

# HARDLINES **Blish·Mize** Strategies

DISTRIBUTING RETAIL PROFITABILITY

SPRING 2016, VOL. 16, 1



## Bigger and Better

**Moundridge Lumber Moves,  
Expands Store and Inventory**  
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IRWIN #	Product Description	Qty.
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1902412	7" MAX LEV Diagonal Cutting Pliers W/ PS	1
1902413	8" MAX LEV Diagonal Cutting Pliers W/ PS	1
1902414	8" HIGH LEV Lineman's Pliers	1
1902415	9.5" HIGH LEV Lineman's Pliers W/ FT	1
1902416	9.5" HIGH LEV Lineman's Pliers W/ FT; WC	1
1902417	6" STANDARD Long Nose Pliers	1
1902418	8" STANDARD Long Nose Pliers	1
1902419	8" ERGOMULTI Long Nose Pliers W/ WS; WC	1
1902420	6 3/4" Bent Nose Pliers	1
1902421	8" MAX LEV End Cutting Pliers W/ PS	1
1902422	Performance Lanyard W/ Clip	1

### WISE-GRIP® 4-PC PERFORMANCE PLIERS MERCHANDISER 1922892

IRWIN WISE-GRIP® Cutting Pliers

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1902422	Performance Lanyard W/ Clip	1

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1906747	Impact Masonry Drill Bit 16-Piece Merchandiser	1
1906799	Impact 2-3/8" Dbl End Fastener Drive Bit 46-Piece Merchandiser	1
1907922	Impact Nutsetter 28-Piece Merchandiser	1
<b>Open-Stock Promotional Set</b>		
1903520	Impact Double End 5-Piece Mix PH W MAG	5
1903521	Impact Double End 5-Piece Mix SQ W MAG	5
1903522	Impact Double End 5-Piece Mix TORX W MAG	5
1903525	Impact Double End 8-Piece Mix PH SQ TX SL W MAG	5
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1866976	Impact Mixed Set 5-Piece	6
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## VISIT IRWIN BOOTH #531

# Change Is in the Air



**S**ome people hate change. I love it. With the change of seasons comes growth, and with our business, change always means new directions and fresh success.

We are featuring four stores in this issue that have decided to make a change and switch BACK to Blish-Mize or switch to us from another primary supplier. This change is something that makes us proud and proves that we treat our customers

better than anyone in the industry. We are one of the only suppliers in the country that considers our customers to be like family.

To learn more about how Galen and Kathy Waltner handled change at Moundridge Lumber in Moundridge, Kansas, take a look at our cover story on Page 6. The couple moved from their old store to a new location last year and continue to expand, adding a greenhouse, Titan LED lighting and more product to their shelves.

Hardware House is also undergoing a change. Lighting, ceiling fans, locksets, quality cabinet hardware, faucets, bath hardware and vanities are all additions that we are focusing on strengthening in 2016. Read more on Page 28.

Our Buying Markets are also changing a bit. At our upcoming spring event we will have 24 items that will have special low market-only pricing. We are also adding some new features that we hope make our Buying Markets not only more exciting, but, most importantly, offer you tremendous value for your attendance.

There's plenty more to learn about in this issue. Find out how one retailer set a promising employee up for success by sending him through the North American Retail Hardware Association's (NRHA) Retail Management Certification Program on Page 24, and learn more about the ins and outs of Blish-Mize's IT department and what they're working on next to help you, on Page 30.

I hope your new year is going well so far, and we're looking forward to seeing you at the Buying Market and discussing any exciting changes in store for your business and your continued success with us.

**Jonathan D. Mize**  
CEO and President

## HARDLINES Strategies

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#### On the Cover:

Kathy and Galen Waltner of Moundridge Lumber in Moundridge, Kansas, recently moved their store to a new location and continue to add more inventory.

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# Don't Finance Your Supplier

We often counsel customers who have come to the realization that, for years, they have been letting their supplier take money from their businesses each month.

They finally understand their supplier uses their money to buy products to sell back to them (with their markup). Those customers thought this was a “rebate,” which is how it’s often described, but turns out to be a way the supplier uses customers’ money to finance their business.

These “supplier funding schemes” are fairly common in the wholesale hardware industry. They are packaged differently—call it a “rebate adder,” a “support fee” or a “participation fee”—but essentially, they’re all similar. They’re all simply ways to take money from your business to fund theirs. They take that money from you every 15 days, due to

the terms most of those programs require. Many times your funds are returned to you only if you meet a complicated set of rules and regulations in minutia.

