

CRE & CSQS 2012 Asia Pacific Leadership Summit & Hong Kong International CRE Innovation Expo

AEON: Customer-focused strategy as a key

Customer service, as an important part of business, is not only significant in the retail industry, but literally in any kind of operation.

Renowned for attentive service and pioneering strategies, AEON won "Contact Center of the Year 2011" and "Outsourcing Team of the Year 2011" of the Customer Relationship Excellence Award 2011.

Mr. Ivan Wong, Director of AEON Information Service (Shenzhen) Co., Ltd. said, "We are grateful to receive two awards this year as recognition for the team's effort in customer service excellence. This is a big encouragement to our company." He added that the Award gave a valuable opportunity for the team as well as the whole company to share the customer service practices and exchange ideas concerning customer service with partners in the industry, or even beyond the financial business.

"This was a really nice opportunity for us to get to know more about the established practices within our financial business. Moreover, we also learnt the latest trends and know-how of other industries, which are also inspiring to our staff and our company policy."

Customer-centricity as focus

As a financial enterprise which needs direct contact with customers, customer service has always been one of the major functions in the business. Like its head company in Japan, AEON places special emphasis on what its customers want and strives to offer them the best. "Thinking for our customers is our corporate philosophy," remarked Mr. Wong.

"Of course our call center serves our customers, but our customer-focused strategy doesn't end here. All of our divisions and functions respect our customers and think ahead for them. We have the same stance as our head company -- whether in terms of information processing, examination and approval and many others, customers are always our center of consideration."

Mr. Wong said their team's daily customer

service duties include handling enquiries, examining and approving documents, as well as arranging training and reviewing every single working process. "We need to stay alert and check whether we still have room for improvement, in all of the working processes, as we are fully committed to our customers."

Learning in every way

The process of the Award lasted for more than six months, Mr. Wong thinks his team has some unforgettable experiences and have learnt a lot. "Our team has put a lot of effort in participating in the Award, and they realized the demand for professional customer service and the relevant factors, which allows us to improve our know-how and bring our customer service level to a new height."

"Internally, our teams are all very eager and willing to participate in this Award. Not only can we share with the industry and the related organizations, but we can also go beyond that to broaden our horizons, and to know more about the customer service excellence best practices, in order to blend them into our own business and make progress and improvement," Mr. Wong declared.

"The learning process is actually more important than the result. We are thankful that this well-recognized Award has made us understand more about customer service excellence, in our own financial industry, and in other business. We have better understanding about the different features of various industries."

He added that one of the gains is that the team knows the demand for customer service is now much different from that in the previous years.

In addition to the basic and established training, Mr. Wong said their customer service department receives comparatively more training opportunities. "To deliver the new products to our customers, we need to provide instant training to our team, so as to cooperate with the marketing department to let the public know more about our new products."

Keeping up with the times

To AEON, the key to keep innovating in the business is to have mutual or even multi-way communications, instead of one-way. "The old concept was to establish a policy to handle customer service and company operation; but it doesn't work now and it is outdated and not suitable for today's business world." Mr. Wong said standing at the frontline, staying in touch with customers, they need to understand the latest trend and the new developments of the industry, including details like the equipment and working process.

Looking forward, Mr. Wong thinks customer service will become multi-purpose in the future. "We believe that customer service is no longer limited in one single industry. There will be more and more so-called 'ideal demand', and

we have to cater for the customers. They won't expect you to provide financial service either, that's why we need to understand other areas for our daily task as well."

"We always need to get ourselves up-to-date. The future of customer service is even more complex, and we have to provide more comprehensive service. Today, we see the rapid

development of social media, and we expect there will be more channels for customer service. In the past, complaints could be done in written form; but now, customers can send an e-mail and the communication process finishes. As a result, the demand for customer service is going to be higher, and it has to be handled more quickly."



Staff of AEON's call center are given regular training to learn the latest know-how and developments in customer service



AEON achieved "Contact Center of the Year 2011" and "Outsourcing Team of the Year 2011"



Mr. Ivan Wong, Director of AEON Information Service (Shenzhen) Co., Ltd. is honored to receive two awards this year as recognition for the company's effort in customer service excellence



AEON believes that cross-industry exchange of practices of customer service excellence helps improve its business