



pulsenewsletter

Pulse Newsletter – Issue 3

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Love²reward

Incentive and reward solutions to exceed your expectations



Product Focus - Love2travel gift cards offer great double savings!

We are pleased to announce a special offer which we feel reinforces the value offered by our [Love2travel Gift Card](#). As well as providing excellent discounts to clients purchasing Love2travel gift cards, we can also offer recipients a £100 Love2travel gift card for every £1,000 spent up to a value of £300*.

In addition to this remarkable offer - the [Love2travel Gift Card](#) provides a one-stop-shop for all recipients holiday and travel requirements by providing access to a full service, ATOL bonded travel agency with complete protection, excellent value for money and the biggest choice of suppliers - including over 200 UK and Worldwide tour operators, 300 airlines and in excess of 200,000 hotels around the globe.

- Over 200 tour operators available including Thomas Cook, Virgin, Airtours and Kuoni
- Full customer service back-up from travel experts
- Airport parking and car hire arranged upon request
- Generous discounts for bulk business orders
- Ideal for high achievers and group incentives & rewards
- Full business and corporate travel service available
- Vouchers can be used as full or part payment
- Personalisation options available
- Hundreds of satisfied clients such as Office Angels, Pizza Express, KFC, Gala, Coors and Alliance and Leicester
- [Click here to buy](#) or email us at <mailto:info@love2reward.co.uk>



Fortis Insurance Solutions - A V.I.P. success story

Fortis Insurance Solutions (UKFIS) is a leading provider of personal and professional insurance products in the UK. Like many companies operating a large-scale call centre, one of its challenges is staff retention, and minimising attrition rates. According to Andy Woodbridge, Management Development Coach for UKFIS, "In May of 2008 we introduced an online rewards programme to streamline our reward strategy and ease administration of a previously cumbersome process. Prior to that time, any team manager who wanted to make an award had to physically purchase the product and reclaim the cost on their expenses.

"After researching the product and trialing other product offerings, UKFIS chose the [Virtual Incentive Points \(VIP\)](#) platform from Love2reward. Essentially Love2reward tailored its VIP online platform so that, to the user, the site appears as a UKFIS branded product.

"The VIP platform comes as a complete package - an online points banking system with all the rewards already selected and featured - and we now administer the scheme ourselves. There are over 2,000 rewards to choose from, including the most popular [Love2shop - The high street gift voucher](#); through [Love2travel](#) and [Love2play](#) experience days; to electrical products, wine and flowers."

The Fortis Points Scheme - 'Creating a buzz'

Although initially introduced to replace a simple cash reward scheme for incentives such as recommending a friend, the company had a clear vision of how it would deliver additional measurable benefit. "The Fortis Points Scheme, as it's known internally, was launched to create a buzz around the business, and to aid cost saving initiatives. The scheme has now grown into a more intelligent and complex reward structure, so that all rewards across the company are centralised.

"We now operate many incentives throughout the company - for example each team manager will have different KPI's (key performance indicators) and can set their own team reward criteria, whether its to encourage sales conversions, reward admin turnaround or just to say thank you for a job well done.

"In addition, we have company-wide initiatives such as long-service awards, employee of the month and good attendance recognition. 51% of our 330 staff have now been awarded points, 37% of whom have spent already and the remaining 63% are saving points to redeem against bigger value items."

Savings in recruitment costs and improved attendance

Andy concludes: "The scheme has been extremely successful - there has been a 3% reduction in attrition rates relative to the previous year, we've seen savings on our recruitment costs, improved attendance, we now have 134 people who have been with us for more than five years, and the number of recommended 'friends' has increased by 50% over the past year. We are delighted."



Staff Focus - Claire Middleton Interview

In each edition of Pulse, we will provide you with an insight into how things run at the Love2reward office in Birkenhead by interviewing a key member of staff. This month, we will be speaking with Claire Middleton, who works in our Partner Development Team.

How long have you been with Love2reward?

I have been here for six months so I'm relatively new to the team. Although due to the welcoming nature of the team, it feels as though I been here for years.

