

**Hilton International, managing company of The Marquette Hotel,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota Wins Best Customer Focus Award at The National  
Business Awards 2005.**

Hilton International, the world's best known hotel brand, has triumphed at the prestigious UK National Business Awards for a second year by winning the coveted 'Broadsystem Customer Focus Award 2005'.

The judges awarded Hilton 'Best Customer Focus' for demonstrating it has the customer at the heart of its business and deploys and manages its resources to most effectively meet the needs of its customer base. Hilton led the field against nine customer focus finalists including First Direct, The One Account, Currys and Vanguard Rental (UK) Ltd.

The Award was presented to Hilton International Senior Vice President of Marketing, Mike Ashton, who was thrilled with the award. "We are delighted to receive such an acclaimed award in the UK business community. To compete amongst travel industry partners is one thing, but to win a nationwide business award, competing against businesses from all industry sectors, is particularly pleasing. It is also great to win a second year running at The National Business Awards - last year Hilton Worldwide Resorts won the Best Marketing Strategy Award.

"The Best Customer Focus award recognizes our new customer brand promise to 'put back a little of what life takes out' and our philosophy of 'Equilibrium' which influences how our hotels look, how we develop our products and services and the way we behave, both with each other and with our customers. Equilibrium has been the inspiration for many of Hilton's new products and services; its team member development programs such as Esprit and Hilton University; exciting new bars and restaurants; industry leading web based communications; and the industry's leading recognition and reward program, Hilton HHonors."

Creative marketing agency, Campaign Works, has supported Hilton's new brand strategy. The strategy first embraced industry and customer research. Innovation Hubs were set up to turn lifestyle analysis and research into a contemporary hotel experience and conventional thinking was challenged which contributed to the creation of the new customer brand promise. The next phase saw the development of innovative internal and external marketing tools that communicated and delivered the brand strategy throughout the organization and to the customer.

The strategy led to outstanding success for Hilton International with significant commercial returns. Hilton is now the number one hotel brand in every global market with higher guest satisfaction levels, increased HHonors delivery satisfaction, improved team member satisfaction and increased financial performance.

Nick McConnell, Sales and Marketing Director of Broadsystem acknowledged Hilton's award winning customer focus; "The judges felt that Hilton International is truly customer-centric; placing customers at the heart of its business strategy throughout all levels of the organization, and Broadsystem is delighted to be able to present them with this prestigious award".

The National Business Awards recognize and reward excellence, best practice and innovation in the UK business community. It is the first program to engage FTSE100s and blue chip companies with SMEs and new ventures. Since their inception, the National Business Awards have quickly established themselves as an important signature of UK success and enterprise.

"We were very impressed by the levels of business success both finalists and winners revealed to the judging panels," said Adrian Tripp, Chief Executive of The National Business Awards. "The combined annual turnover of all entries equates to £165 billion, shows profits of £26 billion and employs over one million people".

Hilton International, a subsidiary of Hilton Group PLC, and Hilton Hotels Corporation has a worldwide alliance to market Hilton, the world's best-known hotel brand. Collectively offering more than 2,500 hotels in over 70 countries worldwide, both companies are recognized as leaders in the hospitality industry.

A complete list of winners is available on [www.nationalbusinessawards.com](http://www.nationalbusinessawards.com).