



# MaitlandQS 2002 Customer Survey

## Executive Summary

### **The objective view**

In March 2002, MaitlandQS conducted a survey of its clients to gain a better understanding of how they perceived us and the services we provide. The survey measured us against eight Critical Success Factors, or CSFs, and used the same measure as a basis for comparing us with our competitors.

We sought to discover:

- How our overall performance was rated
- What clients valued most from our services
- What were the most important criteria for evaluating our services
- What improvements we could make

The survey showed that we performed better than our nearest competitors in all but two of the categories. Nevertheless, it highlighted specific areas and opportunities for improvement and the report incorporated an action plan detailing how those improvements would be made.

Many of the tasks have already been completed, including the creation of a specialist Contract and Dispute Management Division to highlight our expertise in this area. We are also focusing further on training and development, with the appointment of a Training/QA Manager, and finding new ways to enhance the already high quality of the service we deliver to our clients.

The report on our customer survey gives a useful insight into the way our clients perceive us and how we approach our relationships with our clients. It is a valuable resource both for existing clients and clients considering appointing MaitlandQS for the first time.

# Customer Survey Report

## 1. Introduction

As part of our commitment to quality and constant endeavour to improve the service we provide our clients, in March 2002 we carried out a Customer Survey involving our principal clients.

We invited them to score MaitlandQS's performance against eight Critical Success Factors (CSF's), and our competitors, and the results are enclosed.

## 2. Background

MaitlandQS was established in 1987 and is now the largest practice in the UK specializing in the provision of Commercial Management and Quantity Surveying Services for Mechanical and Electrical Contractors from its head office in Farnborough (Hampshire) and regional offices in Northampton, Leeds and Manchester.

We provide both pre and post-contract services. Pre-contract services include tender vetting, detailed examination of contractual and programming obligations, analysis of proposed rates and prices for lump sum contracts, making bills of quantities and providing budget prices. Post-contract services include interim valuations and final accounts, identifying additional works and preparing star rates, notification of claims, claim preparation and negotiation, financial and contractual management.

As of 1st June 2002 we have around 80 fee earning staff.

Of the top fifteen Mechanical and Electrical Contractors by turnover \*, MaitlandQS provides consultancy services to twelve of them.

Our reputation is based on getting results for our clients and this is confirmed by the fact that 89% of our fees in the year 2001/2002 came from repeat business.

One of our principal aims in carrying out the Performance Analysis Survey was to obtain feedback from clients in order to improve our service and maintain our reputation.

\* Source: M+E Contracting in the UK Report BSRIA Dec. 2001

## 3. Mission Statement

MaitlandQS's mission is stated as:-

**“OUR AIM IS TO PROVIDE COST AND COMMERCIAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES THAT EXCEED OUR CLIENTS EXPECTATIONS, AND ADD VALUE TO THEIR BUSINESS THROUGH OUR ENERGY, QUALITY AND EXPERTISE.”**

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## 4. Purpose of Survey

The purpose of the Performance Analysis Survey was to find out from clients:-

- 1 How they rated our performance
- 2 What clients valued most from our services
- 3 What was the most important performance criteria clients rated when evaluating our services
- 4 What could we do to improve the service we provide

We need to know the answers to the above questions in order to put in place the strategies that will fulfil our stated mission.

## 5. Questionnaire

A Performance Analysis Questionnaire was issued to the following clients:-

- ABB Building Technologies Ltd
- Air Cool Engineering Building Services Ltd
- Axima Building Services Ltd
- Bailey Rail
- Balfour Kilpatrick Limited
- Briggs & Forrester (Electrical) Ltd
- Crown House
- Ellis Mechanical Services Ltd
- EMCOR Drake & Scull Engineering
- Jackson Eve
- Lorne Stewart Plc
- Markham Engineering Services Ltd
- Michael J. Lonsdale Limited (Loughton)
- Michael J. Lonsdale Limited (Slough)
- MITIE Engineering Services (London) Ltd
- MITIE Engineering Services (Retail) Limited
- MITIE Engineering Services (SE) Ltd
- N G Bailey & Co Ltd
- Rotary Group
- Shepherd Engineering Services Ltd (York)
- Shepherd Engineering Services Ltd (Windsor)
- Skanska Rashleigh Weatherfoil
- Smith Electrical Group Limited
- Southern Electricity Contracting Ltd
- Thermal Transfer Ltd