Can you tell us a little about your roles and responsibilities?

Maintenance of retail brands

My roles are extremely varied and challenging. One of my main tasks is to maintain the current network of retail brands on [Love2shop - The high street gift voucher](#) whilst also looking to grow the number of retailers appearing on the voucher - we have a fantastic range of retailers on the voucher at the moment, but we are always looking to improve to provide our clients with further flexibility and choice.

New Product Development

New product development is another area I have strong involvement in, with the development of the new Love2shop gift card which is now in full flow. The Love2shop gift card will be launched into the [Christmas Savings market](#) this year, with the first despatch due in October 2009 - and we will be looking to launch the same product to the Corporate market in 2010. We are currently recruiting retailers to the card, and with the rise in popularity of gift cards in general, we are confident that we will have another market leading product in the marketplace to compliment the paper voucher.

Marketing strategies for retailers

Managing marketing strategies for retailers has become increasingly important as the retail environment becomes more competitive. Retailers are currently battling for recipients to use our voucher at their stores, so promoting special offers within the packages we offer is a great way to maximise their potential and help them grow sales. We also work closely with retailers when developing Point of Sale materials which not only helps us promote [Love2shop - The high street gift voucher](#), it increases the likelihood of voucher recipients shopping at their stores.

Support to retailers and voucher holders

It is extremely important that we provide an excellent service to both retailers and voucher holders - if recipients have an issue with spending their vouchers at a certain store, we will contact the relevant person at the retailer and resolve the problem as quickly as possible. If the retailers have any queries about a voucher (ie, they suspect a fraud), then again, we will investigate on behalf of the retailer.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy going out and meeting retailers and learning about how their business works. It can sometimes be quite difficult to get through to the key decision maker at some retailers, in fact it can take around 100 phone calls to obtain an initial appointment. Once we do get a foot-hold though, it is very rewarding, and as soon as we inform them of the features and benefits of our products, they almost always agree to further discussions. From beginning to end, getting a retailer on board the voucher can be a very proud moment.

What makes [Love2reward](#) such a fun place to work?

It is a very welcoming environment. From the moment I arrived, I was made to feel like one of the team. My colleagues have been generous with their time and have really helped me to settle in. It was a daunting task joining a new organisation after spending 10 years with my last employer, but after 6 months here I know that I needn't have worried.

What are your major achievements / high points of your time at Love2reward?

We are experiencing challenging times within the retail environment, but have still managed to sign up a major brand with the [Early Learning Centre](#) along with some lesser-known brands. We feel that even the smaller brands on our voucher add tremendous value as it gives the recipient a wider choice.

Have you ever used Love2reward's products yourself, and if so, what for?

I recently bought myself an iPod from HMV with my [Love2shop](#) vouchers.

Now for the fun stuff...

Dislikes

Quite a wide ranging list here, starting with people who are late for appointments. I dislike milk and mushrooms, can't even stand the sight of them. I'm afraid to say I'm a bit of a food snob, I won't shop at supermarkets if I can help it, I live in a small market town so like to support local businesses such as our butcher who has such a great range of produce.

Other, stranger dislikes include a phobia of motorbikes (stationery and moving) and speckled birds, I don't know where these phobias originated from - but I cannot stand either.

Loves?

I adore indie music and Northern Soul. I'm a big fan of the Manchester scene from the early nineties which featured bands such as the Happy Mondays and Stone Roses - I was quite a regular at the Hacienda and look back on those days with extreme fondness. I do like to listen and watch some of the new bands on the scene at the moment too, I'm particularly impressed with the Last Shadow Puppets and The Young Knives.

Psst. Did you know...

Claire once appeared on TV's Come Dancing when she was ten, in a Junior Latin American Formation Team called Stardust - she is quick to inform us that she no longer partakes in this activity.

What do you enjoy doing in your recreational time / hobbies?

I'm a pretty active person who enjoys swimming and hill walking - anything I can easily involve the family with. We are quite fortunate with the hill walking as where we live, we are surrounded by the Welsh Hills and we are only a short drive away from Snowdonia. I also enjoy 'arty' activities such as jewellery making, silversmithing, painting and sculpting - I gained my degree in jewellery and silversmithing so have a passion for art.

