



'It's crucial
we share
similar values'

For leading Nordic bank Nordea, treating customers with respect and fairness is just as important as a sound credit management policy. With their shared values, Nordea and Intrum Justitia maintain the bank's cash flow while keeping customers satisfied.

BY DAVID NOBLE
PHOTO EVA ROSE FURMYR

Nordea is a leading Nordic bank, ranking first or second in most of its northern European markets, and with more than 11 million customers and a network of 1,400 branches.

In 2010 Nordea Bank had a total operating profit of 9.3 billion euros. Justifiably proud of its customer driven values, Nordea insists that suppliers like Intrum Justitia share and deliver on its beliefs.

"It's non-negotiable for us that suppliers commit to our values of delivering great customer experiences, behaving professionally at all times, acting as one team and being profit oriented," says Karsten Wakeford-Wesmann, Nordea's Nordic Head of Debt Collection in Account Products Services.

"That Intrum Justitia's values largely parallel ours is a principal reason we've chosen to partner with them in Nordic markets like Finland, Norway and Sweden."

Nordea have long used Intrum Justitia in Sweden and Finland for sensitive services such as debt collection, and late last year began working with them in Norway when Intrum acquired the existing supplier, Aktiv Kapital. Wakeford-Wesmann says Nordea's approach when an individual or a client company gets into a default situation is very much about looking at the problem through their eyes.

"Naturally we want to collect what is owed us, but we believe we have a better chance of getting paid – and retaining a customer – if we try to understand the re-



“ Intrum treats our customers fairly while keeping a good recovery rate.”

asons behind the default and try to find solutions to the problem that benefit all sides,” Wakeford-Wesmann told Intrum Magazine. “One of the great things in working with Intrum Justitia is the company’s commitment to treating our defaulting customers fairly while also keeping a good recovery rate.”

Nordea’s Debt Collection organisation

works as the back office for the bank’s network of 1,400 branches serving its 11 million customers. The bank’s loan losses ratio annualised equalled a base points (bps) percentage of 0.31 of the total amount lent out to individual and corporate customers in 2010.

Wakeford-Wesmann says Nordea works with two to three suppliers of credit management services in each of its markets as part of its strategy to stay focused on the core banking business.

“We do not want to build a huge in-house debt collection unit,” he says. “Working with several suppliers gives us the opportunity to benchmark collection results more efficiently. A specialist such as Intrum Justitia has the resources to stay at the forefront of technological and other advances to find and

implement better solutions faster.”

Pan-Nordic workshops are arranged every year to help ensure that Intrum Justitia and its employees stay fully aligned with Nordea’s approach. In addition, there are quarterly meetings of key Nordea and Intrum Justitia staff in each Nordic marketplace. Wakeford-Wesmann stresses Nordea chooses to invest heavily in people with the right mindsets because at the end of the day they are the ones who create superior value for Nordea’s customers, even those who default on payments.

“We appreciate Intrum Justitia’s commitment to developing straightforward, systematic and transparent collection processes that respect our customers and add value to our operations,” Wakeford-Wesmann concludes. ▀