

23 May 2016

Essentials at Leeds University wins national award for outstanding customer service

23 MAY 16: Essentials in the University of Leeds Student Union has today been named the UK's best [CollectPlus](#) store in the brand's quarterly awards programme, which recognises excellent customer satisfaction and service levels over the period January to March 2016.

CollectPlus is the UK's largest independent store-based delivery and returns service, and offers a convenient way for people to collect online purchases or return unwanted items to more than 360 high street and online retailers, including John Lewis, Very and ASOS – all at their local convenience store.

Essentials is owned and run by the Leeds Student Union, a registered charity, and all profits from the store are returned to students, for example through the purchase of sports equipment or funding for the Student Advice Centre. The store employs many Leeds University students on a part time basis, giving them experience of the working world. Essentials provides the student community with a wide range of goods including stationery, groceries, toiletries and hot drinks, and is at the very centre of student life in Leeds thanks to its position in the Student Union building.

The store joined the CollectPlus network in October 2013, and during term time is open from 8.30am to 9pm Monday to Saturday, and 9am to 6pm on Sunday. During university holidays the store is open from 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Sunday.

Sarah Thornewill, Assistant Store Manager at Essentials, said:

“We were very pleased and surprised to win this award, it's a really nice piece of recognition for all of our hard work. It's especially gratifying to know that it's thanks to the great customer feedback that we've received. The Student Union's slogan is “Helping you love your time at Leeds” and the CollectPlus service is just one of many services that we offer our students to reflect that. We know our students love the service because they often take the opportunity to tell us. We handle a large amount of packages day in and day out, and students will often purchase a few extra items when picking up or dropping off their parcels.”

The CollectPlus 'Store of the Quarter' awards programme recognises the best stores in the CollectPlus network of 5,800 newsagents, convenience stores, petrol stations and supermarkets. With 12 regional winners selected, Essentials was judged to be amongst the very best in the company's nationwide network, achieving the best overall performance for customer satisfaction, scoring an impressive 4.7 out of 5 stars between January and March 2016.

Sarah and her team were presented with their award by **Neil Ashworth, CEO at CollectPlus**, who said:

“Essentials is a very worthy winner of our national Store of the Quarter award, and it's been fantastic to visit the store to thank the management team and student employees for all of their hard work in providing such an outstanding level of service to CollectPlus customers.

CollectPlus is focused on providing convenience to customers, and Essentials exemplifies this aim thanks to its great location in the heart of student life here in Leeds. Overall they set an outstanding example to our nationwide network of more than 5,800 stores.”

Recent research has demonstrated that stores benefit from offering the CollectPlus service, as two-thirds (67%) of customers dropping off or collecting a parcel, across the network, are visiting that particular store for the first time. The research also showed that stores in the network take an average of £3,095 a year in additional revenue, on top of the chance to be crowned winners in the quarterly and annual store awards scheme.

Founded in 2009, CollectPlus is a joint venture between PayPoint, the leading retail payment network, and independent parcel carrier, Yodel. For more information visit www.collectplus.co.uk.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editor

For further information, please contact the CollectPlus team at the Red Consultancy:

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CollectPlus scores 9.3/10 on [TrustPilot](https://www.trustpilot.com), with 82.8% of customers giving CollectPlus 5/5 stars (as of 13.05.16).

‘Store of the Quarter’ Terms and Conditions can be viewed by visiting <http://www.paypoint.co.uk/retailers/terms-conditions>.

ABOUT COLLECTPLUS

CollectPlus is the UK’s largest independent store-based parcel delivery and returns service. It offers a simple and convenient way for people to collect online purchases from or return unwanted items to more than 300 high street and online retailers, including John Lewis, New Look and ASOS – all at their local convenience store.

It is also possible to send parcels to any UK address from a CollectPlus store, making it a convenient option for those who sell products via online marketplaces such as eBay, as well as acting as a cheaper and convenient alternative parcel service for sending packages to friends and family.

Founded in 2009, CollectPlus was the first business to offer third party click and collect in the UK and now has a network of over 5,800 conveniently located parcel stores across the UK, nearly all of which are open early ‘til late seven days a week. 90% of the UK’s urban population live within a mile of a CollectPlus point and 89% within five miles in rural areas.

CollectPlus now handles in excess of 300,000 parcels a week and in July 2015 handled its 50 millionth parcel. CollectPlus is a joint venture between PayPoint, the leading retail payment network, and leading independent parcel carrier, Yodel.

ABOUT PAYPOINT

PayPoint is an international leader in payment technologies, its solutions transforming payments for everyone from consumer and financial services companies to retailers, utilities, media, e-

commerce, gaming and government clients.

PayPoint delivers payments and services by taking the complexity of multi-channel payments and translating it into convenient, simple, value-added solutions. It handles almost £10 billion from over 694 million transactions annually.

With the backing of 24/7 operations centres with dual site processing, PayPoint is widely recognised for its leadership in payment systems, smart technology and service.

Retail networks

The PayPoint retail network across the UK numbers over 28,200 local shops (including Co-op, Spar, McColls, Costcutter, Sainsbury's Local, Tesco Express, One Stop, Asda, Londis and thousands of independents), where it processes energy meter pre-payments, bill payments, benefit payments, mobile phone top-ups, transport tickets, BBC TV licences, cash withdrawals and a range of other transactions. In Romania, the retail network numbers 9,700 terminals in local shops, helping people to make cash bill payments, money transfers, road tax payments and mobile phone top-ups. In the Republic of Ireland, over 500 terminals in shops and credit unions process mobile top-ups and bill payments. PayPoint's ATM network numbers more than 4,000 'LINK' branded machines across the UK, and 10,000 PayPoint terminals enable retailers to accept credit and debit cards.

Mobile Payments

PayPoint Mobile Payments (trading as PayByPhone and Adaptis) handles over 118 million payments for parking, payments and consumer services. In major cities in the UK, Canada, USA, France, Switzerland and Australia, its parking solutions make it easy for people to pay for parking by mobile, as well as providing electronic parking permits, automatic number plate recognition systems for car parks and penalty charge notices.

ABOUT YODEL

UK independent parcel carrier Yodel handles over 155 million parcels every year and has a relationship with 85 per cent of the UK's top retailers. The company is headquartered in Hatfield and has over 60 locations across the UK, including three central sorts and over 50 service centres.

Yodel offers a range of services to meet the needs of its clients and their customers. Through its sister company, Arrow XL, Yodel can also offer a two man service for white goods and large items up to 120kg.

To find out more visit www.yodel.co.uk