



Delegates worked hard during the day and relaxed in the evening !

arising opportunities. In addition, be able to minimise weaknesses and plan to safeguard against threats. Jean Tyrer and Steve Grundy from Grundy's Hearing said "Today has been such a useful, enlightening and engaging day. We are just setting up as Independents and at times have found the task over all quite daunting, although you might be a fantastic dispenser; we are not all fantastic marketers. This has given us the confidence that what we are trying to achieve is current and appropriate. It has focused our minds on ensuring we build the foundations of our business in such a way that it will sustain us and with the continued support of Unitron and their partners, we are sure that our business will build to be a strong, high quality and professional service that our clients can rely on".

After the first jam-packed full day the delegates were taken back to the Forest of Arden Hotel to enjoy the facilities and a gala dinner hosted of course by Unitron and its partners.

Return of the customer service guru

The topics of discussion on day two were 'Excellence through Service'; Dr Jez Rose, a partner of Unitron's Unite development program and speaker at the inaugural Unite University returned to educate and entertain the Unite members on all things service related. Recognising that manufacturer brands are irrelevant in promotions, Jez encouraged the Unite members to consider strengthening their own brand on the basis of service excellence which Jez declared "was a true and fundamental strength of the Independent Hearing Healthcare Professional".

Supported by Jez, the delegates went through the whole customer service experience discussing what they wanted to see when they receive service excellence starting from first impressions such as a website, shop window or initial contact, right down to the fine details of lighting, seating and conversation exchange. The delegates in their individual breakout groups were required to discuss in greater detail how service excellence is achieved in their own work situations making sure that "service excellence is the Hearing Healthcare Professional profession".

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Investing in the profession

During the day there was a resounding response from the Unite members that it was a refreshing change to see a manufacturer act by investing in their future in such a profoundly different way without a single mention of hearing instruments.

"In any partnership it is imperative that you recognise each other's strengths and weaknesses", said Chris Auty, Director of Unitron UK, "Our Unite members are already experts in hearing instrument prescription and technology, and so why does the industry insist on taking them away from their business in order to

teach them to suck eggs? Supplier/customer relationships must evolve in order to achieve mutual success. Unitron has developed both the Unite development program and the Unite University specifically with the UK Independent Hearing Healthcare Professional in mind; that is why we only deliver those valuable assets that our customers need."

An example of this commitment to delivering valuable requirements was illustrated on the second day when Chris Auty introduced the latest Unitron promotion; Get Smart. Independent Hearing Healthcare Professionals that purchase 'Smart' products from Unitron can enter to win a two year lease of a SmartCar wrapped in their own company branding. Smart products are Passport and Latitude 16 which both incorporate the clinically proven SmartFocus technology, as well as Smart Alert System.

Asked why they chose the name Get Smart, Chris Auty said, "It is very easy to roll out a promotion that can provide a chance for someone to win a trip away or a TV for example, but none of these are supporting the Independent Hearing Healthcare Professionals business. As a true partner to the independent sector, Unitron has committed to only running promotions that offer value to their business. Besides, vehicle advertising particularly on SmartCar's offers an impactful and cost effective way of building your brand in the local vicinity."

Relaxing and taking stock

Both days had been designed to provide interactive lectures and breakout sessions, to give full opportunity for discussion, evaluation and networking. To carry on with the theme of the weekend and especially as the weather was so glorious, Unitron arranged on the second evening, a BBQ at the Forest of Arden Hotel in order for the delegates to soak up the sun, relax outside on the patio, enjoy food and beverages and generally make the most of the atmosphere whilst sharing conversations and listening and dancing to music being played by the DJ.

Elizabeth Duffy from Capital Audiology said "Unitron have delivered another proverbial kick up the backside to get us to step outside the business box and refocus. I really have enjoyed this non-product focussed event. Seeing how significant and important customer service and marketing is and the fact that it has been academic but very interactive has made the two days even better. It has really made me think about what society is like today and how relevant it is to what is happening around us and in the marketplace. All I can say is thank you Unitron for a fantastic few days".

Clare Kewney FSHAA / Photos: Unitron