ESPO

Customer Service Standards

Executive Summary of Customer Views and Experiences

Member and Non-Member Schools and Colleges

The results of an independent audit conducted for ESPO by The Achievement Network

October 2010

Appendix 2

Executive Summary

TIMINGS:

- The survey was conducted in October 2010 and involved 1500 schools and colleges (*Member/Non-Member*). The universe for this survey remained constant for *Member* areas but was increased for the *Non-Member* areas to reflect the increased numbers of schools on the database supplied by ESPO.

RESPONSES:

- In common with the previous practice responses were analysed by *Member Authority*, *Total Membership*, *Non-Member*, and *Total Respondents*. In addition, for 2010 the Non-Member results are subdivided into three groups – *Nottinghamshire* and surrounds, *Northamptonshire* and surrounds and all *other areas*. The Achievement Network did try to further subdivide the *other areas* but responses were insufficient to be able to present meaningful data for these further subdivisions.

- 38% of *Member* schools and colleges responded, a small decrease on 2008. Insufficient secondary schools responded to enable meaningful analysis by school type i.e. primary, secondary and total schools by Member Authority.

- 22% of *Non-Member* schools responded, a further significant decrease on 2008 and 2006 (51%).

- A significant number of *Member* and *Non-Member* responses were received up to 14 days after the closing date. They were all included in the detailed analysis. The slow response by schools and colleges contributed to the delay in finalising and presenting this report.

- There were no significant differences of assessment or perception across the *Non-Member* geographical groupings. All were universally positive about ESPO's performance.

- The assessments of *Member* and *Non-Member* respondents were closely aligned to a comparative assessment conducted ESPO Senior Team in the *Service Excellence Report* (2006)… i.e. an organisation achieving a performance equal to those in the top quartile of *Premier Excellence Award Winners* as referenced by Dr. Vinod Singhal's 10-year study of these organisations.

SUPPLIER STATUS:

- 99% of *Member* respondents consider ESPO to be an *impartial purchasing resource*.

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS:

- 90% of Member schools prefer to use ESPO for *all/most* of their supplies, very close to the results recorded in the previous four years. For two surveys in succession Leicester City schools continued to record a view similar to that of all *Member* Secondary Schools.

MINI CURRICULUM CATALOGUES:

- Distribution between Member authority schools varies widely from 51% of schools in Cambridgeshire to 84% and 85% respectively in Leicester City and Peterborough. The perceived value also varied widely from 65% of Cambridgeshire schools rating these catalogues as Very useful/useful to 24% of Peterborough schools recording a similar assessment.

PURCHASES:

- 96% of the *Member* respondents use the General Catalogue for all/*most consumable* purchases – a comparable result with 2008 and 2006 result.

RANGE:

- The *Member* authorities recorded a meaningful increase in their assessment of ESPO's range – 75% *Comprehensive*. This is in contrast to the reduced 67% assessment recorded in 2008.

PRICING:

- Value perceptions are broadly maintained across *Member* authorities. 85% of all respondents considered ESPO to offer *Excellent Value/Competitive Prices* (90% in 2008). *Non-Member* customers recorded a similar view.

DELIVERY:

- *95%* of *Member* respondents indicated that the delivery service *met their needs.* This appears to cement the significant improvement recorded in 2008.

- The assessment of Non-Member customers that ESPO is *meeting their (delivery) needs* – *95%* also appears to cement the significant improvement recorded in 2008.

- *Member* and *Non-Member* customers did not record any significant dissatisfaction with ESPO's delivery service. This result further cements the significant improvement recorded in 2008.

- The 2004 survey introduced a delivery sub-question that asked about the interface between the drivers and the customers at the point of delivery. The relatively high levels of satisfaction with ESPO drivers recorded in 2006 and 2008 have been maintained in 2010 - 89% of respondents considered the ESPO drivers to be *Courteous*, similar to the 2008 rating.

ON-LINE ORDERING:

- The results for access to Internet-connected PCs can only be read by Member authority. A total Member figure would be meaningless. Access still varies widely from 39% in *Peterborough* to 76% in *Cambridgeshire* schools.

- Approximately 50% of respondents indicated that they would prefer to continue to *order by phone/fax*. Of those with ready access the preference for *phone/fax ordering* was still substantial – 41%

OPEN:

- *Awareness of OPEN varied from 100% in Cambridgeshire* to *19%* in *Leicestershire*. 80% of Cambridgeshire schools indicated that they used *OPEN* or intended to do so, whereas this figure was only 12% in *Norfolk* where *awareness* is 69%.

MOST IMPORTANT TO CUSTOMERS:

- *Value for Money* and *No Quibble Returns Policy* emerged as *most important* to a significant number of *Member* respondents, a similar result to 2008.

IMPORTANT IMPROVEMENTS:

- Three improvements emerged as being important to a significant cohort of respondents…

  - *Loyalty rewards* (particularly from secondary respondents)
  - *Specialist item catalogues* (despite the recent introduction of mini catalogues).
  - *Green products.*

- A significant minority of respondents did not indicate any important improvements. Instead, they simply congratulated ESPO on its current performance or stated no improvements are necessary.

- For the second survey in succession no aspect of delivery emerged as an important improvement.

PERCEPTIONS OF THE FIELD SALES TEAM:

- *Excellent* or *Good* ratings for aspects of the field sales operation were in the range 79% (*Contracts knowledge*) to 52% (*Special offer alerts*). *Implementing follow-ups* showed a continued improvement on 2008 results.

PERCEPTIONS OF ESPO'S SERVICE:

This question was introduced in the 2008 survey. Respondents were invited reflect back over the last year in order to rate 3 aspects of ESPO's performance on a scale from *Excellent* to *Unsatisfactory* – *Satisfactory* being the KPI benchmark. The ratings were as follows…

- *Price and Value for Money – 92% Excellent/Good*
- *Customer Service – 90% Excellent/Good*
- *Overall performance compared to Other Major Suppliers* – 83% *Excellent/Good*

FUTURE EXPECTATIONS:

- Only a minority of respondents answered this question. No single issue or common theme emerged. A number simply wrote '*keep up the good work*' or similar.

SURVEY COMPLETION:

- There was no significant change in the profile of the personnel who responded to the ESPO survey.

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