

Alison Dalton

Accessibility Manager

British Airways



We asked Alison Dalton, Accessibility Manager at British Airways, to share with us how a training requirement for BA frontline colleagues regarding support for deaf customers was identified. And the process they went through to address this by employing the services of terptree.

What was the training need you identified before contacting terptree? We'd been looking at different ways to communicate with our front-line colleagues about how best to support customers who may have a range of disabilities.

Based on the research we looked at in 2018, we identified we'd undertaken a lot of work that focussed on people with physical disabilities and those with visual impairment. We also recognised we had a gap in terms of our awareness and our customer service delivery when communicating with deaf customers. We wanted to put that right.

How has the training with terptree helped and improved your deaf customers' experience? British

Airways are continually looking to improve their levels of customer satisfaction and engagement. Every customer is important to us therefore we need to learn about better ways to enhance and improve their experience with us.

The training terptree delivered to our front-line colleagues has helped them to communicate more effectively with our deaf customers and to ensure that these customers receive the same high level of service.

Why did you choose terptree? We had a specific set of requirements and felt there were not many companies who were able to deliver what we needed.

I was aware of Victoria through LinkedIn and once she and I started to engage in conversation, and when we then met, I was confident terptree could fulfil the criteria we had set.

How did terptree work with you to deliver what they said they could? Victoria and I discussed where we potentially had some gaps in our customer service



delivery and an initial plan was put in place to rectify this. It was very much an iterative process. The plan evolved and developed as we talked it through, then tried various ideas.

For example, we agreed that a video would be beneficial if it could be engaging and represent how deaf customers felt when they were travelling. The idea developed into using a deaf film crew with deaf actors as customers. The result showed deaf customers talking about the impact of travelling so it was very engaging and real. We couldn't have achieved this without terptree's specialist knowledge.

Also, BA had key messages that were imperative to include; and the entire training had to link to our wider program - Beyond Accessibility. It was essential that our colleagues could identify that the new deaf awareness training was part of this. So there needed to be a degree of synergy.

Two specific requirements from us were that we needed to improve our understanding of what it is our deaf customers require and how we could emotionally engage with them. So we needed terptree to explain that to us in detail.

Then, what advice could they give us on steps colleagues should take to ensure those needs were met.

What are the immediate benefits you can see from working with terptree? It's still early days so we don't have tangible results just yet and it takes a long time to get through all our colleagues. However, we have had very positive feedback from those who have seen the video.

One of our aims was to ensure our colleagues started to think differently about their approach to each customer and broaden their thinking.



It can be too easy to associate disability with a person in a wheelchair. What the training has achieved already is that those who have been through it are recognising each person has different needs and levels of communication.

Would you recommend terptree? Whenever we identify a training requirement we ensure we always engage with specialist expertise to help us address our specific need. This is not only because we want to work with credible companies, but also because their knowledge of the subject will be of the highest calibre. In other words, experts in their field.

We would recommend terptree because they fit the above criteria. They were very business-focussed which meant we were able to meet our business needs. The final result was very effective and professional. Their iterative approach works well. They listened to and interpreted our ideas; always involving us.

Working with terptree was a great example of expert collaboration. They were able to demonstrate flexibility and help us achieve what was needed by using their expertise in the requirements of the deaf community while integrating with the broader training programs we already have in place. I would be happy to recommend them as experts in the field of hearing loss and deafness.



Hi, I'm Victoria, Founder of terptree. Call us today to find out how you can attract, serve and retain deaf customers and offer a world class deaf customer experience on [01635 886 264](tel:01635886264).



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