At Blish-Mize, we don’t ask for your money to finance our business. We have no mock “rebate” adders. We know your funds need to stay in your business all year long. We appreciate that you need to know your true costs with each transaction, and you need to know they aren’t dependent upon a fictitious rebate.

Would these “supplier funding schemes” make sense in any industry? Probably not. Let’s say there’s a brand-new “rebate” program at a new grocery store that’s just come to your town. Say they offer a 4.5-percent rebate on your annual grocery purchases. That sounds good, so you sign

up. The first trip to the store, you notice that 4.5-percent amount is added to the bottom of your receipt.

“Oh, that’s your rebate, but don’t worry; you’ll get that back next year,” the clerk tells you. He also reminds you that you can’t use the bank card you always used (it’s cash only). In addition, only purchases you make on even-numbered days whose name contains a “u” in them apply for the rebate, but it will be added to all your future receipts. Great program—for the grocery store!

It doesn’t make sense for you to participate in this program, so why would you do essentially the same thing with your supplier?

If this sounds all too familiar and painfully true, we’d like to talk to you about a better way to lead your business that allows you to use your funds to grow your business.

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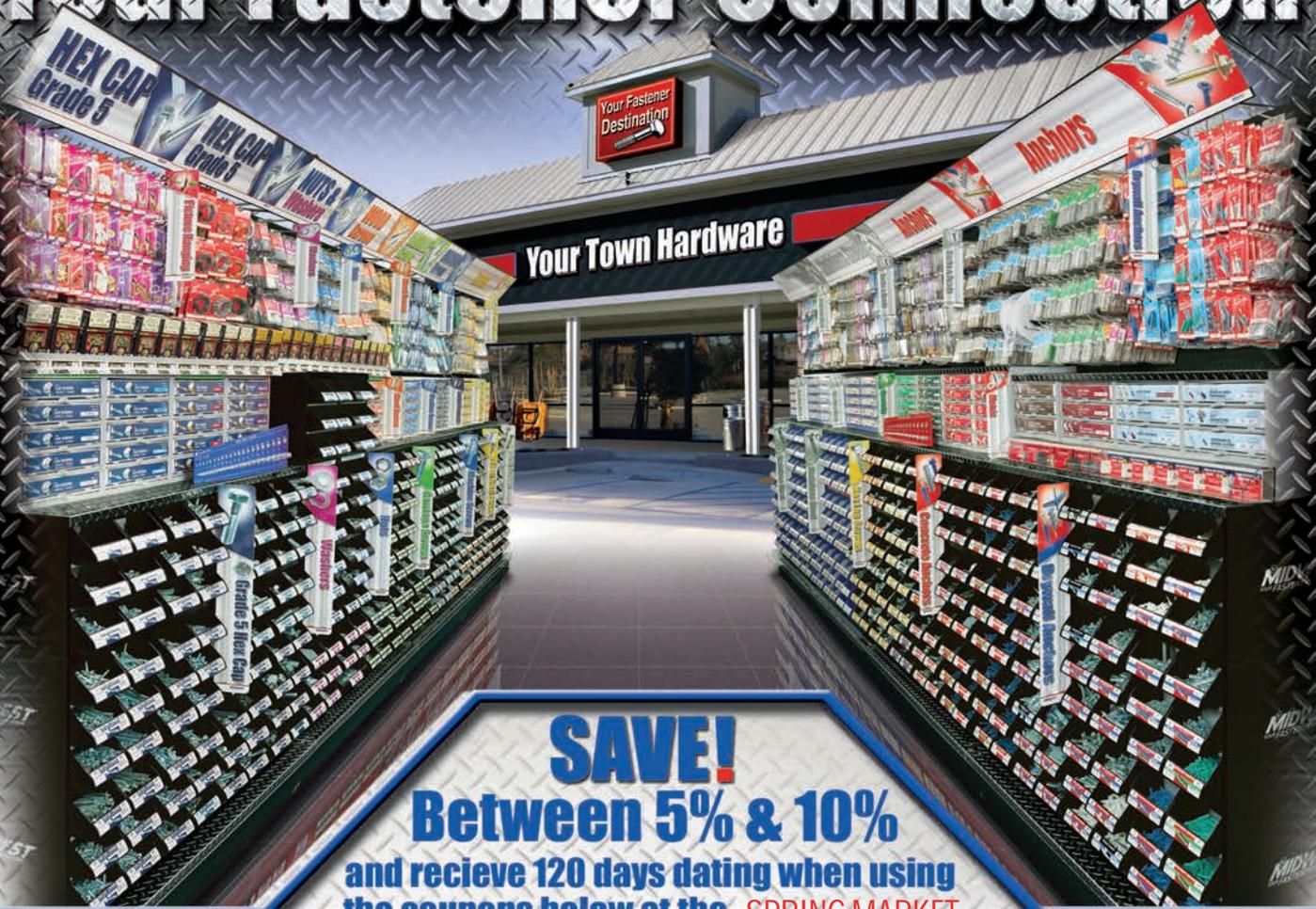
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# Growth Continues

