

# Newsletter

JANUARY 2025



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## BIBAs Leadership Team Of The Year

AN INCREDIBLE ACHIEVEMENT

**Welcome to the 2025 edition of our DGCOS newsletter, which is a recap of what DGCOS has been up to in 2024.**

Our commitment is to offer truly comprehensive support that enriches your experience at every stage of your installer journey. We strive to cultivate an environment where all members have access to the essential business tools and guidance they need to succeed and grow.

Our goal is clear: to show the industry that with a DGCOS membership, specialised and sector-focused support is always within reach.

I hope this newsletter provides valuable insights into our current initiatives and developments. If you have any questions, feedback, or ideas, please feel free to reach out to me at [f.hussain@schemes.org.uk](mailto:f.hussain@schemes.org.uk).

Warm regards,  
Faisal Hussain



**Faisal Hussain**  
CEO

# DGCOS

Ombudsman Scheme



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CELEBRATING 5 YEARS WITH GEORGE CLARKE

February 2024 marked the five year anniversary with George Clarke as Brand Ambassador for The Double Glazing and Conservatory Ombudsman Scheme (DGCOS).

BEYOND TOOLS  
PODCAST FOR  
INSTALLERS:

## Navigating Business Success

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BEYOND TOOLS

Our new podcast series, 'Beyond Tools: navigating business Success', navigates the difficulties that can come with business ownership. The podcast launched in June 2024 and has a total of six episodes.

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# DGCOS Announced As A Finalist

IN THE GGP INDUSTRY AWARDS



DGCOS, the Double Glazing and Conservatory Ombudsman Scheme, has been announced as a Finalist in 2024's GGP Installer Awards. Faisal Hussain, Chief Executive, says, "The whole team has worked hard to really maximise the installer journey benefits we provide to our members. Our mission is simple: to communicate to the industry at large that targeted, industry-specific support is available with a DGCOS membership."

"The fact that we have been nominated as a finalist in the GGP Installer Awards for Best Installer Support Programme or Service Initiative validates all the effort we've made as an organisation."

"Our core principle as an organisation is to safeguard consumers when they are making decisions about buying door and window products. One of the ways we do this is to set standards among our installers, and ensure our installers go through a vetting process."

"Our members benefit from a wide range of services when they are approved members, from the start of

their business journey, to marketing and sales, through to after-sales service and customer satisfaction. To be nominated for this Award is recognition of the genuine benefits that being a DGCOS member can bring to installers in the industry."

For more information about DGCOS and the installer journey benefits, visit [installers.dgc.org.uk](https://installers.dgc.org.uk).

# The Importance Of Providing Good Customer Service

WHAT SHOULD A BUYER EXPECT?

Throughout his experience of doing significant home renovations, Faisal Hussain, DGCOS Chief Executive, has been exposed to various levels of customer service. He discusses here the main issues that have impacted on him and gives his thoughts on how installers can offer top level service to their customers.

Over the last few months, I have been in the position of being a customer of various trade services during my home renovations. Throughout, I have learned a lot about the importance of providing good customer service. Some service levels have been great, but where it has been less than acceptable, it has caused delays, frustration and it begs the question – is it too much for a buyer to expect good service?

## It's not all bad

Firstly, I should point out that it wasn't all bad news. There are resources available to consumers, such as review platforms, DGCOS website and word of mouth recommendations, which can help when researching a potential supplier. All were invaluable to me as they give objective third party ratings. Also, expert tradespeople can provide great advice, and this certainly helped me with challenges or options I otherwise would not have considered. I found that the tradespeople for the smaller jobs were incredibly accommodating and the timeframes, and costs, of getting them done were

all acceptable. It was only when I needed trades for the bigger jobs, such as a bathroom installation, did it all become a different experience.

## Installers, take note!

From a customer's point of view, the frustrations I had in some cases could almost always have been avoided. I was taken aback at how many suppliers failed to even provide a quote, and I contacted approximately ten bathroom companies. It's discourteous and added unnecessary delays into the project. The quotes also varied widely – the highest was three times as much as the lowest – but no one was able to explain why. Is a lower quote representative of a lower quality product? I couldn't say, even now. It seemed that in some cases, the tradesperson was unable to break down the costs and therefore justify their final quote. Something else that took me by surprise was the fact that one company told me they were members of a Competent Person's Scheme but a bit of digging on the website confirmed that they weren't. If they are prepared to be dishonest about that, what else are they being dishonest about? Another common theme was the general reluctance to put quotes in writing. Often, they were sent by text and WhatsApp and some companies went dark when I asked for a written quotation, something I hadn't expected.

## Deposit protection is so important

It was clear that some tradespeople

were not even aware of deposit protection or why it's so important for the customer. One wasn't even clear how credit card payment protection worked, and I had to explain it to him. Some were also unwilling to take credit card payments at all, often citing the charges they incur. But in the current climate, when some companies are struggling and are ceasing to trade, it's so important to be able to protect the customer's money.

## How to get it right

If my experiences are being replicated across the door and window industry, it is a concern. If installers want to run an efficient and profitable business, I believe providing good service is key. I would say to any installer: don't promise what you can't deliver. If you are too busy to quote or know you cannot take on a job, tell the customer. Write everything down clearly. Provide peace of mind by protecting customers' payments and ensure they can pay in the way that's best for them. Be aware of current regulations and provide the right advice first time and communicate at every step.

For consumers, my advice is that if someone says they are part of a registered scheme, check. Get everything in writing and be wary of anyone who is reluctant to do that. Protect your payment at all costs and pay by credit card where you can. Most importantly, though, if something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't and don't be pressured into something that feels off.

To me, these simple steps should be automatic, but my experience tells me otherwise. To ensure a healthy industry, customer service should be at the forefront of every installer's business.

DGCOS is a consumer protection scheme and was founded to give consumers the confidence and peace of mind when buying from accredited installers, offering advice to both installers and buyers. For more information, visit [installers.dgc.org.uk](http://installers.dgc.org.uk).

# Calling all double glazing installers...

WHAT CAN DGCOS DO FOR YOU?



We are passionate about improving the industry, protecting consumers and supporting our members with a wide range of benefits, giving them all round business support.



**Faisal Hussain**  
Chief Executive Officer

Get in touch to discover the incredible installer benefits from DGCOS.

DGCOS is a consumer protection scheme for the installation of double glazing products. Being a member of DGCOS shows that as an installer you are committed to complying with high standards of consumer protection.



**DGCOS**  
Ombudsman  
Scheme

# Avoiding A Race To The Bottom

EXCLUSIVE MEMBER BENEFITS FROM DGCOS

**It seems that no sooner had we come through the challenge of Covid-19, we were straight into a cost of living crisis, both of which have affected the door, window and conservatory industry. In his latest column, Faisal Hussain, DGCOS Chief Executive, discusses the implications that economic pressures have had on installers and how they can best adapt.**

The last few years have been difficult for both installers and homeowners, and the landscape of the fenestration industry has changed as a result. Both Covid-19 and the current cost of living crisis have affected buyer behaviour in different ways, and some installation companies have been caught out.

The pandemic, somewhat ironically perhaps, created opportunities for installers with a shift in how consumers are spending their money. A move towards hybrid working created a demand for new home-working spaces, and as consumers were unable to spend on big ticket items such as holidays, the money saved often went into improving their homes.

