



Excellence in Customer Experience:

Involvement Packaging

EXAMPLE

Organisation Details

<p>Name of Organisation</p> <p>What does your organisation do?</p>	<p>Involvement Packaging</p> <p>We are the UK's leading supplier of UN certified rigid packaging containers. Sounds dull? Well actually it's more interesting than it seems at first. We believe that the products we sell are just the tip of the iceberg... We don't think of ourselves as simply a buyer and seller of buckets and tins. What we do is an absolutely critical part in our Customers' manufacturing processes and getting their products to market. We have a deeper understanding of why our business exists through our Purpose and Values-led Performance Culture.</p> <p>Why Do We Exist?</p> <p>Our Purpose (beyond simply making money):</p> <p>Delivering our Customers' Products to Market with Confidence.</p> <p>How?</p> <p>Our Values define how we achieve this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Image – Building on our positive reputation.• Customer – Exceeding our Customers' expectations.• Innovation – Always looking for new ways of doing business.• Team – Everyone here makes a difference. <p>We have brought our Purpose and our Value of 'Customer' to life within the business through our World Class Customer Experience (WCCE) Campaign. As a result the business has transformed and is, in many ways, unrecognisable compared to 5 years ago.</p>
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Who are your main customer groups?

We supply to a vast range of Customers who utilise our packaging to transport, export, protect and showcase their products to their Customers.

Our principal Customer groups/sectors include: Food, Chemicals & Coatings, Flavours & Fragrances and Animal Nutrition, as well as many other unusual uses for our products.

Please follow the link below to a video narrated by our colleagues, which showcases the incredible things our products are used for, including; camel racing supplements, conservation, live-saving research and Star Wars movie costumes.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/7rd06mu15kpyuu/Part%201%20%20Dec%202015%20Workshop%20Part.mp4?dl=0>

Our Customers are located throughout all regions of the UK and Rep. of Ireland. Additionally, our Exports have doubled in 2018, successfully exporting to over 30 Countries.

We will fulfill over 45,000 orders this year across our 4 Divisions:

- 1) Invopak: Over 70 years' experience in supplying B2B Customers.
- 2) Ashtown Packaging: Invopak's trading division in Ireland with a history of 100 years.
- 3) Manupak: Draws on relationships with leading manufacturers to supply products in large volumes.
- 4) OiPPS: Our online ecommerce division supplies smaller volumes to businesses, direct end-users and members of the public.

The result is that we can confidently supply any customer with just 1 single container up to full truck loads.

What are the main products and services you offer?

We believe that what we offer is a market-leading combination of stock availability, high-quality products, competitive pricing and customer service

Paul – Director “How we go about business can be summed up by the following “Anyone can do what we do, but not the way we do it.”

We summarise our offering into 5 key areas, our Customer Promises (2).

We promise:

- 1) To source and supply the highest quality packaging solutions from our leading suppliers, to protect and showcase your products e.g. we supply the largest range of tinplate containers in the UK
- 2) To strive for a level of service that exceeds your expectations - as a team we are committed to getting 1% better at what we do, every single day e.g. we have our own in-house design team.
- 3) To keep things simple and to make dealing with us straightforward and hassle free.
- 4) That our team will have the knowledge and expertise to offer the ideal packaging solutions for your business.
- 5) That by working together, we will ensure that specific products are in stock and ready to deliver - we are the first to guarantee this. We hold over £3m of stock in total.

Please list any previous awards earned by the project/initiative submitted for this award:

The 2017 & 2018 North West E3 Business Awards - Customer Service Excellence
The 2018 National Customer Experience Awards – Silver for 'Best Customers at the Heart of Everything' and 'Best Business Change and Transformation'.
The 2018 Greater Manchester Business Awards – Customer Service winner.
The 2018 UK and European Employee Engagement Awards – Winner of Best SMB & Highly Commended for Internal Comms

Description of your Entry

Title of your project/initiative **Every Customer has a World Class Customer Experience (WCCE)**

SUMMARY (200 words maximum) Please provide a high level outline of your project/initiative. What aspects of it do you consider demonstrate excellence?

