

# Are you proud enough of your frontline colleagues to nominate them for an award?

This year the new F.A.C.E Award gives retailers a free opportunity to gain public recognition for outstanding service delivered by those at the sharp end of retail...

Nominations for the Fraud Awards 2021 – sponsored by WIS International (OF COURSE!) – are open. And I can hardly wait for the Awards night on the 2nd December...

This will be the 7th consecutive Fraud Awards that WIS have sponsored, and for some that is going to be a Lucky 7. But this year, because of the ups and downs of the last 18 months, nominations have to be in by the 30th September. So don't hang about!

The reason WIS sponsors the Fraud Awards every year is simple. The Awards celebrate the best in our industry, recognise individual and team achievement and most importantly inspire others to do even better. Why would you not want to support the industry in celebrating that! And now that WIS International has become the world's biggest stock take company, with more than 30,000 employees worldwide, aligning ourselves with the best in class in other areas of risk management is precisely in keeping with the standard of our own service offering.

People ask me if WIS gets a vote on who wins what. The answer is simple. NO! Every year the organisers, Retail Risk, invite a select few retailers to form the independent panel of judges drawn from top retail businesses. It is those judges who decide individually which nominations they consider worthy of recognition by scoring the entries in order of merit, as they see it, based on the submissions received. No judge knows who has nominated whom. And neither do the judges know how other judges have voted, because voting is done digitally by each individual judge in isolation.

If you take a look at the Fraud Awards website you can see, recorded for posterity, the names of all those companies, teams and individuals whom the judges have singled out for recognition as being the best of the best. Every year the Fraud Awards finishes with the Retail Risk Director of the Year Award. Some say it is the

highlight of the Awards and the ultimate recognition for someone in our industry in terms of individual achievement. To win it means you are at the very pinnacle of the profession, as judged by your peers.

So at the 2020 Fraud Awards, which because of Covid took place at London in August of this year, when Corin Dennison of adidas took the title for a record breaking three years on the trot, it was truly amazing. And it was my privilege, as sponsor of the Awards, to present the trophy to him for the third year in a row. Remarkable!

In his acceptance speech, Corin spoke of the need for recognition of retail colleagues on the frontline. Those who are customer facing instore who make such an immense contribution to retail, but for whom there has previously been little recognition. So positive was the reaction from the guests at the Awards, whooping and cheering as Corin made comments to the above effect, that this year the organisers, Retail Knowledge, have created a new award...

The new Award is for Frontline Ambassadors for the Retail Experience – or the *F.A.C.E Award* as it has been dubbed. And that acronym is rather apt considering it is an award made to customer facing colleagues who are the “face” of any business – not something that has been lost on the organisers either, I don't suppose!

Quite simply the Award is recognition for frontline retail colleagues who go above and beyond the call of duty to deliver excellent customer service. It is as simple as that. And frankly I would be gobsmacked if every top retailer did not make at least one entry to this new award category, because if not it doesn't say much about your people or your opinion of them... or both!

And we do not want cost to be a barrier for any nomination in the new award category. So arrangements have been made. All entries to all Fraud

Awards categories are free to enter anyway. However, in addition, if the retailer concerned does not have a table at the Fraud Awards then a seat for the individual or a representative of the team shortlisted for the *F.A.C.E Award*, will be made available - so they do not potentially miss their moment of glory for the sake of a budgetary constraint.

So, what are you waiting for? Go to the Fraud Awards website and start nominating your people now...

The *F.A.C.E Award* is not the only new award for the Fraud Awards 2021. There is also the new *Best Retailer and Policing Collaboration Award*. This award has been created by Retail Risk in collaboration with the police's National Business Crime Centre. Superintendent Patrick Holdaway has been instrumental in establishing this new award, and for that I think we all owe him a debt of gratitude.

Simply put the award recognises collaborative efforts between retailers and the police to reduce crime. I understand that not only have a number of retailers already entered initiatives for this award, but also a number of police forces have too, which is terrific!

Whilst I know that there are some areas of disagreement between retail and police from time to time, it is a tremendous opportunity to actually focus on collaborative efforts that are working and deserve recognition. If you are looking to work well with the police in future, then take some time out to recognise the great work that is already being done. Make sure to make a nomination for the inaugural year of this category.

Now, with the August bank holiday in prospect, it's time for me to dust off the barbecue and burn a few sausages, probably in the pouring rain. I hope you enjoy yours too!

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