

Language Travel Mag Star Awards 2008

The LTM Star Awards have become something of a beacon in the language and education travel industry calendar and this year saw nearly 600 agents and schools dressed in their finery attending the ceremony in the heart of the city of London. **BETHAN NORRIS** reports on the evening's events.

This year the LTM Star Awards were held in a 250-year-old grade two listed building and the dining hall was fittingly decorated with digital pictures of stars cascading from the walls. Nearly 600

people attended the event this year and everyone had certainly made an effort with dinner suits, sparkly dresses and, in some cases, national costumes the order of the day.

After a three-course meal, Director of Hothouse Media, Scott Wade, kicked off the proceedings with a short welcome

address that highlighted Hothouse media's latest product, InTouch, which has been described as the Facebook for the industry.

Amy Baker, Editor of *Language Travel Magazine*, was then invited onto the



PHOTOGRAPHS: ROGER HARRIS

Winner's profile



Ilac, Canada

LTM English Language School Northern Hemisphere

Jonathan Kolber, Executive Director at the school, writes, "We feel honoured to have won. We have some strong competitors in Canada and we would like to thank all our agent partners, big and small, and all our staff who work so hard to make the school so dynamic."

Other nominees in this category were: Tamwood International College, Canada; The Language Academy, USA; ITTI Vancouver, Canada; King George International College, Canada.

azine



Conway from Languages International in New Zealand made his way up on stage when his school was announced as the winner. Previously nominated last year, it was the first time a New Zealand school has scooped the prize. Conway dedicated the prize to the many excellent staff at the school, some of whom are no longer there but whose work has helped establish Languages International's reputation.

After this it was the turn of agencies in Latin America to be recognised for their hard work in an award sponsored by English Australia. Brazil, Mexico and Colombia were all represented by agencies in the nominee list and the final winner was Universo Educativo in Mexico. Han Steen, Director of the agency, came on stage to receive his award and made a salute on behalf of the Mexican industry.

This year, the awards had a number of new categories included in a bid to reward every possible sector of the industry for their hard work over the past year. The next winner to be announced was one of these new categories, LTM Star "Other" Languages, which was introduced specifically for language schools teaching non-mainstream languages. The nominees this year included schools in Russia, Japan, Portugal, China and Egypt, reflecting how diverse our industry is becoming. The winner was Liden & Denz Language Centre in Russia and Walter Denz came up on stage to collect his trophy.

The next award was for agencies in North America and was sponsored by Home Language International. The five nominees in Canada and the USA were announced before Cam Harvey from The Learning Traveller in Canada, representing his wife Jodi Hosking, was called on stage to collect the award. His acceptance speech highlighted that his wife Jodi should really >>>

Winner's profile



Liden & Denz, Russia
LTM Star "Other" Language Provider



Walter Denz, Director of the school, writes,
"This is really an award for two things – our staff have worked really hard and also our agents have acknowledged that

we are flexible, fast and responsive. We have always believed in a win-win relationship with our agents. This is very important."

Other nominees in this category were: Mandarin House, China; KAI Japanese Language School, Japan; ILI - International House Cairo, Egypt; CIAL Centro de Linguas, Portugal.

WALTER DENZ

Winner's profile



Embassy CES – Brighton centre and new teaching technology

LTM Star School Innovation
Johnny Peters from the school writes,
"We'd like to thank *Language Travel Magazine* and all our partners and staff for their fantastic support. This year we've invested a lot of time, effort and money on a digital platform to enhance the student and agency experience. This award is testament to the fact that it is working."

EmbassyCES

Other nominees in this category were: St Giles – Platinum Course, Canada; Jakera – The Travelling Classroom, Venezuela; Frances King – Family Courses, UK; Langports – UFO Programme, Australia.

JOHNNY PETERS

Winner's profile

Babylon Idiomas



LTM Star Spanish Language School
Steven Muller, Director of the school, writes, "We opened Babylon Idiomas in 2003 with ambitious goals and a lot of energy. It is such a great feeling of pride, relief and sheer joy that five years later, we are recognised as the leading Spanish language school in the world. We have plenty more to do but this award is a very welcome incentive telling us that we're on the right track."

Other nominees in this category were: Malaca Instituto, Spain; Clic - IH, Spain; Escuela de Idiomas Nerja, Spain; Pamplona Learning Spanish Institute, Spain.



