



Use Your Reimagination

The 2019 Reimagine Retail Program Dives Into Products

Each year, the National Hardware Show® (NHS) develops new opportunities for independent retailers to explore the show floor and expand their businesses. Three years ago, NHS launched Reimagine Retail, a program dedicated to helping independent retailers invest in a project that would set their businesses apart.

As independents, however, capital isn't always readily available to put toward passion projects. For many retailers, Reimagine Retail offers the chance of a lifetime.

For the first two years, NHS awarded one independent retailer \$100,000 to put toward a business improvement plan. The first two years of the program showed just how innovative independent retailers can be. From expanding in-store and

online services to retrofitting with renewable energy solutions, the ideas retailers put forth demonstrated their passion for growing their operations.

Now in its third year, the 2019 version of the program has a new twist, and the focus is on category growth and development.

Instead of one grand prize, NHS will be awarding several prizes to independent retailers at the show, allowing the winners to buy directly from NHS exhibitors. In addition, NHS is excited to offer scholarship awards to help fund retailers' travel.

"Independent retailers represent a significant portion of the home improvement market, and we want them to know that the National Hardware Show takes their growth seriously," says Rich Russo, vice president of the National Hardware Show. "The 2019 Reimagine Retail program gives more independents the opportunity to explore new avenues for their businesses."

Retailers can spend the money with any of the nearly 3,000 exhibitors on the show floor, which span more than a dozen relevant home improvement categories.

"The product mix at the National Hardware Show is one of the most extensive at industry trade shows, so there will be nearly endless ways for the winning retailers to spend their award money," Russo says. "At the 2019 show, we also anticipate nearly 1,000 new exhibitors, so retailers will have the chance to find something truly unique for their operations."

For the latest details about how to enter the 2019 Reimagine Retail program, visit nationalhardwareshow.com.

Continue the Celebration

The North American Retail Hardware Association (NRHA) will host the 2019 NRHA All-Industry Conference May 7-9 at NHS. The annual event brings together independent retailers, regardless of wholesale affiliation, for many chances to network with channel partners, learn operations ideas and discover new products.

This year's event will feature insights from industry experts, exclusive research and a multitude of opportunities to meet other retailers and learn more about your association.

"Every year, we meet new faces and hear new ideas at the NRHA All-Industry Conference," says NRHA executive vice president Dan Tratensek. "This event is all about celebrating independent retailers and bringing them together for inspirational conversation and networking."

For more information about the highlights, visit nrhaconference.com. Visit TheRedT.com/subscribe and choose NRHA Events & Conferences to be the first to know all the details. 

Recalling the Reimaginers

2017 Winner: Caribou Jack's Trading Co.

In Soda Springs, Idaho, there weren't many community places to meet, enjoy a good meal and shop for essentials. Caribou Jack's Trading Co. owner Robert Lau envisioned a restaurant that would complement his home improvement store's grilling category and serve as a place for Soda Springs residents to gather.

Construction began shortly after Lau returned from Las Vegas, and less than a year later, the restaurant opened to the public.

"This program helps shine a spotlight on smaller communities; there are thousands across the country," he says. "We don't want people to forget those small business owners."

Visit TheRedT.com/caribou-jacks-bbq to read more about Lau's restaurant endeavor.



2018 Winner: Woods Hardware

Matt Woods was hopeful when he entered the first Reimagine Retail program in 2017. His concept for a virtual walk-through and online store for his Cincinnati business Woods Hardware took him to the finals that year, but he didn't walk away with \$100,000.

Woods re-entered the 2018 program with a more complete vision. In his case, the second time was the charm.

"Be passionate about your idea," he says. "Being able to articulate why your vision is going to shake the industry is critical."

Read more about Woods' concept at TheRedT.com/woods-rr.

