



IRISH CUSTOMER CONTACT  
& SHARED SERVICES AWARDS

2021

PEOPLE PROMOTING EXCELLENCE

## Book of the Night

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The Board of CCMA Ireland wish to sincerely thank each individual corporate sponsor for their support in hosting the 2021 Irish Customer Contact and Shared Services Awards.



2021 Sponsors



# Welcome to the Irish Customer Contact and Shared Services Awards 2021

& SHARED SERVICES AWARDS

# 2021

PEOPLE PROMOTING EXCELLENCE



Ladies and gentlemen on behalf of the board of the CCMA we are delighted to welcome you to the 2021 Irish Customer Contact & Shared Services Awards. We are delighted to host this prestigious industry ceremony, celebrating customer service excellence within the Irish contact centre and shared services sector.

2021 has been another year like no other and we are so proud and humbled by everything you've accomplished together. Customer demand has certainly changed, fuelled by the economic pressures of the pandemic. More than ever, businesses need to be there for their customers by maximising responsiveness at any point in time, regardless of location. In 2021, we saw a greater shift to cloud technologies as more organisations look to create efficiencies and time to focus on customer needs. As well as providing work-from-home set-up, we've offered more omnichannel options, intelligent routing, easily accessible data and AI-assisted capabilities to our customers.

I want to congratulate each of the organisations and industry professionals shortlisted for this year's awards. The judging panel have had the pleasure of meeting virtually with the talented and committed professionals working in your vibrant organisations. We believe that your operations continue to set the standards for customer service excellence across the world.

On behalf of CCMA Ireland, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to our Gold sponsor Welltel, our category sponsors and our corporate sponsors throughout the year, without your support this event would not be possible. I also want to thank and express my sincere appreciation to Dorothy O'Byrne for her hard work, dedication, and commitment throughout the year. Finally, I want to thank our judging panel for giving up their time to take on the challenging task of selecting winners from the many worthy entrants.

Derek Temple

Chairperson CCMA Ireland.



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR GOLD SPONSOR



As a proud member of the Irish Customer Experience Community, Welltel are delighted to be the main sponsor of the 2021 Irish Customer Contact and Shared Services Awards.

We are huge believers in the ever-growing importance of the customer experience industry to the Irish economy. The Covid pandemic has really accelerated the digital transformation agenda and we believe that in many industries it is now fair to say that the battle to retain and attract customers has now firmly shifted from the main street to the contact centre.

As such it is a great honor to sponsor these awards and highlight all the great and innovative work being done by our fellow members. We particularly wish to pay tribute to all the members who have had to quickly change their work practices to continue to deliver and support essential services and the industry should be proud of our combined contribution to the country in these very strange times.

We wish all the nominees the best of luck tonight and looking forward to seeing all the winners.

Ross Murray CEO, Welltel.

Welltel is a leading customer experience, digital collaboration and secure connectivity business employing 230 people in Ireland and the UK. With over 3,000 clients in Ireland and abroad, Welltel is rapidly expanding with the ambition of building the pre-eminent customer experience services, consultancy, and delivery team in Europe.

Enjoy your evening!

# 1. BEST TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



Shortlisted 2021

An Post	Lilly Global Business Solutions
New Ireland Assurance	

WINNER

Lilly Global Business Solutions

In 2020 Lilly's senior executives specifically identified Early Career Professionals (ECP's) as an enormous asset to the company adding value in many areas across the business and recognising that the company must adequately develop this talent. Thus, The Launch Program for Early Career Professional's Development was developed.

The stated aims of the Program were to enrich the available talent pool by supporting early career professionals to continue to develop their skills, to build their personal brand, to create a community which supports them to succeed professionally and to feel engaged.

The Program was designed and delivered in-house. It is evidence based and includes best-practice methodologies to deliver virtual training, self-directed learning and encourage both participants and their managers to discuss and implement each participant's professional development plans.

Targeted increases in retention, engagement and intention to stay were exceeded and the Program has been achieving 70 NPS (World Class) from participants. The program has been proven to deliver against a progressive Talent Strategy that recognises all employees as sources of talent, identifies diverse future leaders and encourages the growth and development of all employees. Targeted development opportunities across all levels are fundamental to Lilly's People Strategy and their employees learning and development opportunities. The Program continues to evolve and now has a waiting list of eager potential participants.

The Best Training and Development Programme for 2021 is awarded to Lilly Global Business Solutions.

## 2. BEST CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



Shortlisted 2021

DPD Ireland	Pinergy & SalesSense
Iberdrola & SaleSense	Three Ireland
Laya Healthcare	

WINNER

Three Ireland

The highly coveted prize in 2021 for overall customer experience excellence within our industry – “Best Customer Experience” is awarded to Three Ireland for consistently innovating and putting the customer at the heart of everything they do.

Three’s clarity of purpose and overriding vision to provide customers with a better-connected life is glaringly obvious and provides the foundation for delivering the ‘Ultimate Experience’ across all channels and activities.