STEVEN MULLER

Winner's profile

GLS Sprachenzentrum

LTM Star German Language School

Barbara Jaeschke at the school, writes, "I feel honoured having received the LTM Star School award and thank you on behalf of all my team at GLS. A special "danke" to our agents – we would not be where we are now without them!!"

Other nominees in this category were: did deutsch-Institut, Germany; Humboldt Institut, Germany; IH Berlin-Prolog, Germany; BWS Germanlingua, Germany.



HAN STEEN AND HIS WIFE SUSANA PAZ

Winner's profile



Universo Educativo, Mexico



LTM Agency Latin America
Han Steen, Director, writes, "We have formed a close community with schools and know them very well. We are happy to put Mexico on the map with this kind of recognition."

Other nominees in this category were: Experimento, Brazil; STB, Brazil; Central de Intercambio (CI), Brazil; Teducamos, Colombia.

"The awards had a number of new categories included in a bid to reward every possible sector of the industry for their hard work"

Winner's profile

Babilonia Taormina



LTM Star Italian Language School
Alessandro Adomo, Director of the school, writes, "The recognition awarded to our school pays us back for the years spent striving for the best services possible for our students, both in terms of teaching quality and in terms of quality services and customer care. A goal that the agents we work with have continuously recognized and appreciated. Being a native Sicilian, I could almost say "Mission accomplished!" I have founded Babilonia with the intention of offering those who love Italy and the Italian language and culture to discover and experience another part of Italy other than the traditional destinations for learning Italian in Italy and especially an opportunity to study Italian and discover Sicily ... at its best! I am very proud! Proud of all the hard work everyone at Babilonia has put in over the last few years; each of them has contributed piece by piece to this award and I'm also proud to show that one can find excellence where one may least expect it! This award is very rewarding for us and it will fuel us to continue improving our offers, our services and our mission."

Other nominees in this category were: Scuola Leonardo da Vinci, Italy; Linguaviva, Italy; Dilit - International House, Italy; Torre di Babele, Italy.



ROSY SPINA

have been collecting the award as she did all the hard work, but she was unable to attend.

Next was the LTM Star High School category, sponsored by Education en France, with nominees spanning a wide range of countries including the UK, Canada and Australia. It was finally announced that a UK school had won the coveted prize and Mark Greenow from Millfield School came up on stage to collect his award, along with several members of his team.

Another deserving sector of the industry, agencies in central and eastern Europe, were put in the spotlight with the next award, which was sponsored by Hampstead School of English. The first LTM Star Agency Eastern Europe turned out to be DEC in the Ukraine and Moldova and a visibly emotional Natalia Tarchenko from the agency came up on stage to face the crowd and collect her award.

The important role of insurance providers in the industry was recognised in the next award of LTM Star Insurance Provider. Attendees were on the edge of their seat as Assist Card was announced as the final winner of this category. Unfortunately, a representative from this company could not attend the awards so Amy Baker read out some words of thanks passed on by Nicolas Keglevich, Chairman of the Board.

Next was the turn of the Italian language schools to have their moment in the limelight. All the nominees in this category were present in the crowd and the tension in the room, as Amy Baker read out the nominees, was palpable. However, there was a new winner this year as Babilonia in Sicily was announced from the winner's envelope. Rosy Spina, Marketing Manager at the school, came up on stage to collect her award and say a few words of thanks.

The last of the new categories this year was announced after this, that of LTM Star Work Experience Provider, which was sponsored by NSTS English Language Institute, and represents a growing area of the industry. The nominees were made up of a mixed bag of work experience providers from the UK, Canada and Venezuela. The winner was a company who did not have to travel far to attend the awards however, and several exuberant representatives from the London-based winner, Twin, came up on stage to receive their award. Jacqui Fox, one of the twin sisters who run the company, told the crowd that it was the first time they had won anything!

Language school association, Quality English, sponsored the next award, which was LTM Star New Agency, encouraging newcomers of three years or less to the industry. Our four nominees this year were

from Spain, the UK, Canada & Turkey and Colombia and perhaps show where new student markets are springing up. The winner of this award was Kanadam.com from Canada and Turkey and Amy Baker read out a few words of thanks from Gulcan Islam at the agency, who was unable to attend the awards ceremony.

A popular and hotly contested category featured next in the proceedings, that of LTM Star Agency Asia, sponsored by Twin, and last year's winner – Gio Club – was included as one of the nominees. The tension mounted as the winner was announced but this year Japan lost out to Korea and EDM Education – Londonuhak.com. A delighted Brian Seo from the agency came up on stage to be presented with his award.

