



# HARDWARE MERCHANDISING 18TH ANNUAL OUTSTANDING RETAILER AWARDS

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF ENTRIES: FRIDAY, JULY 31, 2009

## BASIC INFORMATION

### WHO CAN ENTER?

All Canadian home improvement retailers/dealers that have operated under the current ownership for at least two years are eligible. You may enter more than one category with the same entry (for example, Building Supply and Young Retailer; Hardware Store and Paint Retailer; or Building Supply Dealer and Contractor-Specialist Dealer, etc.). Previous winners may also enter. There is no fee to enter, and 'nominations' are not required.

### INDIVIDUAL VERSUS CHAIN/BUYING GROUP ENTRIES

- (a) Dealers may submit their entries directly, or...
- (b) Chain/buying group head offices may choose to select their best dealer(s) and prepare their entries for them, in collaboration with the dealer. Head offices may enter more than one store per category.

### HOW TO ENTER

A basic entry consists of a three-ring binder containing text and (very important) photographs describing your business successes. The best way to organize the information is to use the "20 questions" format which follows. This is not mandatory. Video and audio materials are optional. (They may be useful if you have very unusual and/or effective broadcast commercials that were made just for your business. But they are rarely the decisive factor in winning.)

### WHO ARE THE JUDGES?

All entries will be carefully reviewed by a five-member jury. This year's judges include: Frank Condron (editor, Hardware Merchandising); Robert Koci (editor, Canadian Contractor); Michael McLarney (publisher, Hardlines); Bruce Smith (Dave Milne Design Consultants); Anthony Stokan (retail consultant). Winners will be notified in late August.

## ENTRY FORM

(please attach this page, or a photocopy, to the FRONT of your entry)

Store name \_\_\_\_\_

Co-op or buying group(s) (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of owner(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of manager (if differs from above) \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City \_\_\_\_\_

Province \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Website \_\_\_\_\_

Entry submitted by \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the category entered. (You may circle more than one.)

1. **Best Hardware Store** (any size)
2. **Best Building Supply/Home Centre** (any size)
3. **Best Contractor-Specialist Dealer** (must do at least 60 per cent of sales with contractors)
4. **Best Paint Retailer** (open to specialty paint-stores and general home improvement stores with a market-dominant paint niche who provide all the services and products of an outstanding specialty paint store)
5. **Best Young Retailer** (a store manager under the age of 35; entrants may be owners or chain employees)
6. **Best Large Surface Retailer** (over 50,000 sq. ft. retail)

# '20 QUESTIONS' TO ANSWER IN YOUR ENTRY

**1. Overview.** Provide a brief (2 pages maximum) 'sales pitch' as to why your store deserves to win an Outstanding Retailer Award. (Hint: What makes your business a leader in its local market, what are your unique strengths, why are your customers so loyal?)

**2. History.** When and how was your business founded? Has ownership changed hands? When?

**3. Growth.** Please describe how your business has physically expanded and/or moved. (See also Sales Growth, question 13.)

**4. Size.** Please describe your retail square feet, your storage square feet, and, if applicable, your lumberyard acreage.

**5. Business Environment.** Tell us about the town/city you serve, your estimated trading area population, the major industries, the state of your local economy, and the seasonality of your business.

**6. Consumer/Contractor/Institutional Split.** Please provide percentage sales for each of these three customer types. (If there are 'other' types of customers, please indicate.)

**7. Competition.** List your main competitors and their distance from you. Has big box competition recently arrived? How has this affected you?

**8. Staff Count.** How many full-time and part-time employees do you have?

**9. Staff Training, Compensation & Retention.** Please describe how you train; your employees incentives and benefits; and your success at retaining key staff.

**10. Mission Statement.** If you have one, what is it? If you don't have one, describe in a few sentences your business philosophy.

**11. Customer Service.** Provide some examples of ways in which your store has recently excelled.

**12. Community Involvement.** Describe any involvement with charitable organizations, civic events, sports, etc.

**13. Top Line Sales.** Please provide dollar volumes of sales, and percentage increase/decrease, for each of the last five years (or as many years as in business). Please note: the information you provide for this, and the next two questions, is strictly confidential to the judges and will not be published without your express permission.

**14. Sales Per Square Foot.** Please provide a three year history.

**15. Turns.** Please provide a three year history.

**16. Retail Technology.** Which system(s) does your store use and how has it improved your business.

**17. Marketing.** Please describe your most effective marketing techniques, especially those that are unique in your marketplace. Enclose examples of newspaper ads, flyers and transcripts of radio and TV commercials.

**18. Special Events.** Please describe them, whether they are recurrent or one-time events you have previously held.

**19. Extensions of the Business.** Please outline any successful out-growths of your core retail business. For example (but not limited to): installed sales, commercial sales, window and door manufacturing, truss plant, homebuilding, exports.

**20. Testimonials & Awards.** Please provide some customer and/or business partner testimonials and/or copies of favourable correspondence that you have received from customers. If you have won civic awards, or honours within your own group, please specify.

## PHOTOGRAPHY REQUIREMENTS

**Photographs are vital!** Please provide a minimum of five exterior shots, and a minimum of 20 interior ones (there is no maximum). Photography need not be professional-quality but properly developed pics are better than printouts on laser paper. Please label all photos. Exterior shots should include signage and a view from the street or parking lot. (Building centres should include lumberyard pics.) Interior shots should include owner/manager and staff, view from the front entrance, power and other aisles, end caps, in-store promotions and contractor service desk, if there is one.

## SPECIAL NOTE TO 'YOUNG RETAILER' CATEGORY

Since this is a category honouring an individual, please provide personal information on the life history of the candidate. For example, include education, work history, first experiences in the home improvement business, significant mentors, etc. How has this individual, through his or her own singlehanded initiative, significantly impacted the business?

## QUESTIONS?

Please call David Chestnut at (416) 764-1656 or email [david.chestnut@rci.rogers.com](mailto:david.chestnut@rci.rogers.com)

**DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES**  
**FRIDAY, JULY 31, 2009**

Solutions for home improvement retailers  
**HARDWARE**  
MERCHANDISING



**ADDRESS TO SEND ENTRIES**  
**(courier recommended)**

*Hardware Merchandising,  
Outstanding Retailer Awards  
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