ETIHAD AIRWAYS CELEBRATES ACHIEVEMENTS OF ITS 160 EMIRATI FEMALE EMPLOYEES

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Etihad Airways is marking the 5th anniversary of the opening of its Al Ain Contact Centre by celebrating the achievements of its 160 Emirati female employees.

One third of the centre's employees are working mothers, reinforcing the airline's commitment to empowering women, and in particular UAE nationals, by providing a wide range of training and development opportunities to ensure they can pursue challenging and rewarding careers whilst upholding their social and cultural values.

The airline's contact centres in Al Ain, Abu Dhabi and Manchester serve a total of 40 markets. Last year, the Al Ain Contact Centre handled 17 per cent of Etihad Airways' 3 million global phone calls for 14 countries, across three continents.

The Al Ain Contact Centre generates revenue of more than USD40 million annually and since the centre's launch the volume of calls answered by agents has increased by 187 per cent.

Opened in March 2011, the centre began its operations with 85 highly qualified and fully trained

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Emirati women. By the end of 2012, the number of employees at the centre had increased by 150 per cent – and since then a further 30 Emirati women have joined.

Ali Al Shamsi, Etihad Airways' Vice President - Emiratisation Strategy said: "We envisaged a highly efficient contact centre that would combine world class customer service with the highest level of Arabian hospitality. We are extremely proud of the service that our employees are providing to thousands of our guests every day.

"The centre's 5th anniversary is the perfect opportunity for us to showcase and celebrate the immense talent of our Emirati female workforce, the important impact that they are having on our airline and the crucial role they are playing in the economic diversification of Al Ain."

All of the women employed at the centre completed a series of rigorous assessments prior to being offered a position. On joining the company, employees were enrolled in several training programmes to further enhance their IT, English language and employability skills.

The centre has also worked with Abu Dhabi University Knowledge Group to find the brightest graduates and the Abu Dhabi Human Resources Authority (previously known as Abu Dhabi Tawteen Council) to source candidates from the 'future of Al Ain' scheme.

Samia Barj, Etihad Airways' Al Ain Contact Centre Manager said: "I am extremely proud to be able to lead a team of inspirational Emirati women who are doing so much to strengthen our national identity and make a real impact within the company and in the city of Al Ain. It is due to their impressive capabilities that the centre is able to provide a superior service to hundreds of thousands of Etihad Airways' guests each year and I am confident that we will continue to exceed all expectations as we keep striving for excellence."

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