



CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

COSTA EXPRESS

ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015

Costa Express is a U.K. based business that operates more than 8000 self-service gourmet coffee bar machines worldwide and serves more than 100 million cups of coffee each year. The company aims to exceed the expectations of their customers and interested parties, consistently deliver high-quality products and manage their environmental impact responsibly. To help integrate these values into their daily operations and processes, Costa Express chose to seek certification to two international standards, ISO 9001:2015 (Quality) and ISO 14001:2015 (Environment).



Costa Express initially achieved certification to ISO 14001:2015 in 2016 which provided the framework for their environmental management system. Following this success, the decision was taken to add certification to ISO 9001:2015 to further support the company commitment to quality.

An Integrated Management System was developed to cover the requirements for the environmental and quality management standards, and certification to ISO 9001:2015 was successfully added to the accredited certification in 2018.

Costa Express chose NQA, a leading UKAS accredited certification body to assess their conformity to these standards and provide internationally recognized, third-party assurance that Costa Express has effective quality and environmental management systems in place.

Aiming to Exceed Expectations

One of Costa Express's key motivations in seeking compliance with ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 was to improve their understanding of what their customers and other interested parties need and expect from them. Meeting and exceeding these expectations are an integral part of everything that Costa Express does. Activities have been established to monitor satisfaction levels through gathering and investigating feedback, and analysis of information to identify areas of opportunity for improvements as well as successes.

Costa Express understands that environmental responsibility is important to its customers and work closely with suppliers and other partners to reduce negative environmental impacts and increase focus on positive environmental activities. This includes areas of focus such as; the Costa Foundation which supports farmers who grow the high-quality coffee that's packed full of flavour; including life-cycle and circular economy considerations in the design of concessions; working with logistics partners to reduce and recycle packaging solutions; development of reusable cups; and driver awareness training to improve safety and reduce idling times.

The development of the Integrated Management System supported Costa Express in planning activities to accomplish these goals and objectives, linking processes across teams and work areas to identify opportunities for improvements, reduce risks and build operational excellence towards achieving objectives.

Helen Turner: Training Manager, Costa Express

“ The ISO standards have become an integral part of the way the Training Team work. The standards have highlighted opportunities to add more value, step change the way we work and give visibility of the results! ”



COSTA EXPRESS

Development of an Integrated Management System

Costa Express started the road to ISO certification in 2016, but the company had been working on ways to improve its environmental performance, as well as the quality of its products, for some time.

When the decision was taken to add ISO 9001:2015 to the existing ISO 14001:2015 certification, a new Integrated Management System was established to include requirements for both standards.

ISO standards for management systems have a common structure called Annex SL and are designed to work seamlessly together. This common structure enabled Costa Express to integrate its management systems as the two standards share a common high-level structure of clauses, identical core text and common terms and definitions.

The company worked with a specialist consultancy to set up the system to meet the standards' requirements and help the company to achieve its quality and environmental ambitions.

This provided opportunity to build the requirements for quality and environment into one system which would reduce complexity, increase understanding and engagement, improve the management of internal benefits, as well as allowing integrated audit through their preferred supplier, NQA.

All staff at Costa Express were involved in reviewing and updating processes to identify risks and opportunities for improvement related to quality and environmental management. Ownership was shared across the business to build understanding and engagement, and a team of internal auditors was established to review the integrated management system and processes to identify further opportunities for improvement.

The leadership team and a newly established Quality and Environmental Action Group provided the strategic overview of the system, setting and monitoring progress against company objectives that support overall company policies and ambitions for improvement.

Mark North: Quality Manager, Costa Express

“ The ISO standards have enabled us to build a platform, collaborate and make this happen with Quality and Environment running through the heart of it. ”

Costa Express had achieved certification to ISO 14001:2015 through NQA, and once again reached out to NQA to provide a proposal for the addition of the ISO 9001:2015 certification. Once this had been agreed, the certification process which initially involved two assessments by an auditor began.

The first, stage 1 assessment took place once the management system had been embedded for three months, a full cycle of internal audits and a management review of the newly integrated management system had been conducted. During this assessment, an NQA auditor ensured that the core elements were in place and met the requirements and that the system was ready for a full evaluation.

During the next, stage 2 assessment, the auditor ensured that the system fully conformed to the requirements of ISO 9001 in practice. The assessor performed sample audits of processes and activities and documented how the system complied with the standards as well as any areas for further development.

The audit process, Costa Express noted, helped the company to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their management systems and implement improvements that provided valuable business benefits.

The auditor was very happy with how the Integrated Management System had been applied and included this statement in his report;

‘Overall the level of implementation and adherence to the systems in place, along with the innovation and team work evident throughout the organization is exemplary, the systems in place show a very sophisticated company and the audit team are confident in recommending Costa Express for certification to ISO 9001:2015’

Following the successful stage 2 audit, NQA issued certification to Costa Express for their quality management element of their Integrated Management System.

Because of the cycle of audits for the ISO 14001:2015 certification, another full audit against both standards took place in the summer of 2019, to enable the certification cycles to coincide and be fully integrated. Following this successful recertification, the new certificate is valid for three years and will be maintained through annual surveillance audits where an NQA auditor will visit Costa Express to ensure that the system still conforms to requirements and identify any further opportunities for improvement.



FUTURE PLANS

Costa Express have been working with their consultants, Simply Sustainable to make their Integrated management System work even harder for them and this has been further supported by NQA who have facilitated meetings with other organisations with Integrated Management Systems to share knowledge and experience.

Integrated Management System activities have recently been combined with Corporate Social Responsibility activities to create a new initiative

called QuEST. These workstreams shared common goals, so it made sense to combine resources to support ongoing ambitions to improve current and future offerings to the benefit of customers, partners, suppliers and communities. Costa Express has further planned to increase the number of ISO certifications held. The requirements of ISO 45001 have already been built into the integrated management system and plans to achieve certification to this standard in the near future are in place.

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