



Incentive Marketing Association

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Incentive Marketing Association Presents Circle of Excellence Awards to Five Firms for Remarkable Incentive-based Results

CHICAGO – Five companies with five distinct challenges successfully used incentive campaigns to achieve remarkable results, winning the [Incentive Marketing Association's](#) (IMA) 2009 Circle of Excellence Awards, to be presented Tuesday, Sept. 29 at the annual [Motivation Show](#) at Chicago's McCormick Place.

This year's award winners are Volkswagen of America, Inc., Herndon, Va.; Scottrade, St. Louis, Mo., and IBM Corp., Armonk, N.Y. Honorable mentions went to Australia's Seven Network TV Operations and to the Australia & New Zealand Banking Group.

Launched in 2000, the Circle of Excellence Awards identifies and recognizes outstanding examples of successful customer and employee incentive programs designed to help drive business. Both the company and the marketing incentive partner are recognized.

"This year's winners, together with their incentive professionals, used a variety of creative techniques, and achieved fantastic results which set them apart from the other programs we judged this year," said Karen Renk, CAE, IMA executive director.

Here is a summary of the three top winners' programs and their successful results:

VW engages dealers; boosts quality survey ranking – VW of America, together with Touchstone Group Associates, LLC, Cincinnati, Ohio, developed a dealer

communication and incentive strategy in an effort to improve customer satisfaction at the dealer level as a means of improving VW's J.D. Power and Associates Initial Quality Study (IQS) rankings. The "IQS 2008 Challenge" boosted VW's survey score by 32 points, the largest improvement in the brand's history. In addition, VW improved its score by another 16 points this year.

"Above and Beyond" nets payback for Scottrade – The St. Louis-based online investment firm worked with Anderson Performance Improvement Co., Hastings, Minn. to develop and launch an employee communication and recognition process which rewards Scottrade staffers, nominated by their managers and peers, for achievements "above and beyond" what is expected at Scottrade. Successful results include a 95.2 percent participation level in 2008, increased employee retention, and recognition of Scottrade by both *Fortune* and *Computerworld* Magazines as a "100 Best Places to Work" company in 2009.

"Know your IBM" training package pumps sales – IBM and incentive marketing partners Cievents of North Sydney, Australia, and Merscient of Toronto developed and delivered to its worldwide sales and distribution network a product and service knowledge training program called "Know your IBM," which combined successful completion of training modules with a variety of travel and merchandise incentive rewards. As a result, training program participation rose 143 percent over 2007, and sales dollars increased 39 percent from 2007 to 2008.

Honorable mentions are being presented to Australia's Seven Network TV Operations and incentive partner Synchro Marketing for its "Network 7 Olympic Millionaires" promotion, and to the Australia & New Zealand Banking Group and its incentive partner, Accumulate, for the "ANZ Elite" reward and recognition program.

In-depth case studies of the 2009 Circle of Excellence winners are available at www.returnonperformance.org.

For information about the Motivation Show and to register for the Circle of Excellence Awards luncheon, visit www.motivationshow.com.

About the Circle of Excellence Awards - Past Circle of Excellence Award winners have included noted companies such as GE Financial Services, Glaxo Smith Kline, Kohler, Kraft Foods, Purina, Microsoft Corp., NBC, and Sprint Communications. The growing archive of Circle of Excellence Award case studies illustrates the power of incentives, and have set even higher standards for the incentive marketplace. Judging criteria includes overall success in meeting program objectives, program originality/creativity, appropriate incentive selection, perceived value of the incentive, and effectiveness of communication strategy and promotional materials.

About the Incentive Marketing Association

Headquartered in Naperville, Illinois, the **Incentive Marketing Association (IMA)** is the leading voice of suppliers in the incentive marketplace. IMA provides education and information services, publications, conferences and seminars, and research to business to help them efficiently use incentive programs to motivate employees and customers. More information about the IMA and the incentive marketplace is available on its Web site at www.incentivemarketing.org.

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