Family?

I live with my husband and two children - Jack, who is four years old and Lily, who is two years old - they both keep me on my toes and entertained every minute of the day. I still can't believe how different they are, Jack is very laid back whilst Lily is extremely highly strung and has one heck of a temper.

Where do you [Love2shop](#)?

I'm a big fan of department stores like House of Fraser and Selfridges. However, I also like to visit independent music stores and second hand clothes stores, looking for retro gear to accessorise my outfits.

Where do you [Love2travel](#)?

We very rarely go abroad these days, in fact the last time I left the country, it was for my honeymoon when we visited Prague, a beautiful place which I would recommend to anyone. We actually prefer to holiday in the UK these days, so many fabulous places to visit such as Cornwall, Devon and my favourite, the Lake District, ideal for a walker like myself.

City breaks are also a big attraction to me with Manchester, Sheffield and Leeds being my preferred venues.

Where do you [Love2play](#)?

Like everyone I suppose, I love socialising with my friends - we like to go to concerts, the pub and also eating out - preferably Italian. I'm also a keen fan of the boxing, I used to love watching Prince Naseem, Chris Eubank, Nigel Benn and Lennox Lewis. High profile bouts are great but the real action can be found with the lesser-known boxing bouts. My favourite pastime at the moment however, is the new Nintendo WII which has taken over the household, the whole family is addicted to this little console that sits in front of the TV.

Which is your favourite day of the week?

It would have to be Friday, as this is the one and only day I get alone with Lily, my daughter and I can also pick up my son from school. And once the day is taken care of, my sister and friends come around to the house for a Friday night get-together.

If you were marooned on a desert island, which three things could you not live without?

Peanut Butter

A good Northern Soul Compilation Album (assuming a cd player was on the island)

My paints and canvasses

What was the first single you ever bought?

It was either Rio by Duran Duran or I won't let the sun go down on me by Nik Kershaw.



Introducing Everyday Benefits - Our new voluntary benefits proposition

In May 2009, we will be launching Everyday Benefits, an off-the-shelf voluntary benefits package designed specifically for the small and medium enterprise (SME) market. "From our research, we've established that companies with up to 500 staff want to provide voluntary benefit schemes for their employees, but very often find the cost prohibitive," comments Martin Cooper, Sales and Marketing Manager for [Love2reward](#). "With our scheme, employers can now provide a comprehensive range of products and services at a minimal cost."

Love2reward's solution offers a broad range of discounted voluntary benefits including the complete 'Love2' gift voucher portfolio: [Love2shop - The high street gift voucher](#), [Love2travel](#) and [Love2play](#). In addition, the scheme features discounts on health and dental care, motoring, technology, entertainment, leisure and supermarket vouchers, plus optional tax efficient benefits such as childcare and cycle to work schemes, if required. These tax efficient benefits are financially beneficial to both employer and employee, and can help to offset the cost of the scheme so that it becomes completely cost-neutral.

Accessible and Flexible

Everyday Benefits from [Love2reward](#) can be designed and tailored with the employer's branding to appear as the employer's own scheme. Alternative access is via a 'generic' site and be linked to an employer's own intranet. For any employees who do not have access through a conventional online portal, a benefits catalogue is available: "We have designed the scheme to be completely accessible to, and inclusive of all. It can be set up by employees and by closed-user groups, such as unions, and is completely flexible in terms of content. If an employer already has a scheme already running then it is possible to select just those elements that are required to supplement and complement the current offering."

Martin concludes: "70% of our existing customers fall within the 1-500 employee category and there is a distinct lack of schemes as low-cost as ours available in the market today. Unlike conventional reward and benefits providers, which make their income from charging a substantial fee to run such as schemes on behalf of employers, [Love2reward](#) principally benefits from getting more of our gift vouchers and cards into the market - therefore the fees become a less significant part of our cost-base and we pass this benefit onto the employer, so everyone wins."