Three’s customer experience metrics are underpinned by a CX framework that aims to deepen relationships with customers by focusing on key emotional customer drivers of: “I trust you”, “you know me”, “you make it easy”, “you get me”, “you deliver on your promise” and “you fix things”. This focus on customer emotion has driven impressive improvements across all CX metrics and indicators. Furthermore, Three is delivering service more efficiently, by increasing their ‘Right First Time Rate’, significantly reducing their call and messaging volumes and impressively continuing with their digital adoption trend with 91% of customers now choosing digital first.

Customer feedback is at the core of their business. From listening to what their customers were telling them; they have implemented several exciting initiatives over the past 12 months. From partnering with Amazon’s Alexa to provide the world’s first voice-assisted top-up experience, to implementing a one-stop-shop to provide interactive support for 50 smart phone devices and 5 broadband routers, through to introducing ‘3Live’ – a live broadcast medium providing engaging and entertaining content presented by Three’s own experts.

## 2. BEST CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



### Shortlisted 2021

Whilst Three undoubtedly is a customer centric organisation, it is also people centred with a clear appreciation of the value and contribution they make. Of particular note, is the launch of the 'CX Leaders Programme' within their contact centre in January of this year. Individuals were sought out from across the frontline who have a passion for all things 'experience'. The programme empowers these agents to own the employee and customer experience within their area, whilst developing their skills for insight and continuous improvement. Staff engagement and continuous improvement is very much the modus operandi within this business. The 'Thrive at Three' programme enables frontline teams to identify an opportunity, idea or innovation that will impact positively on customer or employee experience. The judges were particularly impressed with the liberating culture that exists within the operation, allowing staff to feel able and empowered to get it right-first-time for customers and deliver the customer experience that customers want 'on their terms'.

In presenting Three with this prestigious award, we congratulate them on their persistent dedication to their customers and to their people, as they boldly disrupt and innovate in their pursuit of customer experience excellence.

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

#### Laya Healthcare

The judges would like to highly commend Laya Healthcare in this category. They applaud them on their continued advancement in transforming customer service provision, reflected in innovative solutions, remarkable results and a complete devotion to making life easier for their customers. Laya Healthcare is a true example of an organisation that puts customer experience right at the centre of their companies growth strategy.

With their highly engaged workforce, strong collaboration and customer centric culture, this is an operation that truly values the role agents play in delivering customer experience.

### 3. BEST USE OF DIGITAL CHANNELS



Shortlisted 2021

AIB	Three Ireland
Squarespace	

WINNER

Three Ireland

This award category recognises companies that have integrated digital channels within their organisation, not only to improve customer service delivery, but also to bring about real business benefits within the contact centre and wider organisation. The judging panel were unanimous in their decision that Three Ireland were the deserving winners of the Best Use of Digital Channels award for 2021.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a very significant impact on customers with home schooling, and more people working from home, leading to increased demand for Three's digital services. The team demonstrated a swift and comprehensive response to covid across all digital channels by hiring and skilling up new team members, launching a bot and developing a new community portal.

In their submission, three reported very solid KPIs that were very business oriented. It was evident to the judging committee that they are measuring the right success criteria – both in terms of the customer and in terms of the business. Specifically they grew the unassisted: assisted ratio to 92% and significantly exceeded the My3 registrations forecast demonstrating success in customers adopting to digital channels. This was topped with a solid NPS improvement with uplift in “right first time” scores for B2B and B2C customers.

The judges would like to congratulate the digital team for demonstrating their ability to continually innovate and wish the team every success in developing new gamification and digital personalisation strategies that they plan to roll out in the coming year.



### 3. BEST USE OF DIGITAL CHANNELS



Shortlisted 2021

**HIGHLY COMMENDED**

**AIB**

This year, the highly commended award goes to an organisation that demonstrated how they used digital to adjust to a dramatic change in customer demand and to essentially double down on their customer first strategy.

Once again AIB clearly illustrated the breadth of experience they have in this category and it is no surprise that they are six times winner of this coveted award. With financial service queries doubling during lock down, it was evident that there was significant customer demand for self service solutions and the AIB team succeeded in opening a record number of accounts remotely via digital during the pandemic.

AIB once again demonstrated how importantly they take their “customer first” mission by developing a new campaign “stop and think before you click a link” in response to increased fraud during Covid. It was a great example of strong creative and good use of a one-to-many strategy leveraging digital channels to deliver effective communications to their customer base.

The judges are delighted to highly commend AIB.

# 4. OUTSOURCE PARTNERSHIP OF THE YEAR



## Shortlisted 2021

Capita & Electric Ireland	SalesSense & Iberdrola
FMI & Electric Ireland	SalesSense & Pinergy

## WINNER

**FMI & Electric Ireland**

The Judges wish to congratulate FMI and Electric Ireland on winning the accolade of Outsource Partnership of the Year 2021. The collaboration between the two organisations has been growing since 2018 and is focused on the acquisition and retention of Electric Ireland customers in a highly competitive marketplace.

This is a relationship built on openness and transparency with high levels of shared information and trust between the partners which has served to deepen and mature the relationship over time. This partnership has achieved strong performance even in the face of strong Covid headwinds thanks to teamwork and joint decision-making which was particularly notable in how changes were implemented on foot of customer insights.