## Kansas Retailer Sees Expansion with New Building and Products

**W**hen a close friend who owned a hardware store in Moundridge, Kansas, was tragically killed in a car accident in 2002, Galen and Kathy Waltner took over the store to keep it running for the community.

They purchased the store in January 2003. Galen, a contractor and part-time farmer, took over running the store.

“We were very concerned that the community continue to have a locally owned lumberyard to serve its needs,” says Galen.

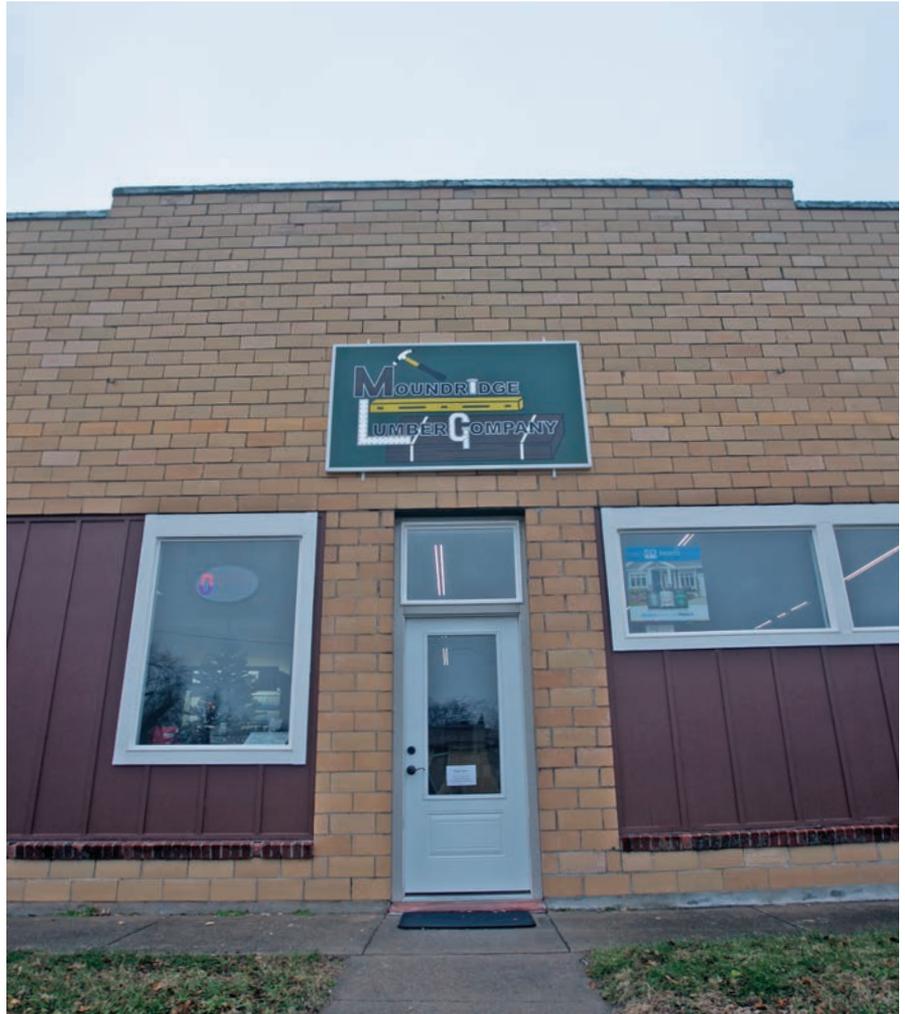
Not only did the business survive, thanks to the Waltners, but in the years since they’ve taken over, it has thrived.