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## 6. Clients Rating of Critical Success Factors

As a way of finding out what factors are the most important, the questionnaire asked our clients to weight out of a total score of 100, the importance of each of the Critical Success Factors in relation to the service they expect:

From analysing the responses our clients rate the Critical Success Factors as follows:

<b>CSF 1</b> How well service provided meets requirements	<b>20%</b>
<b>CSF 2</b> Quality of staff	<b>20%</b>
<b>CSF 3</b> How responsive is management	<b>10%</b>
<b>CSF 4</b> How professional is the practice	<b>10%</b>
<b>CSF 5</b> Competitive fees	<b>10%</b>
<b>CSF 6</b> Overall value for money	<b>15%</b>
<b>CSF 7</b> Importance of locality of the practice	<b>5%</b>
<b>CSF 8</b> Contractual knowledge	<b>10%</b>
	<hr/> <b>100%</b> <hr/>

## 7. MaitlandQS Performance as scored by Clients

The questionnaire asked our clients to score MaitlandQS's performance on their projects against eight Critical Success Factors (CSF), which we had identified. The scores received are summarised below:

	<b>Weighting</b>	<b>Highest score</b>	<b>Average score</b>	<b>Lowest score</b>
<b>CSF1</b> How well service provided meets requirements	20%	9	8.1	7
<b>CSF2</b> Quality of staff	20%	9	7.7	7
<b>CSF3</b> How responsive is management	10%	8	8.0	5
<b>CSF4</b> How professional is the practice	10%	8	7.4	6
<b>CSF5</b> Competitive fees	10%	7	7.1	7
<b>CSF6</b> Overall value for money	15%	9	7.5	7
<b>CSF7</b> Importance of locality of the practice	5%	8	6.2	3
<b>CSF8</b> Contractual knowledge	10%	9	7.2	7
<b>Total weighted average</b>	<hr/> 100%	8.4	7.4	6.1

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## 8. MaitlandQS Performance compared to Competitors

The questionnaire also asked our clients to score the performance of our competitors against the same Critical Success Factors. Their scores are summarised below:-

	Weighting	Highest Comp. Score	Highest FMP. Score	Ave. Comp. Score	Ave. FMP. Score	Lowest Comp. Score	Lowest FMP. Score
<b>CSF1</b> How well service provided meets requirements	20%	9	9	6.8	8.1	6	7
<b>CSF2</b> Quality of staff	20%	8	9	6.89	7.7	4	7
<b>CSF3</b> How responsive is management	10%	9	8	5.83	8	4	5
<b>CSF4</b> How professional is the practice	10%	9	8	7.44	7.4	7	6
<b>CSF5</b> Competitive fees	10%	6	7	6.15	7.1	4	7
<b>CSF6</b> Overall value for money	15%	8	9	6.22	7.5	3	7
<b>CSF7</b> Importance of locality of the practice	5%	7	8	6.44	6.2	6	3
<b>CSF8</b> Contractual knowledge	10%	7	9	7	7.2	8	7
<b>Total weighted average</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8.05</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>6.63</b>	<b>7.57</b>	<b>5.45</b>	<b>6.5</b>

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## 9. Results

MaitlandQS scored highest against our competitors in the following factors:-

<b>CSF 3</b> How responsive is management	13.7% better on average
<b>CSF 1</b> How well service provided meets requirements	13% better on average
<b>CSF 6</b> Overall value for money	12.8% better on average

We scored lowest against our competitors in the following factors:-

<b>CSF 7</b> Importance of locality of the practice	2.4% lower on average
<b>CSF 4</b> How professional is the practice	0.4% lower on average

The overall results confirmed that our clients rated MaitlandQS consistently higher than all our competitors.

