

# Driving Business Excellence Optimus Awards 2008

The Crowne Plaza, Dundalk, has received a National Service Excellence award from Fáilte Ireland for its standards of customer service. The hotel achieved the Award as a result of successful participation in Fáilte Ireland's Optimus Programme and following independent assessment.

This was the first time Dundalk's Crowne Plaza, which opened in 2007, took part in the Optimus programme. The hotel has 129 rooms and conference and banqueting facilities for up to 400 people. It employs 73 full and part-time staff.

Tom Devaney, General Manager of the Crowne Plaza Dundalk said that the Optimus programme is an important follow-on to the company's own efforts to emphasise just how important the customer is. He continued *"Following Optimus training, steps were taken to empower staff to deal with issues on their own initiative as they arise and staff are more confident in their dealings with customers. Even at this early stage I'm getting positive reactions both from staff and customers."*

John Concannon, Director of Regional Development, Fáilte Ireland, congratulated the latest enterprises to be accredited and said *"Optimus was designed to change the service culture and engage management and staff in a continuous pursuit of improvements which would deliver a competitive edge and sustainability. These objectives are even more vital*

*now because of the changing economic and trading environment at home and internationally."*

The 150 enterprises which have undertaken the Optimus programme so far are succeeding in raising the quality of their products and of their business performance to equal the best found anywhere, and Mr Concannon urged more tourism enterprises to follow their example.

Optimus is an innovative, multi-tiered programme which supports tourism businesses in becoming more profitable, more efficient and more competitive. It is based on international research which shows that companies that adopt performance excellence principles can significantly improve their income and sales.

The programme provides, initially, three distinct but inter-related levels, Service Excellence, Mark of Best Practice and Business Excellence Award. These allow participants to build their capabilities and performance at each stage, gaining national recognition as they progress through each level.

**The Service Excellence Award** is an established concept which underpins the other two levels. It focuses on the creation and development of a culture of service excellence that is specific to the hospitality sector.

**Mark of Best Practice** is a business process improvement programme that enables enterprises to benchmark their business against the best in the industry, discover what makes them successful and apply that to their own operations. It focuses on key business processes under the headings of planning, people and operations.

**The Award of Excellence** is awarded to businesses that demonstrate a deep commitment to continual improvement and superior performance with a primary focus on the development of a strategic approach to managing their business.



*Pictured receiving the 'Service Excellence Award' at the Fáilte Ireland Optimus Awards ceremony held in the Castletroy Hotel, Limerick, were (l. to r.): John Concannon, Director of Regional Development, Fáilte Ireland; Niamh Murphy, Crowne Plaza Dundalk; Dame Geraldine Keegan, Optimus Approvals Board; and Tom Devaney, General Manager, Crowne Plaza Dundalk.*

## Want to know more?

Contact the Optimus team at:

Fáilte Ireland, 88-95 Amiens Street, Dublin 1.

Tel: 01 8847768

Email: [liam.campbell@failteireland.ie](mailto:liam.campbell@failteireland.ie) or

visit the Optimus website [www.Optimus.ie](http://www.Optimus.ie)