



HITTING THE **HEADLINES**

Every year, The Greats winners show that winning a trophy is more than just walking off the stage clutching a glittering 'gong'. Win or lose, virtually all winners - and finalists too - are one step ahead in the PR stakes, not only in terms of media coverage, but also in terms of letting their customers know pre and post the event how brilliantly they've done, and in motivating their staff.

PG&H spoke to a selection of this year's Greats winners to discover how they have been making the most of their success.



WINNER: Best Gift Retailer Newcomer - North and Scotland **Alison Bartram, owner of Heart Gallery in Hebden Bridge**

Alison Bartram, owner of Heart Gallery in Hebden Bridge, wasted no time in spreading the news that her shop had been selected as one of five best newcomers in the north of England. Before hot footing it down to London to The Greats awards evening, she used the opportunity to email to her customer database to let them know why she would be hanging up the closed sign for a couple of days. Here's what she said:

"Hi folks,

I can hear alarm bells ringing as this email arrives in your inbox! 'Closed' I hear you cry. Well, don't worry, it is just for two

days as I leave Hebden Bridge behind to travel to the big smoke, Londinium, to attend a glitzy awards ceremony.

For those who haven't yet heard, Heart Gallery is one of only five finalists in the 'Best Newcomer in The North' category at The Greats Awards 2008 organised by Progressive Gifts and Home magazine.

The Greats are established as the premier awards event of the year for gift and jewellery retailers. It brings together the entire industry for a night of celebration to recognise and celebrate not only the top independent and multiple gift retailers regionally and nationally, but also the new breed of gift retailers who, in their opinion, are making a tremendous contribution to the UK jewellery and gift industry.

So, it is understandable that I really HAVE to make this journey next week so hope you aren't too sad that we shall be closed Thursday 22 May and Friday 23 May.

Back open again Saturday 24 May, so make sure you bob along to hear all the gossip from the evening and with a bit of luck for a lot of effort, see our trophy!

Bye for now folks, keep your fingers crossed for us and see you soon."

Kind regards

Alison Bartram

Owner, Heart Gallery



Hold The Front Page

"I made front page and page 5 in our local Hebden Bridge Times and was in the Business Daily section of the Halifax Courier. I'm hopeful that Craft & Design magazine will be mentioning our success in the next edition, and the story will also be going in a future edition of the First Voice of Business magazine which is the FSB bi-monthly that goes out to its members. I have put a photo of me with the award in The Greats photo frame we received in our 'goodie bag' at the Awards, and placed it on the counter

Does it get any better than this?



next to the award which receives constant praise from my customers. I have also been approached by a local women's

church group to be a speaker at one of their meetings after they read the article in the local paper!"

Above: Alison made the front page of her local paper, The Hebden Bridge Times, with a follow-up story inside. There was also an article in the Halifax Courier.

Left: Award winning Heart Gallery.



THE GREATS 2008:
BEING A WINNER



WINNER: Independent Retailer of the Year - South and South East
Emma Harrop, co-owner, Velvet, Brighton

"As soon as we knew we'd won the Independent Retailer of the Year – South and South East category, we wrote a press release, which we posted, e-mailed and faxed to our local press list, to include local radio and TV. We also emailed photos to the picture desk of the local papers, and phoned them two days later to really push it. We were covered in the very popular Brighton and Hove Local Property and What's On magazine's 'Latest Homes/Latest Seven' as well as the Brighton and Hove glossy social magazine Absolute Brighton. A couple of weeks later, Meridian TV filmed at the shop as part of a North Laines feature and, of course, we mentioned our Greats success!"

Right: The press release that was sent out by Velvet.

Below: The Greats award has taken pride of place in the shop window.
Above and below right: Velvet's press coverage includes the Brighton Argus and Latest Homes magazine.



WINNER: Best Independent Gift Retailer – Wales and The South West
Sandy Case, co-owner, Orange Tree, Topsham and Exeter

"Following our success at The Greats, we immediately sent out an email to over 3,000 people on our data base. We are also advertising our success heavily in-store via posters, and are looking at T-shirts as well. Meanwhile, the Princesshay shopping centre PR department is also doing lots of work on our behalf. They produce their own magazine (50,000 copies) and have



Above: The Express and Echo was among the papers to feature the Orange Tree's success.

monthly e-blasts. They love promoting the independent stores. The local papers ran a story and we also have interviews lined up with the glossy magazines.

In terms of printed material, we will be fanfaring our success on our letterheads and on all emails that we send out. And I'm sure we will make the most of our success with many other events. It was great for us to win an award and we are doing our very best to get the message out to everyone."



WINNER: The Greatest of The Greats' - Gift Retailer Of The Year and Best Gift Retailer Newcomer - South and Wales
Mike Adams, owner, Temptations

"We had a great reaction from our local press again, and a terrific personal quote from local MP and Tory front bencher Cheryl Gillan, who was one of many local dignitaries to pile on the praise. "Many congratulations to Temptation Gifts on winning the award of UK Gift Retailer of the Year. It's a great achievement that a local enterprise should have won through in competition with national chains. Now that Temptation Gifts are expanding their online shopping service, many more people will be able to share the experience which so many local shoppers already enjoy."

The press release was sent out the day after The Greats Awards, and went out to over 40 news outlets.



The www.TemptationGifts.com website was re-branded within 24 hours of our success being announced, with a splash on the homepage, a banner advert, a link on the left hand side of the page, a full-page article and an update to our Latest News section. We also sent out a special 'emailshot' to our growing mailing list of over 15,000 names to promote the story

and our success. In addition, the company headed paper has also been redesigned.

Obviously we are thrilled to have won and determined to make the most of being in this fantastic position. I'm sure there will be plenty of other things we'll do through the course of the year."

Above: Mike and Sheena Adams with their two Greats Awards, as featured in the Buckinghamshire Advertiser.
Left: The Temptation team were featured in the Hemel, Tring and Berkhamsted Gazette.



WINNER: Best Retail Display
Linda Pollard, co-owner, Fraiche, Derby

"As well as coverage in the Nottingham Evening Post and the Derby Telegraph, I was also interviewed by BBC Radio Derby about our success at The Greats, as winners of the Best Retail Display award. I was a guest on on a popular magazine programme called Mid-Morning Team, where I chatted about what it meant to win the award."



WINNER: Best Department Store Retailer of Gifts

Ann-Marie James, buying director, Rossiters of Bath

"Following our success at The Greats as winner of the Best Department Store category we contacted our local press both in Bath and in Cardiff, where we have recently opened another store. Not only did the Bath Chronicle run a story, but we also received coverage in the South Wales Echo and the Cardiff Post."

Above and below: Rossiters were featured in the Bath Chronicle, the South Wales Echo and the Cardiff Post.



FINALIST: Independent Retailer of the Year - London
Jayne Czarnopolski, owner The Village Card, Gift & Balloon Shop, Streatham Vale, S. London

"When we found out that we were a finalist in the Independent Gift Retailer of the Year - London category, all our customers were buzzing! We contacted the local newspaper, the Guardian, who did a story on us, and we were also interviewed on Radio Jackie, where we were praised for being such a successful local independent retailer."

Right: Jayne made the local Guardian.