Announcing new additions to Love2shop - The high street gift voucher

Love2shop – The high street gift voucher is the UK's leading multi-retail gift voucher and is now accepted by over 75 leading high street stores and in around 18,000 outlets nationwide.

New redeemers are being added all of the time, and the last few months have seen us include the following organisations:

Early Learning Centre



The Early Learning Centre (ELC) create fantastic toys that help children explore the boundaries of their imaginations and creativity, to make learning fun and help children be all they can be.

ELC opened its first store in the mid 1970's and they now have 215 stores across the UK. And when you visit one of their stores, you can take their toys out of the box and play with them, so you can choose the exact toy your child likes to play with best.

You can find ELC toys in concessions in certain Debenhams and Boots stores. They also have over 80 international stores in 19 countries across the world.

Au Naturale



With over 100 stores across the UK, Au Naturale are one of Britain's fastest growing retailers specialising in fun and funky interiors and homeware.

Soft furnishings, storage solutions, candles, vases, mirrors, prints and much more. Au Naturale offers exceptional value for money.

Silverstone Rally School



Nestled in the heart of Northamptonshire and directly opposite the world famous Silverstone Grand Prix Circuit, Silverstone Rally School (SRS), the first of its kind in the world, offer rally driving courses presenting the everyday driver with an opportunity to try what they could only have previously dreamed of.

Rally courses of SRS are as much fun as they are exciting and those completing the driving courses can expect to leave as far better and safer drivers on the roads.



Love2shop - Providing security in an uncertain landscape

As retailers cope with the challenges of uncertain times, the incentives and reward sector must respond positively to ensure that client investment is secure. [Love2shop - The high street gift voucher](#) is a shining example of just how to achieve the ideal with a product that is both safe and highly effective. Featuring more than 75 leading retail brands and with new aspirational names like Debenhams, House of Fraser, Champneys and Early Learning Centre being added by the day, Love2shop has it all.

Safe investment

"Our gift voucher has been around for 25 years, so we've seen retailers come and go - that's the nature of retail at the moment", comments Martin Cooper, Marketing Manager for Love2reward, "but we've continued to strengthen our offering. In doing so we've minimised our clients' exposure to risk - the sheer number of quality retailers on our voucher means that their investment is safe, and the recipient is guaranteed a pleasurable spending experience.

"We've made significant investment and an ongoing commitment to researching exactly what our customers, both in the consumer and corporate arena, desire and aspire to see on Love2shop. That has allowed us to identify which new retail partners will support expansion and guide strategic direction and as a result, we expect to be announcing new partners on a monthly basis. We've significantly outperformed the rest of the market, having witnessed a massive 85% sales growth over the past three years. Therefore we think it's fairly safe to assume that we're one of, if not the fastest growing voucher in the corporate sector."



Love2reward provide sponsorship for their karate champ

Few companies can boast that they have a World Champion on the payroll, but that may be the case for Love2reward if Pete Watson has his way this summer. The Liverpool lad is the reigning UK GKR Karate Champion, and is off to the 2009 World Cup in Melbourne, Australia in August to launch an assault on the world crown.

He won a silver medal at the 2007 tournament and is determined to go one better after two years of hard work: " I'm going to Australia to win," he says "There's no way I'm going halfway around the world to come home empty handed."

The 23 year-old is getting a helping hand from Love2reward on his mission to be the world's best: " I was trying to think of ways I could fund my 10-day trip," he says, "So I thought I'd approach the company to see if they'd act as my sponsor. Last year I put a sponsorship brief together and presented it like a business plan to Chris Hartley, Business Development Director at Love2reward, highlighting why I needed sponsorship and how the funds would be used.

"So I was delighted when my bid was accepted - I'm really grateful to everyone involved at Love2reward for allowing me to pursue my dream of becoming World Champion."

Pete is a highly-valued member of the Love2reward team, he is an account executive who has had a successful year within the organisation - taking the largest ever [Love2play](#) order and quadrupling sales from another customer to almost £40,000. Let's all hope he can match his professional performance in Melbourne - Good Luck Pete!