We wish the partnership continued success.

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

**SalesSense & Pinergy**

The Judges would like to highly commend SalesSense and Pinergy who have formed a responsive and committed relationship and are on an ambitious growth trajectory together. With their joint focus on innovation, operational excellence and a shared risk and reward model, the judges look forward to future submissions that demonstrate how this relationship further deepens and delivers.

## 5. BEST USE OF TECHNOLOGY – TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME



Shortlisted 2021

AIB	SaleSense
PayPal	

WINNER

AIB

The accolade for Best Technology – Transformation Programme is awarded to a business that was able to demonstrate how they had successfully deployed an end-to-end asset finance solution on the back of a bank-wide transformation to update their IT systems and digitise the bank. Driven by the inability to meet customer expectations with technology and processes that were no longer fit for purpose and lacking agility and speed in a competitive market, AIB launched a single end-to-end cloud-based enterprise solution for lending.

AIB were able to clearly outline the business challenges to overcome and had a strong vision to achieve with defined business goals and objectives. They were able to demonstrate the stages of the transformation and the roadmap taken with detail approaches for training and companywide communication.

Despite being part of a partnership team involving nCino and Accenture, to be commended is how AIB were strong in outlining how they had involved subject matter experts from the beginning of the project and at every stage they had strong influential and decision-making roles.

AIB are to be congratulated on a win that clearly evidenced the tangible business benefits achieved both internally and to the customer, which was accompanied with strong customer testimonials.

## 6. BEST USE OF TECHNOLOGY – TACTICAL PROJECT



Shortlisted 2021

Capita & The Department of Health	ServisBOT & CarTrawler
PayPal	Three Ireland
SalesSense	

### WINNER

PayPal

The award for Best Use of Technology – Tactical is awarded to the contact centre who best demonstrates how they have successfully deployed a specific type of technology, tool or application to improve their contact centre’s business performance and customer experience.

PayPal Merchant Technical Services (MTS) is a worthy winner of this year’s Award for Best Use of Technology – Tactical 2021. This follow-the-sun technical support team successfully tackled a range of employee, customer and team issues all in one go with the introduction of a cost-effective, easy-to-implement AI-powered language translation tool.

The Judges were impressed with the team’s focus on fixing the root cause with technology but without losing sight of the human issues at hand. A great example of how solving for employee pain points leads to better customer and organisational outcomes overall with solid metrics to prove the impact.

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

Capita & The Department of Health

Capita and The Department of Health are highly commended for the rapid deployment of the contact centre and services associated with the Passenger Locator Form. Using SMS technology, they ensured minimal intrusiveness for passengers while also collecting the required information and pushing out important public health messages. Presented with a challenging timeline, changing parameters and public information that was constantly being updated, they rose to the occasion! Besides handling large contact volumes, the cross functional team also provided important data for use in real time decision-making in Dáil Eireann and by NPHET.

## 7. TEAM OF THE YEAR



### Shortlisted 2021

Dell Technologies – Networker Technical Support Team	Sky Ireland – Activations Team
eir – Complaints Team	Sun Life Service Desk – Employee Expenses & Treasury Services Team
Indeed – ROW Teal	TELUS International – Fintech Team
Irish Life Health – Customer Relations Team	Three Ireland – Social Media Team
PayPal – UK Senior Credit Agent Team	Vhi Healthcare – Case Management Team

### WINNER

### VHI Healthcare Case Management Team

The VHI case management team stood out as being an exceptional team especially with the challenges of the last year. As a team they were offering support to customers who had been financially impacted from COVID which is a major challenge to everyone involved. Yet, as a team they introduced a vast array of additional improvements and initiatives throughout the year, all of which had positive impacts upon their customers at such a challenging time. Also, as a team they had incredible success against their targets all of which were focused upon how they worked with their customers. The targets encompassed elements of sentiment and quality but were all measurable and tangible.

Importantly, the individuals within the team were not forgotten and it was impressive to see the approach taken to train, support and constantly communicate to the team. A well-deserved winner with an outstanding submission across all sections. Congratulations to the Vhi Healthcare Case Management Team.

# 7. TEAM OF THE YEAR



## Shortlisted 2021

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

#### eir Complaints Team

The judges would like to highly commend the eir complaints team, who at a time when all contact centres are under pressure, were able to develop a strong team committed to customer care and experience.

They were able to demonstrate how whilst supporting customer complaints they also introduced new customer improvement initiatives with impressive targets demonstrating their success. A team that went above and beyond for their customers.

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

#### Three Ireland Social Media Team

The judges would also like to highly commend the Three Ireland CareTeam, who despite being a small team experiencing high volumes were able to demonstrate a strong approach to training, development, and communication whilst working from home.