## On-going challenges

The demand for home improvements during the COVID-19 pandemic meant there were delays in getting products within a reasonable timeframe. Since then, of course, the cost of materials has risen dramatically, as have operational costs such as insurance and fuel, and staff costs due to the rising minimum wage and employee expectations. Combine this with a skills shortage and the lack of younger people moving into the industry and

you have a perfect storm. If that was not bad enough, installers are reporting that consumer demand is falling as they start to hold onto their money due to pressures on domestic budgets, particularly mortgages, food and energy and a general level of uncertainty brought on by the cost of living crisis. The installers we talk to reported a tough 2023 with expectations for a difficult 2024, certainly for the first few months. A glimmer of hope is that a combination of above-average pay rises and potential falling interest rates will mean that consumers should have more money in their pockets.

## How installers are adapting

Those installers who have built resilience into their businesses are those most likely to ride out the storm. Managing cash flow is especially important, and if you are an installer worried about how to keep on top of it, DGCOS offers advice to their members about this issue.

Giving customers what they want might sound obvious, but being aware of the changes in buyer attitudes represents an opportunity for diversification, which means a wider product offering and consequentially more work prospects. Homeowners are recognising the benefits of installing high-performance products, which might mean more initial outlay, but the long lifespan and product benefits are worth it. Products that offer greater energy efficiency, security and noise reduction are key to giving customers what they want, potentially at a healthy margin.

While some installers are telling us that where the increase in product costs are an objection in a buying decision, they are working more

with customers to compromise in order to win the business. However, by operating an efficient business model, installers can reduce the degree by which they need to do this.

## Benefits and value

It can be tempting to focus purely on cost, whether that's the cost of the final product, the cost of investing in training or quality staff, or the levels of customer service and after-sales care. However, installers should avoid devaluing their offering by cutting costs too far. The focus should be on the benefits of the product, of providing good service levels, and of having highly trained installers. The first internal cost which is often cut in tough times is marketing, but we advise that putting a clear, benefited marketing campaign in place will reap more rewards than not doing any. Again, installer members who do not have experience in this area can call on DGCOS for help and advice.

We cannot solve all the world's problems, but we do have a vast amount of experience and resources available to our members as part of our installer journey benefits package, leaving them free to do what they do best – door, window and conservatory installations.

To find out more, visit [installers.dgc.org.uk](https://installers.dgc.org.uk).

# DGCOS Celebrate 5 Years with George Clarke

A JOURNEY OF EXCELLENCE

**February 2024 marks the five year anniversary with George Clarke as Brand Ambassador for The Double Glazing and Conservatory Ombudsman Scheme (DGCOS).**

DGCOS and George both share a commitment to upholding the highest standards in the double-glazing industry.

Reflecting on the milestone, George Clarke, DGCOS Brand Ambassador, comments, "Celebrating five years with DGCOS has been nothing short of fantastic. I am proud to support them in their mission to protect consumers."

"Looking back on my incredible journey with DGCOS fills me with immense gratitude and pride. Being Brand Ambassador has been an honour and witnessing the dedication and team spirit of the staff at DGCOS and their members has been truly inspiring. Together, we've achieved remarkable milestones, and I look forward to continuing this journey of excellence with them."

Faisal Hussain, DGCOS Chief Executive, comments, "As we mark the five year milestone alongside our Brand Ambassador, George Clarke, I am reminded of the core values that have guided us on this incredible journey."

"At DGCOS, customer satisfaction and installer support are not just a goal; it's a commitment that lies at the heart of everything we do. Collaborating with George and our dedicated team at DGCOS, we've embraced the power of unity, ensuring that interactions with DGCOS leave a lasting impression of satisfaction and trust."

"Our partnership with George has been fantastic and together we've listened, learned, and evolved, always with the shared goal of raising standards, protecting consumers, and empowering our DGCOS members to thrive. Here's to many more years of success and continued dedication to consumer protection with George by our side."

*"Celebrating five years with DGCOS has been nothing short of fantastic. I am proud to support them in their mission to protect consumers."*

- GEORGE CLARKE  
DGCOS BRAND  
AMBASSADOR



# Continued Support For Installers From DGCOS

LAUNCHING OUR INSTALLER BROCHURE

DGCOS has launched its installer brochure, outlining the key benefits of being a DGCOS member, in an easy-to-access format. Aimed at potential member companies, the brochure clearly explains the details of the support installers have access to when they are DGCOS members.

Faisal Hussain, DGCOS Chief Executive, explains more: "In light of recent enquiries from companies who are looking to become DGCOS members, we have produced a brochure for anyone who wants to see what our organisation can offer.

"In order to fulfil our role as a consumer protection scheme, we need to ensure that our members are supported in every way possible, to raise standards, minimise come backs, and boost their reputation and therefore their order book.

"To do this, we have outlined the exclusive benefits that members gain access to when they are part of DGCOS. We can help in every part of the installer journey across six main touchpoints, with over 30 separate benefits that are available for installers to access whenever they need to.



If you would like a copy of the DGCOS installer brochure to find out more about how you and your business could benefit from being a DGCOS member, call **0345 053 8975**, email [info@dgcoss.org.uk](mailto:info@dgcoss.org.uk) or visit [installers.dgcoss.org.uk](http://installers.dgcoss.org.uk).

So that installers can focus on what they do best – installing quality doors and windows – we offer support services in the following areas:"

## Getting Started

From introducing members to manufacturers and distributors, to introducing members to Competent Person Schemes to help you comply with building regulations, and more.

## Customer Service and Satisfaction

From advice on how to avoid complaints, to mediation and conciliation for the members and their customers to help settle any disputes that may arise, and more.

## Marketing and Digital

Scheme marketing materials available, opportunities for consumer leads via the Scheme website, and more.

## Selling

From introductions to finance brokers/lenders, to exclusive sales training, and more.

## Installing

From paying for the members' Competent Person Scheme building regulations notifications, to assistance available when members experience growth spurts, and more.

## Annual Review

From documentation assistance to help members comply with legislative requirements, to annual health checks to keep the members business up to date, and more.





# How Industry Awards Can Endorse Business Activity

MOTIVATION, TRUST & CREDIBILITY

**Industry awards bring a range of benefits to companies, if they are approached properly, says Faisal Hussain, DGCOS Chief Executive. Here, Faisal discusses how important awards are, and how they can put a business at the heart of their profession.**

If you search online for industry awards, you will find a range of events, from local business and regional awards to industry-specific events,

not least the GGP Installer Awards for which DGCOS was nominated as a finalist in the Best Installer Support Programme category. For me, being a finalist in this Award event is an endorsement of the work that we do. Our team knows what a good job they do at DGCOS, and they know how much progress we have made in developing our installer benefits package, for which we have our GGP finalist's nomination. Now, though, the wider industry knows that we are a potentially award-winning company

with the work ethic, motivation and commitment to deliver on behalf of our customers, in our case, installers. I think that in the past we have tended to take what we do for granted and not communicate our work to a wider audience. Since our nomination, that has all changed, and we can proudly say we are very much at the heart of the industry.

### Third party validation

What makes awards generally, and the GGP Installer Awards specifically,

important to us is that a third-party panel of judges has independently viewed our entry with all the details and facts and has judged it worthy to be shortlisted. If you view an awards event as a level playing field, where every entrant has the same opportunity as the next, this puts DGCOS up there among the best. Did we know we were doing good work? Yes – we have done a huge amount of work over the last twelve months to bolster our offering in line with what installers are asking for. Does this nomination make a difference to us? Also yes, and in several different ways.

### Internal and external benefits

Success at an awards event can be motivational, and can give a team a real boost, meaning staff are even more inspired to keep doing the best they can.

