

A NEW TERMINAL FOR HEATHROW

Out at Heathrow the taxi drivers through Heathrow Airport Licensed Taxis (HALT) and JourneyPay are benefitting from a new terminal for card payments. Their old Mobile Payment Terminal is being replaced with the latest state of the art Ingenico GPRS Mobile Chip & PIN payment terminal – which can be used anywhere and it is being issued to drivers free of charge.

In today's market place, many passengers look for the facility to be able to use their plastic to pay taxi fares. Research shows that when a foreign businessman arrives at Heathrow the first time he will probably use his card will be for a taxi. Once he has used this particular card it is normally the one which he will continue to use for the duration of his stay so it is important that these passengers are met with a resounding "yes" when asking if they can pay their cab fare by card. The new terminal will improve the passenger experience when paying by card because it is simpler to use, with the transaction not only being quick but also secure.

TECHNOLOGY MAKES IT EASY

JourneyPay's payment platform is particularly well suited to the taxi industry and is fully certified to all Banking standards and endorsed by all the major card schemes. The company is also a key strategic transport payments partner, specialising in the taxi sector, to Lloyds TSB Cardnet for the London Olympic Games 2012. Lloyds TSB are the official sponsor Bank of the London Olympic Games 2012. JourneyPay Chief Executive Barry Davis said: "JourneyPay continue to develop payments systems for taxis which satisfy the current demand for Credit and Debit payments, while providing a platform capable of generating new work for the trade, re-gaining lost work and enabling the transition to become recognised as part of the Public Transport Network at systems and service levels. It is vital for our trade to become part of the Public Transport Network and systems integration will play a key role in this transition. JourneyPay remain committed to developing systems that enable our trade to achieve this end."

INCENTIVES TO FOLLOW

Taxi Globe went along to the newly opened office in the feeder park to see the new terminal in action. Drivers were coming in to swap their terminals during our visit and it was clear that they were able to use the new terminal with the minimum amount of training. Representatives from JourneyPay told our reporter that they plan to be able to offer worthwhile incentives to drivers who sign up for their terminals as part of the HALT family at Heathrow. Announcements about these will follow once all the details have been finalised. HALT Chairman, Colin Evans, said: "We are delighted to announce the renewal of our terminals. We have used our experience of the past 3 years and are confident that with our partner JourneyPay we have developed and improved our card operation which will be to the benefit of drivers, passengers and the Trade." The drivers who have already swapped their terminals like the fact the new terminals are so quick and also that the battery life is greatly enhanced compared to the older ones. Whilst some drivers may not whole heartedly embrace the changing way that technology is driving their business in, it is a fact that many passengers prefer to pay by card. Another benefit for drivers is that when the new terminal is handed to the passengers to enter their PIN there is a prompt which asks if the cardholder would like to add a tip to the transaction, which avoids any embarrassment for drivers.

LloydsTSB Cardnet Head of Business Enterprise, Kevin Coles, told Taxi Globe:

"As Lloyds TSB Cardnet we continue to work with JourneyPay to deliver a secure and customer friendly service for card payments. This is a fast emerging area for card payments and a very important service for consumers who now expect to be able to pay by card, which they consider the most convenient method of payment."

POSITIVE PASSENGER EXPERIENCE

BAA IS keen to add value to the overall experience of flying into Heathrow. Taxis are now being treated as a part of the retail sector at the airport and

BAA wants customers to spend money within the airport. Taxis are seen as an important part of the whole passenger experience. BAA Retail Services Manager, Andy Cameron, told Taxi Globe: "This is an important development for the Airport as we continually look to improve the experience of our customers who want to use Hackney Carriage Taxis, but also want the certainty and convenience of being able to pay their fare by card. which will ensure the Trade at Heathrow is well-placed to manage the inevitable transition from cash that will be accelerated with the 2012 Olympics".

At Terminal 5 passengers have a huge choice of shops, bars and places to eat before they fly out. So it is logical that BAA will be looking to expand the "feel good" factor for passengers and a reliable taxi service is part of this. The new Fare's Fare scheme is now seeing some good rides out of the airport. With an average card trip coming in at around £72, those drivers who take cards will be benefitting. Mystery shoppers recently visited the ranks at all of the terminals at Heathrow and were surprised to find how many taxi drivers could not offer the facility to take cards. Any drivers who take advantage of the new terminals can be certain that they will be able to accommodate these passengers. The terminals also mean that drivers taking passengers from the airport to their destination have an opportunity to be able to offer other services such as return bookings, all of which will enhance a driver's earnings.

TRAFALGAR SQUARE'S ICONIC FOUNTAINS SET FOR MAKEOVER

Mayor Boris Johnson has announced plans to give the landmark fountains in Trafalgar Square a professional makeover. Plans will see the world famous attraction improved in time for the Olympics and includes the installation of an innovative 'green' energy lighting system.

Trafalgar Square attracts 13 million people every year. Its two fountains, first installed in 1845, including bronze statues of mermaids, a merman, dolphins and tritons, will be cleaned and where necessary repaired, by an expert restoration team. This will help preserve and protect the monument for the enjoyment of future generations.

The lights that currently illuminate the fountains are now beyond repair and will be replaced with a LED lighting system. This will cut the carbon footprint of the fountain lighting by an estimated 90% saving 16,400 kg of carbon every year, as well as saving thousands of pounds on energy bills. The new lighting system will also provide permanent coloured lighting effects for the first time.

Boris Johnson says: 'It is tremendously exciting that the world-renowned Trafalgar Square fountains and their statues are set for a makeover ahead of the London Olympics. Millions of visitors to the square, and the myriad of events that it hosts, will benefit from this revamp.' The restoration is planned from March to May 2009 and will be undertaken to minimise disruption on the square. The fountains were designed by Sir Charles Barry and were later remodelled by Sir Edwin Lutyens starting in the late 1930s and completed after World War II; they are now Grade II listed. The refurbishment of the fountains follows the once in a generation restoration of Nelson's Column, which was completed in partnership with Zurich Insurance in 2006, and the part pedestrianisation and remodelling of the square in 2003.

