

For immediate release

NEWCASTLE BUILDING SOCIETY AWARDED FOR INNOVATION IN PREPAID CARDS

Newcastle Building Society is celebrating following a win at The Cards Awards 2008 in London last week. The prize for Best Prepaid Card Marketing Campaign of the year was awarded to the Society and Tuxedo Money Solutions from a shortlist of five for their work promoting the Blue Diamond Prepaid MasterCard®. Newcastle Card Solutions was nominated three times for this award category and also received one nomination in the category of Best Pre-paid Card programme for its Ministry of Sound card launched in December 2006.

The Tuxedo Blue Diamond card was launched to consumers in February 2007 and through the use of innovative packaging and supported by a strong media campaign, leading programme manager Tuxedo Money Solutions and Newcastle Building Society brought the reloadable open loop prepaid product to the market. Tuxedo also invested heavily in educating their target consumer about the product using mass-market techniques.

The awards, hosted this year by Rory Bremner, recognised excellence and best practice in the cards payment industry. 2008 marked the first year when nominations were open to prepaid card offerings – highlighting recognition of a rapidly expanding UK market for this product.

Newcastle's BREAD Maestro Card programme from Payment Card Solutions and The Sun card from Tuxedo Money Solutions were also nominated for Best Prepaid Card Marketing Campaign.

Colin Seccombe, Chief Executive at Newcastle Building Society commented:

"We are delighted to have won an award that recognises our innovative approach to prepaid cards. With over 60 live card programmes, our team has the ability to operate numerous schemes to a high standard. This is the second time we have won awards in our Card Solutions area and we look forward to what next year will bring."

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About Newcastle Building Society

Newcastle Building Society is the biggest building society based in the North East and one of the strongest mutual building societies in the country. With assets under management of over £4.4bn we are certainly large enough to cope but small enough to care deeply about the needs of our members. We are committed to providing a range of innovative and attractive investment products.

The Society is committed to remaining mutual and by doing so we feel we are better placed to continue to provide our investors with the quality of service expected from one of the country's strongest building societies.

Newcastle Building Society has over 60 live and a further 50 planned prepaid and debit card programmes including:

- Debit cards
- Retail gift cards – replacement of paper gift token.
- Mobile phone cards – combined top-ups and payments cards.
- Teen cards – 13-plus age introduced to card holding.
- Un-banked adults cards.
- Travel cards – Safe convenient alternative to travellers cheques.
- Corporate incentive cards – cards issued direct to employees as reward payments.
- Payroll and Payroll Plus cards – salary payments for employees.

The Society is a MasterCard® Principal Member, with the most MasterCard® approved prepaid programmes in the UK. We hold a SEPA licence and have live programmes in the UK, Ireland, Germany, Belgium and Italy.

About The Card Awards

The UK and Irish card markets have become ever more challenging in recent years. The Card Awards recognise excellence and best practice in the card payments industry and were held on 31st January 2008. The Card Awards were open in different categories to credit, debit, pre-paid and charge card issuers, co-brands, and banking acquirers in the UK and Republic of Ireland. Judges looked for a balance that reflects commercial success against objectives, whilst also considering how the customer experience has been improved. In certain categories judges pay particular attention to the responsibility companies have shown to customers in their business practices and clarity of product information.

The Card Awards Dinner & Ceremony was held at The Grosvenor House in London on Thursday 31st January 2008 and was attended by over 1300 people.

The full list of award winners is as follows:

- Best New Credit Card Product of the Year - Lloyds TSB
- Best Credit Card Design of the Year - Thomas Cook Personal Finance
- Best Credit Card Marketing Campaign of the Year - Marks & Spencer Money
- Best Pre-paid Card Marketing Campaign of the Year - Tuxedo Money Solutions and Newcastle Building Society

- Best Credit Card CRM Strategy - American Express
- Best Affinity / Co-branded / Retail Credit Card Programme - Home Retail Group Personal Finance
- Best Charity Credit Card Programme - WWF and Bank of America
- Best Pre-paid Card Programme - Lloyds TSB
- Best Business Card Programme - HSBC
- Best Credit Card Benefits Programme of the Year - Capital One
- Best Credit Card Cross-selling Programme of the Year - American Express
- Best Corporate Social Responsibility Programme of the Year - Barclaycard
- Best Online Initiative - American Express
- Best Security or Anti-Fraud Development - Barclaycard
- Best Technology Initiative of the Year
-Barclaycard Business
- The Royal Bank of Scotland
- Best Achievement in Customer Service - Advanced Payment Solutions and Broadcastle Bank
- Best Industry Innovation of the Year - Barclaycard
- Most Responsible Credit Card Lending Practices - Nationwide Building Society
- Industry Personality of the Year - Roger Alexander

The independent judging panel of industry experts, chaired by Moneyfacts Group Chairman, John Woods, carefully selected winners from a host of payment card companies and partner organisations who entered. In each case they looked for evidence of best practice and innovation in each of the individual categories. The Card Awards winners were all praised for their achievements in the industry and for their work improving the quality of the customer experience.

Accompanying image

