

## **Retail Industry Futurist Doug Stephens to Headline Ply Gem ProTalk Education Series at 2015 WRLA Buying Show**

- ProTalk Education Series is first of its kind at WRLA, arming professionals with business building ideas and trends.
- During the series, Doug Stephens will host four 20-minute sessions on topics affecting today's retail industry.
- Sessions to take place January 22 in Ply Gem booth 108.

**Calgary, A.B.** – For the first time at the 2015 WRLA Buying Show in Calgary, leading exterior building products manufacturer, Ply Gem, will host its ProTalk Education Series in booth 108 on Thursday, January 22, headlined by retail industry futurist Doug Stephens. Committed to helping customers “Build Success,” Ply Gem’s ProTalk Education Series will arm professionals in the Canadian lumber and home improvement industry with business building ideas and trends.

Founder of the Retail Prophet, Doug Stephens’ intellectual work and thinking have influenced many of the world’s best-known retailers, agencies and brands including Walmart, Home Depot, Disney, BMW, Citibank, eBay, Intel and WestJet.

“With a proven track record of creating success for highly influential companies, we have invited Doug Stephens to share his insight and intellect with building material suppliers and retailers to help your businesses prosper in 2015,” said Andrew Thompson, director, brand marketing, Ply Gem. “This series is the first of its kind at WRLA and we’re kicking it off by giving you access to some of the most sought after information in the industry.”

On Thursday, January 22, Stephens will host four 20-minute sessions throughout the day on pertinent topics affecting today’s retail businesses. Professionals can attend any and all sessions by visiting Ply Gem booth 108 at the designated times.

### **9:00-9:20 am: The Disappearing Middle**

Middle-class consumers, formerly the economic engines of North America, are stagnating. Stephens will examine the reasons for this historic shift and what it means for how retailers in all categories go to market.

### **10:00-10:30 am: The Future of the Retail Store**

Are we witnessing the death of the retail store or its astonishing rebirth and the beginning of the true Golden Age of retailing? Stephens will show you the store of the future, from staffing and store design to technology and marketing, and how each will change dramatically.

### **1:30-1:50 pm: The Robots are Coming**

Robotics, artificial intelligence and machine learning are making their way into the retail environment. In this session, Stephens examines how we may be entering a new era of “augmented humanity” and what it means for retailers.

### **2:30-2:50 pm: The Road to Remarkable: Lessons in Innovation**

In a world where mediocre will no longer cut it, what are the common strengths that the world’s most dominant brands bring to market? Stephens will examine the surprising links between the world’s most successful businesses and provide actionable ideas and steps to emulate their success.

Prior to founding the Retail Prophet, Doug Stephens spent over 20 years in the retail industry, holding senior international roles including the leadership of one of New York City’s most historic retail chains.

Stephens is the author of the groundbreaking book, *The Retail Revival: Re-Imagining Business for the New Age of Consumerism*. He is also the consumer technology contributor on the acclaimed international television series

App Central, as well as the syndicated retail columnist for CBC Radio. Stephens also co-hosts the popular web series, The Future In Store, and sits on the advisory board of the Dx3 Digital Conference.

For more information on Doug Stephens, visit [www.retailprophet.com](http://www.retailprophet.com).

For more information on Ply Gem products and services, visit [www.plygem.ca](http://www.plygem.ca) or stop by booth 108 at the 2015 WRLA Buying Show.

### **About Ply Gem in Canada**

Ply Gem® manufactures a comprehensive line of windows, doors, vinyl siding and accessories for the new construction, home repair, retail and remodeling markets in Canada. Additionally, Ply Gem distributes a wide variety of exterior building products, including replica stone, fencing, railing, windows and doors and architectural accents domestically through their nationwide distribution center network and via export globally. Ply Gem brands include Ply Gem® Windows, Ply Gem® Stone, Ply Gem® Trim and Mouldings, Ply Gem® Fence and Railing and Mitten® by Ply Gem vinyl siding. For more information, visit [www.plygem.ca](http://www.plygem.ca) or [www.mittenbp.com](http://www.mittenbp.com).

### **About Ply Gem**

Ply Gem (NYSE: PGEM), headquartered in Cary, N.C., is a leading manufacturer of exterior building products in North America. Ply Gem produces a comprehensive product line of windows and patio doors, roofing, vinyl and aluminum siding and accessories, designer accents, cellular PVC trim and mouldings, vinyl fencing and railing, stone veneer and gutterware. Ply Gem employs more than 7,000 associates across North America. Visit [www.plygem.com](http://www.plygem.com) for more information.

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