

Local cruise business on wave of success with two travel award wins

29 September 2010 – A Chorley travel company is celebrating winning two leading industry awards – just a week after one of the directors was named Young Entrepreneur of the Year.

Cruise118 saw off competition from hundreds of other travel companies from across the UK to win two awards at the prestigious Travolution Awards ceremony, presented by Jeremy Vine at the Battersea Power Station last night (Tuesday 28 September).

The cruise retailer beat off competition from cruise.co.uk, P&O Cruises and Cunard Cruises for 'Best Cruise Website' which commends a website which has a strong impact in its sector over the last 12 months, integrating a strong sales message with a great customer service promise.

Cruise118 also saw off competition from Co-Operative Travel, Holiday Extras, Thomas Cook and Travel Republic to clinch the 'Best Agent-Only Website' award. The accolade praised the creation of the strong brand in a short space of time in what is a fiercely competitive sector of the online travel industry.

Cruise118 impressed the judges with its recent investment deal with the world's largest cruise retail business, World Travel Holdings, which will offer tremendous growth opportunities for the business in the coming months and years.

The partnership has also seen the launch of the world's most popular cruise holiday URL, Cruises.com, to the UK. Cruises.com sees Cruise118 and World Travel Holdings continuing to work with major cruise lines to offer the very best in choice, quality and price to consumers.

Since launching Cruise118.com in June 2008, directors James Cole and Mal Barritt have created the UK's fastest-growing cruise retail business, expanding to employ 45 people. It has launched its own chartered cruise holiday, three niche holiday brands and signed exclusive deals with well-known brand, travelsupermarket.com, to power its cruise pages.

Director James Cole explained: "When we set up Cruise118, one of our core growth tactics was to set up partnerships with other key players in the industry.

"We knew we had the determination to succeed, but I don't think either of us anticipated that we'd secure two deals as important as the [travelsupermarket](http://travelsupermarket.com) and World Travel Holdings ones so early in our company history.

"We're honoured to have been named Best Cruise Website and Best Agent-Only Website. It's nice to see our hard work acknowledged in this way, especially after such an exciting year for Cruise118.

"This year in particular has been very successful for us as we've doubled the size of the business, secured investment from World Travel Holdings and launched the most powerful cruise holiday site, Cruises.com, within the UK which will offer great opportunities to push our business forward within the online travel industry.

"Cruise118 couldn't have been so successful without the hard work and efforts of our workforce. We really do have the best staff in the business, with everyone absolutely dedicated to providing our customers with exceptional service as standard. Mal and I are really proud that this core ethos, which underpins everything we do, has helped us grow the business and attract an outstanding team of people."

The company is now focusing on continuing the growth in 2010, and is currently recruiting more sales staff from the region.

James added: "The next year is set to be our best yet, with more potential partnerships on the cards, and a real opportunity for us to tap even further into the ever-growing cruise retail market.

"Recruiting new cruise concierges to help deliver exceptional service to our customers is extremely important and we're not just looking for people with previous travel experience. A passion for the industry is the key requirement, but so is the desire to provide the best possible customer experience.

"We're confident our newly-extended team will be just what we need to help the business grow further still, and both Mal and I are looking forward to an exciting year ahead."

Last week, Mr. Cole beat off competition from business directors in the North West to win the prestigious title of Young Entrepreneur of the Year at the EN Entrepreneur of the Year awards.

For more information on Cruise118 visit www.cruise118.com.

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About Cruise 118

- Cruise118 is an independent cruise retailer offering the full range of cruise holidays
- The company has three niche brands www.sixstarcruises.co.uk, www.alaskaonly.com and www.sailfromuk.com
- Cruise118 is the exclusive provider of cruise holidays to travelsupermarket.com
- Cruise118's team of cruise concierges provide each customer with an individually tailored service. The company's independent status means customers receive the best deals and advice when choosing and booking their cruise
- Bookings available via telephone, internet and email
- Cruise118 is committed to providing exceptional customer service as standard
- Cruise118 is ABTA bonded, offering customers complete peace of mind