This team showed good examples of how they measured their success through efficiency, quality and customer experience performance metrics and identified opportunities for further improvements. A team that was keen to provide a best-in-class positive experience for their customers

## 8. SUPPORT TEAM OF THE YEAR

IRISH CUSTOMER CONTACT  
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### Shortlisted 2021

Abtran – Workforce Management Team	PayPal – Merchant Technical Services Team
AIB – Direct Risk & Control Team	SalesSense – Recruitment Team
Cognizant – Quality Team	Squarespace – Product Specialists Team
eir – Back Office Support Team	Squarespace – Workforce Solutions Team
New Ireland Assurance – Contact Centre Capability Team	TELUS International – HR Team
Northern Trust – Investor Fund Service Centre Quality Team	Three Ireland – Experience Performance Team

## WINNER

### PayPal Merchant Technical Services Team

There were a number of strong contenders in this category, but the judges were convinced by the submission of the PayPal Merchant Technical Services team.

This is a team that provides valuable technical expertise to front line colleagues so they can better handle contacts from merchants using PayPal’s products while also directly supporting merchants where detailed expertise is required. In the past year, they have assisted over 100,000 merchant interactions. It was evident from their submission that the team have a strong focus not only on their internal customer but also on the end client.

Measurement is central to what they do, and there were good examples of how data is used to actively support the team and each individual towards their goals. The end result was that all targets were met or exceeded, despite the challenges Covid brought.

It is great to see the priority given to innovation where the team are given space to think and work on projects of interest to them. The payback is evident in some of the simple but effective innovations introduced to improve the efficiency of their operations. The judges were particularly impressed with the extension of their support to more than 12 different languages and the multi-cultural, global dimension of the operation.

## 8. SUPPORT TEAM OF THE YEAR

IRISH CUSTOMER CONTACT  
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### Shortlisted 2021

#### HIGHLY COMMENDED

#### Abtran Workforce Management Team

This team played a critical role in providing expertise, structure, and ongoing support to the operation of the HSE contact tracing program. Using their expertise, the team were able to improve the efficiency of the operation and ensure its scalability working to tight deadlines over Christmas 2020.

The enhancements introduced included moving rostering online, improving reporting and introducing a more structured transmission of data to payroll. The scale was significant requiring the set-up of an additional 1,000 staff. Also testament, is the decision by the HSE to extend the superior processes and systems to other areas. The team are understandably very proud of the role they played in supporting the national response to the pandemic.

#### HIGHLY COMMENDED

#### eir Back Office Support Team

The judges felt this team deserved a special recognition, considering their performance against target and the extra demands brought about by the shift to online support with the closure of stores due to Covid. To cope with this big uplift, field agents were successfully redeployed from the front line and integrated into the back office team.

The transition was also helped by their focus on continuously looking for ways to improve the customer experience and to enable self-service where possible. Their usage of web forms and robotics are some good examples and the impact can be seen in the impressive reduction in associated calls.



## 9. INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR – CUSTOMER SERVICE ADVISOR



### Shortlisted 2021

Sharon Beatty – AIB	Terrie Keane – Capita Customer Solutions
Grace Beggy – Pitney Bowes	Philip Madden – Charles River Microbial Solutions
Finbarr Bruen – Abtran	Brenda McAuley Reau – Allianz Care
Sarah Buckley – Sky Ireland	Rhona McKeigue – Northern Trust
Lauren Carey – FREENOW	Dolores Mulcaire – Three Ireland
Aislinn Connolly – Pinergy & SalesSense	Declan Murphy – PayPal
Colin Dolan – Northern Trust	Eoin Ryan – Indeed
Gary Doyle – Sun Life	Gabrielle Sparano – PayPal
Annmarie Edwards – SSE Airtricity	Keira Suleiman – Squarespace
Stephen Hoey – AIB	James Tracy – Pitney Bowes

## WINNER

### Philip Madden Charles River Microbial Solutions

Philip is an outstanding customer care advisor who demonstrated an exceptional work ethic with a passion for putting the customer first. With a natural ability to deliver an excellent customer experience for his clients he is a highly valued team player, always on hand to lend support to team members. An avid learner with a thirst for knowledge and for imparting knowledge his passion for his role shone through.

His sense of team spirit was clear, demonstrating a genuine empathy for his customers and colleagues and consistently going the extra mile.

Having originally trained as a chef we know that the culinary industry's loss is the CX industry's gain.

With his tenacity and drive we know that his star will continue to shine in the Irish Customer Service industry. A worthy recipient of this award. Recognising the calibre of people shortlisted in this category we are delighted to announce four commendations.

**9. INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL OF THE  
YEAR – CUSTOMER SERVICE ADVISOR**



**Shortlisted 2021**

**HIGHLY COMMENDED**

**Sarah Buckley Sky**

An invaluable team member providing technical support to customers Sarah has a natural ability to deliver an excellent customer experience. An advocate for diversity, she is always on hand to support her colleagues and is recognised by her peers for making a significant contribution to the business. Congratulations Sarah.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED**

**Lauren Carey FREENOW**

A wonderful role model for striking a work life balance Lauren’s performance is exceptional. With a calm and strategic approach to difficult situations she has excelled in supporting her colleagues in the new ways of working over the past 20 months. A first class team player the judges are delighted to commend Lauren and wish her continued success in her career.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED**

**Rhona McKeigue  
Northern Trust**

Our third commendation goes to a financial services specialist who is a top performer within their organisation, whose can-do attitude and warmth shone through. Her warm and engaging personality means she is the “go to” person who is greatly appreciated by her customers and colleagues alike. Congratulations on your commendation Rhona.

