



Dignity PLC Sector: Customer service

Dignity Funeral Plans achieves BSI Kitemark™ for Customer Service

Client background

Dignity PLC, based in Sutton Coldfield, is a FTSE 250 company with 822 funeral locations and 46 crematoria throughout the UK.

Dignity Funeral Plans is a member of the Funeral Planning Authority providing prepaid funeral care plans. These are purchased so that clients' personalised funeral arrangements are paid for and arranged pre-need and then provided at the point of need. They are trusted to help their clients at one of the most difficult times of their lives.

To ensure excellent service from the start of every customer relationship, Dignity has

implemented a customer service strategy, C.O.R.E. principles and a unique Mindset and Language of Service which is part of the Dignity Difference. These have been rigorously assessed against the requirements of the new BSI Kitemark for Customer Service.

The Customer Service Kitemark™

- Rigorous and independent validation of service excellence
- Reinforcement of service behaviours and the core values of Compassion, Openness, Respect and Excellence
- Brand credibility from the BSI Kitemark™, a globally-recognized quality symbol

- Continual improvement in service performance
- Clear competitive advantage
- Enhances brand reputation

“The BSI Kitemark is a recognized symbol of quality, reliability and trust; the Kitemark for Customer Service provides extra assurance to our customers and proves that we deliver on our commitment to a high quality service.”

Gary Kinsella
Head of Client Service Centre| Dignity PLC

Customer service background

As a provider of services that require compassion, respect and care in delivery, Dignity has long been an advocate of quality and service standards – holding ISO 9001 quality management systems certification since 2009 and winning the Best Overall Call Centre at the ICMI Top 50 Call Centre Awards three years in a row.

Gary Kinsella, Head of Client Service Centre, explains, “Dignity always strives to set the highest standards for the funeral profession in terms of service and care – the delivery of customer service excellence lies at the very heart of everything we do. It shapes our strategy and is how we focus our efforts on delivering a strong and consistent performance towards creating value.”

Dignity's organizational culture, known as the Dignity Difference, is critical to continually improving service performance. As Kinsella continues, “We recognize that our staff provide an exceptionally important role in providing excellent client service. Our recruitment policy and induction programme aim to ensure that focus is placed on this area and through on-going training and development our staff are able to deliver high levels of client service and empathy.”

Chris Lewis, Certification Director at BSI says: “The empathy shown by the staff and enthusiasm for the company values and customer service C.O.R.E. principles is exceptional.”

Why the BSI Kitemark?

Maureen Sumner Smith, Chief Operating Officer for Europe at BSI said: “Dignity should be proud that they are the first UK organization to achieve this and it's testament to the customer service strategy they have in place throughout their Client Service Centre. The empathy shown by the staff, and enthusiasm for the company values is exceptional, and it is excellent to see this across all areas of their customer service.”

“Delivering excellent customer service has never been more important to businesses. With rising customer expectations and the growing trend for sharing experiences through social media, companies are under increasing scrutiny and so face increasing pressure to demonstrate increasingly high service levels.”

“Many companies are already delivering exceptional service, however by having their organization's independently assessed on a regular basis as part of the BSI Kitemark process, they can prove to their customers their commitment to high levels of customer experience, particularly as the Kitemark is awarded based on results, not just intent.”

“The BSI Kitemark is a symbol that around 70% of the British public recognize, and one that continues to provide millions of Briton's continued comfort, trust, security and knowledge about the safety and reliability of everyday products – now it's time its authority was

applied to wider customer satisfaction.”

Kinsella says, “The BSI Kitemark is widely recognized by our customers as a symbol of trust. And achieving Kitemark status helps us provide extra assurance during our customers most trusted lifetime purchases. It provides the added peace of mind knowing that they've invested in a high integrity service that will deliver on its promises when the time comes.”

The certification journey

Measuring and improving service performance is a natural part of Dignity's service culture. And the results are impressive – with 94% saying they would recommend a Dignity Funeral Plan to their family and friends.

Service performance metrics are independently validated as part of the BSI Kitemark assessment process.

During the assessment, Dignity also demonstrated its competency against BS 8477: 2014 the Code of Practice for Customer Service, ISO 10002:2014 Quality Management Customer Satisfaction Guidelines for Complaints Handling and ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems.

“In terms of meeting the technical requirements of the BSI Kitemark, we knew we were well prepared because we already have robust processes in place through our long experience of implementing performance standards,” says Kinsella.

“However, the process brought the extra benefit of really focusing our attention on full and effective implementation of our service strategy and being able to prove that our performance is continually improving as a result.”

Benefits of certification

Certification to the BSI Kitemark for Customer Service has helped solve a key business challenge for Dignity. Steve Wallis, Commercial Director says “As a service provider, certification shows our customers that we provide a high quality and high integrity service.”

“Being the first UK organization to achieve this Kitemark really helps to differentiate the Dignity brand and gives us competitive advantage in an industry where trust and credibility are absolutely critical to our customers – from the point of sale to the time of need.”

