

Retail Buyers Out in Force for Totally Shows 2013

“This is the best trade show we’ve been at in at least ten years!” So said Chris Mahon of Am-Tech, at the close of this month’s Totally DIY & Totally Tools trade show, which ran at the Ricoh Arena in Coventry from Sunday, 10th to Tuesday, 12th February.

His sentiments are echoed by fellow exhibitors and visitors alike, who despite the snow which fell overnight on Sunday, 10 February, made it safely to the show.

“We have had a cracking show!” said exhibition director Paul Grinsell. “And it’s because of a real team effort from exhibitors and us to target and invite quality buyers to come along. Everyone worked really hard to find the right people to invite and it seems to have paid off!

“It was also a pleasure to be able to offer our visiting buyers and resellers a sit down hot lunch. It certainly helped to create a more relaxed, sociable atmosphere at the show, which everyone benefited from,” he added.



The show played host to buyers from across all the DIY and tools sales channels – multiples, TV, online, independent, high street, and all types – decorators, plumbers and builders merchants, hardware and general stores and tool specialists.

Vincent Rodgers, buyer at Wilkinson commented that ‘the quality of exhibitors was better than he had expected and he had had some great meetings’.

Gill and John Hewitt, directors of Bamford Trading said they ‘liked the bonus of a free lunch, the show was very well organised with some good exhibitors’.

Audra Rhone and Dan Grace, both Homebase buyers, thought the show was ‘friendly, had a good layout and good stands’.

Ken Sheppard, managing director of Sheppards DIY, Coventry said: ‘Excellent show – obviously the venue suits us because of close proximity but I felt the atmosphere was much better than previously. The hot lunch was most welcome and we had some very fruitful discussions with suppliers both old and new. Hope most of the feedback is positive – we want to come back next year!’

Neil Mackay, of Mackay’s of Cambridge, commented, ‘I was pleasantly surprised by my visit to the show. It was far busier than I had expected. I came along on the Monday intending to do a rapid sweep around the show and see if there was anything new of potential interest. Before I knew what had happened it was 5pm, the show was closing and I had only seen half of the stands.

As a result I returned together with my buyer on the Tuesday. I think the venue change certainly worked very well. The free and easy parking was a bonus. The excellent food was very welcome and very tasty indeed. All in all I was impressed and hope that the show continues to develop.'

Mike Stocks, retail partnerships executive, Ideal Shopping Direct Ltd, commented, ' Great venue, great to see new products, sadly did not have time to enjoy the free lunch (nice idea) and great to see people who wanted to demonstrate their products and were passionate.'

In addition, the show welcomed buyers from Aldi, Amazon, Asda, B&M Retail, B&Q, Barnitts, Best DIY, Betterware, Boy & Boden, Brammer/Buck & Hickman, Bromborough Paints & Building, Buildbase, CDS The Range, Coopers of Stortford, Costco Wholesale, D&P Tools, Gardiner Haskins Homecentre, Greenford Timber, Halfords, Home Retail Group, Hootys Supplies, Huws Gray, Ironmongery Direct, Isaac Lord, JTF Wholesale, Kennedys Mica Hardware, Kent Blaxill & Co, Leekes, Maccess, Machine Mart, Makro, Mole Valley Farmers, Parker Building Supplies, Poundland, PTS Plumbing Trade Supplies, Q V C, Ridgeons, Rightway Builders Merchant, Robert Dyas, Sam`s Trade Centre, Scotts & Co, Screwfix, Selco Builders Warehouse, T D Edwards & Son, Taskers, TBS Building Supplies, Tesco, The Tool Shop, The Tool Stall, The Toolbox, Toolbank, Trago Mills, Travis Perkins, United Merchants, W C Baker & Son, Webbs, Welch & Tidy, Wfsborder, Wickes Building Supplies and Wilkinson, amongst others.

Other aspects of the show also worked well this year. The free seminars which ran on Monday and Tuesday featured speakers who were all able to give their audience a real sense of the bigger DIY and retail picture. Michael Weedon, deputy ceo and communication director of bira, Simon Foy and Daniel Fearnley of market researchers GfK, John Herbert, general secretary of EDRA and Steve Collinge, commercial director of Insight DIY certainly left everyone with plenty to think about, and great ideas for the future to consider.

Products submitted to the New Product Showcase this year were scrutinised by a strong panel of retail buyers comprising Sarah Critchard of Axminster Tools, Mark Nixon of Right Price DIY, Paul Andrews from Home Hardware Southwest, David Dickens from JW Martin & Partners and Pritesh Pancholi of Melton Ironmongers. They picked out six 'Best New Product' Gold award winners and five Silver award winners. The Golds went to:

- Garden - Slug Gone by Vitax
- DIY - Everbuild's Rendagrip
- Tools - LadderLimb
- Hardware - Youngman Group's Loft Ladder
- Decorative - Samurai Paint's Canbrush
- Security - The Solar Centre's Astron 64 solar security light

Silver winners in the awards, which are sponsored by DIY industry publisher Faversham House, were AW Tools' Papillon thorn protective glove in garden, Bagmate in the DIY category, The Solar Centre's Curve solar motion light and Yale's digital door viewer in security, and Polyseam's IPT building trade adhesive and sealant in the decorative category.



The winning products were swiftly put on display so that visitors could easily review them, whilst at the same time they could also take a look at a display of historic hand and power tools, courtesy of John Collier, of Monument Tools.

“This has been a great start for the shows in our new home at the Ricoh Arena. We wanted to put the emphasis on quality and not quantity this year and that seems to have paid off – but of course, we always want more, so we are looking forward to building and improving on what appears to be a

good formula,” said Paul Grinsell. “We’ve already got a list of improvements to put in place, and we’ll be asking for suggestions from both exhibitors and visitors on how we can make it easier and more productive for them!”

The 2014 Totally DIY & Totally Tools shows will run for three days from Sunday, February 16th to Tuesday, February 18th in the Jaguar Hall at the Ricoh Arena, Coventry.

To contact the Totally Shows 2014 team call Brintex on 020 7973 4734.

For further information, or to obtain photos from the 2013 shows, please contact the show press officer: Vanessa Fortnam, 01666 824624 or vanessafortnam@thepressofficeltd.com