Secondly, it generates trust among our target audience. The presence of an independent award lends credibility to our brand and means that our potential members can trust the value of our service. It is a mark of excellence and gives us credibility to the outside world.

This credibility, which is demonstrated in our approach to our members regardless, could potentially help in any future recruitment. As we seek to attract talented individuals to our team, we recognise that they will be drawn to reputable organisations.

Awards can help to attract the right talent, ensuring that we continue to assemble a team of skilled professionals dedicated to excellence.

### Making an entry count

I would say that to put a strong entry together takes teamwork and time. It is not something that can or should be rushed if you are to give yourselves the best chance of success. We knew what we wanted to talk about, and we took the time to make sure we got the right input, and we made every word count.

As a business, DGCOS is looking to the future to keep building on our company ethos of consumer protection and installer support, but we will also be keeping one eye on industry awards for the rest of 2024.

To find out more about our installer benefits, visit [installers.dgc.org.uk](https://installers.dgc.org.uk).

# The Power Of Positive Customer Experiences For Businesses

TAKING CARE OF YOUR CUSTOMERS

**Good customer service can reap rewards for window and door installers, and a customer services strategy should be part of every business. Here, Faisal Hussain, Chief Executive of Double Glazing & Conservatory Ombudsman Scheme (DGCOS), explains why taking care of customers is so important.**

I am sure that most, if not all, readers will have experienced poor customer service in their lifetime – I know I have. A negative customer experience is bad for any company, and, in an era of social media and other online platforms, it is easy for a disgruntled customer to make their views known publicly. However, by integrating regular monitoring and tracking of customer satisfaction into everyday operations, installers can effectively mitigate these risks. The benefits of doing so are huge and there are simple steps that installers can put in place to gain real-life feedback from customers. First it is worth reminding ourselves of the power of positive customer experiences for a business.

## The benefits are real

Firstly, we know it's cheaper to retain a customer than it is to gain one, so that should be motivation enough to make sure customers are happy. Often installers are working within a local geographic area where word of mouth recommendations are important, so the aim is to give customers a reason to talk about their experiences in a positive way to their friends and neighbours. This type of customer loyalty reduces churn, reduces call-backs (which is time not spent earning money) and potentially fills an order book going forward.

Good customer experiences also build positive brand associations, maximising a customer's lifetime value. These positive associations engender trust among potential buyers, and you can't buy trust, it can only be earned. Trust also enables an installer to upsell, as customers already make positive brand connections with companies with a good reputation, so the figurative sales doors is already open.

## Practical steps to happy customers

I believe that most installers operate with integrity and ethics, and with their customers' best interests in mind. I also believe that most installers would say they are delivering to expectations. However, if you do not ask your customers what they think, how do you know for sure? The only way to effectively measure customer satisfaction is to survey them. A customer feedback survey is just one of the tools that DGCOS has in its toolbox available to installers as part of our installer support programme.

Measuring customer satisfaction is about customer perceptions, which, after all, is what matters most. With facts available, an installer can see what they are doing well, reward staff for doing it, thereby motivating the team, and carry on along that path. Good feedback can and should include customer testimonials to further promote the company and underpin its reputation. Feedback forms can also identify where there might be weak areas, whether it's in communication, the purchasing process, clarity of information after a purchase has been made, doing what has been

promised at the time at which it has been promised, and responsiveness of dealing with any issues that may, and do, arise. This gives an installer the opportunity to take remedial action, whether it's filling a training gap, introducing a different process, or communicating with teams about service level agreements.

## If the worst happens

In an ideal world, installers will be on top of measuring and monitoring customer satisfaction, and customers are all providing glowing feedback. We all know, however, that sometimes problems arise and customer complaints will still be part of life. At this stage, an installer might feel isolated and not know what to do. As part of our members' support package, DGCOS offers practical solutions to stop complaints escalating, with a view to finding an acceptable outcome for both installer and customer. These touchpoints include confidential support to talk about complaints; independent inspections where DGCOS deems necessary to help resolve a dispute, and mediation and conciliation services.

Whether you are a DGCOS member or not, delivering high standards of customer service on a consistent and continuous basis can only be good for everyone.

DGCOS is a consumer protection scheme. For more information, visit [installers.dgc.org.uk](https://installers.dgc.org.uk)

# Installer Support From Start To Finish

EXCLUSIVE MEMBER BENEFITS FROM DGCOS

**At the heart of DGCOS is a commitment to provide a holistic support programme to members which reflects the needs of the variety of installers companies within the industry. Here, Faisal Hussain, DGCOS Chief Executive, outlines the benefits that members receive.**

At DGCOS we are dedicated to assisting installer members throughout every phase of their journey, which is reflected in a comprehensive framework that has six clear touchpoints, each designed to enhance installers' experiences.

The motivation to do this stems from a recognition that each installer embarks on a unique path which requires tailored assistance regardless of their business' stage of development. Through the implementation of our installer journey benefits, we aim to bridge these gaps to create an environment where every member can access the support they need, regardless of their requirements. I believe that DGCOS is unique in being able to deliver this complete package.

## Support initiatives

Our installer journey benefits serve as a roadmap, guiding members through the labyrinth of challenges and opportunities they face, and the benefits are wide ranging. Our aim is to ensure that our members are free to do what they do best: install quality door and window products. I have spoken before about how the pressures of running a business often have a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of installers within our industry, because the challenges are real. Increasing product costs and the cost of living has impacted greatly on cash flow, for example, and it's

vital that companies have the know-how to manage these challenges. Our installer journey benefits programme comprises over 30 different benefits – that's over 30 ways in which we can help installers improve the running of their business.

Our package of benefits starts at the beginning of the installer journey, right at the point at which they set up their business. We offer guidance and advice to help them start on the right footing. No business is complete without a sales funnel and a sales funnel needs marketing support. We can help installers harness the power of marketing and digital platforms, enabling them to get their message out to prospective customers. In turn, this helps the sales process and at DGCOS we can help equip installers with the tools to convert leads into sales, and even advise on how to close sales.

Once the order book is filling up, it is vital to think about service levels and customer satisfaction. After all, DGCOS is a consumer protection organisation, and we wholeheartedly support installers in providing the best service and care to deliver a quality installation. Fewer comebacks equate to happy customers, which engenders trust and reputation. Not only is this beneficial to the installer, but it means that consumers can trust in a DGCOS member.

However, it doesn't end there. Regardless of how long a member has been in business, we provide an annual business review to enable informed future planning to keep the company on track.

## One size does not fit all

Every installer has a distinct narrative,

shaped by their experiences, challenges and objectives. We recognise this and our installer journey benefits, therefore, is most definitely not 'one size fits all'. Our approach is holistic in that we encounter many different types of installers. For example, an installer may struggle with marketing and digital platforms, an area where we can lend support and reduce that pressure point. Another installer may need advice on how to manage and monitor customer satisfaction and again we can help.

The team at DGCOS is uniquely placed to offer quality support that is so often needed. Once you add into the equation that only the best installers pass our rigorous vetting system, it becomes clear that we are so much more than 'just' a consumer protection organisation. Everything we do is focussed on raising and maintaining standards in our industry and our installer journey benefits is a key part of this.

DGCOS is a consumer protection scheme and was founded to give consumers the confidence and peace of mind when buying from accredited installers, offering advice to both installers and buyers.

