



Colgate-Palmolive

Colgate-Palmolive is one of the most successful consumer products companies in the world. With a global presence and instantly recognisable brands, the chances are that one of their products will be found in every home. Their success is largely due to their understanding and response to customer needs. The result is brand loyalty.

The issues facing Colgate-Palmolive are the same for many companies. Global markets, particularly Europe and the US, have stabilised and are no longer experiencing the growth rates of a few years ago. Increased competition means that the battle for market share is becoming fiercer, making loyalty a critical success factor.

Kathy LaPier, Manager of Global Consumer Affairs at Colgate-Palmolive, explains, "We are a global company, competing in an increasingly global economy and so it made sense to have a Global Consumer Affairs strategy. Language plays a role in how we handle and manage Consumer Affairs and we needed a system to help. One of the reasons we selected CRS was because it can be used on this basis."

CRS is at the core of Colgate-Palmolive's Consumer Affairs Department management strategy. LaPier describes the importance of Consumer Affairs within the company, "Consumer Affairs has the responsibility of interpreting data which impacts upon all departments. The resulting information is used by Marketing, Sales, Quality Assurance, Packaging and Distribution."

However, with Consumer Affairs Departments in all European countries, with multiple languages spoken and an extensive product range, how does Colgate-Palmolive ensure it responds to customers efficiently and effectively at the same time as collecting data in a uniform way?

Although its products and packaging are similar throughout the world, Colgate-Palmolive believes it is essential for customers to feel as though they are receiving local support and individual customer care. Hence when they were looking for a system to support the Consumer Affairs Department it was important that the software could deal with the difficulties of operating in different languages.

In 8 European countries one freephone number is used on all Oral-Care products, which directs customers to one central multi-lingual location. CRS manages the product & subject hierarchies

and sends response letters in 5 languages, giving Colgate-Palmolive the powerful ability to respond using standard letters at the same time as meeting individual needs.

Last year, the multi-lingual location received over 12,000 enquiries. With CRS, data from these countries can be analysed in order to pinpoint product issues and take quick, effective action.

Colgate-Palmolive is pro-active about understanding the needs of customers. Using the CRS survey module, questions can be set up to allow the Consumer Representatives to ask customers questions relating to products whilst they are on the telephone. "We run surveys to clarify information that is coming into the company and work with marketing to research specific aspects of products." says LaPier.

Looking to the future, "Having a system that will handle multi-lingual consumer communications is one of the factors that will be evaluated as Colgate-Palmolive considers expanding coverage for other product categories. However, with the level of support and services already provided by Qube Global Software, it is anticipated that these multi-lingual needs will be met."

The partnership between Colgate-Palmolive and Qube Global Software will help ensure that the company continues to meet and beat the expectations of consumers, creating genuine loyalty along the way.