

Garlands Call Centres and Powergen Scoop Top Telemarketing Award

Submitted by: Gray Associates

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- 'Define' programme resulted in telemarketing conversion rates increasing by 26%, 'hit rates' by 19% and 'quality concerns' falling by 43% -

Hartlepool, Teeside. Garlands Call Centres and energy company Powergen are pleased to announce that they have jointly won a major industry award for most 'Intelligent Application of Data in Telemarketing'. The award was made at the 'Intelligence' Awards 2002 held at the Le Meridien Grosvenor House, Park Lane, London.

The Intelligence awards are organised and run by Marketing Direct, the leading Direct Marketing magazine from Haymarket Publishing.

The award was won for 'Define', a project handled by Garlands on behalf of Powergen. The aim of Define was to strengthen Powergen's residential acquisition campaign by taking into account individual agents' strengths when selling into particular market segments - uniquely identified through demographic and life style data.

Holly Acland, editor of Marketing Direct and one of the 15 award judges praised the Define programme as "a good example of how businesses are exploiting data segmentation techniques within direct marketing and gaining a real commercial advantage".

The fifteen judges were drawn from right across the direct marketing and advertising industries and included leading figures from both agencies and client-side businesses.

Bharat Vegad Business Development Manager at Powergen commented: "The residential energy market is intensely competitive and projects like Define mean that we are able to gain advantage through understanding the needs of our potential customers."

"We're thrilled that our work has been recognised at such a leading marketing event" said Chey Garland, CEO of Garlands Call Centres. "Customer service and telemarketing personnel are so often the unsung heroes of the marketing department, yet their work is often instrumental in implementing successful campaigns. I also believe this award recognises just how far telemarketing professionals have come in using data segmentation and advanced planning techniques to bring about success".

About Define

The Define programme was built around the idea of creating unique data segments personalised to individual call centre agents which allows them to build on their own track records for selling products to particular customer segments. These segments are uniquely identified through demographic and life style data.

The Garlands innovation was to recognise that the previously existing Powergen data set made up of so-called 'mosaic data' (i.e. data having no intrinsic pattern of commonalities) failed to adequately

capitalise of the Garlands' strength of strongly motivated and led sales teams.

Define used data analysis techniques to segment existing customer data into groupings such as for example; old age pensioners, empty nesters, career people, young families. These segments were then retrospectively correlated against records of previous sales performance, identifying individual agents propensity to sell successfully to each segment. Assumptions were also imposed on the data such as 'when is the best time of day to make contact?' Clearly, in this regard, pensioners and career people needed to be treated differently.

By combining a 'best fit agent to segment' sales strategy with a 'best fit agent to segment' contact strategy, Garlands and Powergen were able to meet and surpass their sales expectations. The programme has resulted in telemarketing conversion rates (i.e. sales per hour) increase by 26%, 'hit rates' (i.e. customer contact ratios) increase by 19%, and 'quality concerns' (i.e. the number of sales 'dissatisfactions' fall by 43%).

About Garlands

Established in 1997, Garlands Call Centres was named the UK's fastest growing large call centre by Marketing Magazine in its 2001 Telemarketing League Tables. Garlands has a blue chip client list that includes leading businesses in the telecoms (mobile and fixed), utilities and financial services industries.

The company handles both inbound and outbound customer contacts via phone, email and the Web for customer retention, cross selling, upselling, customer service, customer acquisition, credit management and customer lifecycle management.

Garlands is passionate about its people, believing that people are key to providing the best customer service. The company provides comprehensive and innovative programmes with a holistic focus to develop the skills of its staff - programmes that extend beyond the call centre and into the local community.

Garlands Call Centres was recognised for the second year running at the European Call Centre Awards, winning a Certificate of Excellence in 2001 and a Bronze award in 2000 for 'Best Outsourced Contact Centre'. The company was also named Tees Valley 'Service Company of the Year' in 2000.

Garlands CEO, Chey Garland, was named Tees Valley 'Business Executive of the Year' in both 1999 and 2001. She has also received national recognition in 2002, notably as 'Business Services Entrepreneur of the Year' at the Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year Finals, 'Best Business Leader' in the 100+ employee category at the Sage Business Awards 2002 and as runner-up in the Verve Clicquot Award for Business Woman of the Year For further media information, please contact:

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