

Media release for the Garden Centre Association

Retail guru from Germany to inspire GCA members

A RETAIL expert will be flying in from Germany to speak at the 2016 Garden Centre Association's (GCA) annual conference in January and he says the future for garden centres is bright.

The General Secretary of both the DIY-Retail Association (EDRA) and the Global Home Improvement Network (GHIN), John Herbert will be at the GCA's golden jubilee event from January 24 until 27, 2016.

John explained: "I will be presenting on topics based on my lifetime experience in retailing and my presentation to delegates will be entitled: 'The huge difference – dedicated employees'.

"I will go through why some retailers are successful and others are not. How inspirational leadership can make the difference and where the family-owned business has a huge advantage over other retail conglomerates.

"I speak from personal experience having enjoyed managing a family business, Knauber, which was voted one of the best stores in the world by a USA leading trade magazine and then having worked in the world's fourth largest retailer, Home Depot EXPO Design Centre, as President, West Coast USA."

John will also give an insight into the future of retailing based on his knowledge of the sector during the past 11 years.

"I've been visiting retailers all over the world for more than a decade, on average 35 times a year, and moderating annually a global congress with 750 delegates from more than 50 countries.

"I will touch on how the Internet will continue to effect shopping habits and what the stores of the future look like...and its not all for the best. But in my opinion there are huge advantages for garden centres going forward"

The GCA's annual conference will be held at The Grand Hotel in Brighton from January 24 until 27, 2016. More than 300 delegates are expected to attend the event.

Iain Wylie, Chief Executive of the GCA, said: "We're really looking forward to hearing what John has to say. He has a wealth of knowledge having started his retail career as a trainee in retailing in York, shortly before his 15th birthday, almost 60 years ago.

"He joined the Army in 1962 and in 1965 joined NAAFI Germany as a trainee store manager, leaving as District Manager in 1975. During this time, John was awarded the Queen's

Commission. John joined German Hypermarkets and in 1977 was appointed Director of Sainsburys/BHS first SavaCentre Hypermarket in Washington, which at the time was on the first of its kind in the UK.”

In 1983, he joined Knauber as CEO a small retail German company. In 2000, John was appointed Divisional President of the Home Depot EXPO for the West Coast USA.

By 2002 he was the Managing Director of the BHB, the German DIY Retail Association, and just two years later he took over the recently formed European DIY Retail Association EDRA, which became an independent Association in 2009.

He later founded the Global Home improvement Network, which became an independent association in 2015.

Iain added: “Today, John is the General Secretary of both the EDRA and GHIN with 127 of the largest home improvement retail companies from around the world as members operating in 99 countries with over 22,000 stores and members sales in excess of \$250 billion.”

To book a place at the conference and hear John speak on January 25, 2016, please visit the members’ area on the GCA website via www.gca.org.uk.

For further information, please call 0118 930 8918. Alternatively, log on to www.facebook.com/GardenCentreAssociation or follow the organisation on Twitter at www.twitter.com/GC_Association.

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Photograph caption: General Secretary of both the DIY-Retail Association (EDRA) Global Home Improvement Network (GHIN), John Herbert who will be speaking at the next GCA Conference in January (2016).

