

No Cowboys Here

Jon Vanstone, Executive Chair of Certass talks about consumer confidence and how the level of professionalism of local installers is always improving

Earlier this year, the Federation of Master Builders said that our economy is missing out on £10 billion every year because homeowners are worried about hiring cowboy builders. Add to that the negative headlines that are repeatedly in the press about the construction industry, from the results of the inquest into the Grenfell tragedy through to construction giant Carillion's administration, it's no wonder consumer confidence is low.

The iMore relevant to the glazing industry, we know that the return to site for remedial work ratio of some of the national glazing installation businesses is very high and that has a negative impact on consumer attitudes towards all installers. It's a real shame for the smaller, local installers because their professionalism has come on leaps and bounds over the last few years, despite what's being said in the trade press.

Driving change

Real certification is all about ensuring high industry standards, with the best outcomes for homeowners. Realistically, the standards are always subject to change, because new legislation is coming through Government all the time. This means that schemes and their members need to adapt. For consumers, this is actually great news, because workmanship standards, product performance and design are always getting better.

In the know

In addition to being Chair at Certass, I'm involved in several organisations that are looking to drive positive change in the industry. As well as chairing the Competent Persons Forum and Trade Association Forum, I'm a Director for TrustMark and Delivery Director for accreditation in the roofing sector through RoofCert.

This not only gives me access and information on new regulations and legislation coming through, it also gives me the chance to see how other industry certification schemes are dealing with challenges and learn from them what works and what doesn't.

How does this help members?

We know that words like legislation and regulation can make installers completely switch off and that's why being ahead of the game is such a crucial part of how Certass works. We look at the information, pull out the important points and see how it will affect our members.

We create easy ways to ensure that our members are compliant, that work with their individual business models. We also help them to improve their skill-set in line with modern innovations, so they are ahead of the curve in both knowledge and business success.

Technical support

As well as access to market knowledge, the team at Certass



has some of the best technical expertise out there. That's because most of our team began their careers as tradespeople and understand the challenges that installers face on site every day. Everything our members can potentially come across in the field has already been encountered by our technical experts. We believe their knowledge should be shared, so that's what we do.

Driving change for consumers

The numbers speak for themselves for Certass members. Over the last 12 months our numbers show that only 0.085 percent of our audited jobs were non-compliant with Building Regulations, showing that our installer standards really are top-notch and well ahead of those reported in some other known market schemes.

The next step for us, and the industry, is to push to make sure that this kind of success is communicated properly to consumers so that they can be much more confident in choosing home improvement companies. [**i**](#)

Picture: Jon Vanstone, Certass Chairman.