

Press release

29 March 2010

Retail specialists rpa:vision and McKenzie Clark support bright young talent on a world retail stage.

As part of a wider talent nurturing programme **rpa:vision** and McKenzie Clark have joined a collaboration to create an opportunity for visual merchandising and business students to showcase their skills to retail executives from across the world.

Young people from countries including Australia, India, Japan, the UK and US must create a concept for a new store – outlining everything from its merchandising to its online retailing presence. They will then present their ideas to more than 1000 delegates attending the World Retail Congress, Berlin, on 21-23 April and the team judged to have the best concept will receive the Retail Futures Challenge Trophy.

The challenge is the result of a joint initiative from Skillsmart Retail and the World Retail Congress, designed to expose new retail talent to a global audience. Interiors specialists **rpa:vision** and retail graphics specialists McKenzie Clark are proud to be official build partners enabling the students to bring their retail vision to life.

In this year's challenge students from each of the cities will now be teamed up with a group of visual merchandising students from the UK who will interpret their ideas and create a window display based on their concepts.

They will then install their displays at the conference hall for delegates to see and the students will be on-hand throughout the event to discuss their ideas.

Nigel Collett, CEO of **rpa:vision** said, "This is an incredible opportunity. Students can experience real life scenarios in developing and delivering a retail brand. We are really proud to be supporting the Retail Futures Challenge. We wish all the teams the very best of luck!"

MD of McKenzie Clark, Graham Clark commented, "We are delighted to return to the World Retail Congress as a sponsor. This year's Retail Futures Challenge offers a real opportunity to help the future stars of retail branding and visual merchandising giving them access to and advice on the latest, innovative graphic solutions allowing them to present their competition entries to judges and delegates in a professional and striking way."

As well as their involvement in projects like this one **rpa:vision** has invested in a dedicated training division, the **rpa:academy**, to help individuals of all ages develop a cross section of architectural and business skills.

Collett added, "We feel it's essential to recognise and support fresh talent to inspire and invigorate our industry for years to come. We also provide training for retailers themselves to keep them up to date with the latest techniques, in sustainability for example. To help us all move forward, together as one."

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For more information contact Janine Leadbeater, Marketing Manager at rpa:vision on j.leadbeater@therpagroup.com or mobile + 44 (0) 7725 599592

Notes to editor

McKenzie Clark

McKenzie Clark is a retail display and POS specialist providing all aspects of in-store graphics and branding. Based in London and represented in 17 countries throughout the World, they provide global solutions for major international brands and shopping malls. Their expertise encompasses sustainable, cost-effective graphic and display solutions with a focus on creating a point of difference, low distribution costs, localised implementation and ethical disposal.

McKenzie Clark is delighted to return to the World Retail Congress as a sponsor. Following their involvement in 2008 in Barcelona producing the "cardboard box" central display, themed around sustainability in retail.

For further information please contact McKenzie Clark MD, Graham Clark at graham@mckenzieclark.co.uk or call him on + 44 (0)7860 187174.

rpa:vision

rpa:vision is an award winning design and delivery consultancy recognised for originality and commercially successful retail and leisure environments. Working with big chain and independent retailers, we help to create inspiring spaces, developing exciting brands for international audiences.

Our success is built on our people whose architectural, planning, design and construction talent is complimented by over 25 years experience working on a wide diversity of projects. We'll always find the right design and the right value engineered and programmed build solution to relieve any obstacles to opening a quality retail offer.

Don't just take our word for it, speak to some of our retail clients – 3, Alfred Dunhil, Ann Summers, Arcadia, B&Q, Blanco, Brooks Brothers, Carphone Warehouse, DSGi, Foot Locker, Headmasters, Louis Vuitton, Musto, M&S, No Name, PC World, The Perfume Shop, Starbucks, Suit Supply, Superdrug, TK Maxx, Thomas Pink, Tommy Hilfiger, Tous, The White Company and World Duty Free, Vertu.

For more visit: www.therpagroup.com

Skillsmart Retail

Skillsmart Retail is the Sector Skills Council for Retail. Part-funded by Government and led by retailers, it aims to be the recognised authority on retailers' skills needs and priorities. Its mission is to drive a step change in skills levels in retail by:

- Making a compelling case for the formal recognition of retail skills
- Uniting retailers to simplify and improve access to the skills system
- Improving the quality of new recruits into the retail sector
- Raising the skills levels of the existing workforce in retail operations