



Quest



SPRING 2001

Regular news items and latest updates on ISO certification

IMSM UNVEILS NEW WEB SITE: www.imsm.co.uk

The user-friendly web site has been designed in a logical way after extensive research to ensure it can be accessed easily.

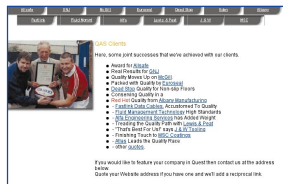
General Manager Owen Wright commented: "All our research and feedback from our customers, business managers and assessors has clearly indicated that a comprehensive and well-planned web site is indispensable, both for existing and potential customers".

Potential and existing customers can now log on to IMSM's new web site, which provides a wide range of relevant and interesting information about the company and how ISO 9000 can improve their efficiency and profitability.

The user-friendly web site has been designed in a logical way after extensive research to ensure it can be accessed easily.

The site is in six, easily identifiable, sections:

- News Centre
- Solutions
- Clients
- International
- Prices
- Contact Us



The News Centre contains an issue-led story, which will be changed and updated each month. Solutions describe the benefits of ISO 9000, what it involves and how companies can prepare. Clients gives no fewer than ten examples of companies in the UK who have

been helped toward ISO 9000 certification by QAS, while the International section gives a resume of the countries where IMSM and QAS are currently active. These include:

- France
- USA
- South Africa
- Australia
- Germany
- Ireland
- Scotland



General Manager Owen Wright commented: "All our research and feedback from our customers, business managers and assessors has clearly indicated that a comprehensive and well-planned web site is indispensable, both for existing and potential customers.

"But we would welcome comments, as we intend to ensure it is kept up to date and fulfils its needs effectively."

The IMSM website can be accessed on:

www.imsm.co.uk

ISO 9000 – TRAINING FOR THE MILLENNIUM

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which hold the internationally recognised quality standard, ISO 9000, can now send their staff on specific courses which provide training, including the Company ISO 9000 Internal Quality Audit.

QAS have recently launched the one-day Internal Audit Training course, which can be held "in house", or at various training locations throughout the country.

SMEs are increasingly recognising the benefits that can flow from ISO 9000 certification. These include improved efficiency and profitability, together with better prospects for winning new business. As QAS customers will acknowledge, many large organisations now expect that their current and potential new suppliers have a form of "in house" quality management system in place.

One of the ISO 9000 requirements includes the Internal Quality Audit, which is designed to provide a thorough and systematic examination undertaken by the

company on its individual quality procedures.

Those attending the one-day courses, which are presented in a relaxed atmosphere, will receive ongoing assessment from the tutor throughout the day, at the end of which they will receive a Course Completion Certificate. The course can either be organised specifically for one company in house, if feasible, or at additional training locations.

QAS, now one of the largest independent companies in its field, has already guided over 3,500 SMEs to successful ISO 9000 certification in this country, USA, South Africa and France. It has recently opened offices in Germany, Canada and Australia. All its quality assessors are experienced and fully qualified.

More information on the training courses, throughout the UK or overseas, can be obtained by calling QAS Training Dept, Temple Street, Swindon on

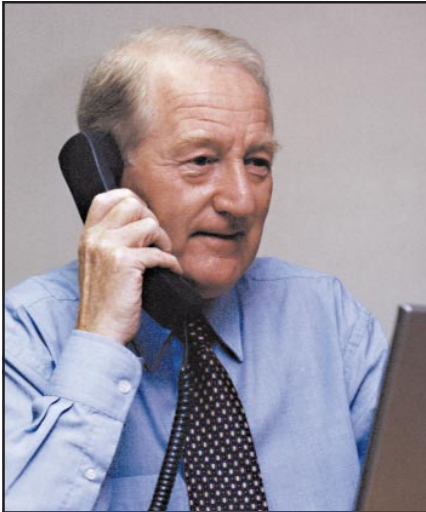
01793-421208(Tel) or 01793-522021(Fax)
email: jonathanp@iso90001.co.uk



*Jonathan Pike
Training Manager*



RAISING QUALITY STANDARDS - ISO 9000:2000



Owen Wright
IMSM Group General Manager

Every one of QAS' 42 qualified lead assessors will, by early 2001, have attended a comprehensive two-day course to ensure they are fully aware of the changes which followed the launch in December of ISO 9000: 2000, the most comprehensive review of these standards since they were first published in 1987.

