



From

DIANNE GILL

Observer marketing, events & sponsorship manager

There are many, many business in the Chichester, Bognor Regis, Midhurst and Petworth areas which, over the years, have shown tremendous commitment and innovation to survive and thrive in an increasingly-difficult environment.

It is about time those companies received the recognition they deserve. And they can, thanks to the Observer Business Awards.

There are awards for companies and individuals, plus a special presentation on the awards night for an individual who has shown an unrivalled commitment to business in West Sussex.

This pack contains everything you require to play a part in the Observer awards.

How do you enter? It's simple.

- Complete the form attached. Remember, it's the judges' first impression of you and your company. Include as much information as you can - add everything that makes your firm special. Make the forms sing!
- Return the forms to Dianne Gill at: The Observer Series, Unicorn House, 8 Eastgate Square, Chichester, PO19 1JN by the closing date - 31st January 2010.
- Wait to discover whether the judges have short-listed YOU for an award.

Many of the companies entering the competition will be contacted by Observer journalists to enable stories about their success to appear in our series of weekly newspapers.

Soon after the closing date, an independent panel of judges will assess every entry. The judging panel will comprise distinguished personalities from the business world. All the companies successfully making it on to the short-list will be offered first opportunity to buy a table the glittering black-tie Observer Business of the Year awards ceremony.

And bear in mind there's nothing to prevent companies from entering more than one category. Entry is free. Good luck.

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AWARD CRITERIA

Business of the Year (up to five employees)

This award recognises sole traders and small companies whose size does not prevent them delivering excellent service and quality products.

Business of the Year (six to ten employees)

We are looking for smaller businesses which compete with the 'big boys' in every way – except size. The winner will need to demonstrate a good team spirit among the employees and a strong customer service ethos.

Business of the Year (more than ten employees)

The winner will have a well-deserved excellent reputation in the community, a record of innovative measures to enhance employee relations and demonstrate a commitment to never fail to deliver on its promises and to meet – and exceed – customer expectations.

Retailer of the Year

This award will go to a retailer able to demonstrate outstanding leadership and vision and be an inspiration to other businesses

Innovation

The winner – either a company or an individual - will demonstrate an exceptional ability to think outside the box, whether it is discovering better ways to work, discovering a ground-breaking product, or showing outstanding marketing abilities.

Going Green

Never before has consideration for the environment been so important. The winner will demonstrate an outstanding record and commitment to green issues.

Business Personality of the Year

Outstanding businesses often require outstanding individuals with larger-than-life personalities who show drive, commitment and enthusiasm and never settle for second best, either with their products or in their relations with staff and customers. We are looking for an individual who shows tremendous commitment and innovation, with outstanding leadership and vision and the drive to deliver.

Customer Service

The customer may not always be right, but putting the customers' needs first is vital if any business is to succeed. The winner of this award will be able to demonstrate an impressive track record of excellent customer service.

Training and Staff Development

Entrants for this category must be able to demonstrate how their business has improved through the training and development of staff. Judges for this category will be looking for what methods of training were offered and how the objectives were met.

Restaurant of the Year

Restaurants, take-aways - all have a chance to be nominated in this category. We're looking for the a Worthing eatery providing great customer service from a quality environment with, of course, consistently fine food. Have fun making your choices!

Estate Agent of the Year

In a highly-competitive market, the winner will be either the company – or an individual – who shows real commitment to their customers, and demonstrates innovative measures to stay ahead of their rivals, and is focused on delivering ever-improving value to customers and improving overall organisational effectiveness.

Motor Dealer of the Year

In a highly-competitive market, the winner will be either the company – or an individual – who shows real commitment to their customers, and demonstrates innovative measures to stay ahead of their rivals, and is focused on delivering ever-improving value to customers and improving overall organisational effectiveness.

Young Achiever of the Year /Apprentice

By a young age, some people in business have made an indelible mark in their company in the local market, or in their trade on a national scale. The winner will be someone who can demonstrate exceptional achievement or performance within their industry.

Lifetime Achievement Award

This is an award to an individual who, in the opinion of the judges, has demonstrated an unrivalled record of achievement in the area for many years, showing outstanding performance within their industry, a commitment towards their staff and who demands – and delivers - exceptional customer service.

Education in Business

We're looking for a business that supports the needs of our local students in a way that helps to 'bridge the gap' between education and employment. For example, this may be through a commitment to Work Experience, support for Enterprise Days, E Mentoring, Site Visits, Workshops and Teacher Development Placements. Small and large businesses/organisations have a role to play and will be judged against their level of support in conjunction with their available resources.

