



# Lifetime Achievement Award

## Andrew Nisbet

Businesses like Nisbets are the cornerstones of our sector, are vital to their customers and key to their local communities. Yet, like many other notable entrepreneurs, Andrew didn't start out in business with the proverbial silver spoon. What his Father offered him many years ago was a summer job in a small business he had acquired. Peter Nisbet tasked his son with looking after "the knife set" business and Andrew's first thought was, why limit supplying these sets to colleges. He could see there was much larger potential but, back then, even Andrew could not have foreseen just how great the potential was.

In 1983, with his father's blessing, an ambitious Andrew set up a new business supplying knives, catering clothing and textbooks to catering colleges. He put together his first small catalogue and set off to hand deliver copies to catering colleges around the country. With a secretary and part time students to help pack the orders Nisbets began to take shape.

What followed by 1987 was the launch of Nisbet's first "proper" mail order catalogue enabling the business to reach a wider market and in 1990 the acquisition of Red Ball took Nisbet's into wholesaling its own products. By 1995 the business stocked 8,000 products for next day delivery and a move into larger premises in Avonmouth. In 2000 Nisbets opened for business in Holland followed by France in 2005, Spain in 2007, and Australia in 2010, having also developed a new purpose built warehouse in Avonmouth to complement its existing premises. Another warehouse followed in 2014 to accommodate a growing product range.

Then retail – viewed as the perfect opportunity to attract serious home cooks as well as catering trade customers. In 2010 Nisbets acquired London Pages in

Shaftesbury Avenue, rebranded it and then opened a further store in Birmingham as well as a new store in Perth, Western Australia to complement the three stores it had opened in Sydney.

In 2013 Andrew led the 'business' 30th anniversary celebrations. Now employing 1,035 team members it was time to design the colleague canteen which doubles up as a showcase for Nisbets products .... Further retail stores have opened in Manchester, Nottingham and Brighton and the business shows no signs of slowing its pace.

Andrew's wife Anne leads a charitable arm which supports local and community charitable projects and this commitment to keeping the business "local" sees 1 in 5 of Nisbets' team members living locally and 121 who have clocked up over ten years with the company.

"Many congratulations to Andrew and Anne Nisbet and the Nisbets team on the creation and development of a superb British direct commerce company of which they should be very proud indeed," commented Nigel Swabey, president of Direct Commerce Association who presented Andrew with his trophy.



Dermot Murnaghan (presenter), Andrew Nisbet, Nigel Swabey (presenter)

### Peer comments

"Andrew has built this business over a period of 30 years and deserves every accolade for developing a great proposition, recruiting an excellent team and putting his customers at the heart of the enterprise."

"Outside of B2B circles, his local area, and the niche which Andrew has focused on, few will have heard of Andrew Nisbet and the brilliant business he has grown. Make no mistake, he is an inspiration to all of us – B2B and B2C – well done Andrew!"

