

The Nation's peak awards for customer service - 2012 Australian Service Excellence Awards winners have been announced

Melbourne – 25 October 2012

In recognition of being Australia's leading service providers, organisations and individuals were awarded Australia's most prestigious customer service awards at the Australian Service Excellence Awards held in Melbourne at the Crown Palladium on Wednesday 24 October 2012. The Awards were hosted by our nation's peak customer service association, the Customer Service Institute of Australia (CSIA).



The winners are chosen from a field of Australia's top and most successful customer service organisations. CSIA Executive Director, Brett Whitford, said that customer expectations are continuing to rise. "The wider business community is becoming increasingly aware of the value and role that customer service plays in achieving business success," he said. "The area of service provision is arguably the most critical determinant of success for many Australian organisations."

Mr. Whitford praised the quality of this year's Award entrants, stating that increasing interest in the Awards from many of Australia's most reputable organisations illustrates the ever-increasing prominence of customer service. "The organisations selected have demonstrated that they are leaders in customer service and are very worthy winners of our top award," Mr. Whitford added. "All our winners and finalists are working hard towards service excellence and their achievements in customer service have shown a true commitment to putting the customer first in today's competitive business climate."

About the Awards

The CSIA Australian Service Excellence Awards showcase achievement in customer service. Reaching the finals and winning an award illustrates the high standards of management, training and commitment to excellence within those organisations.

Customer service has been identified as an essential factor in maintaining an organisation's competitive edge in the market. Many organisations are placing greater emphasis on developing a customer service culture and making it a strategic priority.

State-based Awards are conducted in New South Wales/ACT, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia.

State winners in each category automatically qualify for the National Awards program.

Judging Criteria

The criteria for the Australian Service Excellence Awards is based on the International Customer Service Standard (ICSS), which provides a comprehensive and practical framework to assist organisations deliver consistently high levels of service.

ICSS focuses on four key components necessary to maintain alignment through a cause and effect relationship and balance between 'passion' and 'process':

- Service perspective
- Financial perspective
- Operational perspective
- Learning and growth perspective

ICSS applies equally to government, not-for-profit and for-profit organisations of all sizes and across industry. Organisations seeking to maximise the value of their customer relationships should apply the ICSS framework to their business operations.

Organisations applying in each of the award categories will be asked to demonstrate:

- Approach to each of the attributes outlined in the International Customer Service Standard
- The breadth and depth of the deployment of each approach
- Results flowing from the approach and deployment
- The level of involvement of customers in the strategic decision making of the organisation
- Evidence of continuous review and improvement against the Standard's criteria

The International Customer Service Standard (ICSS) can be downloaded from www.csia.com.au

Judging Process

The Judging Committee consists of representative senior business people actively involved in the customer service profession. The key stages that the national judging committee undertakes in the evaluation process for each category are:

- Individual evaluation of submissions by members of the judging committee
- Site visit by an accredited auditor to clarify elements of the submission by auditing it against the ICSS criteria and mystery shopping of relevant entrants
- Judging Committee reviews results and selects winners, high commendations and encouragement awards in each State
- State winners automatically qualify for the National Awards and are invited to make a presentation to the national judging committee and must also be prepared to answer questions.
- National Award winners, high commendations and encouragement awards selected.

OUR AIMS

The CSIA was founded with five initial aims:

- To promote customer service as a profession and to improve the level of its practitioner's professionalism through assessment, accreditation and certification. Recognition of members professional standing is provided through use of the CSIA's designatory post-nominal letters (e.g. MCSIA) and use of our Certified Customer Service Manager or Professional logo. Thus improving the pride, motivation and self-esteem of customer service professionals.
- To provide people working directly or indirectly in customer service (Public or Private sector), with the education and professional standards that will enable them to reach their full potential in their chosen field.
- To develop and promote the International Customer Service Standard (including a customer charter), which will help organisations develop and sustain a customer ethos through improvements to the design, delivery, quality and effectiveness of customer service strategies, policies and systems.

- To improve knowledge of the components of customer service excellence through the Australian Service Excellence Awards, research, training and development programmes, publications, conferences and customer focus groups.
- To provide a voice for customer service professionals and enhance the status of these individuals and customer service issues via the media and public education forums.

For a full list of state and national winners, please visit:

http://www.csia.com.au/?page_id=2449

For more information please contact:

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