Lifestyle operations are a monopoly and therefore the level of service provided does not need to be excessively high as that would merely diminish returns and increase the cost to the customer. RTA

absolute competence and dedication of the senior management and operations management teams".

In addition to strategic congruence, RTA 8009090 also demonstrated definitively creative capabilities in employee retention and motivation. Their retention and motivation strategy contains all the normal elements of "employee of the month" etc. but then they take it a step further. With the aid of their HR department, the call centre have identified ten key factors that influence retention and as a result of exerting this effort they get far more return on their "motivation and retention spend" than other operations that simply spend excessively. The judges commented "little twists add to the intrigue of this call centre's motivation and retention strategy. Their Blitz weeks, for example, pay dividends not only in challenge and light-hearted competition but also in terms of permissive encouragement and business intelligence. They have formulated a methodology that drives fun, motivation, retention, quality performance and business intelligence

“ These two awards are issued by a regional organization that specializes in providing the latest solutions and certifications related to Contact Centres; this achievement reaffirms the RTA's commitment to providing high standards of services rendered to the public; we are delighted to receive the awards!

Ahmed Mahboub,
Director of Customer Service Department – RTA

"best Government lifestyle call centre" and "best employee retention and motivation program".

The 80-seat call centre is managed by Tanya Marie Barton with the assistance of Contact Centre Specialist, Muhammed Sarwar. Together, Tanya and Muhammed have implemented a contact centre operation that is perfectly orchestrated to deliver optimum returns to the business it serves, both strategically and operationally. The operation handles more than 140,000 inbound telephone calls per month, in addition to outbound calls and emails.

This year's competition saw the expansion of the Government call centre competition; the INSIGHTS' evolutionary model defines seven different types (strategies) of Government call centre and "RTA 8009090" falls within the Government "Lifestyle" strategy. This strategy is defined as call centres that provide optional, opt-in services to the public. "Government lifestyle" differs from utilities because utilities (water, electricity) are essential for living and members of the public have no option but to utilise/purchase utilities. Bus services, taxi services, metro services are used by choice, not by necessity and thus the call centre needs to recognise the need to provide higher

8009090 continue to be a perfect model of balance between providing sufficient service to encourage increased utilisation and avoiding excessively high service that would simply increase the cost of service provision to the public.

“ On behalf of Tanfeeth, we would like to congratulate the RTA for winning the "Best Government Call Centre (Lifestyle)" and "Best Employee Retention and Motivation Program" awards at the Middle East Call Centre Awards 2013. We are proud to have partnered with RTA and supported them to deliver excellence in customer service through their call center operations.

Suhail Bin Tarraf, Chief Executive Officer, Tanfeeth

Barton and Sarwar have demonstrated their consistent ability to control the operation within the tight boundaries required and of course they could not do this without a superb support team of managers, supervisors and agents. Perhaps, most important of all, however, is the support they receive from the senior management team. A management team that is characterised by strategic awareness and competence supported by courage and tenacity. The consistent and continued strategic and operational success of 8009090 would, in the mind of the judges "be simply impossible to achieve without the

simultaneously. In a public service operation with significant challenges of repetitiveness and peaked call arrival creativity has got to be the most powerful 'weapon' and the team who operate this centre seem to be bursting with creative abilities".

INSIGHTS congratulate RTA 8009090 for a superb submission and a result to be proud of. From the agents to the senior managers you have demonstrated strategic abilities, creativity, management skills, focus and dedication to your customers.



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نفيد
tanfeeth™

Other Middle East Call Centre Awards '13 Winners Congratulated by INSIGHTS' President Dominick Keenaghan



Call Centre Manager
Of The Year (Ambassador) - Munther Al Saleh
Best Small Helpdesk (Operationally, <31 Seats)
Best Call Centre Photography Award
Viva Kuwait



Best CRM Analytics
Abdul Latif Jameel



Help Desk of the Year (Strategically Aligned)
OSP Account Manager of the year
bpo+



Best Semi-Government Call Centre
ADDC



Best Internally Developed Application
Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait



Best IVR Process
Al Ain Municipality



Call Centre OSP Of The Year (Strategically Aligned)
City Services Consultancy



Call Centre Manager of the year (<31 Seats)
Rami Al Atiyat, CrystelCall



Best Escalation Management Process
INSIGHTS FLAGS Pioneer
Dr. Sulaiman Al Habib



Best Government Call Centre (Unified)
National Contact Centre Bahrain



Best Medium OSP (71-300 Seats)
Best OSP Reporting Systems And Processes
Best Technology Platform
Silah Gulf



Best (audited) CSAT
Viva Bahrain

Other Middle East Call Centre Awards '13 Winners Congratulated by INSIGHTS' President Dominick Keenaghan



Best Small Call Centre (Operationally <30)
Best FCR Program
McDonalds KSA



Best Government Call Centre (Monopoly)
Saudi Post



Best Service To Sales Program
Smartlink



Best VOC Program - Large Company (>1000 Emp)
Best QA Program
Best Call Centre Song (Music Video)
Best Call Centre Essay Submission
Vodafone Qatar



Best Medium Helpdesk (Operationally, 31-70 Seats)
Emirates Group IT/Mercator



Best Sales Program
Emirates NBD



Best New Call Centre
Hamad Medical Corporation



Best Large Call Centre (Operationally, >70 Seats)
Best Customer Winback Program
OSN



Best Customer Retention Program
Best Call Centre Comedy (Video)
Best Call Centre Music Composition
Best Call Centre Art Award
Ooredoo



Best Facilities
Etihad Airlines



Best Medium Call Centre (Operationally 31-70)
Best Career And Skill Paths
FedEx

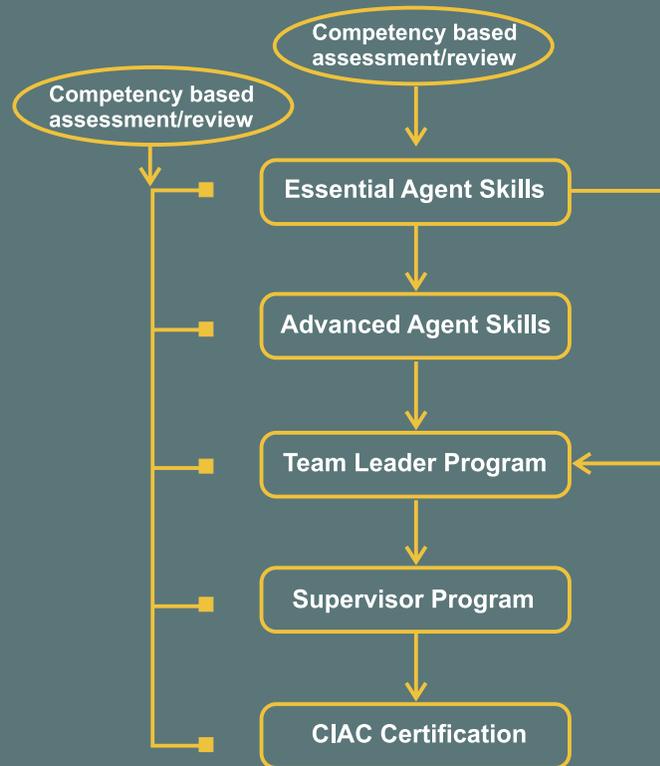


Best Government Call Centre (Utilities)
National Water Company

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