Arjen came into the business in 2011. He found a business that had grown successfully, but it had become Operationally-focused, not Customer-focussed.

It was a good business with so much potential. But the key to unlocking that potential, was to re-orientate people's thinking and find the real Purpose of their work:

Delivering our Customers' Products to Market with Confidence

We've demonstrated excellence because:

1) We're committed. We're consistently developing our WCCE campaign over the long-term including:

- 1% Improvements to deliver a WCCE
- Walking in Other Peoples' Shoes
- Customer Promise
- Stock Guarantees

2) Everyone believes Customer Experience is a priority. We know that because you only see the change in behaviours we've seen, when it's fundamentally aligned to what people believe.

3) We took a "Leap of Faith". We didn't know how to do this yet look at what we've learnt and achieved.

SECTION A - Rationale for the Project (500 words maximum)

This should cover:

- **The aim of the project, initiative and approach.**
- **Why it is important to your organisation.**
- **What measures and targets you have in place which will demonstrate its success.**

Competition, customer expectations, exchange rate fluctuations and raw material increases are all recent challenges for our business. These issues were challenging the long-term survival of the business. For us to meet these challenges, we made the strategic decision to think, "assuming we are competitive on price, what's the lever we pull that's going to keep Customer's coming back?"

Our aim was to mitigate these challenges whilst growing the business profitably. In order to do this and secure the long-term future of the business, we realised we needed to transform our approach to Customer Experience. This was confirmed by survey results, in 2013 colleagues scored the question "Customer Service is a top priority within our company" an average 3.2/5. This indicated that a number of respondents disagreed with this statement.

We had emerged from a difficult period of succession and survived intact, but survival was not enough. We're weren't prepared to 'tick along'. In order to build a stronger, more sustainable business over the long term, we needed to offer a powerful combination of customer experience, quality and price.

We approached this by adopting our Purpose and Values-led Performance Culture, with our Value of 'Customer' at its centre. Out of this thinking and planning came our World Class Customer Experience Campaign.

We had a number of clear measures and targets that would indicate progress for us:

1. **Gaining continuous customer feedback.** We never used to actively encourage feedback. We started using a customer feedback platform called feefo, with the aim of achieving a 4.7/5 Customer Experience rating. More commonplace in B2C, we are the first in our industry to gain and publish independent post-purchase feedback.
2. **Launch our industry first 'Stock Guarantee'** We're the first in our industry to guarantee to customers that we will always have stock of specific lines for them. We will have extended this to include 50 stock lines by January 2019.
3. **More engaged colleagues leading to a reduction in absenteeism.** We regularly had over 300 days of absence in a year.
4. **A 20% reduction in errors and non-conformances**, which has a significant positive impact on our Customers.
5. Everyone, through our **'Walking in Other Peoples' Shoes** project, will have visited a Customer.
6. Implementing **1% Improvements** to improve Customer Experience as a result of **Debriefs** one of the tools we use to get better at what we do.
7. Everyone to have **Quarterly Goals** focused on delivering a WCCE.
8. **Growth.** As a result of this campaign, the business will be growing profitably – focussed on Gross Margins

SECTION B - Planning the Project (500 words maximum)

This should cover:

- How the project was planned and why it was done that way.
- What you believe demonstrates excellence about the planning
- How were relevant stakeholders involved at the planning stage?

With no large corporate budget, we had to plan it ourselves, adapting and learning along the way.

Historically business planning had been haphazard and short term. One of the first things we did was introduce our Planning Pyramid (8). This has developed organically over several years, it's without doubt the tool that has allowed us to make such fantastic progress. Adopting this approach has a proven record of success in our business, whether it's the introduction of our WCCE campaign or other Projects.

We work from the bottom of the Pyramid up and this culminates in everyone having transparent Quarterly Goals, including our CEO which prioritises day-to-day actions.

Our Purpose and Values lay the foundations as long-term commitments. Our 5 Year Plan creates a vision and clarity of what the business will look like. A key pillar is that 'Every Customer has a World Class Experience'.

