

RETAIL EXCELLENCE IRELAND

Plan - 2012

January 2012



LEARNING

Retail Excellence Ireland is dedicated to delivering meaningful and beneficial learning interventions which will assist your company and its people. A full list of learning interventions can be found in the REI Calendar of Events.

Frontline Team Members – Alf Dunbar returns with his exceptional customer service workshop 'You Are the Difference' which will ensure increased sales, enhanced customer engagement and the delivery of impressive customer care standards.

Accredited Retail Management Diploma for Owners and Senior Managers – REI are delighted to announce a partnership with Dublin Institute of Technology to deliver a Diploma in Retail Management relevant to owners and senior managers with significant work related experience. The programme is scheduled over an 18 month period commencing on March 6th.

Owners | Buyers | Stock Planners – REI will focus on one of the most important aspects in successful, profitable retailing – buying and merchandise planning. This three day programme will be supported by a world class e-learning solution and ready to use working templates to allow you to apply learning immediately.

Merchandisers | Window | Interior Display Staff Members – Lara Snider will share her extensive best merchandising and display practice expertise. Lara has worked with international clients and will deliver valuable learning initiatives which will activate retail space, engage the customer, increase dwell time, return custom and essentially will deliver an upturn in sales.

Owner | Senior Managers – REI are delighted to host the Retail Symposium which will take place in Dublin in April with the annual Retail Retreat taking place in September. As always, these keynote events will deliver world class speakers and insights and provide a forum for members to come together and meet.

Head of e-Commerce – REI will launch an e-Commerce Network in association with Google. The aim of this network is to enhance on-line sales practice, understand e-Commerce trends and embrace digital marketing. Two member competence levels will be accommodated within the network – basic and advanced. A fundamental aspect of the network will be sharing and support on a peer to peer basis – retailers sharing with retailers.

As always the calendar will be interspersed with case study visits to best practice retail companies nationwide. Sectoral meetings will continue to feature and 2012 will witness the launch of a Fashion & Footwear member network.

RESEARCH & MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Market Intelligence allows REI to deliver market performance insight to member companies.

Quarterly Productivity Reviews: REI collates and disseminates a quarterly retail industry review for primary retail sectors. The Quarterly Productivity Review involves over 3,000 stores in the Irish market. Sectors included in the review are – Ladies Fashion, Menswear, Footwear, Home & Gift, Pharmacy, Jewellery, Grocery, Furniture & Flooring, Electrical, Garden Centres and Hot Beverage. All members who trade in these sectors are encouraged to participate in the quarterly analysis on a strictly confidential basis. The quarterly productivity reviews allow members to benchmark their trading performance against that of their peers.

Trading Statements: We provide members with two trading updates over the Christmas trading period each year. The December trading reviews allow members to better understand how they are trading versus the market.

Primary Research: Every year REI undertakes a programme of primary research. This research is conducted by a 3rd party research house. In 2011 REI commissioned Behaviour & Attitudes to study consumer behaviour trends in the mature and youth markets.

Other Research: REI conducts many other ad hoc research initiatives including industry labour cost analysis, service charge productivity et al.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Commercial Services allow our members to save money and enjoy best in market service.

Legal Advisory Support: We provide all REI members with a complimentary "over the phone" legal advisory service in partnership with a leading law firm. This service delivers immediate advice to members in such areas as lease law, consumer law, intellectual property, franchising, concession and licensing laws and company law.

HRM Support: We provide all REI members with a complimentary Human Resource Management "over the phone" advisory service through our HRM consultants Tom Smyth & Associates.

Media Buying: For member companies who invest in media advertising, our strategic partnership with Omnicom Media Buying Group (OMG) delivers best in market rates and a guaranteed annual rebate based on media investment in that year. Please contact our offices in order to request the media buying statute.

Rates Advice & Appeals Services: For those members who wish to appeal their local authority rates or seek advice on the topic, they can be assisted through this process by GVA Donal O'Buachalla.

Preferred Suppliers: We list only the best retail industry suppliers who provide members with best in market pricing and service standards. Only those suppliers who pass an intensive vetting process are listed annually. The preferred supplier listing can be found at the back of Retail Times magazine and also on the REI website www.retailexcellence.ie

REPRESENTATION

Representation allows REI to express the concerns of our members to Government and to broader society while also designing and presenting constructive solutions.

Budget Scheduling: REI urge Government to move the Budget from December to February of each calendar year.

