



UNISON

"Square Systems were so helpful and efficient. They held my hand through the entire process and we are really pleased with the results. I didn't know where to start before I contacted Square Systems so if I can do it, anyone can."

Liz Conner, Member Liaison Unit

The organisation

UNISON is one of the UK's largest trade unions, serving more than 1.3 million members. It represents full-time and part-time staff who provide public services. Its members work in local government, health care, colleges and schools, the police service and the voluntary sector as well as in transport, the electricity, gas and water industries.

The challenge

UNISONdirect is the main contact centre for UNISON. The members are a diverse group with diverse requirements and diverse working patterns. UNISON, therefore, wanted to ensure that UNISONdirect was meeting the needs of all its users and meeting the needs of UNISON.

In order to achieve that, UNISON wanted to learn exactly what members are feeling and why they are calling. Most calls are about employment issues but people also contact with queries about legal services and other member benefits. UNISONdirect generally directs callers to local branches for help so it was important to identify that the process for delivering help is effective.

UNISON also wanted to ensure that when members call, they are not only getting a professional service, but also that the service received embodies the ethos of UNISON and delivers on its values. Members should feel that they are being looked after and know that UNISON cares about its members.

Why Square Systems?

UNISON chose Square Systems to deliver its surveying solution because of its vast experience with the challenges facing public services.

Of the many companies approached by UNISON, Square Systems solution was the most straightforward, efficient and transparent. Time being of the essence, Square Systems was able to set up a survey in a very short amount of time and responded to questions immediately. The staff at Square Systems also offered an unparalleled level of support – both in person and via corroborative documentation. Square Systems guided UNISON through the entire process and helped to ensure that the survey script captured actionable information to help UNISON meet its objectives.

The solution

UNISON decided to adopt a stealth mode survey as it was of paramount importance to them to get a totally accurate picture of the contact centre's performance unbiased by agent influence. Square Systems also recommended including an open question to capture verbatim from the survey respondents. By doing this, UNISON can listen directly to the voice of the member and drive service improvements based on the genuine issues affecting UNISON members rather than UNISON's pre-held perception of those issues. The inclusion of an open question counters the risk that the survey questions are dictating the concerns of the respondents rather than discovering them.

Results of the survey can be viewed and analysed instantly via a secure website. This aids communication by allowing information to be shared quickly and any holes in the processes of delivering help to be identified and acted on quickly.

The benefits

- Improved processes: The survey results have identified areas in which the process of helping members can be further improved. This has led to better communication between the contact centre and the local branches as specific problems are pinpointed and addressed.
- Motivational: As the survey captures verbatim, it has proved to be excellent for staff morale in the call centre. Positive feedback from members is captured and fed back to both staff and management.
- Enlightening: The survey has delivered unexpected results and given management a far clearer perception of the call centre's performance. The survey results have not only identified areas for improvement but have also validated current processes by providing evidence of the call centre's strengths.

About Square Systems and Opinion8

Square Systems is a UK-based developer of integrated software solutions for contact centres. Square Systems specialises in leveraging open source technology for application in contact centres, and has developed and manages the Opinion8 survey system.