

## INDUSTRY EVENTS

# HOUSE MONEY

Next month's National Hardware Show in Las Vegas promises independent retailers a winning hand of education, new product debuts and an improved buying experience.

By Sonya Ruff Jarvis

**M**ay can be a tough time of year to get away. And when you do decide to make a break for it, you better have a good excuse. Let the National Hardware Show and its Lawn, Garden & Outdoor Living Show in Las Vegas be yours.

Our approach to making this event a must-attend is by ensuring we deliver exhibitors that will help drive the independent garden center (IGC) business, seminar content that is relevant and new products that will help differentiate you from the other stores in your community.

In the end, that time spent away from the store is time well spent driving sales, offering customers what they're looking for and staying ahead of the competition with the information provided at the show.

### What's New?

The National Hardware Show boasts nearly 700 manufacturers exhibiting in the lawn, garden and outdoor living marketplace, which continues to be one of the highlights of the show. The independent garden center retailer will see, review and find specialty unique products that have high profit margins and will truly differentiate their product offerings for the most discriminating shopper.

The National Hardware Show is also a great launching pad for new products, particularly in the lawn, garden and outdoor living marketplace. There will be more than 400 new products being launched across 11 different product categories with nearly 20 percent coming from the lawn, garden and outdoor living area.

In 2012, we housed new products (in distribution) and new inventions all in one area to

make it easier for buyers to shop new products side-by-side. This area is called Innovation Station and will have a new location this year — right off the main central hall lobby.

In addition, the New Product Launch Spotlight showcase, which focuses on newly developed, patented but not yet in distribution products with no pre-sells or exclusives in place. The New Product Launch Spotlight is truly the hallmark area of the show and never disappoints in fulfilling the buyers' expectation of seeing what's new!

### Plenty of Experience

The National Hardware Show received so much positive feedback from two featured areas that we launched in 2012 that we are expanding these areas for 2013. Both Made in the USA and Pet products will have a depth of representation in each respective product category this year with more than 150-plus exhibitors.

For many years we have been hearing that home improvement retailers and distributors are adding farm and ranch to their product mix offering a well-rounded selection to their customers; the 2013 National Hardware Show will debut a farm and ranch-dedicated area with nearly 100 products from rolled fencing to trellises to pest control and more. This area will be located right next to Pet and Made in the USA.

With so much to see and experience, the National Hardware Show has developed some great navigation tools to help the buyer customize their shopping experience at the show before they even hit the floor! NHS Mobile allows attendees to put the entire National Hardware Show on their smartphone and specifically allows the user to:

- navigate the show floor via interactive maps
- find exhibitors by category
- find new products
- see show specials
- view education schedule and bookmark favorite sessions
- set appointments with exhibitors and request callbacks

In addition, My Show Planner lets the user develop their own personal show itinerary by:

- emailing exhibitors directly
- planning a show floor route
- planning each day with "My Events Calendar"
- finding booth locations directly from an exhibitor's listing
- linking schedule and favorites to NHS' mobile directory

### Time to Get Smart

We are fortunate to have the opportunity to collaborate with the North American Retail Hardware Association (NRHA) in developing all of the show content that is presented on the NRHA Stage in the central lobby. They know the concerns and challenges of the independent dealer and have put together compelling content that will allow independents to walk away with tangible solutions they can take back to their stores. Interesting titles include: "Meet Today's Empowered Consumer" and "In Vogue: Learn the Inspiration Behind Today's Home Improvement Projects." **LGR**

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## 2013 NATIONAL HARDWARE SHOW

**When:** May 7-9    **Where:** Las Vegas Convention Center

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