**HIGHLY COMMENDED**

**Eoin Ryan Indeed**

Our final commendation is for an individual who is dedicated to delivering exceptional client experiences. A natural communicator he is a key team member with a great ability to build strong relationships. We know he has a long and fruitful career ahead in the CX industry in Ireland. Congratulations Eoin Ryan of Indeed.

# 10.INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR – TEAM LEADER



## Shortlisted 2021

Natasha Burtenshaw – Abtran	Isabela Montenegro – Squarespace
Lorraine Byrne – AIB	Sandra Nolan – PayPal
Marta Carboni – TELUS International	Gillian O’Donohoe – PayPal
Theresa Fallon – Avant Money	Amy O’Neill – Three Ireland
Orla Keenan – Pitney Bowes	Ciara Reel – Iberdrola & SalesSense
Karina Linehan – AIB	Kay Sheahan – Arema Connect
Padraig Lowe – Laya Healthcare	Fiona Wixted – Northern Trust
James Molloy – Sky Ireland	

The unprecedented challenges of COVID-19 and in particular the move to working from home has continued to place particular burdens on Team Leaders over the last year. To support their people virtually while simultaneously keeping the focus on the client and business objectives has meant Team Leaders have had to learn new skills and lead in new ways. Reflecting this, the Judges are delighted to announce two winners and four highly commended in this category.

## 10. INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR – TEAM LEADER



Shortlisted 2021

### WINNER

**Karina Linehan**  
**AIB**

Karina leads a team of business advisors and relationship managers who serve the SME customer base of 170k+ business customers. She uses a people management framework to drive performance within her team, her focus on coaching her team has contributed to >95% of the team achieving strong performance or higher in the most recent reviews. A worthy winner of this award she has embraced the challenge of supporting a hybrid team and created a work environment where people progress their careers, enjoy their jobs and build strong working relationships in a high-performance culture.

### WINNER

**Ciara Reel**  
**Iberdrola & SalesSense**

Leading a sales and retention team Ciara implemented a key change in her style of managing since the pandemic. With a focus on coaching and engaging with agents virtually she utilises the Johari Window during 1:1's. and has worked on developing emotional intelligence to better understand team morale, reading the team's mood through performance and behaviours. She has been lauded by her team and management for a leadership style that is focused around development, she challenges people to be the best version of themselves in order to drive them to learn and grow. Ciara tirelessly advocates for customers and works daily to identify any process gaps for improvements to ensure best customer experience. The judges wish her continued success.

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

**Theresa Fallon**  
**Avant Money**

Theresa began her career with Avant Money in 2001 and currently leads the Fraud Strategies team. She has 21 associates who assist customers in financial difficulties and monitor fraud prevention. An exceptional leader with a complete focus on employee engagement, she is accredited by her colleagues as the "Motivator of the Year". Congratulations Theresa.

# 10. INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR – TEAM LEADER



Shortlisted 2021

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

**Orla Keenan Pitney Bowes**

Orla is commended by the judging panel for her proactive approach to people management. Despite the challenges of remote working her team have continued to deliver for their clients as shown by a significant rise in their CSAT scores. Her focus on making things easier for clients and her team to work virtually has led to the design and development of several customer service process improvements. She plays a pivotal role in the continued success and development of her team and has already been recognised within the organisation for her future leadership capabilities.

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

**James Molloy Sky**

James has been with Sky Ireland since the operation opened in October 2012. He is recognised by his peers and management for his excellent people leadership skills. A leader who is highly competent at bringing out the best in people he takes great pride in the success of others. He is adept at judging what approach to use with specific individuals adapting his style to the specific situation. Recently awarded the accolade Team Leader of the Year at the Sky Annual awards he has had an outstanding 12 months. At Sky they believe in better, James with his positive and can do attitude embodies this belief, we wish him continued success in his career.

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

**Sandra Nolan PayPal**

Sandra is a senior Team leader with the PayPal's EMEA Customer Solutions Team. She Joined PayPal's new Dundalk site in 2012 as a customer service agent. Her journey from teammate to Senior Team Leader shines and her vast knowledge of the business enables Sandra to bring her team from strength to strength. During her career she has received a number of Spot Awards, received numerous internal recognition e-cards and most recently was awarded PayPal's Influential Women of the Year Award. Recognised for her proactive approach to people management and mentoring, she is a true leader who pushes her team to shine. Watching her lead her team with such grace and humility is truly inspiring.

# 11. INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR – SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL



## Shortlisted 2021

Rick Costa – Squarespace	Anthony McEvoy – Pitney Bowes
Ciara Dixon – SSE Airtricity	Emer Neilan – Dell Technologies
Hazel Geraghty – Northern Trust	Anne Marie Phelan – Vhi Healthcare
Elaine Haslam – AIB	Siddharth Sharma – SalesSense
Dylan Ingarfield – SSE Airtricity	Nora Tiernan – AIB

This category recognises the important contribution being made by professionals in support roles within the contact / shared services centre environment who enable their organisation to deliver high performance in pursuit of business and customer objectives.

