



Delivering the WoW factor for Thwaites Hotels & Inns



In 2015, Thwaites Hotels & Inns started looking for a training partner to provide support in their development of a customer-focused Reception training programme for rollout in Q1 2016.

Following a significant investment in technology, the group had identified the need within the business to refresh and refocus on guest care. The overriding aim was to target the front line – Reception – to ensure that all guests receive the Warmest of Welcomes (WoW) and experience a memorable customer journey.

“We wanted to re-energise our teams’ focus on customer service with some short, sharp sessions that could be delivered by team leaders to small groups. Cogent Blue worked with us to refine the brief and then delivered 10 bespoke sessions, complete with training materials and hand-outs. Our team leaders came away enthused and excited - ready to deliver the sessions back at their own hotels.”

Jane Waterworth, Marketing Director

Client

Thwaites Hotels & Inns

Industry: Hospitality

Turnover: £84.6M

Size: 1400 staff
6 hotels and spas
8 inns

Description

Owned by Daniel Thwaites plc, Thwaites Hotels & Inns incorporates eight inns and six four star hotels in great locations across the UK. Each is designed to offer both business and leisure guests luxury accommodation, and the highest level of service along with extensive spa and conference facilities in all hotels.



The business challenge

The training programme needed to focus on the importance of the Reception Team's contribution towards the sales effort, including how they can identify and act upon sales opportunities. While reference needed to be made to systems/technology, the main focus was to be on the guest and their experience rather than technical training. Particular emphasis had to be given to 'solutions selling' – bringing

the Thwaites Hotels & Inns' USPs alive through selling an experience rather than a product.

Furthermore, training was to be developed in short modules (approximately 1 hour each) that could easily be delivered by a Reception Manager back at the hotel to their team – on a one-to-one or small group basis, such as at a team meeting.

- New and exciting customer-focused training programme
- Focus on guest care throughout the hotel, in particular Reception
- Rolled out to Reception and P&T managers

Our 360° solution

After working with the client to refine the brief, Cogent Blue developed a comprehensive training package.

10 bespoke 1-hour sessions were delivered over a 2-day workshop to nominated trainers from Thwaites Hotels & Inns, preparing them for rollout back at their own hotels:

1. WoW... On the telephone
2. Open for business... Telephone enquiries
3. Creating a WoW for all... Exceeding guest expectations

4. Check in with a WoW
5. Spot the opportunity
6. Open for business... Successful show-rounds
7. Welcoming feedback and handling challenges
8. Filling 100%... Reception can make the difference

9. Check out... A memorable farewell
10. The warmest of welcomes... on the Night Shift

The WoW supporting materials comprised: trainer notes and handouts, activities and exercises including 'ice breakers', team action plan templates, training records and other support material.

- Developed full training material
- Created 10 customised short modules
- Delivered at a 2-day workshop in-house

“The Aztec Hotel and Spa have been completing WoW (Warmest of Welcomes) Training this week, we now have 7 WoW graduates and 24 individuals over two days from Reception, Bar, Restaurant, Housekeeping, Nights, Spa, Business Centre, Lodge, Reservations, Events and our GM. We look forward to seeing the WoW trainees putting their training into practice.”

Lin Short, Personnel and Training Manager

To find a 360° solution for your business, get in touch:

Call **+44 7854 987 578** or email **Shona@cogentblue.co.uk**