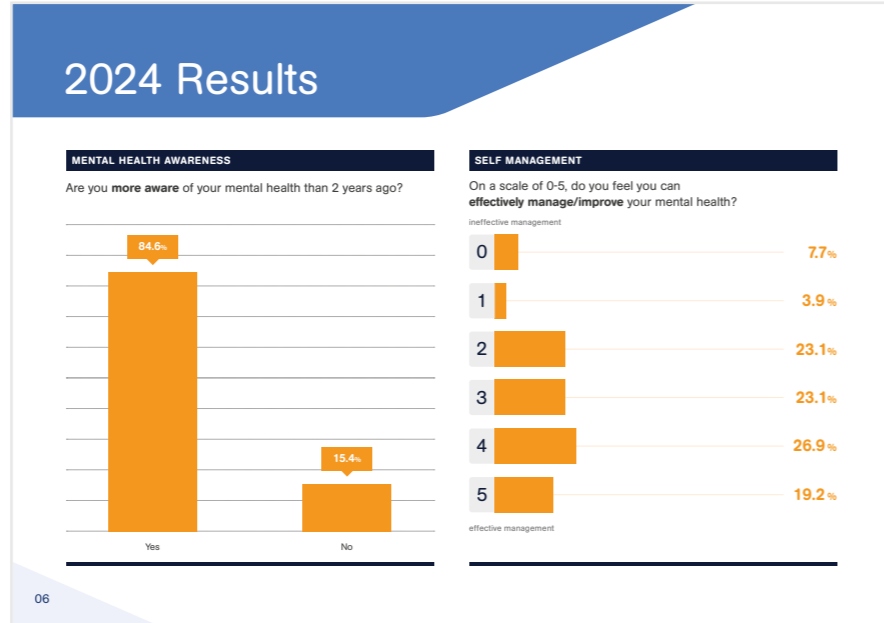
For more information, visit [installers.dgc.org.uk](https://installers.dgc.org.uk)

# Understanding Mental Health Challenges In The Industry

DGCOS SURVEY INSIGHTS 2022-2024

In recent years, mental health challenges in the workplace have become increasingly evident, and the glass and glazing industry is no exception. In 2022, The Double Glazing & Conservatory Ombudsman Scheme (DGCOS) launched the ground-breaking Mental Health Survey, a brave first step for our industry. DGCOS launched a follow-up survey in 2024 whereby the results are now available with some interesting shifts in behaviour and perceptions.

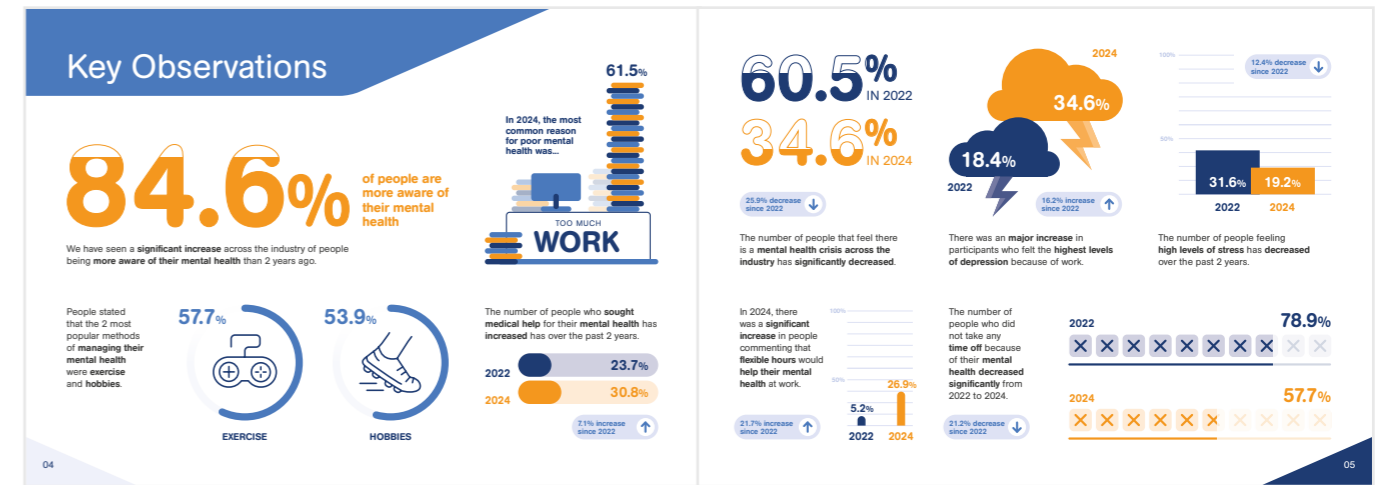
Stress, anxiety, and depression continue to be major concerns. In 2022, 44.74% of respondents felt extremely stressed, dropping slightly to 42.31% in 2024. Anxiety levels rose from 39.47% in 2022 to 42.31% in 2024, highlighting the need for targeted support to manage



workplace pressures. Depression, while showing some improvement, remains significant, affecting 18.42% of respondents in 2024, down from 28.95% in 2022.

*“In 2024, 80.77% of respondents felt there wasn’t enough awareness, but efforts are underway to normalise discussions and break down taboos around mental health among colleagues.”*

- FAISAL HUSSAIN  
DGCOS CEO



Chief Executive of DGCOS, Faisal Hussain, explains more: “These surveys are our roadmap to better mental health in the glass and glazing industry. It’s not just about ticking boxes, it requires collective action and commitment, which is essential. The findings uncover widespread challenges employees face, showing that these issues aren’t isolated—many individuals share similar experiences. By adopting proactive measures, as a sector, we can foster a workplace where mental health isn’t just prioritised but nurtured, ensuring a healthier, more productive workforce for the long haul.

#### Taking their toll

“Key factors impacting employee mental health continue to include consumer complaints and financial

pressures. Consumer complaints dropped from a staggering 50% in 2022 to 34.62% in 2024, while financial pressures like chasing payments and cash flow issues continue to take their toll. Operational challenges such as staff shortages and quality control issues continue to affect overall mental well-being.

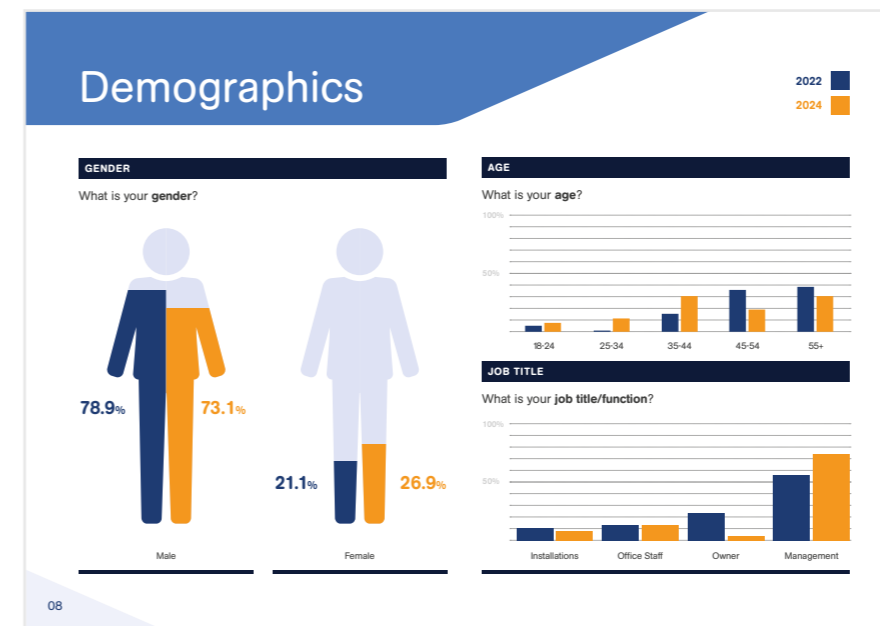
#### Silver linings

“Despite these challenges, there’s a silver lining: 30.77% of respondents in 2024 sought medical help, up from 23.68% in 2022. However, there’s still a gap in sufficient support, with 15.38% reporting they didn’t receive the right help, an increase from 10.53% in 2022. But it’s not all bad news. Employee perceptions of employer support have improved, with 19.23% rating their employers

as very supportive in 2024, up from 13.16% in 2022. Employers recognise the need for even greater support from their staff, showing a mutual commitment to improving workplace mental health.

