

Best mid-range budget campaign

Great service gives customers a competitive edge

Simon Monks, VBH (GB) managing director, asks; what is great customer service?



WH Smith was recently voted the worst high street retailer in the UK (Which? 2018), with customers complaining of out-of-date stores, expensive products and poor customer service. WH Smith has failed to adapt its business model to cater for customers who want more than new colouring pencils and a newspaper. I got me thinking. What is great customer service? What exactly do customers need from a hardware supplier? How can we make that person's job – in closing a sale, ordering hardware for 500 units or putting a problem right – easier?

Differentiate from the competition
Customers need products they can rely on. Put another way, they need products where the risk of purchase is minimal. And fabricators and installers want confidence that the buck doesn't stop with them, if something goes wrong. That's one of the key reasons we launched the Q-secure guarantee last year. Q-secure is unique, and in our view the strongest, most comprehensive guarantee in the

market. It covers all the hardware on windows, residential doors and folding patio doors, giving homeowners complete peace of mind for security. It's a great selling tool for installers – homeowners love the peace of mind it brings, and it offers simplicity, with one guarantee for the full range of suited products instead of individual manufacturer guarantees.

We're very confident in the quality of the hardware we supply, but installers need to convey that confidence to homeowners. So, we created the best multi-brand guarantee there is. There's no small print, or ridiculous caveats to exclude real life use of products. Approved installers give the guarantee to their customers. It's free for fabricators and installers to sign up. In addition to the greenteQ range, Q-secure covers Hoppe, Maco, Roto, Securitool, Siegenia and Yale products that have all been included in our PAS24 test programme at RSL, which was carried out on a variety of profiles. Q-secure also helps installers maintain regular contact with homeowners, as a condition of the guarantee is regular maintenance of products – building relationships and increasing the chance to upsell. If there's a breakdown due to hardware failure, we'll pay out up to £3,250 to the homeowner.

Customers told us they want to differentiate themselves and win business for positive reasons, rather than win it by cutting prices. And they don't want the hassle (and potential for mistakes) of dealing with several hardware companies. One customer I spoke to bought from eight different suppliers! We solved his problem by streamlining

his ordering and centralising his supply of third party branded products alongside his greenteQ hardware through VBH, which made ordering much more manageable. The added benefit of online ordering simplified the process even further. Our 'two-way' close relationship with customers makes VBH stand out. Our in-house technical team provides know-how to customers, carries out R&D on greenteQ products developed for the UK and has over 110 years' experience across hardware supply, glass processing, fabrication, installation and sales. Some customers have been with us since the start! Trademith, a trade fabricator in Sussex, has been with

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VBH since it started 25 years ago. I like to catch up with MD, Mark Hutchinson, and hear his feedback on what's working and what isn't. Trademith uses greenteQ's suited range as its standard furniture option and our Coastline range for coastal properties.

10/10 from Garrard Windows
Buckinghamshire-based fabricator Garrard Windows has been a VBH customer for over 10 years. It fabricates around 2,500 products a week using VBH's greenteQ door hinges and handles, window handles and profile cylinders. Our VBH24 webshop makes it easier for Garrard to check stock levels, prices and the progress of their orders from VBH. Using the

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regularly ordered items is really useful. I like to catch up with MD, Mark Hutchinson, and hear his feedback on what's working and what isn't. Trademith uses greenteQ's suited range as its standard furniture option and our Coastline range for coastal properties. When customers order online through VBH24 or phone to order, they're assigned a designated Customer Services Co-ordinator (CSC). Along with the area sales managers, CSCs ensure a personal service for each customer. We have three hubs across the UK – Kent, East Kilbride and Swans – to ensure maximum coverage. VBH has the latest innovation in hardware and guarantees, unbeatable ranges with security options and reliable service and support. Thinking of streamlining your hardware buying? Then get in touch.

NO MORE WAITING ON THE DOORSTEP



VBH (GB), PART OF
Europe's largest hardware distributor, has added the new Yale Conexis L1 Smart Lock to its range of innovative hardware. With Yale's prominent TV advertising campaign across ITV, Sky and Channel 4, the Smart Lock opens up new selling opportunities for fabricators and installers, and locksmiths for retrofit installations. Yale Conexis L1 Smart Lock is a keyless product, operated via a key card, key tag, phone tag or a secure

homeowners can upgrade their lock easily and with no fiddly wiring

smartphone app; Bluetooth Twist & Go. Homeowners can monitor who is entering and leaving the home, from wherever they are. The app also has the functionality to send temporary access 'mobile keys' to anyone with a smartphone – so no

more children waiting on the doorstep when they have mislaid their key! The mobile key can be programmed to give access from a few hours to a number of weeks. The app also allows you to revoke access at any time, so the homeowner is in total control at all times. Dan Powell, Maintenance & Locksmiths Product Manager at VBH says: "With the new Yale Conexis L1, homeowners can upgrade their lock easily and with no fiddly wiring"

New face-fix hinge

6th March 2018

VBH has added the new Sigma Face-Fix composite door hinge to its greenteQ range. Composite Door Hinge.

