

Case Study - Gardner Smith Key Client Survey

Company Environment

With an experienced, stable management team, Gardner Smith is one of the largest private companies in Australia, celebrating over 80 yrs of international commodities trading, terminals and processing. With head office in Sydney, they have offices in China, South Africa, New Zealand, USA, Singapore and the UK. Previously managed as individual profit centres, Gardner Smith has centralised elements of its trading and logistics processes to enhance international customer service and banking relationships.

Business Challenge

In a strategic move to long term client and centralised data management, Gardner Smith has challenged its staff to rethink the way the organisation operates. To confirm their strategy, an on line and faxed, International Integrated Services Survey was conducted with customers and suppliers. The objective was to determine overall and via product and service, reasons for currently working with Gardner Smith, their expectations for the industry and what will influence their product and service priorities in the next few years.

Evolution in partnership with Future Platform

1. The first step was a facilitated session with key managers to identify the questions and response categories which would elicit the most relevant information
2. A 'communication plan' was then developed and sent to customers preparing them to receive and complete the survey and inform them of what to expect post its completion
3. The 'Integrated Services Survey' was then distributed and administered electronically providing information identifying existing relationship strengths and where opportunities exist for greater client commitment through product quality or broader service offerings. The survey also enabled Gardner Smith to confirm their customer and supplier contract details - hundreds worldwide - and refresh old relationships
4. Informative and educational client profiles were created, per region and per product and service
5. Finally, relationship management staff were trained on how to use the ISS data to facilitate greater client commitment to existing products and services and the adoption of additional products and services

Business Benefits

The ISS has enabled staff at Gardner Smith to be more confident and aware of their contribution in client service. The increased focus, specialisation and accountability within the teams has increased profitability and generated an even stronger capability to act upon opportunities.

"Mutually beneficial customer and supplier relationships are the foundation of our organisation and the cornerstone of our future success. By confirming and in cases, expanding our knowledge of our key relationships, Gardner Smith are well positioned to successfully compete in our chosen markets."

Peter Shearman, Commercial Director, Gardner Smith.