



Lloyds TSB

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LLOYDS TSB LAUNCHES ONLINE BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE SERVICE FOR DEAF CUSTOMERS

- *Lloyds TSB is the UK's first financial services provider to offer Deaf customers an online sign language service*
- *Customers can use the service to handle everyday transactions on their Lloyds TSB personal current, savings and credit card accounts*
- *There are 70,000 people who use British Sign Language (BSL) as their first language in the UK*

Lloyds Banking Group is the first financial services provider in the UK to introduce a sign language communication service for its Deaf customers. Called SignVideo, the service enables Deaf customers to have direct access to the Lloyds TSB customer service team via a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter using their computer and a webcam. This will enable Lloyds TSB Deaf customers to communicate in their first or preferred language of BSL.

To access the service, customers simply click on the SignVideo BSL Live link on the LloydsTSB.com contact us page and follow the on-screen instructions.

Once connected, customers talk to the SignVideo interpreter using sign language and the interpreter relays whatever is said to the Lloyds TSB customer service team and vice versa.

Customers can use the service to handle everyday transactions on their Lloyds TSB personal current, savings and credit card accounts. This includes paying bills and transferring money to other UK accounts.

Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, says: "I've been calling for companies to play their part in addressing the needs of their British Sign Language customers, and so I'm delighted that Lloyds TSB has shown leadership on this issue within the banking sector. It's a great example of industry self-regulation at work, and proof that Video Relay Service schemes can be put in place easily, and at minimal cost. The digital economy depends on making sure everyone can contribute and everyone can benefit, and I would now urge the rest of the banking industry to follow Lloyds' lead."

Martin Dodd, Lloyds Banking Group's Customer Services Director, says: "We are always working hard to understand the challenges faced by our disabled customers, looking to find new ways to improve the services we provide to make their lives easier. This is why we have launched a new programme focussed on meeting the needs of our customers with disabilities

– this includes launching Talking ATMs this year through to this new, market-leading sign language service.

“Many of us take for granted being able to quickly call our bank and ask a question or pay a bill, but for the thousands of Deaf people in the UK, whose preference is to communicate using BSL, this simply has not been possible until now. I’m delighted to be announcing the launch of this service which will significantly improve the service we provide to our deaf and hard of hearing customers.”

Disability Rights UK has worked with Lloyds TSB to ensure service improvements are through real engagement and understanding of disabled people and their needs.

Liz Sayce, the CEO of Disability Rights UK, says: “As well as common adjustments that work for everyone, service providers need to make access provision for specific groups. We are very pleased that Lloyds TSB is leading the way in utilising new technologies to ensure access for Deaf sign language users and hope other banks will follow their lead.”

Joanna Wootten, Director of Information & Advice, Business Disability Forum, says: “Lloyds Banking Group is the first bank in the UK to be widening their access to British Sign Language (BSL) users. As a BSL user myself, I hope that many other businesses will start to follow suit. Whatever your business, ensuring you provide access for deaf people is vital to sustaining your business. Disability-smart businesses work hard to get it right for all their customers.”

SignVideo is available to all Lloyds TSB customers who have access to a PC with a webcam and Microsoft Internet Explorer or Safari.

Lloyds Banking Group will be rolling the service out to all Halifax and Bank of Scotland customers in February 2013.

Lloyds Banking Group is also introducing TextBox, an enhanced form of Textphone that allows deaf or hearing impaired customers to use their own mobile or computer as well as a traditional textphone to contact the bank and converse with customer service staff.

-Ends-

Editors’ notes:

SignVideo provides instant access to highly qualified BSL interpreters through its network of hi-tech video contact centres around the UK. For photos and/or further information about SignVideo contact Duncan Culley. 0208 463 1125, duncan@signvideo.co.uk

Lloyds Banking Group Disability Programme

Lloyds Banking Group is committed to improve the service it provides to customers with disabilities. The Group has been carrying out customer focus groups and continues to work with several disability groups such as Disability Rights UK and the Alzheimer's Society to gain a clear understanding of customers' needs and how the Bank can adapt to address them.

The improvements being made by Lloyds Banking Group as part of its Customer Disability Programme include:

Talking Cash Machines

Talking cash machines are cash machines that are equipped with jack plugs to allow cardholders to connect earphones and which generate a spoken walkthrough of each transaction screen, as it would appear to a sighted customer. Lloyds Banking Group will be introducing 400 talking cash machines early this year, increasing to around 1,000 across the UK by the end of 2013. This will be an ongoing programme with the long term aim of rolling them out to the entire Lloyds' estate of circa 7,000 cash machines across the UK*.

Staff training and support

Disability awareness training for all customer-facing colleagues will be rolled out to ensure they can better meet the needs of customers with disabilities. This includes dementia awareness training and a Group-wide colleague pan-disability guide.

The Group is also introducing a new system for capturing the needs of customers so customer service staff can better understand what challenges a customer faces as a result of their disability. For example, a deaf customer might want the fact they lip-read recorded, so that branch staff are aware of this when they are serving them in the future, or a customer with autism might want to move to a quieter room.

Lloyds Banking Group has also set up a specialist helpline that staff can call if they are dealing with a disabled customer and need advice on how best to manage their requirements.

Operating system requirements for SignVideo

To use SignVideo BSL Live customers need to meet the following basic requirements:

- PC with a webcam
- Microsoft Internet Explorer V7, 8 or 9 or Safari
- Bandwidth of at least 256 kbp/s upload and download

For more information contact:

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