



For Immediate Release

June 11, 2014

Contact: Michelle Bretscher

614.225.6908

**Franklin County Retail Summit Slated for July 11**  
***Event to Feature 2014 Retail Report Results, Provide Thought Leader Presentations on Design, Digital Convergence and Personalization***

**Columbus, OH** – The Franklin County Board of Commissioners, along with the Columbus Chamber, will host the annual Franklin County Retail Summit Friday, July 11 at Renaissance Columbus Downtown. The breakfast event, which runs from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m., will feature insights from industry experts and the reveal of the 2014 Franklin County Retail Report. Jung Kim, director of research for the Columbus Chamber and Columbus 2020, is producing the report.

“There’s no doubt that the state of retail is evolving,” said Commission President Marilyn Brown. “As the shift to a global and more virtual way of doing business continues, we have made supporting our local storefronts a priority in Franklin County. The annual retail summit is an excellent resource for business owners to gather information on emerging trends and learn about new tools-of-the trade to stay competitive. We want our local retailers to succeed so that our residents remain employed and our economy strong.”

Also on the Retail Summit agenda are three topics considered top trends in the industry—presented by Columbus Region thought leaders:

- Digital Convergence – Technology is Not the Strategy, presented by Kim Bartley, vice president, marketing and menu development, White Castle.
- Store Design: Delivering an Experience. As e-commerce’s popularity increases, some web proponents predict physical storefronts may be nearing extinction. Store environments are not going anywhere soon, but they can certainly benefit from reinvention. To thrive, retailers must re-imagine the experience. Presented by Diane Rambo, executive vice president, creative services and Michelle Isroff, director of retail, Big Red Rooster.
- Consumer Loyalty and Personalization, presented by Leonard Jennings, senior director, loyalty solutions, Alliance Data Retail Services.

“The retail industry continues to be an integral component of the Columbus Region’s economy, and we’re proud to partner with Franklin County on this annual event,” said Michael Dalby, president and CEO, Columbus Chamber. “The 2014 Retail Summit will give retailers and other industry professionals the hyper-local business intelligence and tips from thought leaders they need to help them grow and prosper.”

Another area of focus at the Retail Summit will be the development of downtown. Marc Conte, deputy director of research, planning and facilities, Capital Crossroads SID, will present a brief discussion on the untapped retail market within downtown Columbus and the increased demand that is coming with additional housing and office development as well as visitors to the area. Insights also will be shared on the established and emerging markets in other central city neighborhoods.

The Franklin County Retail Summit is free to attend for Columbus Chamber members and \$25 for non-member guests. Registration is required, and seating is limited. Visit [columbus.org/retail](http://columbus.org/retail) for more details.

Retail and restaurant executives, representatives of industries that serve retail, local economic development officers, and anyone interested in the future of retail should attend.

[View the 2013 Franklin County Retail Report](#), or [take a look at photos](#) from last year's summit.

The Franklin County Retail Summit is presented by the Franklin County Board of Commissioners and the Columbus Chamber with support from Alliance Data Retail Services, Columbus CEO Magazine, Big Lots, Bartha Audio Visual, Buckledown Interactive, Morgan Linen Services and White Castle.

###

#### **About the Franklin County Board of Commissioners**

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners has established the Economic Development and Planning Department to promote organized growth supported by the principles of environmental responsibility, progressive land use, planning, social equity and economic vitality. For more information on business development assistance in Franklin County please contact: the Department of Economic Development and Planning 150 South Front Street, FSL Suite 10, Columbus, Ohio, visit [Development.FranklinCountyOhio.gov](http://Development.FranklinCountyOhio.gov), call (614) 525.5631 or email [edinfo@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:edinfo@franklincountyohio.gov).

#### **About the Columbus Chamber**

The Columbus Chamber provides connections, resources and solutions to help businesses thrive. Founded 130 years ago, the Columbus Chamber has evolved to become the largest business services organization and primary advocate for the Columbus Region business community. Leveraging a customized, consultative approach to support members that range from small businesses to Fortune 500 enterprises, the Columbus Chamber is helping to grow the Columbus Region economy one business at a time. For more information, visit [columbus.org](http://columbus.org).