**WINNER**

**Anne Marie Phelan  
Vhi Healthcare**

The judges were highly impressed by the stellar performance and wide scope of control managed by Anne Marie whose achievements truly embody the raison d'être of the Support Professional award category. A most deserving winner, Anne Marie is a highly engaged and passionate leader. Her ability to attune to the needs of others and direct the focus of her role in driving positive people initiatives ensures the best possible outcomes for individuals and the business in such a busy and challenging environment.

Anne Marie's achievements include mobilising a New Ways of Working initiative following the pandemic, achieving reduced absenteeism and attrition levels and supporting the contact centre in a variety of ways as it shifted to the challenging work-from-home model. Her role expansion to deliver the People Strategy for VHI is the result of a great career trajectory starting as an advisor - a great personal story but also a win for VHI.

Anne Marie's inspirational leadership, authenticity and passion are cited by fellow-leaders, colleagues and other key stakeholders as being key to the success of the operation in such trying times. Her innovations and engagement with staff resulted in an improvement in all operational success markers and are testament to Anne Marie's personal leadership values.

Anne Marie recognises the value and importance of the human element in running customer operations and strives to ensure others are successful, happy and motivated. This makes her a very deserving winner of this really important and highly contested category.

# 11. INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR – SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL



Shortlisted 2021

The judges would like to highly commend three nominees in this category who have each demonstrated commitment, collaboration, and an employee focus in their work.

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

**Rick Costa - Squarespace**

Rick’s enthusiasm for innovating in his role and his strong collaboration and partnering mindset impressed the judges. A strong performer in his capacity as a product specialist, it was Rick’s focus on driving success for his team through his continuous improvement initiatives and firmly held belief in effective collaboration that make him worthy of this Highly Commended mention. He has achieved great results for his team through his strong work ethic and consistent pursuit of high performance.

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

**Ciara Dixon  
SSE Airtricity**

Ciara’s focus on the Vulnerable Customer community and the innovations deployed to drive positive outcomes for this cohort of customers deserves a special mention in this category. The important work that Ciara does, with her strong focus on staying ahead of issues, finding creative ways to communicate and raise awareness internally is highly valued work that ensures the appropriate care and due diligence for vulnerable customers, and ultimately drives important regulatory compliance for the entire organisation.

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

**Hazel Geraghty  
Northern Trust**

The judges were impressed by the complex and comprehensive nature of Hazel’s contribution towards driving quality across the organisation. Her strong focus on partnerships and driving improved quality outcomes are key elements to driving success for her organisation. Her personal work ethic and keen desire to collaborate with others but also to step out of her role and help others were elements that warrant a special mention.

# 12. INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR – MANAGER



Shortlisted 2021

Tara Carmody – CarTrawler	Roisin Langrell – Dell Technologies
Audrey Cowan – Charles River Microbial Solutions	Lisa Plunkett – New Ireland Assurance
Jorge Hoppe – Squarespace	

WINNER

Jorge Hoppe  
Squarespace

The Industry Professional of the Year- Manager 2021 is awarded to Jorge Hoppe of Squarespace. As the Senior Director of Customer Operations and the Dublin Site Lead for Squarespace, Jorge is responsible for Dublin Customer Support Operations, including Global ownership of the Social Support Program and all Non-English Support for Squarespace.

A forward thinking, innovative and agile leader, Jorge has a thoughtful, inclusive, and collaborative style. He actively promotes accountability with his team ensuring they have the right tools, training and support to drive results and make the difference. An analytical and strategic thinker, he sees the big picture and appreciates the need for integration and engagement with staff to help analyse and resolve problems.

An expert stakeholder manager, Jorge effectively deploys his planning, communication, and leadership skills to build solid relationships, influence decisions and gain buy in from the wider business, in order to prioritise his customer needs and ultimately deliver more connected service provision.

Of particular note has been Jorge’s role in championing the ‘Get Ireland Online’ project, advocating for it internally and removing roadblocks that were crucial to the success of the initiative. Essentially, the Get Ireland Online project has helped local businesses and communities optimise their online presence via consultation, workshops, and support.

Jorge constantly keeps updated with developments within the industry, dedicating time to engaging with industry peers, reading industry publications, attending industry events and benchmarking. He has



## 12. INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR – MANAGER



Shortlisted 2021

recently completed an INSEAD program on Business Strategy and Financial Performance and plans on taking further courses on building 'Executive Presence'. Jorge is constantly pushing his team to have a curiosity and growth mindset to encourage stronger self-belief, innovation, and performance.

The judges congratulate Jorge as the winner of this prestigious award, noting what an innovative and inspirational leader he is. With strong strategic thinking, collaborative working and impressive stakeholder management skills Jorge is a highly worthy winner of this category.

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

**Lisa Plunkett New Ireland Assurance**

The judges would like to highly commend Lisa Plunkett of New Ireland Assurance for her leadership approach to people development and engagement. With a natural ability to connect with people, her leadership style is energetic, collaborative and highly motivational. Customers are at the very heart of her thinking and decision-making processes, resulting in Lisa leading a truly 'customer first' operation, considered best in class and the envy of many.

