

VWSA wins international contact centre award

Nelson Mandela Bay often gets a bad rap for its service, but Volkswagen Group South Africa (VWSA) call centre manager Ryan Kleynhans broke the mould by bringing home prestigious international service industry awards.



Operations manager of the Volkswagen Customer Interaction Centre (CIC) in Uitenhage which has 103 employees, Kleynhans returned home from Las Vegas where he was awarded silver in the category of Best Contact Centre Operational Manager at Contact Centre World's Top Performers Conference.

The awards were a culmination of three intensive regional competitions earlier this year which saw Kleynhans taking gold in the same category for the Europe, Middle-East and Africa region. After having his written submission meticulously judged by two panels, he was then called to present on the CIC in the UK - the venue for the Europe, Middle East and Africa region awards. Here he was also quizzed by his peers from around the world as part of the final heat.

Customers and staff are important

The CIC has various functions, ranging from roadside assistance to customer care and after sales follow-ups with Volkswagen customers. "I'm very passionate about my customers and customer service, but also about my staff. I think it's a combination of those two things - trying to get customer service right, but not at the expense of your staff," he said.

It is the third year running that the company has come out shining in what is considered the global standard for call centre awards, held every two years. In 2010 VWSA won Gold for Best Mid-Sized Contact Centre, and in 2008 took home silver in Best Outbound Campaign.

"We are competing against call centres employing more than 2 500 people, so that's a significant win, because we are not that big and are based in a little town, but we can compete with the best there is," Kleynhans said.

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