

How a major UK Shopping Centre increased sales by £3.2m using Mystery Shopping

Sector/Location

One of the largest shopping centres in the UK, comprising over 100 retail and 45 F&B units.

Why is it important to measure?

The client wanted to measure the customer experience against agreed standards, then analyse performance and delivery against the targets set. By measuring performance, and overlaying sales information, they wanted to link service to sales, and prove the positive impact that a better customer experience had on the bottom line.

Why use an MSPA member company?

By choosing a MSPA member, the client was confident that the programme of activity would be designed and implemented ethically and using industry best practice. A selection process was undertaken, using the MSPA provider search tool **MSPA Provider Search** to create a shortlist of competent service providers in the local area.

Why use Mystery Shopping?

Mystery shopping was the best methodology to meet the objectives, on the basis that it is the only methodology that evaluates the **experience designed** versus the **experience delivered**. It can be used both **operationally** and **strategically**, as it provides insight to several different departments within a business.

What were the project specifics?

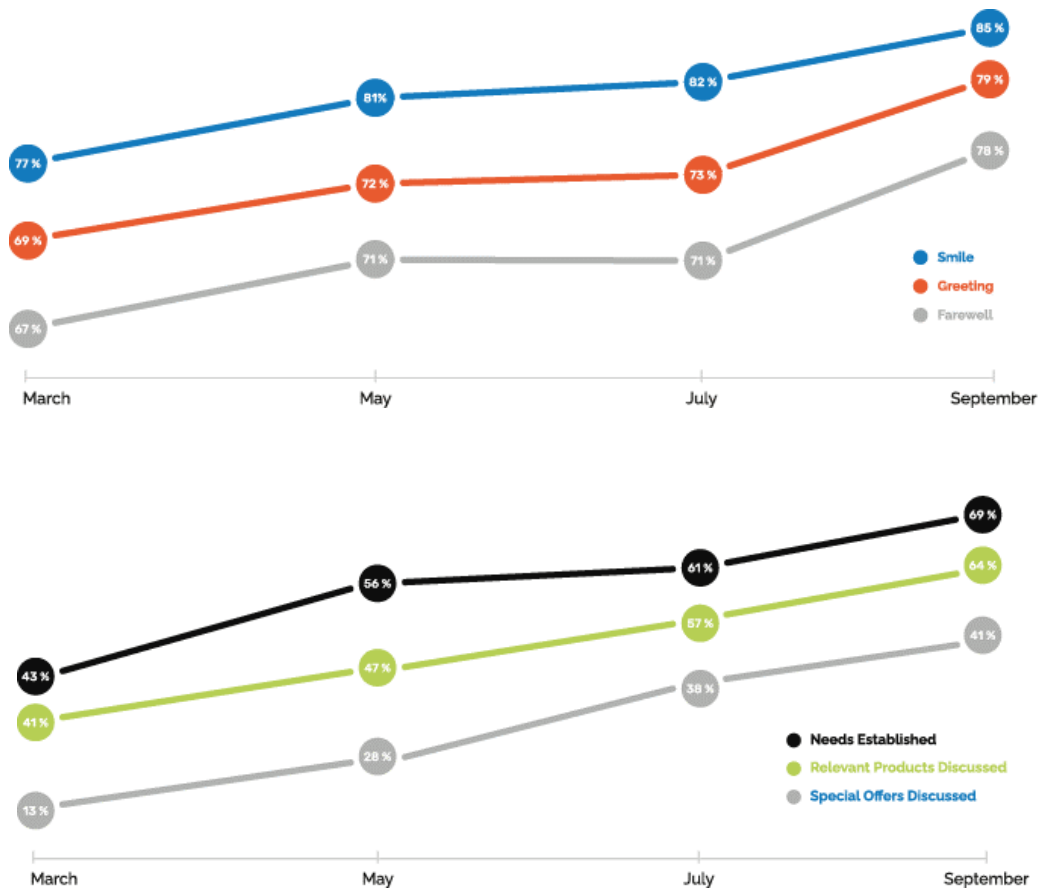
A programme of activity was carried out to provide a benchmark of performance. The findings were evaluated, and sessions were arranged to feedback to occupiers these findings at individual unit level. An action plan was created by each occupier to address the issues highlighted and acknowledge excellent performance. A training programme was developed by the client to help equip the frontline teams with the skills necessary to deliver performance to the required standard. Individual and group coaching was provided by the shopping centre to raise the profile of the activity and encourage sharing of best practice. A continuous programme of activity was agreed, which involved the cycle outlined here:



Mystery shopping activity took place at each unit every other month. Units that performed below a pre-agreed threshold received additional mystery shopping visits to help support them in raising their performance levels.

What were the results?

Over the first year of continuous activity, significant improvements were made in relation to the behaviours of the frontline teams on the basis of the mystery shopping activity carried out. Selling skills performance metrics improved alongside the soft skills, as the frontline became more confident in talking to customers and helping them get the most from their visits to the shopping centre.



What were the commercial benefits?

- An **8% financial performance difference** between brands with above average service and those providing below average service.
- Brands with a 90%+ score in the mystery shopping assessments achieved a **7% increase in sales**, compared to a 5% drop in sales for brands scoring below 70%.
- The insight has enabled this client to deliver an **additional £3.2m of sales** through the sharing of feedback to improve service amongst individual brands.



This article was submitted by Jill Spencer, Associate Director of ReactCX. React CX has been a member of MSPA Europe/Africa for 20 years. As a current MSPA member, they are a provider of good standing within the mystery shopping industry.