# 13. SHARED SERVICES CENTRE OF THE YEAR



Shortlisted 2021

Lilly Global Business Solutions

National Shared Services Office (NSSO)

## WINNER

**Lilly Global Business Solutions**

Lilly celebrated its 10-year anniversary since first opening its doors in Cork in 2011. Over the period, the centre has evolved from a finance shared service to a centre supporting every stage of the molecule life cycle. The team has grown by more than 33% in the past year alone. Reflecting their global reach, the team is comprised of 40 nationalities speaking more than 44 different languages.

The past year has been a period of change for the team, with the divestiture of one business and the transfer of some operations. Throughout it all the team maintained a positive employee experience and completed effective transfer of knowledge to new teams, even while working remotely.

The fight on Covid 19 was a key priority and the team worked tirelessly to scale and transform existing functions to deliver at speed– cutting weeks and months from normal development and delivery lifecycles.

Not happy to rest there, the newly established Global Capabilities Optimisation and Automation team, went on to deliver innovations resulting in substantial savings to date. Lilly Global Business Solutions have created a centre of excellence whereby they centralise, streamline and add value to a number of global functions. Their focus on driving change and continuous improvement is a leading example of how organisations should see shared services, as a key enabler in driving greater service and customer experience.

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

**National Shared Services Office (NSSO)**

The judges would also like to highly commend NSSO for a very strong submission. They clearly demonstrated that innovation was critical to the NSSO and one of their core values with strong service measurements and in-depth KPIs, detailed efficiency improvements and very strong people engagement initiatives. They illustrated their commitment to delivering an excellent standard of customer experience and the value of the shared service model. Congratulations to the team at NSSO.

# 14. BEST EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT



Shortlisted 2021

Capita Customer Solutions	National Pen
CarTrawler	PayPal
Covalen	Sky Ireland
eir	Three Ireland
Dylan Ingarfield – SSE Airtricity	Vhi Healthcare
Lilly Global Business Solutions	

WINNER

Dell Technologies

Dell’s continued and wide-ranging work to ensure its employees are empowered, and their potential is recognised and fulfilled, lead it to be the clear winner in this category in 2021.

The submission outlined in detail how employees are enabled not just to do their job at Dell, but to pursue their careers in the organisation, being guided in their development to ensure they identify and follow the right learning path for themselves, and explore new opportunities that fit with their capabilities and ambition.

The range of support tools in place including online courses, mentoring, events, podcasts and workshops, in addition to educational assistance for those choosing to pursue 3rd level education means employees are facilitated to learn and develop in a way that best suits them.

Diversity and inclusion was shown in Dell’s submission to be heavily embedded in the company’s culture, through its comprehensive 6 pillar strategy, empowering the workforce by giving all a voice and recognising the importance of bringing new perspectives into the business, while building talent. The range and depth of initiatives was particularly striking, one such example being ‘Releasing Female Potential (RFP)’; a development opportunity for female professionals which supports and helps them navigate their career through life changes.

Employee resource groups are also positioned effectively in the organisation, as a purpose driven tool to build community across teams, bringing individuals together to work around themes that matter to them, and that lead to action.

# 14. BEST EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT



Shortlisted 2021

The measurement of employee engagement at Dell provides a further platform and process for employees to have their say in relation to the company's culture, the effectiveness of tools and initiatives in place, and to continue the discussion, with each other, their line managers and senior management about who engagement can remain at the fore.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

PayPal

The second commendation is for a global company whose engagement strategy is interwoven with the company's values of collaboration, wellness, innovation and inclusion. Their theme for this year being belonging and community. What is striking about the strategy is the focus on employees achieving their full potential and developing the growth mindset. Congratulations to the team at PayPal.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Sky

Our first commendation goes to an organisation that has a simple and clear employee centric strategy – their team are comfortable being themselves, their work has meaning and their focus is on helping customers. Engagement is powered throughout the organisation with strong involvement by all of the leadership team. Our first commendation goes to Sky Ireland, congratulations to all the team.

# CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE OF THE YEAR

IRISH CUSTOMER CONTACT  
& SHARED SERVICES AWARDS  
**2021**  
PEOPLE PROMOTING EXCELLENCE

## Shortlisted 2021

Avant Money	FMI
CarTrawler	New Ireland Assurance
Charles River Microbial Solutions	Northern Trust
Dublin City Council	Sun Life Service Desk
eir GoMo	Three Ireland

## 15. CONTACT CENTRE OF THE YEAR - SMALL

### WINNER

### New Ireland Assurance

New Ireland Assurance's highly customer-centric approach ensures their deserved place, for the 3rd year running, as award winner of the 'Contact Centre of the year - Small' category.

Their customer-obsessed culture shone through in this year's submission as we were led through the structure and detail of their operation along the customer journey from purchasing a new home to retirement. Providing a multi-channel experience, the customer service strategy is underpinned by a robust operating model with the contact centre operations at the heart of the organisation. Enabling and sustaining connections and engagement via the New Ways of Working within the context of Covid and increased business pressures has resulted in resilience, agility and positive customer outcomes.

