



## **Celebrating five years, the Home Improvement eRetailer Summit shifts its dates to Q1 2021**

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Contact: Sonya Ruff Jarvis, 203-295-3385

[Sruffjarvis@eretailersummit.com](mailto:Sruffjarvis@eretailersummit.com)

In response to the travel and public health uncertainties created by the spread of the novel coronavirus, the management of the Home Improvement eRetailer Summit, in consultation with its Advisory Council members, has rescheduled the event to March 7-9, 2021, from its previously scheduled date of October 7-9, 2020. It will remain at the Aloft Chicago Downtown River North Hotel, Chicago, IL.

“With the acceptance and expansion of ecommerce, the Summit is more relevant than ever,” says Sonya Ruff Jarvis, the event’s founder. “Nowhere else will online retailers with a focus on home and home improvement products have access to knowledgeable peers that the Summit affords.”

The virus, ironically, has served as an accelerant for online sales, which pre-pandemic had already been steadily climbing as a percentage of total retail volume. The Salesforce Shopping Index, which analyzes the activity of one billion consumers worldwide, found 20% digital commerce growth in the first quarter of this year.

A recent survey by Loup Ventures, of 245 U.S. consumers, suggested that 72% of consumers are now buying more online, driven by groceries. One estimate projected that ecommerce could represent nearly one-third of retail sales in the second quarter of 2020.

During the pandemic, retailers in the Hardware Channel, from Home Depot and Lowe’s to independent dealers, have offered their online shoppers the safety and convenience of curbside pick-up. For example, Stine Home + Yard in Louisiana has gone from a few orders per

day that customers retrieve at the store's curb to more than 100 per day. "Curbside pick-up is a must, and helps level the playing field," Jeremy Stine, this dealer's Marketing Director, said in a recent webinar interview with *HBS Dealer*.

Proactive maneuvers are imperative for survival, at a time when the virus could be the final nudge that topples brick-and-mortar retailers with precarious balance sheets. UBS analysts are now estimating that, as the coronavirus is forcing more consumers toward digital channels for essential and discretionary purchases, up to 100,000 retail stores could close by 2025.

There has never been a more urgent moment for online retailers to prepare for such scenarios by fully grasping the trajectory of their industry sector and what's motivating consumers. The Home Improvement eRetailer Summit, which is entering its fifth year, has become the premier forum for its attendees to share information and best practices.

Scott Sinclair, Director of Ecommerce for OneStone, the consumer services group, said his company is eager to attend the Summit for the second year. "It provides an intimate setting to share ecommerce learnings and insights. Attended by both retailers and brands alike, differing perspectives leads to great conversation. You'll likely walk away with actionable next steps and relationships."

What Advisory Council member Asa Farquhar, Vice President for the online retailer Spreetail, especially likes about the Summit—and what separates it from other industry events—is "the intimate environment, and its specialized nature."

The shift in dates allows the Summit to honor its mission to invite leading online retailers, suppliers, and technology solution providers to gather face-to-face for meaningful conversations, educational sessions, and reciprocal one-to-one pre-scheduled meetings, all of which are focused on the home and home improvement industry.

To request your invitation to attend the Summit, or for more information about the event, please contact Sonya Ruff Jarvis, founder at [sruffjarvis@eretailersummit.com](mailto:sruffjarvis@eretailersummit.com), or at 203-295-3385.

*The Home Improvement eRetailer Summit is the only face-to-face North American event that focuses on home improvement ecommerce through networking, education, and one-to-one meetings. It is designed for all types of retailers, manufacturers, distributors and industry professionals who are interested in gaining intelligence and insights on how to optimize the internet as a distribution channel to sell more home improvement products. The Summit is owned and operated by the JC Event Group.*

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