



Customer service advisor Steve Byrne with operations manager Mark Brack.



Bob Winnington, Institute of Customer Service director, left, and customer service manager Linsey Frostick, right, present Luton customer service advisor Dainh Danzine with a prize.

Back to the floor

MEETING and exceeding customers' expectations is a priority at Arriva and National Customer Service Week (NCSW) provided the perfect opportunity to demonstrate this.

Highlighting how important good customer care is for the business was just one of the benefits of NCSW, which was held from 5-9 October. It was also a chance for Arriva's excellent customer service to shine.

It was the first time Arriva had taken part in the national event and the newly centralised customer service team at Aintree and Luton used the occasion to organise a range of events and activities.

Cross-team quizzes, a dress-down day at Aintree and a colour-themed day at Luton were just a few of the highlights. The Institute of Customer Service visited Luton, and managers from across the business went "back to the floor".

Feedback

In Glasgow, Leeds, Middlesbrough, Wakefield and Whitby managers and directors joined passengers on Arriva's buses to get face-to-face feedback.

Managers and directors also took to the phones to listen to what customers had to say.

Mark Brack, operations manager at Arriva North West's St Helens' garage, was just one of the managers who went "back to the floor" and says he found it to be a very helpful and interesting experience.

Mark spent several hours with customer service advisor Steve Byrne at Aintree and was impressed with the professionalism of the team.

He said: "I really admire the team's knowledge, patience and friendly attitude. They really do know their stuff.

"While I was there, I took a call from a customer in Scotland, who was travelling between Paisley and Largs. Steve Byrne instantly knew the route and I was very impressed by this.

"All the customer service team members have a vast knowledge of the networks we serve – even as far afield as the North East and Scotland.

"They're also adept at handling calls and staying calm – however difficult the conversation with a customer might be.

"This was a new experience for me and a real eye-opener. I would definitely recommend it to other managers. As an operations manager I receive details of investigations from the customer service team so it was good to see what happens in the initial stages – from taking the call, to logging it on the system.

"It was also nice to see how many compliments Arriva receives too. Customers do ring in to praise the work of our employees and say how much they like Arriva's modern vehicles."

A fitness plan to take us forward

THREE-YEAR PLAN SETS OUT ARRIVA'S VISION FOR FUTURE GROWTH

AN AMBITIOUS, three-year plan has been launched, aimed at strengthening and growing the Arriva UK Bus core business against a background of rising cost pressures.

The plan involves a four-pronged approach:

- Working as cost-efficiently as possible
- Creating growth in the core bus business
- Creating additional non-core business growth
- Working effectively with local authorities

Mike Cooper, managing director of UK Bus, said: "This plan will ensure that the business is in the fittest possible state to

face the challenges of competition and rising costs, particularly fuel."

Everyone in Arriva's UK Bus businesses will be given the opportunity to learn more about the three-year plan through local events in the new year. Employees will be briefed about their role and the contribution they are expected to make towards achieving the plan's aims.

For the majority of those who work for the company – that is, those involved in frontline bus operations – that means delivering excellent service by providing customers with what they want.

"The focus for managers will be on

running an excellent and profitable network to strengthen our core operating areas," Mike added.

"Our three-year plan will make our bus businesses ready to adapt to changing market needs – crucial in these unprecedented economic times.

"At Arriva, we have a wealth of experience and skills and we must focus this expertise on the things we do well, and do them better and more cost effectively.

"We have a good workforce and a top senior management team who are strong enough to weather the challenges of the next three years."



James Charlton

Arriva North East
Fitter, Durham

SIXTY SECONDS

Arriva NOW! What was the first record you ever bought?
James: Something like Alvin and the Chipmunks.

Arriva NOW! What's the best experience you've had?
James: A trip to Prague with five mates on our motorbikes – we hadn't planned where we were going, we just got on a ferry and that's where we ended up.

Arriva NOW! How would you describe yourself?
James: I'm a spur of the moment person – I don't like having things planned.

Arriva NOW! If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be and why?
James: I'd live in a caravan next to the Nürbergring ring in Germany where there is no speed limit. I would then race round it on my motorbike whenever I felt like it.

Arriva NOW! Which celebrity would you like to meet?
James: Valentino Rossi, MotoGP world champion.

Arriva NOW! Who or what makes you laugh?
James: My partner, because when we are together we always have a laugh.

Arriva NOW! What are your favourite sports?
James: Clay pigeon shooting, motorcycling and walking.