The award for language school associations was also hotly contested and representatives from all the five nominees were present in the audience. There could only be one winner though and lalc was announced to take this coveted title again after a year's hiatus. Executive Director, Jan Capper, and President Walter Denz both took to the stage to make their acceptance speech.

The German language schools nominated in the LTM Star German Language School category had been waiting patiently up to this point to find out who the winner of this category would be. Amy Baker finally put them out of their misery by announcing that GLS Sprachenzentrum had won for the first time. As no representative from the school could be present, and as the school is a member of IalC, Jan Capper took to the stage for the second time to collect the award on their behalf.

After the Germans it was the turn of English language schools in North America to receive their accolade and the four Canadian and one US school in this category waited anxiously to see who would be crowned LTM Star English Language School North America. Navitas sponsored this award and the final honour went to Ilac in Canada for the second time in two years. A number of representatives from the school came up on stage to claim their prize.

Next came the LTM French Language School category, which was sponsored by Ecole Suisse de Langues. France Langue, winner for the previous two years, had to contend with a new king in the



Winner's profile

French in Normandy



TOM & ELERI MAITLAND

LTM Star French Language School
Eleri Maitland, Director of the school, writes, "I knew we were onto a winner when Wales beat Azerbaijan in the football on Saturday! But it is not really about winning. What was lovely was the warmth of feeling shown by all those present. Everyone was enjoying themselves and winning the Star Award was a marvellous shared experience."



Other nominees in this category were: Institut Linguistique Adenet, France; Ecole Suisse de Langues, Switzerland and France; Accord, France; France Langue, France.

Winner's profile

Boa Lingua, Switzerland



MAX WEY, LEFT; KURT KRUMMENACHER, RIGHT



SPRACHAUFENTHALTE WELTWEIT

LTM Agency Western Europe
Kurt Krummenacher, Managing Director at the agency, writes, "I am honoured that we won for the second time in a row. It is all about good, strong relationships with our partner schools. I am sure this award reflects the hard work and the continuous efforts to assure that our students are well counselled and know what to expect from a language course abroad. I dedicate this award to the whole Boa Lingua team."

Other nominees in this category were: SI Språkresor, Sweden; ESL - Language Studies Abroad Switzerland; ProLinguis, Switzerland; globo-study Sprachreisen, Switzerland.

Winner's profile

intuition, UK



NORMAN RENSHAW

LTM Star English Language School Europe
Norman Renshaw, Managing Director of the school, writes, "It was a great feeling to hear our name read out as winners. Having been nominated for the third year we were beginning to think it would never happen. It's a genuine recognition of our team's professionalism and hospitality of our host tutors."



Other nominees in this category were: United International College, UK; Malvern House, UK; Hampstead School of English, UK; Centre of English Studies, UK and Ireland.)



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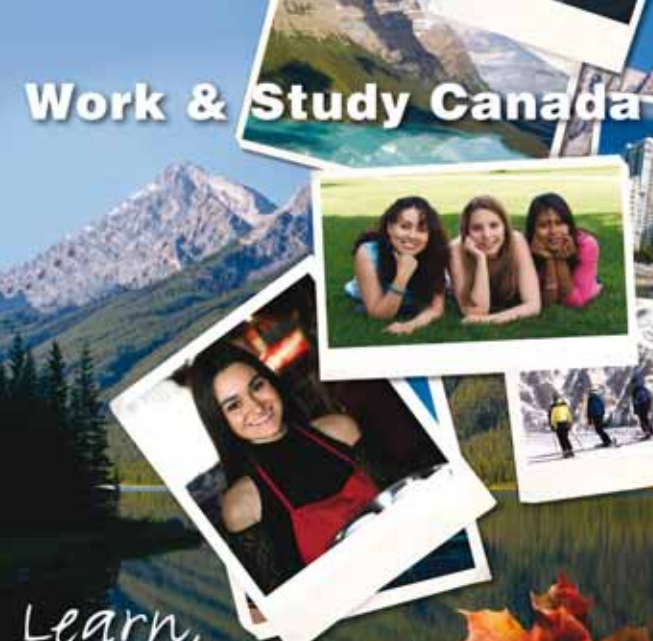


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LTM Star Agency
Europe

category: French in Normandy was this year's winner and after a few tears of joy, Eleri and Tom Maitland took to the stage to give another moving acceptance speech. They dedicated the award to their daughter Emily, who was returning from a charity walk in Afghanistan, as well as their partners around the world.

