

Customer Service Award

Awarded to the company (manufacturer, distributor or supplier) that best demonstrates its commitment to customer care and satisfaction and in meeting its clients' needs

Blue Max

What the judges said: *Liked the family approach. Strong ethical values and good customer testimonials*

Blue Max says its key aim is customer service. "We regularly ask ourselves what customers expect of us collectively and individually, and attempt to give them what they require to the best of our ability," it says. "We are a friendly family company who really want to help."

Blue Max operates a next day delivery service and aims to be 98% in stock at all times. "We normally achieve this but if for circumstances beyond our control we fall below our aspirations we move Heaven and Earth to rectify the situation and fly goods in to speed up the delivery process as far as humanly possible," it says.

Blue Max prides itself on producing quality products at below average prices, but will not compromise on quality or service to achieve these prices. In fact, Blue Max says it will go the extra

mile for its customers. "On one occasion a Director drove nearly one hundred miles to deliver the goods, and on another, despite the non arrival being no fault of Blue Max, another Director took the goods to an embroiderer at one end of the country, waited for them be embroidered, and drove another two hundred miles north to meet the deadline."

The company also claims to have transparent policies. "We run a Discount Scheme which is both simple and fair," it says. "Those who buy more get better discounts. We do not give discounts to any customer just because they are big and powerful, which would disadvantage other customers who, whatever their size, spend more. Blue Max appreciates loyalty and rewards it fairly."

"We tell our customers the truth," it claims. "We do not promise things we cannot do and to



the best of our ability we keep them informed when problems occur. We also refrain from knocking or lying about our competitors, which is contemptible in any industry."

Blue Max helps customers with their catalogues/websites by providing literature/discs to enable them to lift pictures and text if they wish, and operates an "excellent bespoke service".

It visits its factories regularly to ensure products are made with proper standards, and an ethical policy statement is available to all customers. "Above all we are a family business who really want to help our customers. We are grateful to them all," it adds.

BTC activewear

What the judges said: *Good lead times and order fulfilment service. Impressive stock availability and use of retail pricing in brochures*

BTC Activewear has grown from strength to strength over the past 20 years to become one of the leading clothing distributors to the imprint industry.

The main trademark of this company is the four highly motivated regional sales teams, who regularly go "beyond the conventional" to help customers solve their garment requirements.

BTC activewear has won the prestigious

PROMOTA Clothing Supplier of the Year Award two year's running – in 2006 and 2007.

It has an impressive delivery service – customers have until 4.30pm to place an order for their goods to arrive before noon the next day, with carriage paid if the order is over £250.

As well as carrying massive stocks of all garments, BTC activewear also offers customers the entire collections from three key brands – Dickies, Continental and Stormtech – allowing them an even wider choice on a direct ship basis. There are a total of 27 brands to choose from in 2008.



www.polo-shirts.co.uk

What the judges said: *An innovative service. Particularly liked the customer feedback system*

Launched in 2003, polo-shirts puts customer satisfaction at the heart of its business, as founder Michael Conway explains: "I believe that a fundamental factor for any success must be an efficient and above all, caring attitude towards customers, especially for an exclusively online company where service may otherwise seem impersonal."

To this end, polo-shirts has implemented an innovation that allows the company to monitor customer satisfaction and tailor the business to customers' needs accordingly.

The Satisfaction Monitoring System requests customers to complete a short feedback form, rating their experience of and satisfaction with product quality, speed of delivery and general experience satisfaction.

The panel was impressed with the system, which allows the company to gauge how the customer feels over a specified time period.

For example, over the past six months 97.14% of the 1,434 customers who answered the form felt the service delivered a positive experience.

Judges also liked the fact that customers can also post comments and rate each individual product, which polo-shirts believes is a first for the industry.