### A New Building

About 60 percent of the store’s customer base is local contractors, with most of the balance being DIYers. One unique customer is a large local manufacturing company the store works with to provide shipping crates.

In 2014, the couple purchased a 7,000-square-foot warehouse building a block from the original store and showroom. (At this time, Kathy, a teacher, left her job to work at the store full-time). The new building includes 3,300 square feet of showroom space, with the rest being used to house millwork, doors, windows and hardwoods.

“With the purchase of the additional building, we were able to increase the size of our showroom so that it’s now two and a half times larger,” Kathy says. “This gives us the opportunity to actually display many of the products we’ve had all along. We are



*Galen and Kathy Waltner, owners of Moundridge Lumber, purchased a 7,000-square-foot warehouse building in 2014 that became the new home for the store.*

slowly adding, especially to our plumbing, electrical, automotive, gardening and outdoor living departments.”

Other popular products the store sells include lumber and building materials, fasteners and paints and stains.

“We focus on selling the finest lumber,” says Galen. “We find that once contractors and even DIYers use a quality product, they are willing to pay a small premium for it.”

While there are a few competitors nearby, it’s customer service that keeps their customers coming back.

“People who choose the big-boxes often have had to rely on us to fix problems with their products or get them the right thing,” Galen says. “Once they have had a bad experience there, we generally have a customer for life.”

Along with the warehouse, the store has expanded with the addition of a greenhouse.

# MAKE AN IMPACT

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**LINZER**

# CUSTOMER PROFILE

“We added that to help with our garden center,” Kathy says. “We’re continuing to expand that aspect of our business. We’re adding more bulk seeds, seed potatoes, sweet potato slips, annual and

**“We are small-town America, and we focus on quality products and unmatched customer service. I think Blish-Mize shares that philosophy.”**

**—Galen Waltner,  
owner of Mountridge Lumber**

perennial bedding plants and more quality soils, rock, sand and other garden and landscape needs.”

Along with a new building came other changes, such as lighting. The couple chose to use Titan LED lighting, which they found thanks to the company’s partnership with Blish-Mize.

“We had to do some minor remodeling and repairs to make our new building functional,” says Galen. “One obvious need was lighting. We chose to jump in with Titan LED lighting and have really appreciated the nice bright appearance it gave our showroom.

“We get many compliments on the light and have sold several projects by showing the difference it has made in our store,” he says.

Of course, the move to the new location meant a busy time for the store.

“Moving is a lot of work and takes a lot of planning,” says Galen. “We tried to make a smooth transition with only minimal down time.”

