

# Mini-profile:

## a day in the life of a corporate client services manager



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*Thursday 13 January* It's been a busy week so far, and the renewal season seems to get longer each year! I manage a team of eight in Corporate Client Services; seven Customer Account Managers who deal with high level issues for specific customer accounts, and one Publisher Account Manager who works closely with our major publishers to ensure any complex queries are dealt with and to keep on improving our working relationship. Corporate Client Services covers several customer market sectors – Corporate, NHS and Health, Government, British Library and British Council – so a real variety to manage.

Client Services works extremely closely with the Operations Team, which has responsibility for handling day-to-day account issues, so one of the first things I do each day is to meet with them for

a quick catch up and to check that all is running smoothly.

I also have a discussion with my Manager, Jo Connolly, to follow up on visits she has made recently to three of our major corporate clients in London. All went very well and we had positive feedback. It is particularly rewarding to hear that, following the restructure we undertook last year, with several of my team members being newly promoted to their roles, service levels are still high and customers are very positive about the changes. We discussed a new outsourcing project with one of our key corporate customers, where the Information Centre will be manned onsite by an employee of Swets Information Services, who will provide the full range of services to end users within the company. We discussed my role in the



project which will be to train and manage this 'remote' worker and to prepare them in all aspects of working for us within our customer's environment, ensuring they receive the same attention as members of my 'internal' team, and working with our Company Trainer to draw up an intense training plan as we will need to get them prepared in a shorter amount of training time than usual.

I catch up on a few e-mails, including an invitation to our Customer Forum and Reception at Dublin Castle in Ireland, which I'm really looking forward to. Before I commenced my new position in August, I had dealt with publishers for eight years, so this will be a good opportunity to meet library customers. I decide to book a day's holiday onto this to stay on and enjoy the Irish hospitality!

My next task is to get myself ready for a meeting with the Vice President of Strategic Sourcing for a large investment bank, who wanted to come in to see what we do, how we manage their subscriptions, and our processes. We have at least one customer or publisher visiting us each week, and we encourage these visits and the opportunities they provide us to explain how a subscription agent works, to demonstrate the added benefit we give to both customer and publisher. It also enables customers and publishers to meet the people who work on their account, which always helps to build up a good working relationship. We have a 'Dedicated Resource' within my team who works solely on this customer's account, so it's a little bit different from the usual visit, and she leads the visit and the demonstrations. I meet the customer and run through the changes we've

accomplished over the last five months to improve our systems and ways of working, to find out a bit more about her perception of us, and to give her some information about reports we can run to help budget requirements and online access availability. Unfortunately our visitor has to rush back to London so we can't take her for lunch, but a good visit all round.

After lunch I have a conference call with our Head Office in the Netherlands, together with our regional offices in France, Denmark, USA, Singapore and Germany. The UK office structure is being rolled out globally, so we answer questions from our colleagues about procedures we have in place in the UK, and provide guidance where it's needed ... and it's good to hear that the same issues affect us all, no matter which country we are in!

We've decided to do a satisfaction survey of customers in a cross-section of our government and academic markets, so I get some input from the Academic Services Manager and one of my Government Customer Account Managers to see what kind of questions we need to include. Even though this kind of thing, as we all know, can occasionally generate negative feedback, we are encouraging our customers to be candid. I hope to receive only positive feedback of course!

My day is also interspersed with all the usual interactions with members of my team. Although sometimes I should put my manager's 'red hat' on (red hat being – 'do not disturb', green hat – 'bother me all you like!'), it is always better to answer questions as they come up. Anything Customer Account Managers are dealing with is urgent or high level, so we always work to a speedy resolution.

I have just been asked to do a five-minute presentation at our 'Third Party Supplier Open Day' next week, so I need to go and speak to the people who work closely with these book and newspaper distributors in order to put together a PowerPoint presentation. We've built up a great relationship with the two companies we work with, so it will be good to get them in to meet everyone and formally discuss the mutual benefits our companies have from working with each other. However, this will need to wait until tomorrow, as it's past home time and the thought of what to have for tea is taking over!