

October 11, 2013, 09:00 GMT



## Retail-to-Business (#R2B) Advisory Board meets ahead of 2014 summit at DISTREE EMEA

*Major ICT retailers and vendors discuss current issues and channel themes ahead of inaugural R2B summit scheduled for early 2014; CONTEXT to host event at DISTREE EMEA in Monaco.*

**PARIS and LONDON** – The first meeting of the Advisory Board for the 2014 Retail-to-Business (R2B) channel summit took place in Paris last month. The R2B Advisory Board includes senior channel executives from major ICT vendors including Lenovo, AMD, and Lexmark. Retailers in the Advisory Board include Fnac and Maplin, with many other major players pledging their support to attend the conference. Distributor Tech Data is also a launch member of the R2B Advisory Board.



The inaugural R2B summit, taking place in February 2014 at DISTREE EMEA, will focus on the evolution of the retail channel as an effective route-to-market for ICT vendors to reach out to micro, small office home office (SOHO) and small businesses across Europe.

Jean-Baptiste PrévotEAU, Head of Business-to-Business (B2B) at Fnac and R2B Advisory Board member, said: "Next year's R2B conference will demonstrate to retailers that R2B is a strategic option."

Mario Silveira, Consumer Sales Director EMEA at AMD, added: "We welcome the initiative from DISTREE Events and CONTEXT to focus the IT and retail industries on the growing trend of selling to businesses through retail."

Farouk Hemraj, Director and Co-Founder at DISTREE Events, said: "The launch of the R2B summit has struck a chord with major vendors and retailers. The Advisory Board meeting has allowed us to shape an agenda for the summit that meets the needs of all the major R2B channel stakeholders."

Adam Simon, Global Managing Director for Retail Business at CONTEXT, commented: "The message coming loud and clear from the R2B Advisory Board is that selling to business through the retail channel is a real and growing opportunity."

The R2B summit will form part of the 2014 agenda at leading regional channel event, DISTREE EMEA. The session will be hosted by ICT channel tracking research experts CONTEXT and will take place in Monaco on Wednesday 12th February 2014.

The summit will focus on driving the growth of the European R2B channel by engaging with vendors, distributors and retailers. The Advisory Board meeting discussed a number of topics the summit will cover including the impact of 'bring your own device' (BYOD) on R2B, building an effective CRM

tracking strategy, maximising R2B sales to existing customer bases, plus the role of vendors and distributors in developing structured R2B channels in Europe.

Hemraj added: “Building an R2B strategy offers a chance for retailers to better understand their customer base and counteract the impact of showrooming and margin erosion. We are delighted to host the inaugural R2B summit in association with CONTEXT as part of DISTREE EMEA.”

Serving business customers through retail channels is firmly established in other sectors. The commoditisation of ICT hardware, coupled with online support services for small businesses, is opening up new opportunities for retailers to act as a primary route-to-market.

Neil Berville, Executive Director EMEA Channels at Lenovo, added: “Traditionally the line between consumer and commercial business has been very distinct, however as the consumerisation of devices proliferates, so too does the opportunity for different devices to be sold to different customers.”

Simon concluded: “The R2B concept already has the support of some of Europe’s biggest retailers and most influential vendors. We fully expect new R2B initiatives to develop from the exchanges and discussions that take place at the summit. We encourage all companies keen to discuss the R2B opportunity and shape the future of this evolving channel to join us at the 2014 R2B summit.”

#### **About DISTREE Events**

DISTREE Events specialises in the planning, organisation, staging and management of ICT & CE channel events. DISTREE Events is a Paris-based company owned by Infopro Digital. The team at DISTREE Events has successfully organised such events for the past decade, gathering more than 10,000 senior executives from 80 countries during that time. DISTREE Events spans the entire EMEA region, Asia-Pacific and Latin America with employees based in Paris, Dubai, Moscow, London, Singapore and Latin America. For more information, visit [www.distree.com](http://www.distree.com) or follow us on Twitter @DISTREE\_Events

#### **About CONTEXT**

Headquartered in London with over 140 staff in 12 countries, CONTEXT specialises in tracking technology sales and pricing across the globe. With real time data captured from a wide range of channel sources including exclusive access to Global Technology Distribution Council (GTDC) members, the US\$3 billion of sales processed each week in Europe provides the most accurate channel market information available today across a range of business and consumer technology products. CONTEXT reports and services enable our customers to assess their business operations in the light of actual sell out figures, and make business critical decisions based on hard data. Follow us on Twitter: @contextworld.com or visit our website: [www.contextworld.com](http://www.contextworld.com)

**Contacts for DISTREE:**



DISTREE Events  
Stuart Wilson, Research & Conference Director  
+44 (0)782 5635437  
[stuart@distree.com](mailto:stuart@distree.com)



OXYGEN  
Lucie Bocquier / Charline Perrissol  
+ 33 2 41 43 96 17  
[distree@oxygen-rp.com](mailto:distree@oxygen-rp.com)

**Contacts for CONTEXT:**



Adam Simon, Global Managing Director,  
Retail Business Development  
+44 (0)7748 903 817  
[asimon@contextworld.com](mailto:asimon@contextworld.com)

Media Contact  
Fundamental Communications Ltd  
+44 (0)7876 616 246  
[fundac@gmail.com](mailto:fundac@gmail.com)