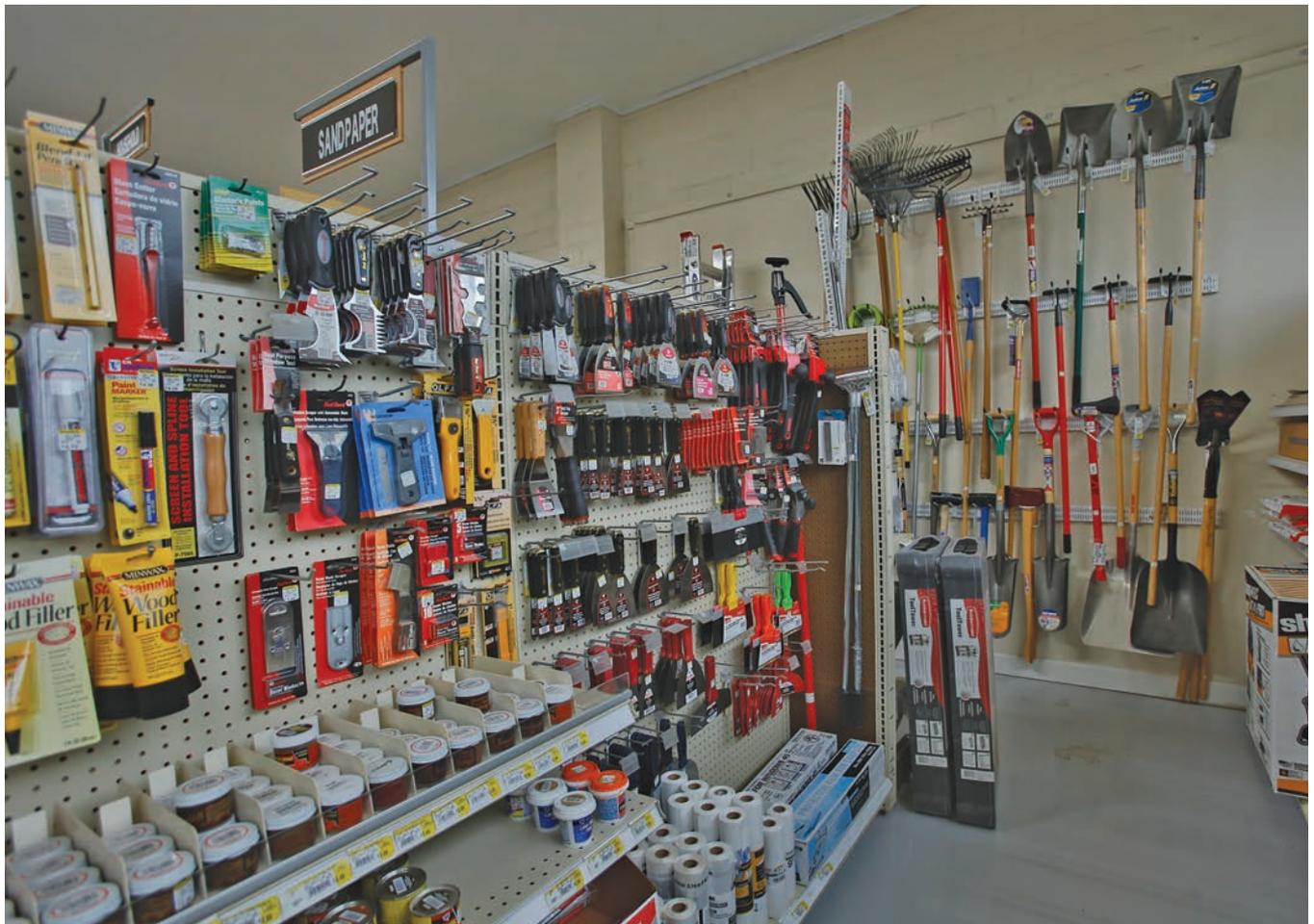
The couple chose to close the store for one weekend as they moved, but even during that time, they were able to help customers who had specific needs.

There’s still some work to do—“We were able to start doing business at our new location that following Monday, but it’s still a work in progress,” Galen says.

## **Working With Blish-Mize**

The Waltners chose to work with Blish-Mize when they took over the store in 2003, and they haven’t looked back.

“We are small-town America, and we focus on quality products and



A larger building has allowed the Waltners to add more inventory to many departments in their store. Some of the popular products they sell include lumber and building materials, fasteners and paints and stains.

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BOOTH 239



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unmatched customer service,” Galen says. “I think Blish-Mize shares that philosophy.”

He says he appreciates the efforts Blish-Mize makes to help their store stay competitive. “They keep our overhead low and prices reasonable with low freight rates and willingness to break packs, which helps us keep our inventory at a good level. They have great deals at markets and throughout the year. They also hook us up with some vendors who have some unique product choices.”

The couple says they like the real-time inventory and like to use pool orders for products not in the warehouse. They also enjoy attending markets, where they always learn something new.

“We really appreciate the opportunity to meet with representatives from the manufacturers we work with and have a chance to provide feedback on the products we have, as well as see new products that are coming out,” says Kathy. “We also find that often, a small store like ours is offered the same buying incentives usually only available to much larger customers—that’s a great benefit for us.”

They also appreciate the opportunity to work with the Blish-Mize staff. “They have a great staff that’s willing to work with us,” says Galen. “They always try their best to help us out—they are helpful and personable and care that we are successful. I definitely would recommend working with Blish-Mize.”

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# A New Venture

## Retailer's Experience Helps Build a Successful Business

**S**everal years ago, Andy Koppen decided he wanted to be his own boss. And with 10 years' experience working in a paint store, he knew what kind of business he could start. And with that, Summit Paint and Stain was born.

### Getting Started

Koppen and his partner, Betsy VanderPloeg, opened the store in Frisco, Colorado, three years ago.