Arriva NOW! What dream would you love to fulfil?
James: I'd like to follow in the footsteps of Ewan McGregor and Charlie Boorman when they did their 'Long Way Round' trip on motorbikes.



Julie Brown

JULIE'S VIEWS

West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority is drawing up proposals for the UK's first Quality Bus Contract covering the whole of West Yorkshire.

This unproved approach would include taking over the running of bus services. They'd specify and manage the vehicle types, schedules, literature and standards, with bus companies bidding for contracts to operate the routes.

What's being proposed is completely different to today's commercial market where we work in partnership with local authorities, with joint efforts and joint responsibilities. The current structure is less complex than Quality Bus Contracts, and where we've been able to work together, it works well. What's more, local authorities can benefit from the wealth of expertise and innovation that private operators bring to the bus industry.

We all agree that local transport needs investment. The fact is that investment by the private sector has saved the taxpayer a fortune. Businesses are able to attract investors who provide funds on the basis that they can make a return. As public finances tighten and people face increasing council tax bills, they may wonder if now is the right time to be introducing more cost and risk into local authority budgets.

■ ■ ■

A big thumbs-up to UK Bus for introducing m-ticketing, a move that embraces technology, communication and innovation.

During development, the project team was told 'You can't do mobile ticketing without ticket readers'. Fortunately they took a deep breath, stepped back, and had their Eureka moment. They realised that we already have a dedicated team of experienced ticket readers – one behind the wheel of every bus.

So, they've brilliantly used technology as technology should be used – not over-engineered and not over designed, but understood, adapted and fine tuned - to provide a ticket on a mobile phone on over 4,500 buses.

That type of creative but rational thinking should be bottled. It'd fetch a fortune.

■ ■ ■

Have a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Julie works at Arriva's head office, Admiral Way, Doxford International Business Park, Sunderland, SR3 3XP. Contact Julie by email at brownj@arriva.co.uk



Still sinking in: Pat Taylor.

Unforgettable for Pat

IT WAS an experience Pat Taylor will never forget ... The Arriva North East employee, who is based at Whitby, is officially the nation's second top bus driver.

"It was such an eventful day," said Pat, "that being runner-up for such a prestigious award (The Chris Moyes Memorial Award for Top National Bus Driver) is still sinking in.

"I'd never been to London before and I nearly had kittens when I saw all the people, the congestion and so many buses. It was unbelievable and anyone who drives a bus in London deserves a medal."

■ Brian Gosling from Arriva the Shires and Essex and Graham Killingworth from Arriva North East were both highly commended in the same award category.

One

HE DESCRIBED individual pr and it earned the UK Bus A competition. Arriva Yorl Cummins lau two years ag taken on boo Arriva's UK E "I am abso achieved the shall treasure

SIMPLY

- THE UK Bus Awards honour the finest in the bus industry and Arriva was once again right at the heart of the celebrations on 12 November.
- The ceremony at the London Hilton Hotel on Park Lane was a chance to reward and recognise the people, services and projects that make the industry a success.
- In this special feature we spotlight Arriva's entries in nine separate award categories.



UK BUS
A W A R D S

recognising rewarding inspiring

2009

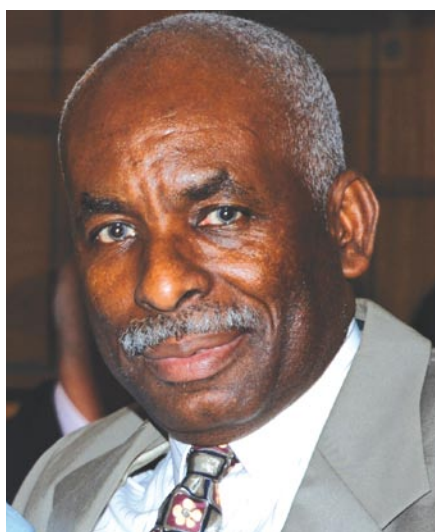
A real honour

HE'S spent 48 years in the bus industry and becoming a joint runner-up in the **Top London Bus Driver** award category is a real high point of Grantley Best's career.

Thousands of bus drivers work in the capital and the Arriva London employee was just one of eight people short-listed for the award.

It was Grantley's excellent driving and attendance records, and his professional attitude that greatly impressed the judges.

"Attending the ceremony was a once in a lifetime experience for me. I had a wonderful day and it was great to have my efforts appreciated in this way. It was an honour to collect the runner-up certificate," said Grantley, who works at Norwood garage.



Arriva London's Grantley Best.



From left: Mark Lamb, Bob Burgess and Terry Trainer.