The hinge comes in standard or 1D-adjustable versions and is available in five colours to match the greenteQ suite. It features a steel frame plate with five countersunk fixing points, providing a strong connection to the outer frame, and the sash component is fixed to the door with four screw fixings.

Elongated fixing holes on the standard version provide flexibility in the factory or on site. Strong fixing points and a five-knuckle construction prevent the hinge from dropping once it's installed and the pre-lubricated hinge point ensures an exceptionally smooth action.



Adrian Gale, timber and composite door product manager at VBH, talks about the importance of good looking hardware when the time comes to sell a property.

The housing market got off to a subdued start in 2018; the number of sales, new buyers and properties joining the market has fallen in the first few months, according to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. Uncertainty over Brexit is also expected to affect both house prices and the growth, or downturn, of the market.

Property expert Sarah Beeny recently reminded homeowners that with the selling season approaching, upgrading their front door with new hardware gives their home the "wow factor". Replacing new handles, letterplate and knocker on a tired door can be a cost-effective solution. Equally, replacing an old door for new is an easy way to entice potential buyers who want a lot of "bang for their buck" when it comes to quality, security and hardware suited to their home environment.

A new composite door and matching hardware gives properties an instant facelift and refreshes a home's character. It's an easy win for the installer, and a worthwhile investment for the homeowner. As Yousuf Copest, managing director at Everglade Windows based in London, said: "We're a large fabricator of PVCU, composite and aluminium doors, and the composite door market is a growing area for us. Fabricate grey composite doors with white on the inside is a particular trend we're noticing."

With premium composite doors, it's important to have the right hardware. We're seeing increased demand from homeowners looking

No second chance for a first impression



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for a matching suite that can be applied across a complete door and window installation. With the different core finishes to choose from, VBH's greenteQ suite provides a premium hardware solution with products suitable for composite, timber, aluminium and PVCU doors and windows. So, whether a homeowner wants a traditional charcoal green door with muted polished chrome hardware, or a contemporary ultracrust grey slab with subtle satin chrome or black furniture, they can have it with greenteQ.

"Our customers are split for choice with colour options, door



styles and the greenteQ hardware we offer – and every door is as unique as the customer who orders it." Yousuf said.

"We've developed a stainless-steel Coastline range specifically for those in coastal and other aggressive environments. With lever handles, pull handles, letterboxes, hinges and knockers passing the 1,000-hour neutral salt spray test, the range meets the requirements of BS EN ISO 9227:2012 for exceptional corrosion resistance. It also comes with a 25-year guarantee against failure and defects."

confidence Security is the highest priority for homeowners on their new doors and windows. Most break-ins are through the door. With that in mind, we created the Q-secure guarantee, which is available on greenteQ products and selected partner brands. This guarantee is designed to cover any expenses resulting from a home intrusion. We're so confident of our security strength and performance that VBH will pay homeowners up to £3,250 compensation if they are burgled as a result of hardware failure on windows, doors or patios. Installers can easily sign up for the guarantee – and if the home is sold, the guarantee can be transferred to the new owner.

We developed greenteQ to suit a range of tastes and styles of properties, with the ability to colour-match all hardware. It's also been developed with the installer in mind. Our newest solution for composite doors does just that: The Sigma Face-Fix Composite Door Hinge is designed to help an installer fit a composite door quickly and safely, in both standard and 1D-adjustable versions. It's designed to be compatible with all composite doors and will fit directly into the frame prep of one of the leading door manufacturers.

This was a major factor in encouraging Everglade to switch and embrace its composite doors.

www.vbhgb.com

If you're not using our range of greenteQ Omega letterboxes, you need to be shown the door.



Introducing our NEW greenteQ Omega letterboxes.

- All metal frame construction
- Suits 40-80mm mid-rails and composite doors
- Excellent draught and water protection
- Cushioned closing action prevents rattling
- Available in six finishes - more to come in 2019!
- Suites with full greenteQ range

greenteQ is a growing suite of window and door furniture, style and colour matched for a seamless and integrated look.

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