Following an extensive consultation process, there are now just four new primary standards, from the original 27. The aim is to provide standards that are relevant to all manufacturing and service sectors, which are more "user friendly" and which can be readily applied world-wide.

The course was organised by specialist consultancy JPD, which has provided training for QAS assessors on several previous

occasions. Approved by the International Register of Certified Auditors (IRCA), it included a thorough study of the new requirements, helped by detailed case studies.

The QAS service now encircles the globe, including the USA, Canada, South Africa and, most recently Australia, as well as the UK, France and Germany. While business managers have been appointed, and operate, in individual countries with whose business environment they are familiar, it remains company policy for all assessors apart from

"The value of the new quality management system, in terms of operational efficiency, economic performance and customer satisfaction is undisputed,"

those in France and Germany - to be UK trained and based. These highly qualified lead assessors travel to English-speaking countries where QAS operates to implement the ISO 9000 certification.

The proposed changes will increase business benefits for small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) in which QAS specialise and, for the first time, provide a process for continual improvement. The revisions aim to help organisations align modern quality

management with their everyday activities, resulting in greater efficiency leading to improved performance and quality.

The inclusion of a 'continual improvement' concept has been designed to increase an organisation's competitive advantage, and respond better to customer needs and expectations.

Holistic approach

"The value of the new quality management system, in terms of operational efficiency, economic performance and customer satisfaction is undisputed," said IMSM Group General Manager Owen Wright. "The new revisions emphasise the need for an organisation to demonstrate that it can meet customer needs. But they also provide us with scope to develop a holistic approach to quality management for continual improvement".

Re-structured

The new revisions follow extensive surveys among quality experts and user groups worldwide. Just four primary standards – ISO 9000, 9001, 9004 and 19011 – will replace the current ISO 'family' of 27 standards.

Owen Wright concluded: " The revised standards have been structured to be totally compatible with other management systems, such as the Environmental Management Standard, ISO 14000. This is an exciting time for organisations now looking to achieve certification. And, for those who already have ISO certification, it is a great opportunity to examine whether they could benefit from the new continuous improvement processes."

STEADY PROGRESS IN MID WEST & WEST COAST, USA

IMSM has been making steady progress in the Mid West and West Coast of the USA during the last 12 months, with its business managers in four key areas identifying a growing number of SMEs who have locked into the benefits of ISO 9000 certification.

Todd Jones is based in beautiful Long Beach, home of the Queen Mary. Todd, lucky man, covers the whole of Southern California for the company. Mike Sommerfeld has, like the movie, been sleepless in Seattle in his efforts to generate more business in Washington and Oregon states. Pete McKinnon has been doing excellent work in Texas from his base in Houston, while Ruth Vaughan Henry makes regular trips to Atlanta, Ga, from her base many thousands of miles away in Northern Scotland, where she is also very active for the company.

Among the companies helped by Todd Jones is Applied Coatings and Linings, based in El Monte, near Los Angeles. In business for over 40 years, with an annual turnover of \$3 million and a workforce of 25, Applied is a leading source for shop applied high performance coating and lining systems in the western USA.

President Jim Horton decided on ISO 9000, along with SSPC certification, to help differentiate his company from competitors and to enhance third party credibility.

With their QAS ISO 9000 certificate clearly visible on their web site, it's hardly surprising to hear that he's pleased with his decision. " The quality manuals prepared by your assessor Ray Ford were very thorough, well written and reflect accurately what we aim to achieve. It

has also enabled us to refine our management systems. We have been very pleased."

Across the country in Houston, Texas, PSI Automation produces quality air motors for use in the aerospace, automotive and oil industries. It realised it needed ISO 9000 certification.

in response to demands from a growing number of its key customers, including mighty Boeing.

Director Bob Arnett selected IMSM/QAS because of its strong track record helping SMEs. " ISO 9000 has given us access to more potential customers and, that, in due course, will improve profitability. It is as simple as that. The QAS service was excellent."

Applied Coatings: www.appliedcoatings.com
PSI Automation: www.psiautomation.com

BOB GAMBLE – EVERYWHERE!