“The survey reveals mixed opinions about mental health awareness within the industry. In 2024, 80.77% of respondents felt there wasn’t enough awareness, but efforts are underway to normalise discussions and break down taboos around mental health among colleagues. Interestingly, the perception of a mental health crisis has shifted: in 2022, 60.53% believed there was a crisis, which dropped to 34.62% in 2024. Those who didn’t see a crisis increased from 39.47% in 2022 to 65.38% in 2024, indicating a more optimistic outlook or actual improvements.

“The industry needs more extensive employee wellbeing programmes, increased training on mental health issues, and a culture of openness and support. By tackling these challenges head-on, the glass and glazing industry can set a precedent in prioritising mental health in the workplace. This latest survey highlights both the ongoing struggles and areas for improvement within the industry. With collective action and commitment, the glass and glazing industry can continue to enhance mental health support, ensuring a healthier, more productive workforce. It’s up to all of us collectively to drive this forward.”





# Sales And Marketing: The Foundation Of A Prosperous Business

KEEPING THE PIPELINES FULL

As part of their installer journey benefits package, the Double Glazing & Conservatory Ombudsman Scheme (DGCOS) offers comprehensive sales and marketing support to help members achieve better sales. Here, DGCOS Chief Executive, Faisal Hussain, discusses what that support looks like.

According to reports, there are more than 12,000 companies in the UK installing doors, windows and conservatories (Insight Data, 2022) and it's safe to assume that the vast majority of them know their products well. However, the key to showcasing this knowledge and expertise is selling, and this is where some installers may struggle.

Business that is gained through word of mouth is the dream and those that keep full pipelines from this are fortunate. They have built a good reputation in their area, thanks to their expertise, and business is good. However, what happens if this pipeline starts to slow down, or you want to broaden your sales and grow? Perhaps you are a new business looking to make your mark?

Also consider the challenging market: increasing product costs and the cost of living has impacted greatly on cash flow, for example, and it's vital that business owners have the know-how to manage these challenges before they start to affect their sales, and their mental health.

All these challenges can be addressed with a sales and marketing strategy but it's often an area where many installers can struggle so it is an area we work closely on with our members to support them.

## Providing a road map

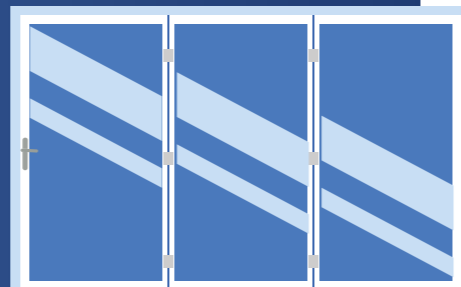
Every member of DGCOS has full access to a range of benefits, laid out in a comprehensive framework of six areas where we can offer support. We call them our installer journey benefits because they are designed to provide a roadmap, guiding members through the labyrinth of challenges and opportunities they face. Our aim is to ensure that our members are free to do what they do best: install quality door and window products. Sales and marketing support is one area that is widely accessed by our installer members.

## Selling

Helping you close your leads

- Introduce you to finance brokers/lenders
- Sales training available
- Deposit & stage payment protection provided to your customers upon job registration on the portal

...and many more!



## Marketing & Digital

Helping you reach potential customers

- Scheme marketing materials available
- George Clarke as Brand Ambassador
- Website audit available to help improve its performance
- Opportunities for consumer leads via your listing on the DGCOS website

...and many more!



### Sales objectives

No business is complete without a sales funnel and to get a sales funnel, you need to set yourself some clear sales objectives. What do you need to earn, what sales do you want to achieve by when?

We work with our installers by asking these sorts of questions and then helping to define their objectives.

### Marketing objectives

The next step is to support the sales funnel with marketing to help generate leads. How are you going to get the money in? Where will the leads come from? And in most cases, where do you start with marketing? With DGCOS, not only can we support making these decisions, but we can also offer marketing materials that members can leverage. From being listed on our website for lead generation, to content creation, to George Clarke as DGCOS Brand Ambassador, our marketing support is wide reaching and made to help members get their message out.

### Converting leads

Once the leads start coming in, the next and most crucial step is converting them to sales. When you meet with potential customers, your experience, expertise, and knowledge will likely shine through; however, sometimes closing a sale is more than reassuring your customer that you are reliable. Introductions to finance lenders/brokers, information on government grants and schemes, and payment protection options are just some of the benefits of being a DGCOS member. Also if you're not confident in the process, there's sales training available too.

### Keeping customers happy

Once you have an order book and understand service levels, effectively communicating and customer satisfaction are crucial not only for getting paid but also for building and maintaining the good reputation I mentioned earlier. Ultimately, this reputation is the best sales and marketing tool every business can have.

### Providing a competitive edge

Having a good reputation as an installer advocate and consumer champion is something that DGCOS strives for every day. We do this by providing our members with the support and services they need to be successful and in turn, making sure consumers have quality installers to work in their homes.

Being a member of DGCOS is a badge of honour that our members wear proudly and that consumers can rely on, giving DGCOS members a competitive edge in the market.

For more information, visit [installers.dgc.org.uk](https://installers.dgc.org.uk).

# Navigating Business Success

OUR PODCAST IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NHIC

Faisal Hussain, Chief Executive of the Double Glazing & Conservatory Ombudsman Scheme (DGCOS), discusses the organisation's latest collaborative podcast series focusing on business support.

Our new podcast series, 'Beyond Tools: Navigating Business Success', navigates the difficulties that can come with business ownership.

Running a business in the glazing industry is a challenging, yet rewarding, journey filled with opportunities for growth and success. However, the path to success for many aspiring business owners may be a bit trickier than they first thought. Recognising the need for guidance and support within the sector, our new podcast series, created in partnership with the National Housing Improvement Council (NHIC), seeks to address these challenges.

## Building on better mental health

In our first podcast series focused on breaking the silence around mental health, one of the recurring topics of conversation was the challenges many faced in running a business,



so it made perfect sense for this to be the focus of our second podcast series. We wanted to build on these conversations and explore practical solutions for the challenges faced by talking to specialists who were willing to share their experiences with host Anna Scothern (Chair of the NHIC and host of its popular podcast), and members of the DGCOS and HIES teams. Together we unpick the issues and offer useful tips to businesses in the glazing and wider home improvement sector.

The episodes include:

## Legal and compliance

Jon Vanstone, Chair of Certass and the HSE's Industry Competence Committee (ICC) is well placed to offer advice on what the glazing industry needs to be aware of when it comes to the legal and compliance requirements we should be meeting, as well as upcoming changes we need to be ready for, particularly when it comes to Building Safety Regulations.