Rates: REI continues to argue for an immediate deferral of the rateable valuation calculation, which has proven so costly to those retailers in local authority areas where the calculation has been implemented to date. We continue to lobby for a rates reduction including the launch of a "Bord Snip" approach to local authority spending and the ring-fencing of water charges and property taxes to fund Local Authorities and in turn reduce the rates burden on businesses.

Town Centre Management: REI intend to create a plan to revive Ireland's high streets and town centres. The plan will insight such matters as retail mix, car parking charges and enforcement, town planning, occupancy incentives et al.

Black Market and Casual Trading: REI will push for increased penalties and improved enforcement of black market trading as well as increased licence fees and better regulation of casual trading.

JLC's: We are monitoring Government plans to re-establish the JLC system. It is our understanding that the new system of JLC's will set lower pay rates which will be benchmarked against economic conditions.

Lease Law: We are dismayed by the Government decision not to proceed with the legislation to unravel Celtic tiger rents. The Government were clearly aware of the Constitutional issues when promising the legislation in their pre-election manifestos and this decision is clearly a political rather than a legal one.

Retail Planning Guidelines: The Retail Planning Guidelines (RPG's) must be maintained in their current form. We are disappointed that the review of the guidelines has recommended an increase in the size of the cap for urban retail planning. We continue to engage with the Department of Environment on the matter.

VAT: We are disappointed that the Government have increased the VAT rate from 21% to 23% in Budget 2012. It is our view that a 1% increase in 2012 followed by a 1% increase in 2013 would be a far more prudent and responsible approach. We continue to urge the Minister for Finance to review the increase during 2012.

RETAIL EXCELLENCE IRELAND AWARDS

The Irish Retail Awards are designed to recognise and reward excellence in retail practice. The 2012 Awards will be presented to retail stores, companies, websites and people who best demonstrate evidence of outstanding practice and consistency and who make a positive difference to the retail experience being delivered to the Irish consumer. The Awards are the most prestigious event in the Irish retail calendar and will be launched in April with the winners being announced at the annual Awards ceremony on Saturday 3rd November.

ABOUT RETAIL EXCELLENCE IRELAND

Who we are?

Established in 1995, Retail Excellence Ireland is owned by the members, for the members. We are a not for profits organisation which invests in innovative and exciting learning, market intelligence, commercial services, Government representation, awards and member networking initiatives. Retail Excellence Ireland involves over 700 leading retail companies who operate over 9,000 stores in the Irish market. Our members are the most progressive and innovative retail operators.

Who can join Retail Excellence Ireland?

Any retail company which operates in the ROI market can join Retail Excellence Ireland once that company and its owner/s and senior Directors are committed to engage, participate and share.

Any supplier to the retail industry can become listed as an REI Preferred Supplier once that supplier passes a rigorous vetting process.

How much does it cost to join?

Retail Excellence Ireland membership fees are based upon the number of full time employees within your organisation.

Membership Bands	Employee Number	Membership Fee 2012
Small	1 - 20	€365
Medium	21 - 100	€585
Large	101 - 250	€985
Extra Large	251 - 600	€1,585
Corporate	> 600	€3,885

Other benefits

All members receive a bi-monthly copy of industry magazine Retail Times.

All members receive access to the "members only" section of www.retailexcellence.ie. This website hosts useful industry documentation, policy statements, presentations and research reports.

Member communication

Bi-Weekly – Our bi-weekly e-mail update keeps members informed of important issues, news and on-going progress made by Retail Excellence Ireland on your behalf.

Bi-Monthly – Retail Times is our industry magazine, with each edition containing retail news, member profiles, industry analysis, commissioned features and much more.

Quarterly – The REI Quarterly Productivity Review measures retail sales trends in eleven retail sectors. The Review also provides commentary on monthly retail sales, average transaction values, turnover by space, wage cost and rent cost.

Ad Hoc – Retail Excellence Ireland disseminates research reports, trading statements, policy documents, guidance notes and newsflashes when relevant.

Who is here to support you in 2012?

Chief Executive – David Fitzsimons – david@retailexcellence.ie 087 2535482

Learning & Awards – Helen O'Dowd – helen@retailexcellence.ie 087 2418380

Market Intelligence – Lucy Chadwick – lucy@retailexcellence.ie 086 7843777

Commercial Development – Susan Meade – susan@retailexcellence.ie 087 2482650