



Customer service makes a real difference

At a time when rebuilding consumer confidence and treating customers fairly is top priority for all financial services providers, why are we continuing to see damning reports in the press of poor client management, a lack of controlled processes, questionable transparency, shocking service and increasing complaints?

As the range of products and services grow so too does the number of providers. In the self invested market place alone there are around 120 Self Invested Personal Pension (SIPP) providers, the need to take a closer look at this expanding marketplace became clear and in 2007 SIPP became a regulated product by the FSA.

Since then, the market place continues to evolve and the smaller bespoke providers continue to hold a sizeable share and their specialist services meet

the needs of a large number of clients. Over the last 12 months, the FSA concluded its review of SIPP providers and as a result two were closed to new business and the damning reports regarding the controls and service issues have continued to emerge.

Providers with experience know the value of such controls, slick processes and strong service propositions. Therefore, it is not surprising that one such company with 30 years of self investment experience received a clean bill of health following their FSA review earlier this year.

Moreover, despite robust internal processes and their own client feedback surveys, they still felt the need to demonstrate their commitment to their customers further by commissioning an independent evaluation of the service that they provide to clients and introducers. This was conducted using

external accreditation by Investor In Customers and they were awarded a two star "Outstanding" rating and received the highest score from Financial Advisers on satisfaction of all product providers assessed to date.

Managing Director of Investor in Customers, Neil Craig commented, "This tremendous result confirms Dentons' position as the leading product provider on the IIC books and positions them in the top quartile of all results in the IIC database."

What may surprise you is that Dentons Pension Management Limited is not a large office, not owned by a giant financial parent, but is independently owned and committed to remaining this way with strong financial backing.

Martin Tilley, Business Development Manager at Dentons commented, "We felt that the Investor In Customers programme was a very worthwhile project. It is unfiltered, delves deeper than any other survey might, yet it is not invasive in the day to day running of the business."

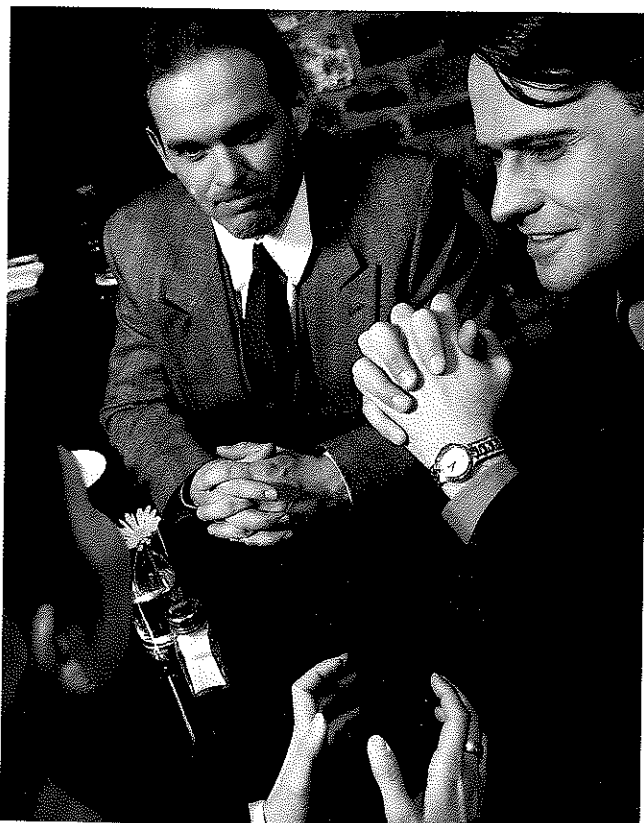
"In the current climate clients are understandably more cautious over their choice of provider; many have had a bad experience or are just feeling nervous about the security of any company they may wish to use."

"We wanted to ensure that we, as a provider, are doing everything we can for our customers to enable them to have continued confidence in us and to provide information to enable consumers to make an informed choice about the products and services available to them."

"Investor In Customers asks the questions that really matter. Comparison tables cover headline costs and fees, but reveal nothing on the service the client may receive or the way the company operates."

Martin concludes, "The self invested pension industry is full of news with smaller providers not operating in the way that they should and, as is often the case, other providers are then unfairly tarred with the same brush in sweeping generalisations from the media. Therefore the results of this assessment are very well timed indeed and more important than ever."

Treating customers fairly should not just be limited to the Financial Services Industry – in fact it makes good sense in all sectors of business.



The FSA has outlined six core outcomes that it expects to see as a result of the "Treating Customers Fairly" (TCF) Initiative. These are:

Outcome 1 - Consumers can be confident that they are dealing with firms where the fair treatment of customers is central to the corporate culture

Outcome 2 - Products and services marketed and sold in the retail market are designed to meet the needs of identified consumer groups and are targeted accordingly

Outcome 3 - Consumers are provided with clear information and kept appropriately informed before, during and after the point of sale

Outcome 4 - Where consumers receive advice, the advice is suitable and takes account of their circumstances

Outcome 5 - Consumers are provided with products that perform as firms

have led them to expect, and the associated service is of an acceptable standard and as they have been led to expect

Outcome 6 - Consumers do not face unreasonable post-sale barriers imposed by firms to change product, switch provider, submit a claim or make a complaint

However, you could argue that for all areas of business this should be standard practice.

Does this paint the picture of service people used to receive before the age of large contact centres, before the internet was everything and when clients really were king? Perhaps, in these difficult economic times it makes sense to look closely at the more basic principles of service and really think about how much this really does impact your business, your customer loyalty and your profits.

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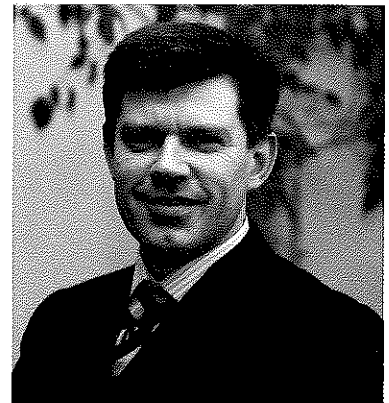
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We pride ourselves on the quality of our administration. We offer one to one relationships with our dedicated consultants, who, supported by our experienced administrative assistants provide a bespoke service to our clients and introducers.

We have achieved a 2* - Outstanding award from an independent accreditation company - Investor in Customers, thus confirming that service is one of our key strengths.

Denton's flexible approach will consider all Revenue permitted investments, with the exception of individual unquoted equities for overseas trading companies.

Our transparent charging structure and product facilities mean we can offer a tailored and reliable cost efficient service.

Please call **01483 521521**
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