## Financial management

Paul Clifton is a window industry Sales & Profit Consultant with Window Sales Lab. He has worked with many companies in our sector and even published a book in 1989- "What Master Salesmen Know That Average Salesmen Don't" - about his experience of being a top double glazing salesman with Coastal, where he achieved an annual 82% conversion rate, when at the time, the group average was 34%. In this episode, we discuss the complexities of managing money and unpick some of the buzz words many find confusing when it comes to the financial side of the business.

## Business operations

Thom Emerson is Sales Director of Ideal Window Solutions, a successful window and door installation business

in the South. Thom discusses operational challenges and the correlation between managing your business and mental health. Together we discuss the importance of building a team, putting the right people with the right skills in place to support you, having the right processes in place, and the importance of being strategic in picking the projects that are right for your business.

## Advice for the home improvement sector

Our sister scheme, HIES Consumer Code, which covers the installation of renewable energy and home energy efficiency products, focuses on the challenges this sector is currently facing. It's a sector that is still in its infancy and can be unpredictable with a fluctuating supply chain.

We're also a long way from meeting renewable energy targets set by the government, so in these episodes we're discussing how collaboration can empower and support businesses to grow and adapt with Jack White from Segen; offering tips on effective sales and marketing techniques with Rhys Jones from TrustMark; and we explore and understand the current grants and incentives available with Stew Horne from the Energy Savings Trust.

The new 'Beyond Tools: Navigating Business Success' podcast series with NHIC is now live.

Scan the QR code to listen to the podcast



Listen →

## BEYOND TOOLS FOR INSTALLERS:

# Navigating Business Success



**FAISAL HUSSAIN**  
DGCOS



**JON VANSTONE**  
CERTASS



**PAUL CLIFTON**  
WINDOW SALES LAB



**THOM EMERSON**  
IDEAL WINDOW SOLUTIONS

Unlock the secrets to success in the double glazing industry with a new business support podcast series produced by DGCOS in partnership with the NHIC.

AVAILABLE NOW



The Double Glazing and Conservatory Ombudsman Scheme (DGCOS) is a consumer protection scheme for the installation of double glazing products. Being a member of DGCOS shows that as an installer you are committed to complying with high standards of consumer protection.

# The Evolving World Of Regulation

PODCAST EPISODE 4

With NHIC's Anna Scothern as host, guest speakers Jon Vanstone, the Chair of the Competent Persons Scheme; Certass, and Faisal Hussain the Chief Executive of the consumer protection scheme; DGCOS, the Legal & Compliance podcast explores the recent regulatory shifts, their implications, and the roles of competence and consumer protection schemes in the sector, providing valuable insights into the evolving regulations and the importance of competence in ensuring consumer safety.

The regulatory framework has been significantly influenced by the Grenfell tragedy, the fall out of which puts spotlight on the severe flaws in existing laws and regulations, prompting an independent review and the eventual creation of the Building Safety Bill, now the Building Safety Act. This act introduced two new regulators: the Building Safety Regulator and the National Regulator for Construction Products. The Building Safety Regulator oversees the safety of buildings and the competence of those involved in construction, while the National Regulator for Construction Products ensures that the materials used meet safety standards. These co-regulators work in tandem to enhance building competence standards across the board, ensuring the safety

of buildings and the people who inhabit them.

Jon explains the driving force behind the change: "One key factor in the tragedy, residents were ignored. This is the point of the act, putting residents at the heart of the decisions as they are the ones that suffered."

"It is important listeners know how to work within the new rules and regulations. If ignored, they will be taken to court."

The new building safety regulations have profound implications for installers, and depending on their area of work, installers must adhere to proportional requirements. Jon uses an example that a window installer in the domestic sector must demonstrate competence through continuous professional development (CPD) and adherence to the correct use of approved products, further emphasising the need for installers to stay informed and compliant with the new regulations. As part of the change, Building Control has undergone structural changes, with inspectors and approved bodies now operating under stringent oversight. This ensures greater reliability and accountability in the industry.

## Ensuring compliance and competence

Another important factor to consider is the importance of installers demonstrating competence, which can be done through recognised schemes. Faisal explains how vital it is to "distinguish between competent person schemes and consumer protection schemes". While competent person schemes ensure that installers comply with building regulations, consumer protection

schemes offer mechanisms like mediation and financial protection to protect consumers using the services of their members. Faisal emphasises to listeners that, "it is crucial to understand these differences to ensure both regulatory compliance and consumer safety."

Faisal provides three key recommendations for ensuring compliance:

1. Stay informed through trusted sources like government websites.
2. Assess the competence of everyone within the business and adhere to industry frameworks.
3. Communicate effectively with customers, providing them with accurate information and guidance on product usage.

Jon focuses on the importance of continuous professional development (CPD), encouraging installers that they "must keep themselves updated on regulatory changes and work with reliable sources to ensure compliance".

## Myths and misconceptions

Jon goes on to address the common myths and misconceptions surrounding product responsibility in the field of building safety regulations. He emphasised that the regulations "apply to all buildings, not just high-rise structures, and every individual involved in the construction process must adhere to them". He adds that homeowners are also responsible

for their buildings and there is legal responsibility there, concluding that "there are too many horrible stats in the UK, a lot of ownership and responsibility needs to be accounted for, a sorry 'I didn't know' is not a good enough excuse."

