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TPE 2018: News from the Show Floor

The tobacco, vapor, and alternative industries' first big event of the year exceeds expectations.

February 2018 – Giving the new year a solid start, TPE 2018 brought the entire tobacco, vapor, and alternative industries together for a very successful buying, selling, and learning tradeshow. Always a good time, the two-day event was expanded this year by NATO's Industry Outlook 2018, which was held the day before the show floor opened. All three days were highly entertaining, educational, and lucrative for both attendees and exhibitors.

Says Craig Cass from Tinderbox.com, "My compliments go out to the fabulous 2018 TPE show. The evolution of TPE, along with the corresponding marketing of your programs has been first rate. Within the premium cigar category, we all need each other. It was a pleasure to be part of your show."

With a notable increase in attendance over last year, thousands of eager buyers flooded the convention center during TPE 2018, interacting and purchasing thousands of products from vendors in all tobacco and tobacco-related categories. The show floor was categorized for easy browsing, and the quality and quantity of the exhibitors gave buyers a one-stop-shop experience that saved them time and money—especially with the exclusive TPE 2018 deals being offered.



"The TPE 2018 Tradeshow continues to be a great venue for our company to showcase our products and meet with current and prospective customers in one location," says Bill Holliday Davidoff of Geneva USA. "This year's show surpassed our expectations with greater traffic and new promotional opportunities."

Beyond elevated attendance and record-setting sales reported by some exhibitors, the strength of the industry was evident in the expanded Product Spotlight, which gave buyers an at-a-glance look at fresh

goods and trends coming to market in the year ahead. Merchandised in a retail setting, this feature was created to help new items stand out from the sea of offerings, benefitting both buyers looking for growth, and exhibitors trying to get eyes on their wares. Highlights here included Drew Estate's Undercrown Sun Grown Robusto, EAS' Cue Vapor System, Inhale Health, and P&L Sales Group's Twisted Hemp.

"TPE Shows always have the best variety of new and creative items for my company to pick up for the upcoming year!" says Scott Fisher, Media Manager at Carlito's Way.

Amidst the serious business happening at TPE 2018, the show floor was a lively place for learning, networking, catching up with old industry friends and acquaintances, and sampling goods. Lounges offered a bit of welcome respite, with music and activities, including a Day 1 evening happy hour hosted by the iconic Jonathan Drew, and a Day 2 morning Bloody Mary bar, which was quite popular after the night in Las Vegas.

"You can feel the energy, and you can feel what's happening in the industry at TPE," says Jonathan Drew, President of Drew Estates. "There's a groundswell, and it's visible everywhere- from the mass market all the way up to the super-premium categories. All sales channels, all market segments, all sales categories, all packaging departments, all manufacturing disciplines- all the facets of our business have come together at this TPE Show. It brings me great pride and a lot of reflection on our successes together, doing something like this. And I salute you guys for creating something so important at this time in the world, and in the industry, that we work in and love. Cheers to TPE."

As the keynote speaker on Wednesday morning, Jonathan Drew offered attendees his colorful stories and tips on taking chances on the road to success. Other informational sessions hosted by industry veterans occurred throughout the show as well, providing material geared toward encouraging growth and profits in the current legislative climate. Speakers included industry veterans like Jeff Borysiewicz from Corona Cigar Company and Daniel Trope, Director of Federal Government Affairs- IPCPR. And this was all in addition to the NATO learnings from their Jan 30 Industry Outlook.

"It was a great week at the TPE 2018 Show in Las Vegas," says Rob Norris, General Manager of Altadis USA. "I took part in an interesting panel, 'Pathways to Growth,' and was able to spend some time with a number of key retail partners planning Altadis USA growth for the year. Thanks Tobacco Media group (TMG)."

"We really tried to make TPE 2018 as valuable as possible to our attendees and to our exhibitors," says Jason Carignan, CMO of Kretek, parent company of TMG. "With the industry gathered together, it's an optimal place to evaluate the market, share ideas, and learn in an atmosphere that promotes good fun and good business. We filled the convention center with top quality exhibitors, positioned the show at the start of the year when retailers are looking to stock up, and are really pleased with the results. We heard great feedback at the show, and will take that info into account when designing an even bigger and better TPE 2019!"

"TPE 2018 was exciting," says Heather Cliff, AP Executive/Event Coordinator for Ganesha Enterprises. "I was able to network with potential buyers, which was very helpful for the new year. I am looking forward to TPE 2019, and want to extend a special thanks to all the employees who went above and beyond for all of the exhibitors."

Adds Tom Azar, CEO of Dr. Smoke Distribution, "TPE helped my business meet with new manufacturers to enhance the product variety that we provide to our customers."

Reservations are already being taken for exhibitors looking to book their spaces for TPE 2019, which will be held February 12-13, 2019, in Las Vegas, NV. Those booking early will be able to take advantage of noteworthy early bird discounts and packages. Exhibitor space did sell out twice for 2018, so early reservations are recommended, especially to reserve optimal booth locations.

Official attendee registration does not start until September 2018, though we encourage buyers to mark their calendars and save the date for next year's first big industry event of 2019.

"We were looking to expand our lines and reach of potential clients," says Laine Anastasia, Marketing Director of Seneca Smoke Shop. "I came away with everything to accomplish that and more. I would highly recommend attending a show with this much variety, networking opportunities, and overall great vendors that were friendly, as well as knowledgeable."

For more information about TPE 2019, please visit www.tobaccoplusexpo.com.

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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 was held January 31 - February 1 at the Las Vegas Convention Center. To learn more about TPE, please visit the website: www.tobaccoplusexpo.com.

About NATO

Now in its 16th year, the National Association of Tobacco Outlets, Inc. (NATO) is a national trade association organized to strengthen the business interests of all tobacco retailers on a collaborative and individual basis. Headquartered in Minneapolis, it assists its members throughout the country to respond to and stay atop the pulse of tobacco-related legislation on the local, state and federal levels. NATO will be holding its Industry Outlook 2018 event on January 30, 2018. To learn more about NATO, please visit the website: www.natocentral.org.