



2.1 Atlas Voyages: Suppliers' Hygiene Control Campaign

Description of Good Practice

In November 2001, as part of a process of company re-organisation, Atlas Voyages, a Morocco-based inbound tour operator, developed a suppliers' hygiene control campaign. The company plans to implement a new contracting policy in 2004, based on specific terms and obligations related to food quality and hygiene.

The company identified 17 hotels and restaurants as its main 'repeat' suppliers, in terms of volume and frequency, to be the focus of the quality control campaign for hygiene and food quality. The London-based Cristal Society, specialists in the HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) food safety system, conducted four visits to suppliers in 2002, at the request of Atlas Voyages. These visits raised suppliers' awareness of hygiene issues and their interest in improving their performance; some of the visited suppliers are now in the process of applying for HACCP certification.

Implementation

The first visit to suppliers was an audit and baseline diagnosis, followed by the provision of a document with clear policies, procedures and standards, and specific recommendations for each case. Follow-up visits were conducted to verify whether specific recommendations had been implemented and if steps had been taken to reach the outlined targets. All 17 suppliers are now fully complying with the designated standards. Regular annual visits will continue, to monitor quality and to begin implementing the next phase of development, which will focus on energy saving and waste recycling. The Quality Department analyses the progress of the campaign and creates monthly reports for each of the company's offices throughout Morocco.

To maximise effectiveness, the campaign is highlighted for all Atlas customers in a detailed questionnaire. The questionnaire includes all suppliers featured in the client's programme, whether or not they are part of the hygiene campaign, since Atlas intends to widen the process to all its suppliers and establish a new contracting policy.



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Benefits

This programme has created benefits at several different levels:

- At the customer level, the quality of food and service is enhanced, an important benefit in a country where food is renowned but may also be the source of temporary troubles;
- At the supplier level, hotels and restaurants are helped to adhere to international standards of quality;
- At the official and legal level, the programme is helping Morocco build generalised rules and update national regulations to comply with international hygiene standards; and

- At a development level, the programme is creating a general awareness of the expectations of international tourists and tourism trends.

Comments

Because of Atlas Voyages' prominent market position in Morocco, this campaign has resulted in widespread awareness among suppliers, even those not working with the company. OFPPT, a national training and certification institution, confirms that there is now a long waiting list of Moroccan hotels that have applied for the HACCP audit and certification.



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As Morocco's objective of attracting 10 million tourists by 2010 includes a strategy for protecting the environment, the authorities would benefit from supporting consistent regulations that meet international standards. Atlas Voyages has made an important contribution toward developing such regulations for food safety and hygiene.