There can surely be few, if any, lead assessors who have travelled so far, or so often, in the course of his work for QAS than Bob Gamble. Last year, he visited South Africa, Italy, Kuwait and Australia. And that does not include numerous assignments in the UK.

In the last three months of 2000, Bob was at his home in York for just 15 days! And he is already booked to visit South Africa this year on no fewer than eight occasions.

“It’s a busy life”, he says, “but it is immensely satisfying, helping so many companies towards the achievement of ISO 9000, and then seeing them derive so much benefit from it.

Understandably, he has a wealth of stories about his extensive travels.

“I was in Kuwait last year - where alcohol is illegal - and, one evening, went out for dinner with a customer. He asked me what I would like to drink. Coke, please, I said. When the drinks arrived, they were accompanied with a bottle of local ABC water. My host recommended that I might like to add some to my Coke. I was amazed to detect the flavour of vodka! And, as the evening progressed and became more enjoyable, the waiters kept bringing more ABC water!!”

Bob was visiting Kuwait to advise a British company based there, which supplies technical staff to oil fields. This was the first company QAS have helped there but, according to Bob, the potential there, and in other Middle East countries, especially Libya, looks very good.



Bob Gamble (left) presents the ISO 9001 certificate to Webco Managing Director, Craig Webster.

“One company I helped in South Africa, Webco, commented to me that their turnover and profit had increased more in the five months since certification than in the previous 93 years!”

PROFILE ON SCOTLAND

IMSM’s Scotland business team is making a valuable contribution to the company’s success and, at the same time, helping many SMEs to improve efficiency and profitability through the acquisition of ISO 9000.

IMSM’s experienced business manager covering Scotland north of Aberdeen is Ruth Vaughan-Henry. With such a large and sparsely populated area, Ruth spends much of her working time in her car, with a typical time of two hours between appointments.

In contrast, David Luke, 42, only joined IMSM last September to cover the extensive territory of Glasgow, South West Scotland, Cumbria and Northumberland. Before joining the company, David ran his own business and was financial controller in an IT consultancy.

Tim Collings had worked in the paper and printing industries in both England and Scotland before joining IMSM in three years ago. Covering what is commonly called the Central Belt of Scotland, including Edinburgh, Tim initially found generating business quite tough compared with southern England. “But the so-called north/south divide has now been formally recognised and the business environment is definitely improving”, he said.

Among the Scottish companies helped by IMSM is Inverness-based DJM Communications. Since its formation five years ago, DJM, which provides telecom, data and network solutions for large companies, government departments and local authorities, has expanded rapidly and now employs a 12-strong workforce.

“We were very pleased with the high standard of work from QAS, whose flexible approach and experienced assessor made the whole project much easier than we had expected.”

David McInroy,
Managing Director. Scottish Grass Machinery

DJM decided on ISO 9000, which followed acquisition of Investors in People, to provide a formal structure for expansion and to improve the overall organisation of the business.

Joint managing director Jacky Macbeth, who runs the company with her husband David, commented: “ISO

9000 has given us formal recognition of quality which, as a small company, has unquestionably improved our credibility with existing and potential customers. We were very pleased with the seamless QAS service, which caused minimum disruption to our normal operation.”

Scottish Grass Machinery is widely recognised as Scotland’s premier groundcare machinery supplier. Its key markets are local authority ground maintenance departments and golf clubs north of the border.

Following a management buy-out in 1991, the company has more than tripled its annual turnover from £3 million to £10 million in the last nine years. To accommodate this impressive expansion, it relocated to Inverkeithing, near Dunfermline, in 1997, and now employs 56 staff.

Although Scottish Grass’ business philosophy has always placed quality at the top of its priorities, in the last few years the feedback from existing and potential customers has indicated that they preferred to deal with companies which possessed a recognised quality standard.

Managing Director David McInroy commented: “We decided to acquire ISO 9000 to assist with internal management controls and because many potential customers, particularly local authorities, were beginning to ask for it as a prerequisite when tendering for contracts”.

A small engineering firm in Brechin, 2D Precision, has received a major boost by gaining ISO 9000 certification with help from QAS. Its business involves a broad range of engineering work, from agricultural to the oil business.

Director Scott Milne commented: “The key reason was competitive pressure. Every time I wanted to tender for new business, I kept being told that ISO 9000 was a prerequisite. But having now acquired it, I am seeing how beneficial it is in improving overall efficiency and profitability.”

