



Embargoed until: 6 OCT 2008

Special Event: National Customer Service Week 2008 begins
6th October

Australia's peak customer service body, the Customer Service Institute of Australia is celebrating National Customer Service Week and is calling on consumers and organisations to get involved.

Be the difference!

October 6 - 10, 2008

CSIA celebrates National Customer Service Week with up to 1,000 new jobs and education places aimed at ensuring customer service is recognised as a true profession employing some of our best and brightest

Everyone agrees that customer service standards need to improve and that often the biggest single impact on service outcomes is the people and processes organisations have in place. Unlike other professions, customer service management has not been formally recognised with a clear professional education structure. This year, in an initiative announced during National Customer Service Week 2008, the Customer Service Institute of Australia is working with its members - some of Australia's largest companies - to provide a structure for up and coming customer service professionals to gain the work experience and training they need to become **Certified Customer Service Managers**.

Executive Director of the Customer Service Institute of Australia, Brett Whitford outlined the program.

'Customer Service Managers come from a variety of backgrounds but unlike other professions such as Accounting there has not been until now, in Australia, formal professional development and industry body recognition. Anyone may call themselves a customer service manager but few have any qualification other than experience to prepare them for the role.

'A significant component of Australia's customer service managers and professionals have no formal qualifications instead gaining considerable experience at a variety of levels in the organisation before working their way up 'through the ranks'.

'Professionals in other roles study their chosen discipline and then are recognised by their professional association. For example, despite studying a recognised accounting degree, an accountant is not 'Certified' or 'Chartered' until they have worked through their professional body's course requirements and are recognised as qualified in the field. The CSIA believes it is time Australian organisations treat service as importantly as finance.

'The Customer Service Institute of Australia has worked with leading organisations to develop a training, assessment and certification program leading to a **Diploma of Business for Customer Service Managers** and Australia's only formal and nationally recognised "**Certified Customer Service Manager**" designation.' Accepted candidates will receive a **full-time role in customer service** and **CSIA will provide each student with over \$15,000 of training free of charge.**

The CSIA has ensured Australia is part of a global customer service network through its Foundation Membership of the International Council of Customer Service Organizations. CSIA is the secretariat for this organisation and our own Brett Whitford was elected Secretary-General of the Council for a three year term beginning in 2008.

As Mr Whitford points out, 'Education standards have to be global so graduates are recognised internationally. **Our program meets international criteria and is nationally recognised** under the **Australian Qualifications Framework**. We are developing the **Chief Customer Officers** of the future and Australian talent will be sought around the world from Dubai to Shanghai, from New York to New Delhi.'

About CSIA

The Customer Service Institute of Australia was established in 1997 to serve the needs of all Australians who work in customer service. Today it is our nation's peak customer service body and is a Foundation Member of the International Council of Customer Service Organizations which promotes service excellence through the



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International Customer Service Standard certification program and the International Service Excellence Awards.

Our members include CEO's, business owners, government employees and of course customer service professionals. We are driven by and committed to the development of people, systems and standards to improve customer service.

The Customer Service Institute of Australia is our nation's peak customer service body and has the mission to develop people, systems and standards to enhance customer service in Australia. The Institute also manages the prestigious Australian Service Excellence Awards (since 2001).

For more information please contact:

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Best Wishes
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Some Organisations
talk about excellence
in customer service.
CSIA Members prove it!



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