

Call centres are bloody awful!

In a new CCF feature, Mike MacEachern speaks to ex-newspaper editor Piers Morgan about his dream of launching "the mother of all assaults" on contact centres in the UK

Feeling relaxed?

Yes, I guess so. As long as you aren't going to make me into public enemy number one again.

What's your experience of call centres?

Never having had to use a call centre before when I was working at the News of the World and at the Daily Mirror, I always relied on my secretary to make all the necessary calls for me. But the moment I lost my job at the Mirror and returned to normal life I was exposed to them again and they're awful.

Why do you think so many people hate call centres?

Sometimes if you're lucky, there are call centres that are efficient and you get the answer to your problem. Then you see that the service can actually work well. But then there are the others that don't work quite so well. When they work well they are a joy, but that's not that often.

Have you had any particularly bad experiences with them in the UK?

I changed my bank because of bad customer service, that's how bad it can get. I used to be a Barclays customer and I'm now with Calvert. What is incumbent on the industry is to make sure that we do not lose human contact and connection, which is happening.

What's your view on offshoring call centres to India and further afield?

There will be a backlash because of the sheer number of calls going abroad. The other day I was trying to get

PIERS MORGAN shot to fame as the disgraced editor of the Daily Mirror after he published fake photos of abuse to Iraqi prisoners. He owns the Press Gazette.

through to Apple. The first guy I spoke to was Irish and he was fine but when I phoned back I was put through to an Indian. He had a lot of problems understanding me and speaking to me and I simply do not think that's good enough. It's not too much to expect that they should be able to speak English is it?

Strong words...

Well, if you're just phoning up about a simple product abroad I wouldn't be so bloody demanding, but for more complicated matters, it's incumbent on them to bring them back to England. It's so bloody annoying. Regional dialects are okay though. I have no problem speaking to someone from up north.

You were quoted as saying you would launch "the mother of all assaults on call centres".

I actually can't remember saying any of that stuff, but guilty as charged. I stick to my words. If I was back working for a paper, I

would launch the mother of all assaults on call centres. It takes people hours to get through and they are treated like shit when they do. I'm glad you pointed this out to me. They are just so frustrating, it affects the readers of a national newspaper on a daily basis so it then becomes a justifiable campaign for an editor. I would think that my readers have got better things to do with their time than deal with stuff like that all day. ■



It's incumbent on the industry to not lose human contact