

Case Study



No-one else is Close.

Company Profile

Close Premium Finance
www.closepf.com

Location

Surrey, UK

Industry

Financial Services

Headset Users

130

Services

Provider of premium finance products for the general insurance market in the UK & Ireland

Business Challenge

Ensuring Sales, Customer Service and Credit Control advisors equipped with headsets to maximise audio and call quality

Plantronics Solution

EncorePro® Monaural and Binaural

EncorePro® delivers audio quality and reduces background noise in Close Premium Finance

Overview

With over 3,000 brokers and funding roughly £2 billion of premiums every year for both commercial and personal lines insurance, Close Premium Finance is a pioneering provider of premium finance products and services in the UK and Ireland. The company was the first to identify UK brokers' need for premium finance and founded the UK premium finance market back in 1977 (expanding into Ireland in 2000). Since then, this nine-time award winner of 'Premium Finance Provider of the Year' has continued to lead the industry's product and service innovation – being the first provider to harness the power of the internet by introducing i-prompt and the first provider to back offers with a service level agreement.

EncorePro® selected for optimum audio quality

The Close Premium Finance contact centre has over 130 advisors processing 6 million direct debits a year and handling premium payments for over 3,000 brokers in the UK and Ireland. For several years, the contact centre staff used basic 'entry level' headsets, but replacements were needed as advisors were struggling with both call clarity and background noise levels.

Benefits

- EncorePro® proven to be five times more efficient in noise-cancelling
- Vast reduction in background noise
- Positive comments from customers received for call quality
- Clearer verbal communication achieved between advisors and customers helping in overall time and cost efficiencies



“Plantronics assistance also enabled us to fully understand how getting the right audio equipment for our staff was essential.”

Tracey North-Sands, Quality Manager for Learning & Development at Close Premium Finance

Following a visit to the Plantronics stand at Call Centre Expo in 2011, Close Premium Finance were offered to trial the EncorePro headset because of its dedicated design for the contact centre with audio quality and noise-cancelling features, coupled with the wideband design for wear over long periods.

Tracey North-Sands, Quality Manager for Learning & Development at Close Premium Finance explains, “We had already identified key departments – Sales, Customer Service and Credit Control - where we had an issue with background noise. Plantronics recommended EncorePro as it is specifically designed to pick up the advisor’s voice by having the microphone only on one side of the mouth piece (facing the advisor) - picking up sound in a 90 degree scope and filtering out the background noise into clear audible words for the customer. By doing this the advisor will naturally start lowering their voice which will collectively contribute to a decreasing noise level across the whole contact centre. These vital elements are especially important when you have a large open plan floor as we have at Close Premium Finance.”

The trial enabled Tracey and her team to provide data and staff feedback to management about the effectiveness of EncorePro on noise reduction with the overall benefits. Tracey continues, “Our focus is first call resolution but with 100% customer service delivered. We needed our advisors to have the best audio equipment to enable them to deliver a professional service. You can train, coach and mentor an advisor to actively listen to the client and identify the best solution needed to resolve their query, but all that investment of time and cost is lost if the call audio quality is poor.”

Survey results prove benefits of EncorePro®

To gain quantifiable results and feedback from advisors, Tracey and her team conducted a survey asking questions about EncorePro usage, such as: Have you had problems hearing the customer on your phone? Do you experience any crackling or bad signal on your line? Have you had feedback from the customer commenting on background noise? The results were significant, illustrating that in all cases - call clarity, noise-cancelling and overall customer satisfaction were ‘off-the-scale’ in terms of increased quality.

Tracey comments, “Notably, the results of the survey clearly told us that the EncorePro headset is far more superior and is five times more effective in noise reduction compared to our old headsets.”



EncorePro® Binaural



EncorePro® Monaural

Other comments from advisors included:

“Clarity is so much better; I rarely struggle to hear clients now!” Charlotte – Customer Service Advisor

“Good quality sound and comfortable to wear” Victoria – Senior Customer Service Advisor

“I could hear the clarity of the client’s voice and they could hear me without the background noise interfering. A professional tool to help me deliver a professional service.” Kirsty – Customer Service Advisor

Tracey concludes, “Plantronics assistance also enabled us to fully understand how getting the right audio equipment for our staff was essential. The fact that Plantronics sent us a number of headsets free of charge so we could trial them, and also did a site visit to help us understand our environment and background noise, really swung the case when we put the report forward to management for all our advisors to have their headsets replaced, which was a significant investment. The time efficiencies we are now benefiting from in first call resolution based on the vast improvement in audio quality is proof alone that we have made the right investment in Plantronics for the longer term.”



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