The Spaniards were next on the awards list with IAE Global sponsoring the award for LTM Spanish Language School. The winner of this category was Babylon Idiomas and Steven Mueller, Director of the school, accepted the award on behalf of everyone at the school and even managed to embarrass his wife thoroughly by getting the audience to join in an organised sing-a-long of Happy Birthday for her!

The final four awards were for Agency Association, Chain School, English Language School Europe and Agency, Western Europe. The first of these, sponsored by the University of the Arts, was won by Tieca in Thailand for the first time this year. Pitsamorn Kusalanont accepted the award on behalf of the whole association and thanked schools for recognising their hard work. She said she was full of shock, and was visibly surprised at finding herself on stage.

Next was LTM Star Chain School, sponsored again by IAE Global, which is a popular award and generated a lot of interest among the audience. All of the nominees were for English language chains this year and the winner was Australia-based Navitas, which solicited a large cheer from the crowd. John Crick accepted the glittering award on behalf of the company. >>

Winner's profile



lalc
LTM Star School Association
Jan Capper,
Executive Director,
writes, "Even the lalc schools that didn't win individual awards this year share in this Star School Association award. We're proud of them and would like to thank all the agents who voted for us. The LTM Star Awards bring the language travel industry together and highlight the importance of good partnerships."
Other nominees in this category were: English UK; English Australia; Quality English, International; MEI-Reisa, Ireland.



IALC
International Association
of Language Centres

WALTER DENZ, LEFT; JAN CAPPER, RIGHT






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Winner
English Language School - Europe 2008



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Winner's profile

**Languages International,
New Zealand**



LTM Star English
Language School Southern
Hemisphere
Darren Conway, Chief Executive Officer at the school, writes, "We are pleased and proud to have won the award against such good schools. In this business, if you try to be really good you never know if you are really achieving this or not. We have gone for 30 years without this kind of feedback. It is nice to have concrete feedback on how well we are doing. It is also nice to give recognition back to the staff as this success depends on every single staff member."

Other nominees in this category were: Langports English Language College, Australia; Good Hope Studies, South Africa; English Language Company, Australia; Sunshine Coast English College, Australia.



DARREN CONWAY

Winner's profile



DEC, Ukraine and Moldova

LTM Agency Eastern Europe
Natalia Tarchenko writes, "It has been very hard work for the past year. We have seen big growth in our business and doubled our sales so it has been hard to keep the quality very high and treat each student as an individual. We have a very personal relationship with our schools and they have helped us a lot. This award is a big honour for us."

Other nominees in this category were: Student Agency, Czech Republic; Students International, Russia; Intact, Czech Republic; Global Vision, Turkey.

NATALIA TARCHENKO

Winner's profile



Twin, UK

LTM Star Work Experience Provider
Caroline Fox writes, "Having started the business over 15 years ago, Jacqui and I feel that this is definitely one of our greatest achievements. We are delighted and so thankful to all who voted for us. Also thanks to *Language Travel Magazine* for organising a wonderful evening. We all work hard within the industry and its so nice to be rewarded by our peers."

Other nominees in this category were: Jakera Adventure, Venezuela; Professionals UK, UK; English Bay College, Canada; Kaplan Aspect Opus, International.

CAROLINE FOX AND COLLEAGUES

"What was lovely was the warmth of feeling shown by all those present. Everyone was enjoying themselves"



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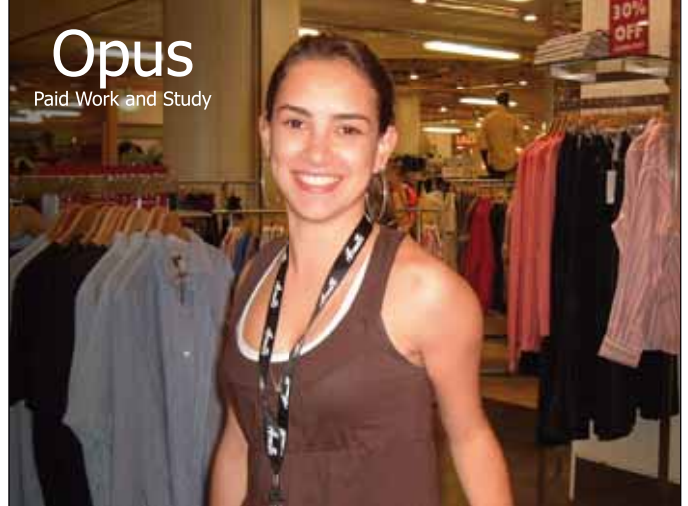
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Winner's profile



Millfield School

LTM Star High School

Mark Greenow, Director of Millfield Holiday Courses writes, "It's great to win. It means a lot to us. We try hard to provide a quality service. It is good to have great premises and facilities but I firmly believe that you need great people and we have a good full- and part-time team."