"Betsy and I talked about what kind of business we wanted to open, and paint made sense, as I had a lot of experience and connections in the industry," says Koppen. "And then an opportunity got thrown in our laps."

In the next county over, there was a little paint store the owner wanted to sell. Koppen and VanderPloeg bought the store and moved it to Summit County, where they live.

They had to act quickly, as the owner wanted the process completed within 30 days. "It was fast and furious," Koppen says.

They gathered their cash and chose a location for the new store—right across the street from a local Sherwin-Williams.

The 1,400-square-foot store has only two employees—Koppen and VanderPloeg—and a customer base made up of about one-third homeowners and two-thirds contractors.

Thanks to the ski industry, Summit County sees plenty of tourists and visitors who have vacation homes in the area. Many of the homes are log homes.



*Andy Koppen and Betsy VanderPloeg opened Summit Paint and Stain about three years ago, after buying an existing paint store that was for sale in a nearby county.*

"We definitely do really good business with the log home industry," Koppen says.

Exterior stains are among some of the store's most popular products. "They're by far our biggest sellers," he says. "In this area, people rarely paint anything outside—everything exterior is usually stained."

### Using Connections

Koppen's connections came in handy as he and VanderPloeg got the store ready for business. While some shelving and other materials came with the store, he also attended an auction at a former employer's store, which was going out of business, and bought more shelving and some product.

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### DCST990M1

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# CUSTOMER PROFILE

“We filled out the rest of the store with products from Blish-Mize,” he says.

It was an easy decision to use Blish-Mize as the store’s supplier, Koppen says. He had previous experience working with Denver Randol, his current Blish-Mize sales representative.

“Denver was actually one of the first people I talked to when thinking about plans to open my own store,” he says. “I already had a good relationship with Denver, and Blish-Mize offers great service and pricing. He helped us get an awesome opening order together.”

His connections helped when it came to customers, too.

“We live in a small, tight-knit community,” Koppen says. “I got to know a lot of homeowners and contractors in all those years of selling paint. When we opened our doors, they came right into our store. Now, in my own store, I have the same



The customer base at Summit Paint and Stain, where Koppen and VanderPloeg are the owners and only employees, is made up of about one-third homeowners and two-thirds contractors.



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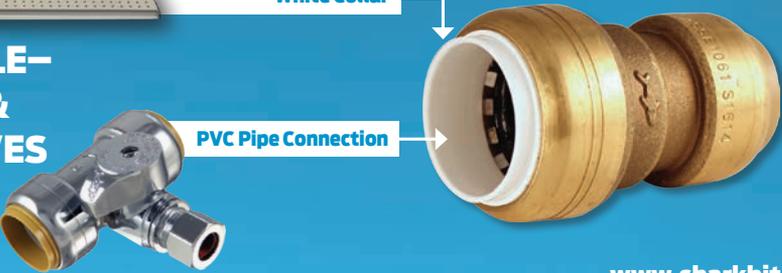


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## CUSTOMER PROFILE

products I used to sell and the same customers I've worked with."

It's helpful for him to be able to get that business, considering the number of competitors in town. Besides the Sherwin-Williams across the street, there's also a Benjamin Moore store in town, and a Lowe's opened nearby the same month as Koppen and VanderPloeg's store did.

**"Blish-Mize is a fair, honest family company, and that really fits well with us and our business."**

**—Andy Koppen, owner of Summit Paint and Stain**

"The people in our community like shopping local and would rather go to a small mom-and-pop store like ours," Koppen says.

### **Working With Blish-Mize**

Koppen says he likes Blish-Mize's products and their reliability with deliveries. He finds it especially helpful since he has a small store and can't stock everything a customer might need.

"Deliveries are like clockwork—it's great," he says. "If I have an order in by Monday at 9, it arrives by Tuesday at 9. The longest turnaround for me is three days. For my competitors, it could be two weeks.

"When a customer needs something, I can go on the website and get it to them within a day or so. That kind of quick, easy access to products helps me out with special orders and keeps my overhead low, too."

He also enjoys attending the spring markets (he doesn't always have time to go to the fall market, as it's the busiest season at the store). "I can buy in bulk the things I'll need for a busy summer season, and with our stain-heavy market, it's always a good time to find deals on stains and other related products."

What he appreciates most about Blish-Mize, though, is the high quality of customer service he receives, and especially the face-to-face service with salesperson Randol.

"Denver is a great rep," