



**Páramo Directional Clothing Systems
recognise independent outdoor
retailers' commitment in *Premier
Retailer of the Year 2007* awards**

Páramo[®], one of the most innovative outdoor clothing companies in the UK, have awarded this year's Premier Retailer Retailers of the Year to Whalley Warm & Dry of Clitheroe in Lancashire and Gorge Outdoors of Cheddar in Somerset.

In its 4th consecutive year, the ***Premier Retailer of the Year Award*** recognises the highest levels of customer service and advice among their independent retailers, taking into account the retailer's enthusiasm for and knowledge of Páramo, and their commitment to communicating the benefits of the brand. The winners were selected from the 156 independent shops throughout the UK. The Mountain Factor in Ambleside (in the North) and Action Outdoors in Ipswich (in the South) were named as the runners up.

Northern region winner, **Whalley Warm & Dry**, operating from a converted stables in the Ribble Valley, is unique in having been a winner or runner up in the award in all four years. Jon and Liz Smith, who run the business with their family, are delighted to be back in pole position. Not only do they stock a very comprehensive range of Páramo, but they are renowned for their high level of customer service, whether delivered in the shop, via mail order or via internet sales. Their eye for detail and the personal touch has developed fantastic customer loyalty and generates add-on sales. They have proved excellent at communicating with their customers to encourage them back into the store.

Gorge Outdoors, the Southern region winner, is situated in the heart of the Cheddar Gorge. Jon Morten took over the business just over a year ago and is building steadily on the success of the previous owners. Recognising the limitations of the

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existing trade, he and his enthusiastic team have applied both lateral thinking and enthusiasm to appeal to new sectors, so harnessing the wider opportunities presented by the Cheddar area.

The Northern runner up, the Mountain Factor in Ambleside, has worked very hard to build Páramo sales in the well serviced Lake District, so just pipping neighbouring retailers to the post in these awards. Headed up by Stuart Wood, the retailer's strong web presence with fast fulfilment has generated lots of positive feedback from customers.

The runner up in the South, Action Outdoors, is based in East Anglia – not the obvious location for a mountain brand! However, Dave Tonks has used his extensive knowledge of both trade and consumer marketing to create a business which makes both the product and information easy to obtain, continually evolving strategy to adapt to changes in the marketplace.

Head of Sales at Páramo, Rob Cook, congratulates and thanks the award winners and concludes *"With the last twelve months proving exceptionally tough for independent retailers, this award from Páramo reinforces that successful small companies can stand up to competition from national groups through providing choice and customer service, making the whole purchase process both straightforward and pleasant for the consumer."*

Páramo endeavours to support the independent outdoor retailer in providing choice, by holding stock in the UK and fulfilling even small orders as quickly as possible. Páramo also provides marketing initiatives to communicate the genuine benefits of the brand to consumers and bring people into shops. The current *15th birthday bonanza* promotion has demonstrated how value added promotions can draw people into stores and give retailers a chance to demonstrate their knowledge and range of outdoor equipment.

For further information on this release please contact Catherine Whitehead or Helen Oxley on 01892 786447 or email marketing@paramo.co.uk .

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Note to editors:

- Páramo® Directional Clothing Systems are based in the village of Wadhurst, East Sussex
- Páramo promotes Ethical Manufacturing. Every garment purchased helps an underprivileged family in South America
- We can provide with high resolution pictures
- See the whole range of Páramo's innovative outdoor clothing online at www.paramo.co.uk