



For Immediate Release:

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### **Industry Icon Named Keynote Speaker of TPE 2018**

#### **Drew Estate Co-Founder and President, Jonathan Drew, to speak at this year's show.**

July 2017 – With a renewed focus on the premium cigar and pipe tobacco industry, TPE 2018 (Tobacco Plus Expo) is proud to announce Jonathan Drew as a keynote speaker for this year's show. Held at the Las Vegas Convention Center from January 31-February 1, 2018, the show offers attendees the opportunity to explore, sample, and buy tobacco, vapor, and alternative products and accessories at the start of the New Year. With Las Vegas as the backdrop, hundreds of exhibitors and thousands of buyers, exclusive show specials, and top-selling products being showcased, TPE 2018 is a fun place to do serious business.

TPE also features an educational track, which offers sessions, speakers, panels, and Q&A discussions on a variety of topics supporting the many facets of the tobacco business. Jonathan Drew will be speaking on Day 1 of the show, as part of these informational sessions. A pioneer in his field, and a successful entrepreneur, Drew will be sharing his experiences from the past 20 years in the cigar industry.

"Jonathan Drew is known as a visionary and entrepreneur within the premium cigar world, and we are thrilled to have him at TPE 2018 as a keynote speaker," says Ben Stimpson, Managing Director of Tobacco Media Group (TMG). "His insight into innovation, product creation, and building brands is second to none. With all the changes we are seeing within the tobacco industry, this is a great opportunity to learn from someone like Drew, who is at the top of his game."

"We are excited that Jonathan Drew will be kicking off this year's TPE show as our keynote speaker," says Jason Carignan, CMO of Kretek. "He's a titan in the cigar world- to consumers, distributors, and retailers alike. His stories are invaluable to those both new and established in the industry, and we think he'll engage and inspire the TPE audience in ways that will impact their businesses long after the show."

The educational sessions on the first day of the TPE 2018 show will focus on "Building Your Business," providing information and ideas for growth in the ever-changing tobacco and tobacco-related industry landscape. The focus for each session will cover different categories of tobacco businesses, offering

retailers and manufacturers the opportunity to explore relevant topics and new opportunities for profits within their business.

The second day's sessions at TPE 2018 will be geared toward specific industry tracks, featuring a focus on FDA Compliance with insight and guidance from Tom Briant, Executive Director of NATO (National Association of Tobacco Outlets, Inc.). Partners of TMG, NATO is an industry trade association that takes a proactive approach to inform members about pending laws and regulations, and has much to offer attendees looking to navigate current legislation.

"We've designed the TPE show to really support the entire industry," says Carignan. "People can come to the show and know that they're getting interesting info from expert minds, like Jonathan Drew. They'll find, explore, and buy the best products out there- from the tobacco to vapor to alternative categories, and overall have a great time networking and relaxing in our creative and enjoyable lounge spaces. We truly anticipate TPE 2018 as being the best one yet!"

For more information about attending or exhibiting at TPE 2018, please visit [www.tobaccoplusexpo.com](http://www.tobaccoplusexpo.com). See you at the show.

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#### **About TPE:**

Under the banner of Tobacco Media Group (TMG) owned by Kretek International, Tobacco Plus Expo (TPE) is the largest B2B tobacco trade show highlighting the full-spectrum of tobacco, vapor, alternatives and general merchandise products available on the ever-evolving market. TPE 2018 is planning to deliver the industry's most compelling content, and will be held January 31 - February 1 at the Las Vegas Convention Center. To learn more about TPE, please visit the website: [www.tobaccoplusexpo.com](http://www.tobaccoplusexpo.com).

#### **About Kretek International, Inc**

Kretek International is America's number one importer, marketer, and distributor of specialty tobacco products. For over 30 years, Kretek has enjoyed a strong reputation for providing exceptional customer relationships and top quality goods. The company continues to offer standout brands like Djarum, Cuban Rounds, and Djeep Lighters to distribution channels across the United States and Canada, bringing value, high-margins, and growth to retailers and distributors.