



## ISO 9001 – Quality Management

# CASE STUDY SHADES OF COMFORT LTD

### Summary

#### Needs

- To have independent auditing
- To increase corporate client base
- To win public sector contracts
- To improve internal efficiency
- To improve customer satisfaction

### Benefits

- Staff commitment to continual improvement
- Business growth
- Ability to cater for customers that have ISO 9001 as a pre requisite for supply
- Increased client satisfaction
- Increased awareness of business goals and objectives

### Background

Legislative change in recent years has prompted a greater appreciation of the benefits of outdoor trading at licensed premises. Shades of Comfort Limited was formed in 2005 by Tony Peters and Barrie Evans to provide outdoor solutions following the smoking ban in pubs and restaurants. Shades of Comfort helps turn external space into extended customer entertainment areas. The company has subsequently expanded rapidly and services major groups including Whitbread, Enterprise Inns, Admiral Taverns, St Austell Breweries and Youngs.



During the latter part of 2008 Shades of Comfort was awarded a contract to supply 15 David Lloyd leisure sites with side arm and giant umbrellas to their external areas.

The Company was extremely pleased with the end results and a further 8 sites have already been completed so far this year.

As result of the work with Whitbread, Shades of Comfort was given sole provision for umbrellas and awnings to Costa Coffee to their 900 plus outlets.

Shades of Comfort has also benefited from increased demand in the domestic sector. Property prices have meant that it is often more cost effective for homeowners to improve rather than move, so they too are increasingly looking upon their gardens as extensions of their homes.

## Customer Needs

Gaining certification to the quality management system, ISO 9001, was an integral part of Shades of Comfort's business plan as the company recognised that achieving certification would provide business credibility in terms of performance and efficiency to larger clients. The company has since been in stronger position to target customers in the following sectors: public sector and utility companies, government, councils, authorities, blue chip companies, councils and other organisations such as theme parks, zoos, hospitals, stately homes, leisure chains, shopping centres and museums.

Sales and Marketing Director, Tony Peters, explains that, "The quality of products and services has always been important to Shades of Comfort and our business growth has been largely due to recommendation. For this reason it was crucial to back this up by making sure that the company itself had systems, processes and procedures fully documented as well as developing an ethos of continual improvement and customer satisfaction that would be ingrained in everything we do."

## Benefits

"Obtaining ISO 9001:2008 has been a magnificent achievement for Shades of Comfort," continues Peters. "Everyone signed into quality as an objective for our business, the way we conduct ourselves and the way customers view us. I believe we are now in a position to survive the current economic downturn and are in good stead to be able to grow when the financial situation improves. We have already had encouragement from large organisations and secured business that we could not have obtained prior to certification - including working with The Croft Primary School in Stroud whom we supplied with sail shades."

## BSI's Role

Shades of Comfort obtained registration to ISO 9001 within just nine months. Tony Peters explains that they chose to work with BSI because, "When you think of quality, the benchmark is British Standards. We had a first class consultant who worked closely with us and took us through the benefits of having a management system and its potential influence on quality and client satisfaction. It didn't take long before our entire staff became advocates of the project".

Shades of Comfort is now planning to work towards the internationally recognised environmental management system standard, ISO 14001.

### BSI

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