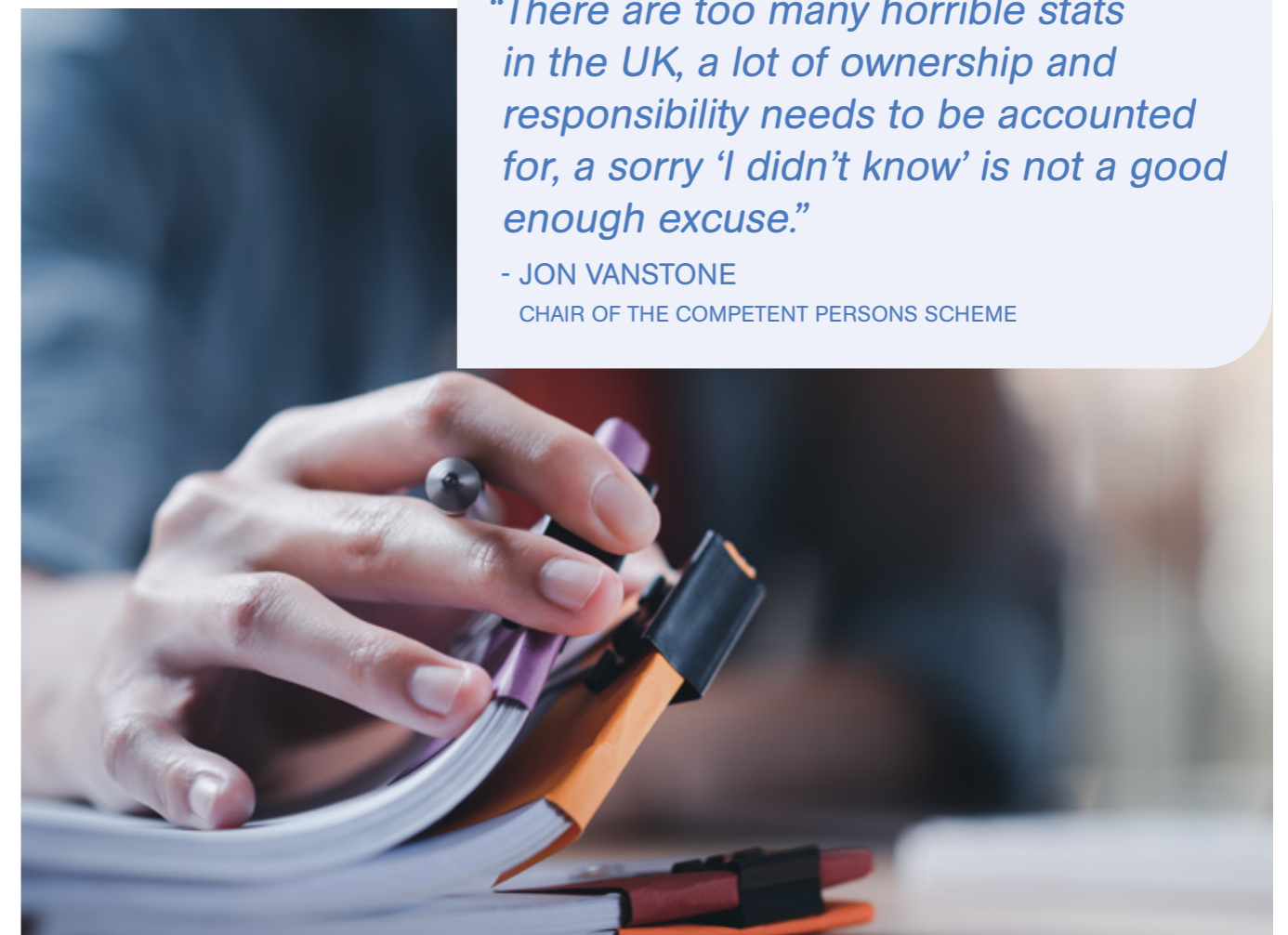
## Future directions

The construction industry is undergoing significant changes aimed at improving safety and competence. With leaders like Jon and Faisal guiding support, the focus on compliance and consumer protection ensures that the sector moves towards a safer, more reliable future, promoting a culture of competence and accountability. Installers and consumers alike must stay informed and proactive in adapting to these new regulations, ensuring that the tragic lessons from Grenfell lead to a more secure built environment for all.



*"There are too many horrible stats in the UK, a lot of ownership and responsibility needs to be accounted for, a sorry 'I didn't know' is not a good enough excuse."*

- JON VANSTONE  
CHAIR OF THE COMPETENT PERSONS SCHEME



Listen to the full episode of the podcast series



Listen →

# Financial Management Mastery

PODCAST EPISODE 5



*“Identifying low-hanging fruit enables businesses to make simple tweaks to improve profitability.”*

- PAUL CLIFTON

SALES & PROFIT CONSULTANT, WINDOW SALES LAB

For the Financial Management Podcast, host Anna Scothern (National Home Improvement Council Chair) is joined by Faisal Hussain (Chief Executive DGCOS) and Paul Clifton (Sales & Profit Consultant with Window Sales Lab) to delve into effective financial management strategies. They provide practical insights into managing business finances, drawing from their extensive experience to offer clarity on some of the financial complexities business owners often find confusing.

Mastering financial management is essential for achieving sustainable profitability and success in any business. By understanding critical financial metrics and leveraging innovative tools, business owners can navigate their finances more effectively. Paul Clifton, Sales & Profit Consultant with Window Sales Lab, and Faisal Hussain, Chief Executive DGCOS, guide us through the necessary steps to maintain financial health and achieve long-term success in the window, door and conservatory industry.

## Understanding numbers

Understanding your starting financial position and key metrics is fundamental, and Paul focuses on three crucial areas: quantification, orchestration, and innovation. To avoid cash flow problems, businesses should always keep at least one month's revenue in the bank. Grasping cost and revenue percentages is vital; without this knowledge, businesses are vulnerable to market fluctuations. Paul collaborates with bookkeepers to categorise costs, including marketing, admin, sales, materials, vehicles, and repairs, setting clear financial benchmarks, and highlighting areas for improvement.

## Supporting installers with practical advice

Faisal points out that many business owners struggle with their financial figures, “often confusing gross profit and net profit, leading to

mismanagement.” To address this, DGCOS provides support through templates, spreadsheets, and check-ins, helping installers maintain a clear financial overview.

Adhering to profit margins and avoiding price competition is crucial. Long-term costs, such as warranty visits, must be factored into profitability calculations. Faisal also stresses the importance of not underestimating VAT and HMRC payments, advising businesses to allocate funds monthly to avoid end-of-quarter surprises. Regular financial reviews can identify overlooked expenses, ensuring comprehensive financial health.

## A game-changing tool

Paul introduces his profit tracker spreadsheet, a tool designed to empower business owners by linking current costs with key sales performance indicators. Paul explains to listeners that this tool allows users to adjust metrics and immediately see the impact on their financial picture, “Identifying low-hanging fruit enables businesses to make simple tweaks to improve profitability”.

For instance, involving more decision-makers during quotes or adjusting prices slightly can lead to substantial profit increases. One company improved conversion rates and monthly profits by changing its approach. Even minor price increases, such as 3%, can enhance markup without affecting conversion rates.

## The five steps to sales success

Achieving sales success involves five key steps: fact-finding, design options, specification, price options, and closing the sale. Paul emphasises that separating each step improves outcomes, ultimately leading to higher conversion rates, “This structured approach ensures salespeople address customer needs effectively, increasing sales and profitability”.

By breaking down the sales process into distinct steps, businesses can provide a more thorough and personalised approach. So, by understanding



customer needs and preferences, presenting design options, detailing product specifications, transparent price discussions, and a smooth closing process can lead to successful sales outcomes.

## Partnering up

Faisal highlights that DGCOS invests substantial effort in finding reputable associates in bookkeeping, recruitment, and marketing to recommend to their members. Building strong relationships and support networks is vital and essentially these associates become extensions of their members' businesses, providing specialist advice and support. Relying on these relationships allows business owners to focus on growth and profitability.

Specialised services such as, bookkeeping, which maintains accurate financial records, expert marketing advice, which enhances visibility and attracts new customers, and recruitment support, which ensures that businesses hire the right talent, contributes to overall efficiency and growth.

## Coaching: Path to sustainability

Achieving sustainable growth requires a structured approach. Paul offers financial health checks and a three-stage plan typically taking about three years. This involves improving conversion rates, managing costs,

and implementing necessary changes. Willingness to change and commitment to learning new skills are crucial. “By working with a coach, businesses can achieve their profit goals and create a system that produces extraordinary results”.

Regular reviews of monthly figures and close collaboration with sales teams to enhance conversion rates and optimise costs are integral to Paul's mentoring approach. This ensures sustainable growth, keeping businesses competitive and profitable long-term.

## Next steps

Financial management isn't just about keeping the books, it's about understanding the bigger picture and the impact of decisions on your business. It starts by looking at the numbers and being honest about your financial situation. Track business progress, make informed decisions, and seek support from experts. By working on your business, rather than just in it, you can achieve long-term success and profitability. With the right tools and strategies, any business can thrive.

Listen to the full episode of the podcast series

Listen →



# Mastering Business Operations

PODCAST EPISODE 6

Running a business in the glazing industry is a challenging yet rewarding journey, filled with opportunities for growth and success. However, the path to success for many aspiring business owners may be a bit trickier than they first thought. Recognising the need for guidance and support within the sector, the new podcast series for installers 'Beyond Tools: Navigating Business Success' from DGCOS, created in partnership with the National Housing Improvement Council (NHIC), seeks to address these challenges.

The new series has been designed to provide valuable insights and advice to installers and entrepreneurs in the window and door sector and in this article, we focus on the Business Operations episode.

