

UKWA opens its doors to retailers and manufacturers

John Lewis, Homebase and Claire's Accessories are among the first retail companies to sign up to the United Kingdom Warehousing Association's (UKWA's) new membership category that allows retailers and manufacturers who manage their logistics and supply chain operations 'in house' to become part of the association.

Originally established as a trade body for the third party warehousing and logistics sector, UKWA's membership has, until now, only been open to those companies that provide outsourced third party logistics (3PL) services together with suppliers of products and equipment used by the warehousing industry.

But now UKWA membership is no longer restricted to companies operating in the third party logistics and warehousing sectors. Essentially this means companies that undertake warehousing and logistics tasks but for whom such operations do not represent their core business – such as retailers, manufacturers and wholesalers - are now free to join the association.

"The decision to open our 'doors' to companies whose primary business is not logistics has been driven by the demands of retailers and manufacturing companies who want access to the best practice advice and knowledge that UKWA can provide," explains UKWA's chief executive officer, Peter Ward.

He continues: "Brexit aside, the logistics sector is facing a period of unprecedented and rapid change and it is important that companies in the retail and manufacturing space are able to work with UKWA and its 3PL members as we all strive to shape Britain's supply chains and respond to the many opportunities that lie ahead, while managing the prevailing risks of uncertainty."

"By opening up its membership criteria, UKWA will become a forum where retailers, manufacturers and 3PL service suppliers can exchange ideas and this can only benefit the development of the modern supply chain."

"Of course, we expect the overwhelming majority of UKWA's members to remain third party warehousing and logistics services companies, but the move to widen the association's membership eligibility means that UKWA is now truly representative of the wider supply chain community."

Spearheading this initiative and as part of the growing influence of the retail sector on UKWA's activities, John Munnely FCILT, head of operations at John Lewis Partnership's Magna Park logistics centre, has joined UKWA's management board.

Peter Ward comments: "We are delighted to welcome John to UKWA. He is widely respected throughout the industry and his input will be invaluable."