He chose QAS because of their understanding of his business, their commitment to the project and their competitive pricing. “They provided a good all-round service from the first meeting to completion. I would be very happy to recommend them.”

Three case studies. Three satisfied businesses. As the pressure to provide one’s customers with an ever-higher quality of service continues, it is hardly surprising that more businesses in Scotland are concluding that ISO 9000 is a standard they cannot do without.

IMSM EXPANDS INTO GERMANY



Kirstie Chase & Josie Thiel, two members of the German team in Chelmsford

As part of its expansion strategy in Europe, IMSM has recently begun forming a team, which will offer professional expertise to businesses in Germany leading to ISO 9000 certification.

Kirstie Chase, an honours graduate in German and French from Essex University, has been appointed to build the company's operation there. Based at IMSM's offices in Chelmsford, Essex, Kirstie recently accompanied Rick Hursthouse, Area Manager in Frankfurt, where they interviewed a number of excellent candidates.

As a result, three German business managers, to cover the Frankfurt area, have been appointed. A further two appointments are planned for early in 2001, to be based in Wurzburg.

Initially, UK-based assessors will provide expert ISO 9000 guidance, but it is planned, in due course, to appoint qualified German assessors.

Managing Director Michael Bright commented: "Germany has a highly developed business and industrial environment. ISO 9000 certification is already well established in larger companies there, so the potential for attracting smaller firms is considerable. It is a logical expansion for the company, following our very successful penetration of the French market."

Already, QAS has successfully guided three businesses there towards ISO 9000 certification.

CANADA – ISO 9000 IS COMING!

It's not only the Mounties who are coming. Helped by IMSM/QAS, ISO 9000 has come to Canada.

With IMSM now enjoying rapid growth in the USA, the logical next move was north into Canada.

"The assistance we received from QAS assessor Ian Kendall was outstanding. He was very professional",

Following intensive market research, its "all systems go" there, with business managers Scott Mersch and Jim Goldstein now helping SMEs in Toronto and Montreal towards

receiving the benefits of ISO 9000.

One early beneficiary has been Precision Instruments, based in Markham, near Toronto.

A small and well-established business for 15 years, Precision Instruments sells industrial

X-ray machines and table-top equipment to measure the thickness of all metals. Their customers include major multi-nationals, such as IBM and Nortel, as well as plating shops throughout Canada and the USA.

Proprietor and President Samih Issa decided to acquire ISO 9000 to underline his commitment to the highest standards and proper management techniques. "We are finding that a growing number of customers are looking for that higher level of quality, which the ISO certification provides."

"The assistance we received from QAS assessor Ian Kendall was outstanding. He was very professional", he said.

Meet Jan Ashdown - Chelmsford



Jan Ashdown has not just one crucial role within the IMSM family, but two.

As Chelmsford officer manager, Jan is responsible for recruiting, training and managing the tele-marketing teams that arrange appointments for our business managers in the eastern half of England and Scotland, South Africa, the eastern side of the USA and, most recently, Germany.

Wearing another hat, Jan is also Sales Development Manager for same part of England and Scotland and Eire. This role involves working with IMSM's business managers in these countries, arranging their initial training and ensuring they have all the facilities at their disposal to generate new business.

Last year she visited Dallas, Denver and New York, where she organised induction training for recently recruited business managers. "Working in the States was a real eye-opener", Jan commented. "I found all the American men I met to be extremely polite, and at all times was treated with great respect. It's a great country but, if you think we have traffic problems on the M25, just visit the LBJ Freeway in Dallas at rush hour! It's unbelievable!"

Jan joined IMSM some five years ago, shortly after the Chelmsford office was opened. Initially working as a member of the then small tele-marketing team, Jan's talents were soon spotted and she was quickly promoted, first to credit control manager, then to office manager and, finally, to sales development manager. As she herself says: "I've just grown with the company"

Jan lives with her two teenage daughters in the nearby town of Wickford, where she is actively involved in local amateur dramatics, having taken, just as she does at work, many leading roles. What of the future? Jan is optimistic: "ISO 9000 in 2000 (referred to elsewhere in this edition of Quest International) affords terrific opportunities for IMSM. The growth we have achieved in 2000 is an indication of the huge potential in the next few years. It promises exciting times ahead."

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