A breath of fresh air

SUCCESSFULLY reducing car trips in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty placed Arriva North East in the runner-up position in the **Bus in the Countryside** category.

The Coast and Castles Connection brand provides improved links from Newcastle, Morpeth and Alnwick to the coastal area and onto Berwick.

Increased frequencies, a commercial Sunday service, four new low-floor buses and door-to-door leaflet drops have all helped boost passenger numbers by 43 per cent.

to treasure

...S it as "probably the biggest project I have led within Arriva" and him the runner-up prize in the Awards **Engineer of the Year**

...shire engineering director Phil Stone won the **Engineering Excellence** award and the project has since been named by other business within the Bus division.

...lutely delighted to have won the runner-up prize. It's an award I treasure," said Phil.

Consistency is the key for Green Line

A HIGHLY prized runner-up certificate now belongs to Arriva the Shires and Essex's Green Line 757 team following their entry in the **Express Operation of the Year** award category.

Judges said they were very impressed with the service, which is operated by Luton depot and offers express links between London Luton Airport, Luton and London Victoria via the M1. The service runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week and uses

up to four coaches per hour.

Luton depot manager Maq Alibhai said: "Our ongoing success is a testament to the cleaners, engineers, drivers and supervisors who deliver high operational and engineering standards day-in-day out."

Maq added that this was a clear reflection of the consistency of aspirations at Arriva the Shires and Essex to be one of the best, having come runners up at the UK Coach Awards earlier in the year.



The Green Line 757 service.

THE BEST!



A winning partnership: Jim Barclay, director of resources at Merseytravel, Arriva North West managing director Phil Stone and Aaron Peters, Arriva North West EcoManager team project manager with the Innovation Award.

And the winner is... EcoManager

ECOMANAGER – Arriva's technological innovation that, saves fuel and reduces exhaust and CO₂ emissions – has become an award-winning initiative!

The technology, which scooped top prize in the hotly contested **Innovation Award** category, was trialled at Arriva North West's Runcorn garage and has now been rolled out to other garages within Arriva.

EcoManager was entered into the awards as a joint entry with Merseytravel, who part funded the project.

Since the arrival of EcoManager at Runcorn, emissions have reduced by nine per cent.

Arriva North West development manager Martin Taylor said: "It's always nice to win an industry award and it's good to be at the forefront of innovation."

"It has been a real team effort and Aaron Peters, who is project manager, and his team have worked hard to ensure EcoManager is a success."

Mark Bowd, Arriva's technical services director, said it was very rewarding to see that EcoManager was not only delivering significant environmental benefits, but also placed Arriva as the industry leader in this field.

OTHER highlights from the ceremony:

■ Winner of the **Services to the Industry** award for 2009 was Arriva's former group managing director – corporate affairs, Steve Clayton.

■ Highly commended in the **Winning New Customers** award category was Arriva Midlands for its We are Derby innovative communications plan to attract new passengers.

■ Highly commended in the **London Bus Garage of the Year** award category were Grays (Arriva Southern Counties) and Palmers Green (Arriva London).

■ See www.ukbusawards.co.uk.

In brief...

Awards double for Scotland West

ARRIVA Scotland West has achieved high acclaim in two separate award categories in the prestigious Scottish Transport Awards.

The GlasgowFlyer 500 service, operated by Johnstone depot in association with BAA Glasgow, won the Best Bus Service Award.

It offers a direct route between Glasgow Airport and Glasgow City Centre and is operated 24 hours a day by a team of 26 drivers.

Inchinnan regulator Jimmy McGrory, who has worked in the bus industry for 28 years, won the Frontline Employee of the Year Award.

Winners were announced at a dinner on 29 October in the Radisson Hotel, Glasgow.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

Job satisfaction on the way up

THANK YOU for taking the time to complete the recent employee survey – your comments are helping us to improve our ways of working at Arriva.

In fact, the survey response rate across the UK and mainland Europe has exceeded the target of 60 per cent, with 62 per cent of employees completing the questionnaire, which is nearly 25,000 employees.

Other positive news is that employees' overall satisfaction with the job has gone up.

Fifty-seven per cent of you said that you either strongly agree, or agree, with the statement that you are satisfied with your job.

This has increased from 49 per cent in 2007.

■ **Look out for a feature on this in the March issue.**

We're geared up

ARRIVA'S Christmas campaign has stepped up a gear with radio adverts, door-drop mailers and the arrivabus website encouraging customers to hop aboard buses and make the most of the festive activities.

