

CITY A.M.

BUSINESS WITH PERSONALITY

ROBIN
DUTT

The key to a better lifestyle

DO YOU think you have the ultimate accessory? Perhaps it's a rare, ultra-light pashmina woven by blind nuns in some far flung country.

Perhaps it is that Fendi hold-all, as sported by Jennifer Lopez?

Or perhaps it is a Blackberry that can make the tea and sort out your love life with the push of a button?

David Johnstone thinks he has come up with the gadget to beat all others. He is the founder of Key-2, which is modestly described as, "the lifestyle accessory complementing and creating loyalty between both our luxury partners and thousands of high net-worth clients, by offering exclusive privileges on a daily basis to get more out of their busy lifestyles".

The Key-2 scheme works a little like this: businesses acquire a key ring. Its weighty aerodynamic shape — part space probe, part vehicle prototype looks sleek and chic. You cannot buy it and you cannot transfer it to anyone else. Once awarded a Key 2, it's yours for life, personalised, numbered and loaded with treats and treasures.

The key is only given by businesses to the best clients — we're talking high fliers who spend appropriately. The key is something of a rather grand loyalty device but it's way beyond scoring points at a supermarket.

Johnstone's key ring, which he encourages every new owner to attach immediately to their key bunch, is registered to make it personal — and for security reasons. If lost, Key-2 will endeavour to return your keys to the specified address.

And now, onto the best bits. Participating companies hail from the most prestigious realms of fashion, entertainment, dining and travel. The key ring can open doors to such names as No 5 Cavendish Square (a private club), Novelli in the City, Raj Mirpuri (superb tailors), Mercedes, Donna Karan, Getty Images Gallery, Valentino, Mirabelle, Carlton Tower Hotel, My Hotel, Salvador Dali, New York Nail Company and many, many more. In other words, the key ring covers everything from head to toe; bar to show.

Examples of the discounts available as a Key-2 carrier include up to 50 per cent off the best luxury room rates by participating hotels and VIP upgrades, free venue and room hire, 20 per cent off the total bill at participating spaces, complimentary champagne, thousands of on-line deals and up to 50 per cent off fashion brands. And, so, the almost exhaustive luxury list lolls on.

"Giving and getting that little extra always makes the difference," crows Key-2. And knowing that it is exclusive adds to its partisan pleasures. It just goes to prove that the free things in life are only considered to be the best by those people who haven't a hope of earning what they desire.

Quentin Bell got it right when he identified the natural attraction our species has to consumption and then making it conspicuous.

Key-2 details available from www.key-2.com

