

News Release

27<sup>th</sup> June 2011

## **The Institute of Customer Service teams up with the National Business Awards to promote excellence in customer experience**

The Institute of Customer Service is delighted to announce a strategic alliance with the National Business Awards in partnership with Orange to support its campaign to find the best UK candidates for the Customer Focus Award for 2011. This award is designed to bring nationwide attention to the impact of innovative, collaborative and efficient customer service on commercial success.

*“The Institute exists to improve business performance through demonstrating the tangible return on investment and measurable impact of a positive customer experience,”* said Jo Causon, chief executive of the Institute of Customer Service. *“By creating a dedicated award for Customer Focus in its highly respected programme, the National Business Awards not only recognises excellence in this area but sends a message to the entire business community that customer service is a strategic business issue.”*

Now entering its tenth year of recognition, the National Business Awards in partnership with Orange actively seeks the best performing organisations in the public and private sector – from SMEs and local authorities to FTSE 100 businesses and government departments. Across 17 categories, this annual programme of awards recognises excellence, innovation and ethics in a range of business disciplines – from Employer, Growth Strategy and SME of the Year to Customer Focus, Innovation and Excellence in Marketing Awards (a full list of categories is below).

*“The Institute of Customer Service is a highly respected organisation, with a large and influential membership including FTSE companies and many of the UK’s leading brands as well as public sector organisations, that is transforming attitudes and approaches to customer service,”* said Caroline Jackson Levy, Managing Director of UBM Awards, the company that owns the National Business Awards. *“It is our hope that this alliance will support us in further identifying the industry-changing examples of customer service that the wider business community can be inspired by.”*

To submit an entry for the Customer Focus Award, or to find out more about this or any other category, call 0207 234 8755 or visit [www.nationalbusinessawards.co.uk](http://www.nationalbusinessawards.co.uk).

Finalists will be announced on the 28th July and winners will be honoured at the National Business Awards gala dinner and awards ceremony in London at the Grosvenor House Hotel, Tuesday 8th November. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, has confirmed his attendance and is to deliver a welcome address to over 1,100 business leaders expected to attend the 2011 Awards.

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**Notes to editors:**

**About the Institute of Customer Service**

The Institute of Customer Service is the professional body for customer service. Our main purpose is to lead customer service performance and professionalism. It is a membership body with a community of more than 320 organisational members - from across the private, public and third sectors - and over 6,000 individual memberships. Created to be the first port of call for every aspect of customer service, it exists to deliver high quality, tangible benefits to organisations, individuals and other stakeholders, so that its customers can improve their customers' experiences and their business performance. To find out more, visit [www.instituteofcustomerservice.com](http://www.instituteofcustomerservice.com).

### **About the National Business Awards**

Open to organisations of all sizes from all sectors across the UK, the National Business Awards in partnership with Orange is the UK's most prestigious independent business recognition platform with its particular emphasis on excellence, innovation and ethical business. Now in its tenth year, the National Business Awards connects the nations' professionals through its annual awards ceremony; year-round thought leadership and round table events; and is UBM plc's flagship awards programme. Visit [www.nationalbusinessawards.co.uk](http://www.nationalbusinessawards.co.uk) for further information.

### **Categories for 2011**

For information about the criteria for any of the following award categories, visit <http://www.nationalbusinessawards.co.uk/Content/Award-Categories/2/>

- \*New Category - The Transformational Change of the Year Award
- The Excellence in Marketing Award
- \*New Category - The WorldPay Online Business of the Year
- \*New Category - The Small Online Business of the Year
- The Customer Focus Award
- The Employer of the Year
- The ICAEW Sustainability Award
- The BlackBerry Growth Strategy of the Year
- \*New Category - The BlackBerry Business Enabler of the Year
- The Orange Innovation Award
- The Entrepreneur of the Year Award
- The Santander Small to Medium Sized Business of the Year Award
- The 3i Private Business of the Year
- The Grant Thornton Mid-Cap Business of the Year
- The Coutts & Co Large-Cap Business of the Year
- The Daily Telegraph Award for a Decade of Business Excellence
- The Orange Leader of the Year

### **For further information please contact:**

Henriette Svensen  
Head of PR & Marketing  
UBM Awards  
Tel: 0207 234 8753 / 07500 917 628  
Email: [henriette.svensen@ubm.com](mailto:henriette.svensen@ubm.com)