As well as providing details of Christmas timetables, Arriva has been giving hints and tips on places to visit with the family during December and in the New Year.

Each region has a dedicated space on the website, which describes up and coming events, lists town guides and gives helpful advice on the best tickets to buy.

■ See www.arrivabus.co.uk

Get on your mobile to get mobile

MOBILE phone technology has taken ticketing into a whole new world for Arriva UK bus operations.

M-ticket, the trailblazing new system where customers buy tickets on their mobile phones and the information is then displayed on the screens, was officially launched on 17 November. It has been rolled out to all the UK commercial operations (excluding Arriva London) following successful trials at Arriva Yorkshire and in the Kent area of Arriva Southern Counties.

A major communications exercise has been under way at garages and depots across the country to prepare drivers for the introduction of the new system. Customers register for m-tickets on the Arriva website. The m-ticket application is then downloaded to their phone (it needs to be GPRS enabled), allowing the user to select the ticket and pay via their credit or debit card. If customers need to pay by cash they can buy credit at their nearest PayPoint

or Arriva Travel Shop. The screen ticket provides all the information that the driver requires. It has a coloured box that changes each day, so the driver can check to ensure it's valid for that day. The system is expected to help speed up boarding times for drivers and customers. Most importantly, it is set to help boost business by making travelling by bus even more accessible.

UK Bus marketing manager Mike Woodhouse, who has been touring the regions to communicate the new system, said the main advantage of m-ticket was convenience. "Customers can literally buy a ticket at any time, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with no more worries about having to carry the right money for the bus. M-ticket is the result of a project on ticketing that we have evolved over the past two to three years. What we have developed is a system that uses advanced technology but, ultimately, is very easy to use."



Top shot: Mark Scott.



Runner-up: Max Warebring.

STANDARDS were once again exceedingly high in Arriva's photo competition with CrossCountry employees once again scooping two of the top three prizes.

Employees are continuing to capture the imagination of the judges with some outstanding photography. First place went to Mark Scott from CrossCountry (Derby). Max Warebring from Arriva Scandinavia (Stockholm) took second prize. Third place went to Simon Kent

Hot shot snappers in the frame



Third: Simon Kent.

from CrossCountry (Derby). The deadline for entries for the next competition is 25 January 2010. Email photos@

arriva.co.uk for a copy of the rules and entry details. You can find full details of the winning entries on www.arriva.co.uk.



Win a two-night break in historic Bath

Entry form (cut out and post)

December 2009

Answers: 1 2

Name

Work place

Home address

.....

Postcode Tel no.

A TWO-night break in historic Bath is in store for the lucky winner of our December competition.

With its Roman baths and beautiful abbey, this World Heritage Site sits on the scenic River Avon.

Home to the famous Royal Crescent and Pump Rooms, Bath makes a picturesque location for a short getaway.

To stand a chance of winning this prize (the break will include hotel accommodation and breakfast for two people, plus spending money to cover the cost of meals), just answer the following questions.

1. Name a famous Bath attraction.
2. Which river runs through Bath?

Send your completed entry form (only one entry per person) to Arriva NOW!, Ruxley Communications, 81 High Street, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 1DN. Or email the information required to arrivanow@ruxley.co.uk

The first entry drawn from the hat on 20 February, 2010 will win the prize, which is subject to availability at the time of booking. Terms and conditions apply.

Our festive £50 prize is snow joke, kids!

WITH the cold winter weather closing in, it's a great time to stay indoors and play a few games. If you can find the names of 10 games in our grid, then you could stand a chance of winning £50. The names can be found forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally.

Once you have fitted the 10 words into the grid send your completed entry form to Arriva NOW!, Ruxley Communications, 81 High Street, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 1DN.

The first entry drawn from the hat on 20 February, 2010 will win the prize.

The games to find are: Chess, Cluedo, Guess Who, Jenga, Monopoly, Risk, Rush Hour, Scrabble, Twister, Uno.

Entry form (cut out and post)

T	I	N	C	L	U	E	D	O	S
W	R	U	S	H	H	O	U	R	C
G	B	O	E	C	W	I	A	M	R
H	U	B	A	H	J	E	N	G	A
R	C	E	H	E	S	N	R	S	B
I	U	B	S	S	K	C	K	M	B
S	T	W	I	S	T	E	R	I	L
K	B	I	M	O	W	N	G	O	E
G	A	U	N	O	T	H	E	B	N
O	Y	L	O	P	O	N	O	M	B

CHILDREN'S COMPETITION

Name

Home address

.....

Postcode Age

Parent/guardian

Work place