

# VW no. 1 in customer service

By  Danette Breitenbach

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VW took the number one spot in the Ask Afrika Orange Index 2016/17 Top 10, at a chic cocktail function at the Wanderers Club in Gauteng. The Index measures and recognises customer service benchmarking and social profiling.

The brand, which also won the Automotive Industry category, edged out brands Woolworths Food and Audi, second and third respectively. After Audi the other top 10 brands recognised are: (from 4th to 10th place): Romans Pizza, Pick n Pay, Netcare, Outsurance, Hyundai, Momentum, BMW and Mediclinic (tied in 10th).

VW was delighted with the award. “As a brand we put a lot of effort into customer service - it is a key KPI that we measure ourselves on. So, to be recognised overall for something we are so passionate about by winning this accolade is amazing,” says Carla Wentzel – general manager: sales and marketing for Volkswagen.

She acknowledged all the VW dealers for their massive contribution towards winning the Award. “Our dealers are the ones at the coal face of customer service and without them winning this Award would not have been possible.”



Pxabay

She adds: “The VW brand is about people and good customer experience is about connecting with them. We are a people brand and customer service talks to our brand values.”

Customer service is a direct reflection of company leadership says Andrea Gevers-Rademeyer, CEO and founder. “The winners of the Orange Index all boast CEOs that lead by example and are people-centric, and obsessed with their customers.”

The Orange Index looks at what matters most to consumers right now, says Sarina de Beer, managing director. “This remains true for 12 to 18-month period and then it changes and this is why customer service is so difficult for brands currently. As they understand the trend, it shifts. Brands need to be agile and adapt to changes constantly.”

What makes the Orange Index different to other Indexes is that 30% of its total score measures emotional satisfaction. “If you only measure customer satisfaction then you are only measuring transactional satisfaction. In today’s world where emotions play such a big role in our lives - think of emoji’s – that we have to look at the emotional component.”

People also do things quickly as the world we live in does not give us a lot of time. “The result is that we make decisions pretty intuitively. Therefore, when you ask customers about their experience, they will use words such as “surprised” or “frustrated”, which are emotional terms. We communicate emotionally,” she explains.

This is the 15th year of the Orange Index, which started in 2001. The Index includes 150,000 face to face interviews, 500,000 telephonic interviews as well as an online component. No lists are used and the selections are made randomly. The Index measures and tracks 135 brands. The Index is independently audited.

## **Orange Award Industry winners: (first place only)**

- Airlines: British airways
- Automotive: VW
- Banking: Capitec
- Building retail: Builders Warehouse
- Car tracker: Tracker
- Casinos: The Boardwalk
- Clothing retail: Markham
- Electronics and white goods: Hifi Corp
- Entertainment: eTV
- Fast food: Romans Pizza
- Food retail: Woolworths food
- Furniture retail: Morkels
- Home and decor: @home
- Hotel: Protea Hotels
- Internet service providers: Cell C
- Long term insurance: Momentum
- Medical aid: Discovery Health
- Petrol stations: Caltex
- Private hospitals: Netcare
- Short term insurance: Outsurance
- Sport retail: Sportscene
- Telecommunications: Vodacom
- Vehicle consumables: Tiger Wheel and Tyre
- Government / public services: SARS

## **Call Centre Index:**

- 3. Vodacom
- 2. Discovery
- 1. Cell C

## ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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