Lindsey – Communications Manager "When Arjen shared this vision of the 5 year plan and a World Class Customer Experience, it seemed so far from the reality at that time, that it was hard to picture."

We realised we had to break down this daunting task into something achievable. We break WCCE down into Annual Priorities and Planning Frameworks. Every Team has their own Planning Frameworks which detail the objectives for the year, measures, who's responsible and by when.

We expand the Planning Frameworks objectives into Quarterly Goals. Every single person in the business has Quarterly Goals reviewed monthly.

This method of planning effectively means that we have 90 people working towards delivering a World Class Customer Experience.

We involved colleagues at the planning stage by:

- **Creating our WCCE Principles:** At a company-wide Workshop everyone was asked 'What do you think makes a World Class Customer Experience (WCCE)?' Everyone shared their ideas and we pulled apart the components of each experience to create 8 Principles that everyone in the business can relate to and demonstrate.
- **3 All-Company Workshops per year:** A great way to engage colleagues and introduce new ideas around the WCCE Campaign. Led by the CEO, every single person attended these Workshops from all the depots and remote workers.
- **Colleague Feedback:** In our Values Handbook, we developed "What You'll See Us Do" and "What You'll Hear Us Say" in response to stakeholder feedback.
- **Your Voice:** A quarterly meeting where representatives convey the views of their team members, allowing everyone to contribute and have their say on decisions that affect them.
- **Weekly 'Huddles':** A key communication tool throughout the business and an opportunity for everyone within the business to raise something that has gone well/less well and discuss solutions.
- **Yammer** - The voice of our employees
- **Ongoing Planning & Learning:** e.g. using Discussion Boards in small groups to aid planning

SECTION C - Implementing the Project (500 words maximum)

This should cover:

- What you believe demonstrates excellence about how the project was implemented
- How were relevant stakeholders involved in the implementation stage.
- How were your resources managed?

Our Approach to Implementation

1. **Keep it simple:** The introduction of Purpose and Values taught us that we had to keep it simple, whilst supporting its implementation via continuous reinforcement through conversations and guidance, in line with a Communication Plan.

We clearly defined important messages by incorporating them into our Values Handbook, the most important document in our Company.

2. **It's REPEATEDLY Driven from the Top.** It had to start with the CEO/Directors. We had to model the behaviours we wanted our colleagues to adopt first.

We also introduced a New Direct Report Meetings Structure (including 1-2-1 Check-Ins) to align the Leadership Team and manage resource. These replaced traditional Management Meetings.

3. **An Inclusive Approach:** Everyone was involved in our WCCE Campaign and we continually encourage suggestions by:
- Regular conversations with teams around how Purpose & Values relates to them and what a WCCE looks like.
 - Having Quarterly GOALS focussed on WCCE.
 - Attending Customer Workshops. E.g. we reviewed our Customer Experience Relay (23) to identify 1% Improvements to deliver a WCCE.
 - Weekly Huddles.
 - Suggestions and recognition Inbox.
 - Yammer – Open platform for colleagues
 - Debriefs. Anyone in the business can call a debrief. It's a way to facilitate a conversation around something that has gone well or less well, and agree 1% Improvements to improve the process.

Joan – CSE “I’m given support when I need it and I’m able to make my own decisions and improvements to benefit customers”.

4. **1% Improvements:** A natural extension to our WCCE Campaign. We asked everyone, what can you do to improve a process by 1% in order to benefit the customer? So far, an incredible 250 1% Improvements have been suggested. Many have been implemented including:
- 5-minute picking-list checks every morning.
 - Automated Delivery Notifications – Industry First.
 - Driver Checklists suggested by a Warehouse member.

5. **Creating a personal connection with our customers:** Walking in Other People's Shoes.

Everyone in the company visits a Customer to meet them personally and gain a deeper understanding of why they ask us to do the things they do. A Debrief is held and resulting improvements are created, some of these include our Picking List Criteria and Food Customer picking-list symbol.

