

93% Customer Satisfaction through Access to Services Strategy and Qmatic Customer Flow

Submitted by: Proud PR
Tuesday, 19 February 2013

Bedfordshire – 19 February 2013 – Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has installed Qmatic (<http://www.qmatic.com/uk>) customer flow management to help implement its Access to Services strategy that is being rolled out in three stages across three areas of the borough, Thornaby, Stockton and Billingham.

An analysis of customer advisory points within the borough showed that there were 23 separate customer reception points across the council. The aim was to reduce the number of access points, making it easier for customers to get in touch with the services they require without being passed around different departments. Such has been the success of Stockton's customer flow (<http://www.qmatic.com/uk>) system, in a customer satisfaction survey, 93% of customers scored 9 or 10 out of 10 for customer satisfaction.

The consolidation of council services began in Thornaby with a new customer services centre comprising four customer service desks and a cash office. Qmatic's customer flow management system, Qmatic Suite was installed to help make the transition from entering the customer services centre to seeing a customer adviser as seamless as possible. Following on from the success of this first phase, a larger customer services centre was set up in Stockton town centre, which consolidated six council information services, previously located across different offices within the Borough.

One of the main aims of the Council was to encourage customers to self-serve via kiosks or the council website, thereby helping to reduce the demand on customer service advisers for relatively simple enquiries. As customers enter one of the customer service centres, they are directed to a self-serve kiosk from Qmatic which provides the option to use the self-serve system or take a ticket and wait for an adviser.

Should they choose to see an adviser, customers are issued with a ticket, each coded with a letter before the ticket number to define which service the customer has selected, they are then directed to a waiting area. Kath Hornsey, Customer Services and Administration Manager comments: "The prefix of each service is useful in that it isn't just a straight numbering system. The customer is aware that there are different service queues, and they can see where they are in that particular queue. It allows us to match customers to the most appropriate member of staff, so that queries can be properly addressed. The Qmatic system is flexible enough that it allows us to do this."

Within the waiting area, a screen displays the ticket numbers that are next in each queue, so that customers have an idea of waiting times and are called forward when a suitable customer adviser becomes available. Additional screens can be located in other areas, such as the café, so that customers can get a coffee and still keep track of their place in the queue. The screens also allow the Council to display information to customers such as Council office opening times, information about local events and to inform about new council services.

The Qmatic system provides a number of useful back office and reporting functions, which helps Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to plan and allocate resources effectively. Kath Hornsey comments:

“The management information from the Qmatic system provides data such as visitor figures, peak times for visitors, average wait times and the nature of enquiries. This can help us forecast when we need to bring resources from the back office to the front office and we have multi-skilled our team to enable us to have this flexibility.”

Additional services have been added to customer service centres, such as a private housing association and the Qmatic system enables Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to add these relatively easily. This degree of flexibility allows councils to scale up their customer services, without the need to fully reconfigure their customer flow system.

David Anahory, UK CEO for Qmatic UK comments: “Qmatic has worked with a number of local councils to help them consolidate their customer-facing services. This has a benefit to customers as it provides a one-stop-shop for Council services and also provides economies of scale for the Council. However, increased footfall means that Councils need to carefully consider how they manage a higher volume of customers under one roof. They need a solution that is scalable and which provides meaningful data to help resource their customer facing services adequately.”

- Ends -

About Qmatic

Qmatic is the world leader and innovator in customer flow management (CFM) solutions that are designed to increase sales and productivity while reducing costs for organisations in the retail, retail finance, public sector, healthcare and travel sectors. Its software, hardware and consultancy helps organisations such as Barclays, Boots, DVLA, Homebase, HSBC, Marks & Spencer, Post Office and UK Border Agency to value time within the physical customer experience and derive real-time management information (MI) that powers meaningful business decisions.

This management information can drive important considerations such as in-store/branch/location skills routing, store layout and design, employee training and job satisfaction, customer loyalty and retention, brand equity, opportunity sales, real-time feedback and problem resolution as well as efficiency and cost control. Qmatic’s products range from barriers, right through virtual and linear queue management hardware to mobile phone applications, kiosks systems and new media.

Headquartered in Sweden, Qmatic operates out of 120 international locations. Its solutions have been successfully deployed in 51,000 sites across 122 countries. It is estimated that more than two billion users; a quarter of the world’s population, pass through Qmatic’s systems every year. See www.qmaticolutions.co.uk

Qmatic UK is based at Derwent House, University Way, Cranfield Technology Park, Bedford, MK43 0AZ. Phone: 01234 757 110. Twitter Qmatic_UK.

Press contacts:

Natalie Sutton/Kimberley Gray

Proud PR (<http://www.proudpr.com>)

+44 (0)1276 679570/07884 405835

[qmatic\[at\]proudpr.com](mailto:qmatic[at]proudpr.com)