

C E M Day Limited

- ***Customer complaints have decreased by 34% from 1993 to 1997 and by a further 32% from 1997 to 2000***
- ***The system is a very powerful means for recognising best practices and adopting them across the company***
- ***Demonstrating adherence to parts of the system has helped maintain legal compliance***
- ***ISO 9000 certification is necessary for the long term success of the business***

The Company

C E M Day Ltd, which was established in 1926, is a privately owned organisation employing 370 people at 11 sites throughout South and South West Wales. The business comprises 5 Ford main dealerships, an Iveco/Ford dealership, a large Ford Rent-A-Car operation running 2000 vehicles, a Contract Hire company with a fleet of over 2500 vehicles and an independent finance company with in excess of 3000 current customers.

C E M Day obtained ISO 9000 registration in Septemebr 1992 to cover every area of its activities, but has since removed the Accounts department from its scope as it operates to its own rigid and systematic set of procedures.

The Issues

A key driver responsible for the company seeking ISO 9000 registration was commercial – corporate customers were increasingly asking if C E M Day was registered to ISO 9000. Ford Motor Company gave the company the opportunity to be a pilot dealer to achieve ISO certification.

In addition, C E M Day was aware that the market would, sooner or later, dictate certification to a nationally recognised quality standard.

The Benefits

As a result of obtaining ISO 9000 registration, CEM Day has standardised its procedures across all its sites, particularly in sales and services, obtaining uniformity and consistency across the company. It is a very powerful means for recognising best practices, that are then adopted across the company and, similarly, any poor practices are swiftly addressed.

BSI Case Study on the Benefits of ISO 9000 Registration

As a result of the statutory legal defence part of C E M Day's system, the company has been able to establish a mechanism that would, in the case of a prosecution, offer an effective due diligence defence.

2000 was one of the toughest years experienced by the motor industry and certainly one of the most challenging for the company in its 75 year history. Despite this situation, the company is certain that the systems that have been established contributed significantly in reducing the impact of the industry recession on it.

C E M Day has conducted a quarterly analysis of its customer complaints ever since registration in 1992. At the end of 1993, there were 137 complaints for the whole year; these had fallen by 34% to 91 in 1997, and by a further 32% to 46 in 2000.

The company has won many national industry awards, including the Ford Chairman's Award for Customer Service Excellence, in 6 out of the past 7 years, two outstanding achievement awards and a national Investors In People award.

The annual investment in ISO 9000 is ca.£30k, including senior management's time, and approximately one third of this could be saved if C E M Day were not certified. However, the Quality Director, Mike Grant, believes that, without certification, it would be difficult to maintain the discipline to sustain an effective management system that provides the widespread benefits associated with ISO 9000 certification.

BSI's Role

C E M Day chose BSI as the registering body because it was a known name, the organisation with the greatest awareness, instantly recognisable, and had the benefits of going with what was considered to be the market leader at that time.

BSI has demonstrated a consistency since that time, in a period when the quality industry has been very inconsistent, so C E M Day has confirmation that it made the right decision.

During registration the company worked with consultants supplied by Ford, but BSI was frequently consulted for advice on interpretation and to get consistent feedback. BSI personnel were incredibly supportive and a natural professional relationship developed, in which they provided advice about addressing non-conformances and realistic timescales needed to implement effective corrective action.

Since that time an open dialogue and close links have been established with BSI Assessors, who readily provide feedback when asked on both their observations in general and any non-conformances raised during external quality audits.

About the System

C E M Day's system is not purely a quality system, but a management system that incorporates the requirements of a national quality system certified to ISO 9000.

The company is in the process of transferring the system onto its intranet, and as a result, there will be one manual instead of ca.60. Currently, it is an onerous task to make any amendments needed to the system, but once it is successfully transferred on to the intranet, this process will be significantly simplified.