

## **Top business tips on offer at retail masterclass**

Celebrate diversity, Debenhams former PR director will encourage businesses at a retail masterclass in Sheffield.

Businesses are invited to sharpen their skills on November 22, between 6-9pm, where Ed Watson will offer out his top tips for success.

Ed has two decades' experience in retail PR including director of PR at Debenhams and head of PR at Asda.

While at Debenhams, he was credited with pushing the department store's use of more diverse models and the banning of retouching to alter models' body shapes.

Speaking ahead of the event, he said: "Diversity has always been a dirty word when it comes to the high street. For me it's the responsibility of retailers to make customers feel great.

"A one-size-fits-all in terms of body ideals is out of date and doesn't translate from a commercial perspective - I look forward to sharing some insights."

The exclusive event, hosted by Welcome to Yorkshire, includes professional speakers and Q&A sessions to help businesses thrive.

Also on hand to offer advice will be queen of lingerie Aliza Reger, the owner of one of Britain's most beloved brands. Her company Janet Reger this year celebrates 50 years of successful trading. She has featured across national media with her opinions and is sure to have plenty of tips on offer.

She said: "Diversity has always been very close to the Janet Reger brand. My mother had the foresight to launch one of the globe's best known lingerie brands at a time when some women were burning their bras - am so looking forward to sharing more."

Award-winning consultant and entrepreneur Kate Hardcastle is founder of business consultancy Insight with a Passion and The Consumer Whisper and will also be at the event. She is a regular contributor and industry commentator to Sky News and BBC, and is often referred to as the "Queen of customer service" as it is central to her belief of how the retail sector can engage with consumers.

Kate said: “This is a great opportunity in the golden quarter to hear from some of retail’s finest. The idea behind Retail Masterclass Series is to bring the very best of retail success stories to the Yorkshire region to share their expertise for free.

“As a Yorkshire lass and an International Retail expert, I travel the globe advising businesses on their strategy and development. Retail has a dynamic course over the next five years and it will be a case of survival of the fittest.”

The masterclass is completely free to everyone and will take place at Sandersons Boutique in the fantastic shopping destination of Fox Valley, Sheffield, on November 22, 2017.

Sir Gary Verity, Chief Executive of Welcome to Yorkshire, said: “Our retail masterclasses really are a fantastic tool for businesses to get inside information from experts in the field, ask questions and network.”

**ENDS**

**Editors’ Notes:**

- **Welcome to Yorkshire** is the official destination management organisation for Yorkshire, working to grow the county’s visitor economy.
- **Welcome to Yorkshire** is a not-for-profit membership organisation, funded in part by grants, sponsorship and Welcome to Yorkshire members. All money raised is reinvested directly back into promoting Yorkshire.
- Key facts include:
  - Tourism in Yorkshire is worth £7 billion annually
  - The county’s industry employs almost a quarter of a million people

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