

Trust and transparency

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Jeremy Harrison, managing director of MSL, a leading provider of nationwide planned, reactive and compliance FM services, explains how the firm is taking on the industry's big players with its personalised approach.

In business, it is said that trust is the currency of success. It is the cornerstone of longstanding relationships and in the world of facilities management, can be the difference between building or breaking partnerships.

MSL Property Care Services a national provider of reactive and emergency maintenance services for multi-site clients, alongside its growing divisions of planned compliance and ad hoc project work, is a business that is proud of its ethos of trust and transparency.

Formed in 2008, the company has grown organically to become a £30 million turnover provider of reactive, planned and compliance FM services, working with some of the UK's biggest high street brands, including William Hill, Pets at Home, New Look, Mitchells & Butlers and Greene King to name a few.

Led by managing director Jeremy Harrison, a qualified accountant by trade, the company has ambitious growth plans, having been recently backed by a £6.5m investment from private equity and infrastructure investment manager Foresight Group. However, the foundations of its success have been built on customer focus and an approach that allows customers clear visibility on their building maintenance and projects.

Property maintenance

Headquartered in Halifax, where its national helpdesk is also located, MSL offers reactive and emergency maintenance services with an emphasis placed on customer service excellence.

Compliance maintenance is another core service MSL provides to clients. This involves the maintenance of a range of customer assets to ensure that they remain compliant in line with statutory regulations, including fire assets such as fire alarms, fire extinguishers and electrical equipment services such as PAT testing.

The company also provide water systems checks for water-borne diseases such as legionella, with planned visits once or twice a year to ensure compliance before carrying out any required remedial works. Whatever your property type, MSL provides detailed and comprehensive compliance maintenance services to ensure that your business complies with every regulatory law it needs to.

Beyond maintenance, MSL also offers a range of project management services, such as small refurbishment and renovation works such as remodelling office or store spaces to create new facilities such as bathrooms and toilets.

Customer-centric focus

As Jeremy explains, MSL's ethos is to place customer satisfaction at the heart of each stage of the company's processes. This clear and staged approach ensures the customer has full visibility of the service they will receive, be it reactive or planned:

"At MSL we can provide the 'platform assets' of the bigger FM companies, including nationwide coverage, a 24/7 helpdesk and CAFM system. A key differentiator is that we offer a more personalised service. Our focus is always on delivering strong customer service, account management and building relationships. Customer focus is central to our culture. here"

The firm's operations are backed by InSYNC, a CAFM system that allows live integration of modules and provides total transparency of activity and communication from the individual site to customer head office, back to MSL.

The InSYNC system includes a web-based customer portal which enables customers to log, track jobs through to completion and view reports.

"InSYNC provides our customers with a transparency of service. They can see how our engineers are performing and how they're spending their money. It's a great asset that we are continually improving with our in-house software team." Jeremy explained.

A great place to work

Employee engagement is a key component of MSL, with the firm recently named in the Times Best Places to Work 2024 List. To achieve this recognition, employees at MSL must undertake an independent objective survey, with high-scoring organisations making the list based on the results of the study.

The Times Best Place to Work listing is an accolade Jeremy is proud of, as he explains:

"We have a clear vision and values. Our vision is to be the most respected maintenance company in the UK. That word 'respect' is central to everything we do and includes our approach to employee engagement."

"We see an intrinsic link between our strong employee culture and the quality of our customer

relationships. People at MSL enjoy life here and they understand our customers' needs and want to do the best for them, so the two things go hand-in-hand."

MSL is keen to emphasise its approach to 'giving back' as a maintainer of assets for many charities including the British Heart Foundation, Marie Curie, Oxfam and Age UK. MSL supports these customers' fundraising efforts through various initiatives.

Taking a greener approach

Alongside its customer-centric approach, MSL has also taken clear steps to reduce its impact on the environment through various eco-initiatives. Having measured the company's carbon footprint, Jeremy says MSL is now looking at ways to eventually become carbon-neutral.

MSL's new ECO Property Maintenance solution is an environmentally friendly and cost-effective method for bundling non-business critical jobs of compatible trades. With ECO Property Maintenance, the company can reduce the number of attendance fees and lower both its own and its customers' carbon footprints for non-urgent works such as minor repairs and decorative fixes.

"By delivering these works with only one call out, we can reduce the time that our vans are out on the road," Jeremy explains. "We're also in the process of transitioning our vehicle fleets, so currently all of our cars are either fully electric or hybrid."

A winning formula

Following the recent investment from private equity firm Foresight Group, MSL is looking to the future with excitement. While continued growth is the ambition, Jeremy says the company will not stray from the personal approach which has been the catalyst for its success to date:

"We've enjoyed longstanding relationships with many well-known brands. That to my mind is a testimony to the service we provide," he says.

"We operate with a transparency that our customers appreciate and a personal touch that starts with me as managing director. All our major customers have access to me and my fellow directors. We are very visible to our customer base, and I believe that has been one of the foundations of our success." He concludes.

For more information on MSL and its services visit www.msl-ltd.co.uk