

PRESS RELEASE

IRISH LOYALTY AWARDS – THE NEW AWARDS PROGRAMME PUTTING THE *CUSTOMER AT THE HEART OF BUSINESS*

Zenith Marketing are delighted to announce the arrival of the Irish Loyalty Awards, a new awards programme which has been developed specifically for the Irish market with the goal of becoming the premier platform for excellence and achievement in the loyalty industry for Irish companies. The Awards programme was officially launched yesterday Tuesday 20th November and key loyalty stakeholders attended, to learn more about this exciting initiative.

The new Awards will be supported by Visa, the leading global payments technology company, which has been announced as lead sponsor. Visa is helping to transform the loyalty landscape in Ireland with its Card Linked Offers platform which is now available to anybody with a Visa debit card issued by an Irish bank. With Visa debit, credit and prepaid cards accounting for more than €1 in every €3 of Irish consumer spending, Visa is able to deliver unrivalled insights to banks and retailers, enabling them to attract new customers, as well as reward existing loyal customers.

Commenting at the Awards launch, Philip Konopik, Ireland Country Manager, Visa, said “We’re delighted to support the inaugural Irish Loyalty Rewards. In an increasingly competitive business environment, loyalty is key for any organisation’s long-term success, and we are looking forward to celebrating the innovative programmes that Irish companies of all sizes are operating to retain, grow and expand their customer bases. We have seen through the success of our Card Linked Offers platform that a one-size-fits-all approach to loyalty is no longer sufficient as consumers increasingly demand ever greater personalisation and seamless shopping experiences.”

The Awards will recognise SMEs and blue-chip brands across all sectors that are building lasting and profitable relationships with their customers through loyalty. Applications are welcomed from all companies irrespective of size or profile. Entries are now open, and more information and application forms can be found on www.irishloyaltyawards.ie.

We are also delighted to welcome on board category sponsors, Pure Loyalty, WIN | WIN and Axa Insurance.

James Lenehan CEO WIN | WIN remarked “In recent times, there has been a power shift between consumers and brands when it comes to loyalty. Big Brands are now the ones being put to the test as they must demonstrate loyalty to their customers – turning the traditional model on its head! This has come about because today’s digital world has become much more competitive. New channels and offerings have disrupted the traditional model with challenger brands now breaking new ground. Loyalty is no longer just about offering discounts. As consumers expectations evolve, there is a growing need for loyalty programmes to evolve with them. The Irish Loyalty Awards will pave the way for recognising and establishing best practice in the Loyalty space in Ireland. As key players in the Rewards and Loyalty sector, WIN | WIN are delighted to sponsor the event. We are really looking forward to the awards in March 2019’.

“Customer loyalty is important, but emotional engagement is the element marketers need to focus on in order to be successful with today’s consumers. That’s what we’ve been working on with The GAA, Pallas Foods, Electric Ireland and Applegreen and why we are thrilled to be sponsoring the very first Irish Loyalty Awards. Not only are we proud to be supporting a new, local industry initiative, but

we're excited about giving more companies the exposure and tools they need to build a successful loyalty scheme of their own." Mike Brinn, Global Loyalty Director, Pure Loyalty

Antoinette McDonald, Direct, Partner and Customer Experience Director said" AXA are delighted to support the Irish Loyalty Awards, as a company we are focused on making a difference in our customers lives. Our loyalty programme, AXA Plus is already an award-winning customer loyalty programme and provides real rewards, which are an extra PLUS for AXA customers, in addition to the normal insurance relationship.As part of AXA Ireland's vision, we are building on this by creating even more compelling customer experiences. In creating sustained, long-term relationships, combining them with enhanced customer engagement we will continue to create added value for our customers. By helping customers during their time of need, outside of the usual insurance claim situation, it helps AXA to demonstrate that we care for what matters to our customers".

Over the last number of years we have seen great loyalty programmes emerge and transform business, by engaging a significant amount of expertise and ingenuity. Never has there been a better time to recognise such leaders and innovative initiatives in the industry. The black-tie Awards ceremony will take place on the 28th March at the intercontinental Hotel, Dublin to celebrate the Irish rising stars of Irish loyalty.

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About Visa

Visa is the world's leader in digital payments. Our mission is to connect the world through the most innovative, reliable and secure payment network - enabling individuals, businesses and economies to thrive. Our advanced global processing network, VisaNet, provides secure and reliable payments around the world, and is capable of handling more than 65,000 transaction messages a second. The company's relentless focus on innovation is a catalyst for the rapid growth of connected commerce on any device. As the world moves from analogue to digital, Visa is applying our brand, products, people, network and scale to reshape the future of commerce. For more information, visit (<https://www.visa.ie/>), the Visa Vision blog (vision.visaeurope.com), and [@Visalreland](https://twitter.com/Visalreland).