The judging panel was impressed with the unwavering people-first approach with its strong focus on engagement and learning and development. Combined with the other innovations outlined in the submission New Ireland is a deserving winner of this prestigious award and is an excellent example of how consistent engagement, innovation and customer-centricity drives great results for all stakeholders

# 16. CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE OF THE YEAR – MEDIUM



Shortlisted 2021

**WINNER**

**CarTrawler**

We are delighted to announce CarTrawler as the undisputed winner of the 2021 Contact Centre of the Year – Medium award. This is an operation that has consistently applied innovation, leadership, and agility in the pursuit of operational excellence.

Few industries have been as severely impacted by the Covid crisis as the travel industry. For CarTrawler as the leading B2B provider of car hire and mobility services to the travel industry, Covid hit them hard. Booking volumes decreased while contact rates increased significantly with queries largely concerning Covid refunds, cancellations, and amendments. CarTrawler approached the challenge head on and implemented a number of successful initiatives that helped manage contact volumes, streamline, and automate processes and manage cash flow, resulting in controlled customer impact underpinned by the customer being always front and centre. Despite the challenges faced by Covid, CarTrawler has been true to its objectives of delivering customer experiences that they are proud of and reducing cost to serve, demonstrated by increased CX scores coupled with decreased costs in the last year.

With a strong focus on staff engagement and wellbeing, CarTrawler has implemented many initiatives for their staff, including regular wellbeing events and self-care motivational programmes. Committed to diversity and inclusion, the company has been at the forefront of respecting and valuing the differences between people, reflected in their policies, values and behaviours. This is a company that truly values the role and contribution of their people, evidenced by a significant increase in their engagement survey score.

CarTrawler's deployment of technology is smart and progressive. Their bespoke artificial intelligence (AI) system has driven many efficiencies and provided easy experiences for customers. Not willing to become complacent, they are currently expanding their AI technology to the next level to 'Emotion Detection' which will detect customer frustration/delight across all languages.

In recognising CarTrawler for overall excellence and operational performance, the judges note their insistent focus on performance improvement, their highly engaged and committed staff and their clever application of tools and processes to drive customer experience and process efficiency.

## 17. CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE OF THE YEAR – LARGE



**WINNER**

**Three Ireland**

The highly esteemed award for overall operational excellence within our industry – “Customer Contact Centre of the year – large 2021” is awarded to Three Ireland. This industry-leading operation is at the forefront of digital transformation, recognised for delivering real strategic value to Three’s customers, staff and business.

With a cohesive and customer-led channel strategy supported by an effective operating model, Three is enjoying tremendous success demonstrated by the significant customer take-up of digital channels, improved customer experience and enhanced staff engagement.

In the past 12 months, Three has delivered a companywide digital transformation programme resulting in a more responsive and agile way of doing things. This transformation has enabled Three to connect to its customers in exciting new ways and empower its people to create better customer experiences. It has also delivered an integrated IT System that has transformed its sales, CRM, billing, and order management processes. As a digitally enabled business with the right tools and support systems, the contact centre is enabled fully to do the right thing, in the right way, at the right time to deliver better and easier connected experiences for customers.

Three clearly values the role and contribution of its people, evidenced by the approach they take to staff leadership, training, engagement and wellbeing. A strategic and innovative approach to training is in place with investment made in many learning tools such as LinkedIn Learning and their learning management system “Cornerstone”. Staff are encouraged and rewarded to present initiatives that will deliver efficiencies and benefit to the customer and the business. An employee wellness programme is in place providing access to wellness programmes, such as headspace, yoga and podcasts. Additionally, Three provides a free confidential employee assistance counselling service for any employee to utilise for the challenges faced within their personal life and notably this service is also extended to employees’ friends and family.

In recognising Three for overall excellence and performance, the judges would like to congratulate them on their successful digital transformation programme, underpinned by a highly engaged workforce, a culture of getting it right first time and bold leadership, resulting in more efficient, easier and better connected customer experiences. This operation has set the bar for excellence, innovation and distinction – Congratulations!



## **Trends in Customer Service Operations/ Service Delivery in Ireland in 2021**

- For the last 10 years NPS has been the dominant measure of C/X; Right first time is becoming more important for some companies
- Companies are starting to use machine learning to better understand needs on assisted and unassisted channels
- Companies are discovering that some personal services can be delivered remotely that were not considered possible before
- In 2019 there was a definite Dublin & Outside Dublin market for staff; Ireland has become a single market for recruitment
- Hybrid working is a thing; But not yet clear what. For some it is options for full time WFH, for others options to sometimes WFH
- Some companies are making imaginative share options schemes to combat attrition and hiring challenges
- Messaging continues to grow as a channel, trend is back toward in-app messaging and away from consumer messaging platforms
- Many companies are using new-found abilities to create expert ad-hoc teams from around the globe to solve real-time problems better and faster
- Evidence of an increase in some of the companies using “plug and play” third-party software to expedite /speed up IT development to improve processes and CX





IRISH CUSTOMER CONTACT  
& SHARED SERVICES AWARDS

2021

PEOPLE PROMOTING EXCELLENCE

GRAPHICS BY



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