

Power Train case study



The issue

In 2004 the turbulence caused by intensive international corporate transformation and far-reaching Dealer network changes had seen Mercedes-Benz Customer Satisfaction scores plummet and its UK JD Power rating fall to 26th place. An ambitious improvement strategy was required to ensure that the message 'prestige brand equals prestige customer service' became a UK-wide reality.

What we did

Power Train worked closely with Mercedes-Benz to put in place the strategy that would simultaneously address immediate customer service issues whilst ensuring long-term delivery of the brand promise. This culminated in the design and delivery of a ground-breaking programme to drive up the Mercedes-Benz Customer Experience. The programme launched with a Roadshow that visited over 60 locations in the UK and Europe, candidly presenting the issues and the new strategy to an audience that, as the Mercedes-Benz leadership was well aware, had become disaffected by the recent difficulties.

How we did it

Using customised conference trucks and multi-media presentation techniques, 'Class Leaders On The Road' was designed to bring about a significant mindset change in Dealership management and staff. It opened with a glossy, 'company propaganda' film presentation that was immediately challenged during a brutally honest 'telling it like it is' intervention by a Dealership technician (Power Train Actor Consultant) planted in the audience.

Customers were then observed - in their bedroom - heatedly discussing a new car purchase. A true-to-life 'warts and all' visit to a re-created showroom followed. All the action was interspersed with live interviews with Mercedes-Benz and Dealership executives - and, of course, plenty of audience participation. Plans and improvements were presented and discussed. Audience views were listened to and acted upon.

These events reconnected with those attending, tapping into their fierce brand loyalty and winning support for the next part of the strategy, 'Best In Class' training events delivered by Power Train to over 3000 customer-facing managers and staff throughout the UK. They were followed by specially adapted events for head office personnel and the development of 'Class Leaders At Your Place' short session training kits for delivery on-site by Dealership managers.

As a result of the success of 'Class Leaders On The Road' and 'Best In Class', the strategy has now been extended to the Mercedes-Benz Commercial Vehicle network with the roll-out of 'In The Spotlight' Roadshows and management training events. Specially adapted 'Best In Class' events have also been staged for Dealership personnel from across Europe at the headquarters of parent company Daimler AG in Stuttgart.

Return on investment

Between 2004 and 2009, internal Customer Satisfaction scores showed dramatic improvements and in the JD Power ratings the company climbed from 26th to 3rd place for service satisfaction and top spot for sales satisfaction. Finally, Mercedes-Benz is now at number one in the automotive sector of the Institute of Customer Service UK Customer Satisfaction Index.