Whilst our highest score was marginally better than that scored by a competitor - 8.4 versus 8.05 - our average score for each CSF was consistently higher in every instance apart from CSF 7 - importance of locality of the practice.

## 10. Action Plan (OR how we are going to act on the results of the survey!)

CSF	Weighting %	Average score	Area for improvement	Action plan
1 How well service provided meets requirements	20%	8.1	Flexibility	<p>Flexibility of both management and staff in accommodating client's initial and changing requirements.</p> <p>Clients employ us because of our ability to respond quickly, our staff are well trained, qualified and experienced, who know clients businesses very well.</p> <p>This "can-do" culture is very important for the service we provide and we must ensure that all new staff and trainees have the attitude and/or training to fit in with this culture.</p>

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CSF	Weighting %	Average score	Area for improvement	Action plan	
2	Quality of staff	20%	7.7	Improved monitoring of staff  Additional training	<p>Appointment of Training/QA Manager from 1st August 2002 and QA/Systems Manual for all staff.</p> <p>The Training/QA Manager will be responsible for the ongoing training of our Trainee QS's (13 at 1/6/02) and carry out Quality Audits on all staff regardless of position, to ensure QA Systems manual is being adhered to.</p> <p>Quality Audit check form will be submitted to clients.</p> <p>Appointment of Human Resources Manager from 1st July 2002 will prepare individual Training and Development Needs Plan for staff.</p>
3	How responsive is management	10%	8.0	Clients unsure in certain circumstances as to who they should address enquiries, queries or complaints	Appointment of Human Resources Manager from 1st July 2002 will prepare individual Training and Development Needs Plan for staff.
4	How professional is the practice	10%	7.4	MaitlandQS is not universally known for the services it can provide in respect of claims, dispute resolution and commercial training even though we have a consistent track record with many clients.	<p>Create a separate business unit with MaitlandQS Partnership to deal with Claims, Dispute Resolution and Commercial Training</p> <p>Ensure staff in new business unit have recognised experience and qualifications to meet Clients needs.</p>
5	Competitive fees	10%	7.1	Ensure that the correct level of staff is allocated to a project in accordance with the Clients brief	Majority of fees earned by MaitlandQS are either wholly or partly on a contingency or shared risk basis.

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	CSF	Weighting %	Average score	Area for improvement	Action plan
6	Overall value for money	15%	7.5	In assessing fees Clients sometimes do not compare our proposal or staff properly in relation to our competitors	<p>Emphasise that our staff are all experienced M+E Quantity Surveyors in whom MaitlandQS has and will continue to invest in training.</p> <p>Emphasise continuity compared to agency personnel.</p> <p>Emphasise back-up resources always available if required</p> <p>Emphasise long-term relationships with our principal clients based on success.</p>
7	Importance of locality of the practice	5%	6.2	Additional Regional offices	If opportunities arise we will look to establish Regional or Specialist offices in the future.
8	Contractual knowledge	10%	7.2	We are not perceived to have expertise in claims, dispute resolution and commercial training	<p>Create a separate business unit within MaitlandQS to deal with Claims, Dispute Resolution and Commercial Training.</p> <p>Establish internal commercial awareness and training seminars for staff on contracts, together with external courses on specialist areas such as adjudication.</p>

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## 11. Summary

We would like to thank all our clients who took the time to take part in the Performance Analysis Survey. The results will assist us in achieving a better understanding of the specific requirements of each client, which will enable MaitlandQS Partnership to improve the quality and scope of our service to all our clients.

The results of the survey support our belief that MaitlandQS is the leading specialist Mechanical and Electrical Quantity Surveying practice in the UK, providing dedicated and highly trained staff and quality service to our clients.