6. **It's a GOAL for everyone**
We realise these things don't just happen, so we set Annual Priorities – WCCE is one of them. Everyone has Quarterly GOALS linked to Annual Priorities, which leads day-to-day actions. This approach makes something as big as our World Class Customer Experience achievable.

7. **Celebrate Successes and Have FUN!** Our Recognition Programme takes many forms – from a simple “thank you” through to company-wide awards.
- Instantly: on-the-spot vouchers
 - Weekly: Huddles and Friday Note
 - Monthly: GEM Awards
 - ‘Thank you’ notes from the CEO
 - Annually: Summer Celebration MAD Awards.
 - Yammer: Customer Care Group.

SECTION D - Impact and Learning (500 words maximum)

This should cover:

- What were the outcomes/results of the project which demonstrate excellence
- What did the organisation learn from the project (this could include from the planning and/or the implementation)
- What do you perceive to be the long term impact?

Commitment to gaining feedback:

- We opened ourselves up to independent customer feedback.
- We achieved our feefo target of 4.7/5 Customer Service rating and received feefo's Gold Trusted Service Award – it's highest accolade awarded to the top 2% of businesses.
<https://www.feefo.com/en-GB/reviews/invopak?withMedia=false&timeFrame=ALL&displayFeedbackType=BOTH&serviceScores=4>

Actively receive feedback from customers:

- See link to Customer Videos – interviews with long-term Customers.
- <https://www.dropbox.com/s/oyqf9ssbfqdd704/Q2%202017%20Workshop%20%28V4%29.mp4?dl=0>

Customers now feel compelled to tell us about our service:

- Xxx customer highlighting “massive improvements”.
- Xxx Technologies UK “highly professional”.
- Mistakes happen. Customers remember how we react: xxx Packaging.

More Engaged Colleagues has led to:

- Picking errors have reduced by: 17% YTD compared to 2017. Whilst orders despatched increased by 14%.
- Keying errors have reduced by: 43% YTD compared to 2017. Whilst orders keyed increased by 2%.
- Since 2015 we've achieved an incredible reduction of 54% in absenteeism across the business.
- Customer Service is now a top priority. Scoring an average 4.3/5 in our latest survey.
- Proud to tell customers about what we stand for.

Focusing on 1% Improvements has created a long-term Culture of Innovation:

We received an incredible 127 improvements after the first workshop alone. Leading to a continuous flow of improvements via our suggestion channel.

Arjen – CEO: “When I came into the business, people didn't think or see how they could innovate in their role. People now realise that just because the rest of the industry is slow to change, we don't have to be. They know there are opportunities to innovate.

Growth. UK GDP Growth has been between 1.5% - 2.5%pa for 4yrs. In contrast, we've achieved, without acquisitions:

- 5% Sales Growth y-on-y
- 8% Gross Margins Growth –y-on-y
- OiPPS – our e-commerce platform for smaller volumes - tripled turnover in 12 months.
- Manupak – for high volume business – £0 to £3m in 4 years.

What did we learn?

- **Keep Things Fresh and Simple, Whilst Not Introducing Anything New:** We framed our WCCE Campaign as an extension of our 'Customer' Value.
- **Be Patient and Guide:** Change takes time and people want to be shown how. Our Values Handbook and WCCE Principles guides colleagues.
- **Adjust the message and/or channel to the team.**
- **Company-wide Recognition Goes a Long Way.**
- **The most important step is beginning.** We've never done this before yet look at what we've achieved! We've learnt as we've gone along and improved through practice.

Ultimately, the long-term impact has been the transformation to Customers being at the heart of everything we do.

Our colleagues summarise this impact in their own words:

Kerrie – Accounts Assistant “I feel proud to be a part of a company that is going places.”

Lindsey – Communications Manager “Our focus on Customer has been an incredible transformation. Previously we were focused on our own operation. Now, everyone's focus has shifted to the reason that our business exists...to help our customers.”

Stuart – Customer Service Improvement Manager “The biggest difference has been our focus, we focus on our Customers AND our teams. Previously, we were driven by sales.”