Other nominees in this category were: Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, Canada; St Clare's, Oxford, UK; Langley School District, Canada; St Joseph's Nudgee College, Australia.)



CAM HARVEY

Winner's profile



learningtraveller.com



The Learning Traveller, Canada

LTM Star Agency North America

Cam Harvey, Director, writes, "We are really excited. I phoned my wife who has done all the real hard work and she said that her face muscles ached from smiling. This really makes all the hard work worth it."

Other nominees in this category were: Amerispan, USA; Apply ESL, USA; Lingua Service, USA; Sejours Linguistiques et Culturels, Canada.

Another hotly contested award was LTM Star English Language School Western Europe, sponsored by Wired Spain Languages, and again, all of the nominees were in the crowd. The winner this year was inTuition Languages in the UK and a smiling Norman Renshaw came up on stage to receive his award. Having been nominated three times, he said he was delighted to have finally won for what is a unique product, home teachers who are matched to individual clients.

Finally, Stuart Bannerman from the University of Essex International Academy – sponsor of the last award for LTM Star Agency Western Europe, as well as the whole ceremony – came up on stage to say a few words. He thanked *Language Travel Magazine* for organising and hosting the awards ceremony, and he finally presented the last Star Award this year to Boa Lingua in Switzerland and Kurt Krummenacher came up on stage to accept this honour for the second time.

After all the awards were presented and many winners were already celebrating with friends and staff members at their tables, it was left for Stephen Roberts, Director of Hothouse Media, to say a few closing words and thank everyone who had made the effort to come to the ceremony and help make the event such a success. While many headed for the bar, others were already debating as to who would be an LTM Star next year... >>



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Winner
School Association 2008

Winner's profile

**Kanadam.com,
Canada and Turkey**



LTM Star New Agency
Gulcan Islam writes, "As Kanadam.com we would like to thank all our partner schools and LTM for this award, we are honoured. We consider this as an important accomplishment showing our commitment to professionalism and trust in our relationships with both our partners and students. We believe that we are on the right route to success. Thank you!"

Other nominees in this category were: Answer English, UK and Spain; Global International Studies, Colombia; Living Languages, Spain.

Winner's profile



Assist Card

LTM Star Insurance Provider

Nicolas Keglevich, Chairman of the Board, writes, "For years we have been striving to be the best travel care company rather than just a company that pays claims. This prize rewards us and encourages us to enhance our commitment to protect and shelter all travellers and ensure they always get a helping hand against any adversity. Thank you all once again and we hope to be sharing next year's event with all of you!"

Other nominees in this category were: Endsleigh Insurance, AVI International, Student Guard, Care Med.

Winner's profile



**EDM Education –
Londonuhak.com,
Korea**



LTM Agency Asia
David Seo, Deputy Manager, writes, "It is a fabulous chance to us to show our appreciation to every partner school for the winning of this award. All our partners have done this job for us. Let's shine!"

Other nominees in this category were: IAE Global, Korea; Gio Club, Japan; Wish International, Japan; Ryugaku Journal, Japan.

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And the winners are.....

LTM Star Spanish Language School:
Babylon Idiomias

LTM Star French Language School:
French in Normandy

LTM Star German Language School:
GLS Sprachenzentrum

LTM Star Italian Language School:
Babilonia Taormina

LTM Star Chain School:
Navitas (ACE), International

LTM Star English Language School – Europe:
Intuition, UK

LTM Star English Language School – Southern
Hemisphere:
Languages International, New Zealand

LTM Star English Language School – North
America:
Ilac – International Language Academy of Canada,
Toronto, Canada

LTM Star High School:
Millfield School, UK

LTM Star “Other” Language Provider:
Liden & Denz, Russia

LTM Star School Innovation:
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technology



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DEC, Ukraine and Moldova

LTM Star Agency Latin America:
Universo Educativo, Mexico

LTM Star Agency in North America:
The Learning Traveller, Canada

LTM Star Agency association:
Tieca, Thailand

LTM Star New Agency:
Kanadam.com, Canada and Turkey

LTM Star Insurance Provider:
Assist Card

LTM Star Work Experience Provider:
Twin, UK



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Stuart Bannerman, Director, International Academy



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