

RETAILVISION REVIEW

Europe's retailers gather for business in Barcelona

Pan-European event crosses borders for PC retailers ● Poll of visiting retailers brings two awards for Archos



The level of organisation, the format of the event, the chance to meet fellow buyers and the mix of vendors have all been praised by visitors to this year's RetailVision. Next year's event will run in Dublin

by Scott Bicheno

HOT ON the heels of the CTS in Birmingham came RetailVision Europe – in equally exotic Barcelona.

Billed as the premier event for European PC retailers, it spanned three days and featured many of Europe's leading consumer IT vendors.

Coming so soon after CTS, it was not only an opportunity for pan-European companies like Trust, Belkin and Ingram Micro to meet retailers from all over Europe, but also a timely reminder of how business is done outside the UK.

There was also plenty of opportunity for more relaxed chat, thanks to the excellent facilities put on by the organiser Gartner. James Myerscough, product manager at retailer Premier Farnell, was keen to praise the event. "This was my first RetailVision show and, I must say, I was very impressed with the event in its entirety. The organisation of absolutely everything was second to none, and the format of the event and I thought the mix of vendors was superb. I have made many excellent contacts which have already proven to be beneficial and I am sure will prove to be successful on both accounts in the very near future. I will be attending the next event in Dublin for sure."

His colleague, product development manager Darren Roberts, was equally impressed. "Having to attend most of the industry's key exhibitions such as CeBIT (Germany), Computex (Taiwan) and CTS (UK), finding time for more shows is difficult. But with RetailVision my time was well spent. The organisation of the event means not a moment is wasted and the fact that the vendors come to you ensures that you are receptive to what is being said. This is the second time we have attended RetailVision and on both occasions we have achieved more than any of the other 'traditional' exhibitions.

"The show is not just about meeting new vendors, it's also a chance to meet with fellow buyers and exchange views on what's happening in the marketplace."



One vendor exhibiting at the show was the multimedia solutions company, ADS Tech. UK sales manager, Martin MacNamara, offered: "If we only did one show a year, this is the one I would choose. You know that the people there are the people you need to deal with. In two days I had sit-down meetings with ten retailers. Where else am I going to be able to do that?"

The Best of RetailVision Europe Awards gave the show a traditional send off. More than 187 retailer executives in attendance voted on the winning products from 91 vendor companies. Meetings held during the event are an integral part of the decision-making process, which retail buyers undertake in order to stock their shelf space in over 8,000 outlets and online stores across Europe.

"RetailVision Europe continues to be the barometer for the European PC and consumer electronics market, and these awards showcase the next wave of retail technology," said Pete Prentice, senior global director, RetailVision. "What makes the awards so significant is the fact that they are determined by the retailers who are on the frontlines of showcasing and selling product to millions of European consumers."

BEST OF RETAILVISION EUROPE AWARD WINNERS

Best Product: Hardware
WINNER: Archos

Best Product: Software
WINNER: Nero

Best Product: Accessories
WINNER: Griffin

Best Product: Digital Home
WINNER: Archos

Best Retail Strategy
WINNER: Trust

Best Vendor
WINNER: Belkin