With NHIC's Anna Scothern as host, guest speakers Thom Emerson from Ideal Window Solutions and Faisal Hussain, Chief Executive of DGCOS, address common themes and struggles that emerge when starting and running a business in the industry. Through discussions and insights, the podcast seeks to empower listeners with practical knowledge and strategies to overcome obstacles and help their businesses thrive.

## Mental Health Awareness

One of the recurring themes discussed in the podcast is the importance of mental health awareness when running your own business. Starting and running a business can be incredibly stressful, often leading to anxiety and burnout. Addressing these issues early on and seeking help is crucial for maintaining overall wellbeing and achieving long-term success.

*"Bringing other specialists into your business can often be the key to success."*

- THOM EMERSON  
IDEAL WINDOW SOLUTIONS

Thom Emerson encourages listeners to prioritise their mental health and provides strategies for managing stress and anxiety. "When someone drops all the plates is normally when they've been too scared to ask for help". Thom also says: "It is about recognising and building the right team and having good support. Fostering a supportive community and promoting open communication about mental health aims to create a culture where individuals feel comfortable seeking help and support".

## Transitioning from Specialist to Business Owner

The podcast acknowledges that many individuals in the sector enter entrepreneurship as specialists in their fields, such as sales or marketing. However, transitioning from specialist to a business owner can be challenging, requiring individuals to acquire new skills and knowledge. All aspects of running a business are equally important but it's often the case that none of us are experts in everything. From HR management to financial planning, the podcast provides practical advice and guidance of the schemes available for building a successful business from the ground up.

Faisal Hussain explores the challenges and opportunities associated with this transition and shares how DGCOS supports their

installer members: "We provide them with for example, templates of cash flow, profit & loss, and can refer accountants and other professionals to support businesses". Thom talks again here about the importance of team: "Bringing other specialists into your business can often be the key to success".

## Importance of Processes

Building on this, it is recognised that any business depends on efficient operating procedures too. However, many business owners need help developing and setting an effective plan that will support their goals.

Thom points out the value of methods for business operations and offers suggestions for creating customised procedures that are suited to individual company requirements. Streamlining processes and boosting effectiveness allows business owners to increase output and produce better outcomes.

## Strategic Planning and Management

This leads into a discussion around effective strategic planning and how it is essential for navigating the complexities of business ownership and achieving long-term success. The podcast provides insights into strategic planning and project management, offering practical advice for setting goals, managing resources, and overcoming challenges.



*"When someone drops all the plates is normally when they've been too scared to ask for help. It is about recognising and building the right team and having good support. Fostering a supportive community and promoting open communication about mental health aims to create a culture where individuals feel comfortable seeking help and support."*

- THOM EMERSON  
IDEAL WINDOW SOLUTIONS

## Employee Management and Diversity

Back to teams and Faisal and Thom discuss how creating an inclusive and diverse work environment is vital for employee satisfaction and business success but recognise it's often a tricky area to navigate. Effectively managing teams and addressing issues related to diversity and inclusion is key so it is crucial to explore strategies for promoting inclusivity, equality, and diversity within the workplace. The discussion offers practical tips for fostering a positive and supportive work environment. By prioritising diversity and inclusion, business owners can build stronger teams that work together, driving business growth, building positive wellbeing and ultimately, successful business.

From conducting SWOT analyses to prioritising projects, Thom Emerson equips listeners with the tools and knowledge to make informed decisions and drive business growth.

The podcast does a great job of navigating the difficulties that come with business ownership. Running a business in the window sector requires a holistic strategy that includes inclusive leadership, effective processes, and mental health awareness.

The NHIC Business Operations podcast sponsored by DGCOS provides valuable insights and guidance

for installers and entrepreneurs to overcome challenges and achieve their business goals.

Listen to the full episode of the podcast series

Listen →



# DGCOS Named BIBAs Leadership Team Of The Year

AN INCREDIBLE ACHIEVEMENT

The Double Glazing & Conservatory Ombudsman Scheme (DGCOS), as part of QA Scheme Support Services, has been victorious at the Be Inspired Business Awards (BIBAs), Lancashire's premier business awards, winning Leadership Team of the Year.

Louise Fletcher, Deputy Managing Director of QA Scheme Support Services, expressed her delight at the win: "We are more than thrilled to win the Leadership Team of the Year category at this year's BIBAs, an award that reflects the excellent leadership team we have in place looking after our schemes.

"The team is dedicated to creating an environment of excellence within the organisation, driving for a people-centric work environment that's operationally efficient, through training and supporting our people to be the

best they can be. Collectively, we foster the values of respect, integrity, teamwork, and communication at all levels of the organisation and encourage wellbeing for all.

"We strongly believe that a motivated and happy workforce leads to excellent service delivery, increased productivity, and ultimately, greater customer satisfaction. While this remains central to our business, with high standards of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to maintain to ensure we've engaging with our members effectively and efficiently, it's not all about business.

"I'm a huge advocate for improving mental health and well-being. Not only do we promote it with our members and the wider industry, but we take it very seriously internally, too. We've implemented Mental Health Awareness Days and appointed three trained Mental Health First Aiders

## BIBAs Winner

(MHFA) to support our team. We've implemented other rewards like personalised tokens of appreciation and team-building activities too, which have significantly increased employee engagement, boosted motivation and reduced staff turnover.

"The leadership team maintains these standards through rigorous quality control measures, targeted training and quarterly offsite senior management sessions.

"Winning this award is a great reflection of the team's vision, hard work and dedication, and I couldn't be prouder. DGCOS is a place where excellence thrives for both our team and our members".



To find out more about becoming a DGCOS installer, visit [installers.dgc.org.uk](https://installers.dgc.org.uk).

# Installers: Unleash success with DGCOS

*DGCOS are passionate about providing all-round support for their members with a wide range of benefits, helping to give them the edge.*

**George Clarke**  
DGCOS Brand Ambassador

## Contact us today to boost your business

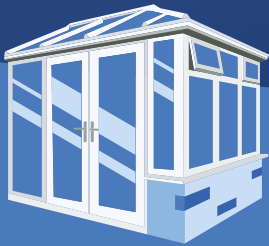
[info@dgc.org.uk](mailto:info@dgc.org.uk)

DGCOS is a consumer protection scheme for the installation of double glazing products. Being a member of DGCOS shows that as an installer you are committed to complying with high standards of consumer protection.

**DGCOS**  
Ombudsman Scheme

# Are you a double glazing installer?

DGCOS can help you at every stage of your installer journey, including...



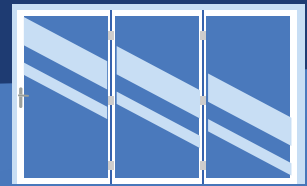
## Getting Started

Support setting up and registering your business



## Marketing & Digital

Helping you reach potential customers



## Selling

Helping you close your leads



## Installing

Making it easier for you to install



## Customer Service

Making sure you and your customers are satisfied



## Annual Review

Looking at the previous year, preparing for the year ahead

Get in touch today to discover our incredible installer benefits, designed to help you succeed.

[info@dgcoss.org.uk](mailto:info@dgcoss.org.uk)

**DGCOS**  
Ombudsman  
Scheme

The Double Glazing & Conservatory Quality Assurance Ombudsman Scheme (DGCOS) is a private company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales under Company Registration Number 05860672 at Centurion House, Leyland Business Park, Centurion Way, Farington, Leyland, England, PR25 3GR.

DGCOS-NL-001-Jan25

Arrange a call with DGCOS Chief Executive, Faisal Hussain, by emailing him at [f.hussain@schemes.org.uk](mailto:f.hussain@schemes.org.uk)