

Welcome!

I would like to thank all of you in advance for attending the 1999 Fall Market October 4–7. It's always great to meet you and talk face-to-face, and I look forward to seeing you all in Las Vegas!

At the last Market, I proposed a two-pronged philosophy to guide the actions of your co-op into the 21st century—the building of operational and retail excellence. This is the strategy that will guide our long-term success, and you should keep this in mind whenever you gauge your co-op's progress. This Market—Your Market to the Millennium—gives you your first chance to see where those ideas are taking us. These are only our first steps, but they are probably the most important ones we will take. The results you see in Las Vegas are the ones that provide the framework for growing your business well into the NEXT millennium.

Some of the most important include

- Solid e-commerce direction: Doing business in the coming years will rely heavily on technology—and we're right there. Your comprehensive Web sites are among the best in the industry, valuable to both you and your customers. And with the new e-commerce initiatives we've developed, you not only have great information sites; you also have a seamless system for running your business and a new way to increase profitability.
- New store strategy: More than just a new store design, the "New Evolution" is being created by all TruServ departments to have universal appeal, great service and easy shopping. See it first-hand in the "New Evolution Discovery Center."
- A new brand/advertising direction: With all of the national hardware/home center chains around, branding is one of the most effective methods of clearly defining you and your store.
- Pre-Market workshops: These intense educational workshops are among the most valuable learning experiences you can have to guide your store into new areas of doing business.
- Buying opportunities: As always, your merchandising departments have come up with some incredible deals, especially on seasonal products.

In addition, the 70+ seminars offered at the Market are your chance to interact with an expert in a field that interests you—one that will put your store in the forefront. These are excellent resources for techniques and ideas that will let you walk away better prepared to meet the challenges facing your store.

So where will your store be in the opening years of the next century? Join us and see for yourself.

See you in Las Vegas!

Don Hoye,
President and Chief Operating Officer