



Lex Autolease Sector: Customer service

Lex Autolease sharpens its competitive edge with the BSI Customer Service Kitemark™

Client background

Lex Autolease is the UK's leading fleet management specialist, with around 380,000 cars and commercial vehicles on the road. Customers range from individuals and small and medium-sized firms, to major companies running large fleets. A subsidiary of Lloyds Banking Group, Lex has over 1,000 employees across the UK. Alongside its growth strategy – it increased its fleet size by 100,000 vehicles between 2015 and 2017 – it recognizes the importance of customer experience. In early 2019, it achieved BSI certification to the BSI Kitemark for Customer Service.

The Customer Service Kitemark™

- Demonstrates best practice in customer service
- Reassures existing customers
- Impresses prospects, strengthening bids and tenders
- Provides employee recognition and motivation
- Boosts brand and enhances reputation
- Differentiates the company, creating competitive advantage

The benefit

The BSI Kitemark for Customer Service showcases a high level of service to customers, prospects and other stakeholders, proving that with the BSI Kitemark, customers are put at the heart of business. Internally, it makes an organization proud and provides reassurance, while also ruling out any complacency by challenging companies with areas for improvement.

“Externally, the BSI Kitemark demonstrates our high level of customer service to customers, prospects and other stakeholders. Internally, it's a great source of pride for colleagues, whilst also helping us focus on those areas where we can improve further.”

Carol Butler
Customer Service Director | Lex Autolease

Driving customer service

Three core values run through everything Lloyds Banking Group does: putting customers first, keeping it simple, and making a difference together. For Lex Autolease, this means a relentless focus on customer experience.

The company has shown continued commitment to customer service by having a dedicated Customer Proposition and Experience Director on the board, focused on developing and improving the customer experience. As Carol Butler, Customer Service Director (pictured on the right), explains "The automotive industry is going through a period of unprecedented technological and regulatory change. As such, it's more important than ever that our business and personal customers feel looked after and can access the guidance and support they need."

She continues, "We dig deep to get a full picture of our customers' experience and our customer service ethos is symbolized by our 'Route 66' strategy." The figure 66 reflects the healthy Net Promoter Score (a common customer service metric) that the company aspires to maintain and exceed.

Going further for customers

Butler describes how in Lex Autolease's corporate business, for example, it distinguishes between the corporate customer – typically represented by a fleet manager – and the individuals who are actually driving its vehicles. "Each month we survey our drivers to ask them about their experience – how easy it was for them to obtain a quote, whether the vehicle was delivered on time and in perfect condition. If something didn't work well we find out exactly what was wrong so we can put it right."

She continues, "We also survey the corporate decision-maker every six months to gain feedback on the broader range of services we're providing. We then have working groups that look at the detailed feedback we've received so we can continually improve. We also have a monthly 'Route 66 Forum' where colleagues from different parts of the business work together to review and enhance the customer experience."

Why the BSI Kitemark?

The Customer Service Kitemark is an independent mark of trust that provides differentiation, and with it a competitive edge. Butler explains, "We wanted an external benchmark that would validate the standards we achieve in delivering a leading customer service experience. Because we are the UK's largest supplier of leased vehicles, it has sometimes been suggested that we're 'too big to care', when nothing could be further from the truth. We're genuinely customer-focused, so it's great that an independent third party has come in and evidenced that."

Benefits

She continues, "Externally the BSI Kitemark showcases our high level of customer service to customers, prospects and other stakeholders, proving that we put customers at the heart of our business. Internally, it makes us proud and provides reassurance, while also ruling out any complacency by challenging us on areas where we can improve."

She says Lex Autolease colleagues are hugely passionate about their customers. "The pride they take in what they do is really important, and the BSI Kitemark is really powerful for them, reassuring them of the value they add. The BSI Kitemark is such a trusted brand, recognized across a wide variety of different markets and industries."

Implementation

"In terms of our processes, we didn't need to make significant changes to reach the standard required for the Customer Service Kitemark," says Butler. "It helped that we already hold BSI certification to ISO 9001 (Quality) and ISO 14001 (Environmental Management), which meant we were already familiar with the way standards are assessed."

The biggest challenge for the company was finding suitable evidence for certain decisions and actions. "Because our focus on customer service is so much a part of our DNA, we had to step back and ask 'how do we prove that?' We had to consider what metric or documentation would show our BSI assessor that 'it is how we say it is.' For example, we routinely review our performance with a client against a service level agreement (SLA), so we would need to dig out the minutes of meetings in which the SLA review took place and certain decisions were made. We were able to find this sort of evidence, but it has made us think differently, so that we now maintain a higher level of clarity and control over it."

BSI's role

From call centre agents to engineers, the BSI assessment touched all parts of the Lex business. "Our BSI assessor took a very constructive, collaborative approach, giving us clarity on the detail of what was required – for example in managing customer complaints – to achieve the Kitemark standard, so that we could then ensure that we were complying with those requirements," says Butler.

"She gave me a daily update on her findings at different sites, which I particularly valued as it kept me involved in the assessment as it took place. It was heartening when she shared positive findings, such as the impressive level of product knowledge and genuine customer focus among the teams. However, it was also incredibly valuable to spot the opportunities for improvement, such as the need for specific evidence."

Looking ahead

"The company as a whole, and the individuals within it, are very proud of becoming the first vehicle leasing company to achieve the Customer Service Kitemark," says Butler.

She concludes, "Both the internal colleague engagement, and the external validation to customers of our customer service ethos, are vital. We're in a very competitive business, and I'm confident the BSI Kitemark will give us an edge over our competitors."

