

Servicing Customers Essential for Home Improvement Retailers to Differentiate, J.D. Power FindsAce Hardware Ranks Highest in Customer Satisfaction for 13th Time in 14 Years

TROY, Mich.: 11 June 2020 — Having now been sequestered at home for several weeks, about half of U.S. consumers say they've considered starting a home improvement project. But what drives customers to select one retailer as their primary choice? According to the J.D. Power 2020 U.S. Home Improvement Retailer Satisfaction Study,SM released today, the single factor with the greatest influence on that retail experience beyond inventory, prices or location is friendly, knowledgeable service with a smile—and provided in two minutes or less.

"The one-on-one engagement a customer has with the retail staff continues to be the largest driver of overall customer satisfaction with home improvement retailers," said **Christina Cooley, director of the @Home practice at J.D. Power**. "Now, more than ever, customers are looking for the guidance they need—but they're also looking to get in and out of the store quickly. When customers receive speedy, knowledgeable and friendly service, they are more likely to return and recommend that retailer. However, if they must wait five minutes or more to receive help, satisfaction scores tumble."

Following are some key findings of the 2020 study:

- **Staff and service is key differentiator:** No single home improvement retailer outperforms the others across all measures of satisfaction, but those that are strongest in staff and service—the most heavily weighted driver of overall satisfaction—usually perform notably better in the study.
- **Help in two minutes or less:** Customer satisfaction with home improvement retailers is highest when they receive help from staff within two minutes or less. Just one-fourth of customers received help within this threshold. Waiting more than five minutes for help decreases satisfaction with staff and service by more than 70 points (on a 1,000-point scale).
- **Online shoppers visit more brick-and-mortar retailers and spend more:** Customers who shop and/or research online before making a purchase spend, on average, approximately \$500 more per year on home improvement than those who do not research online. These shoppers are often more price-sensitive and are more likely to buy during a promotion or sale.
- **COVID-19 as possible catalyst to home improvement projects:** Based on additional J.D. Power research conducted April 2-3 of this year, 49% of U.S. consumers say they are considering a home improvement project within the next three months. Of those, 61% say they plan to do the project themselves. The top projects on the wish list include painting (15%), lawn and landscape projects (14%) and starting a garden (12%).

Study Rankings

Ace Hardware ranks highest in customer satisfaction among home improvement retailers for the 13th time in 14 years, with a score of 844. **Menards** (841) ranks second and **Lowe's** (838) ranks third.

The 2020 U.S. Home Improvement Retailer Satisfaction Study measures customer satisfaction with home improvement retailers by examining five factors (in alphabetical order): merchandise; price; sales and promotions; staff and service; and store facility. The study is based on responses from 2,626 customers

who purchased home improvement-related products from a home improvement retailer within the previous 12 months. The study was fielded in January-February 2020.

For more information about the U.S. Home Improvement Retailer Satisfaction Study, visit <https://www.jdpower.com/business/resource/us-home-improvement-retailer-satisfaction-study>.

To view the online press release, please visit <http://www.jdpower.com/pr-id/2020062>.

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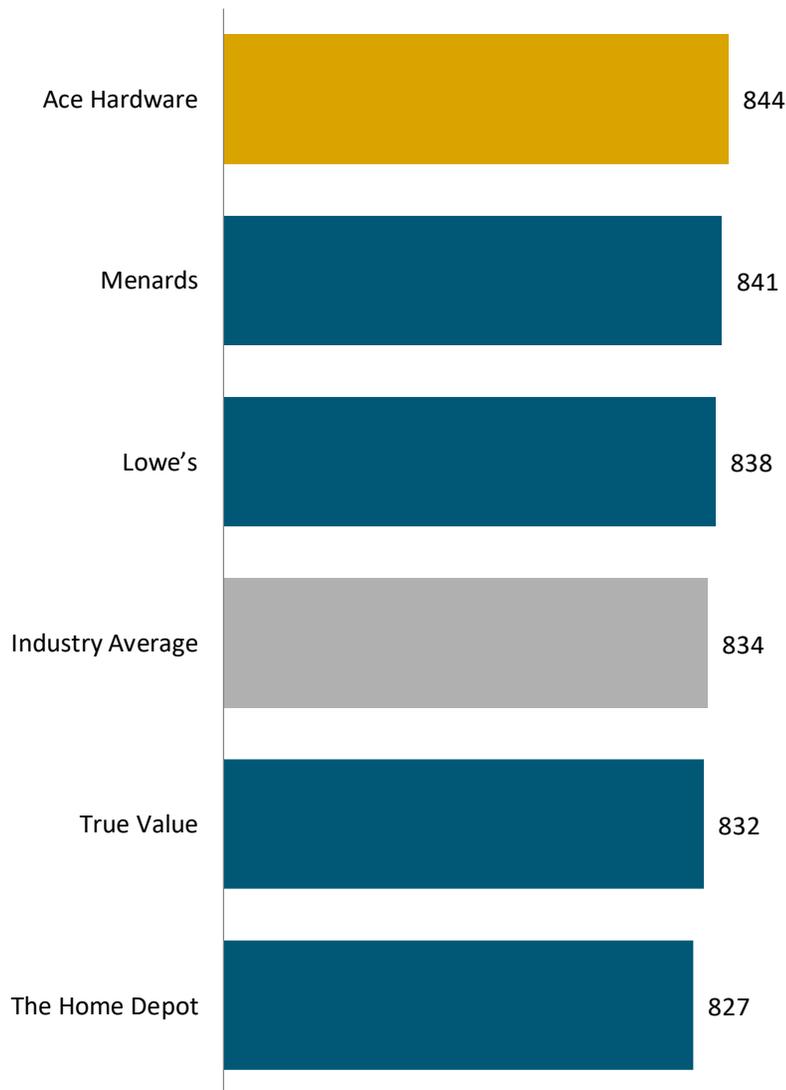
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NOTE: One chart follows.

J.D. Power 2020 U.S. Home Improvement Retailer Satisfaction StudySM

Overall Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Source: J.D. Power 2020 U.S. Home Improvement Retailer Satisfaction StudySM

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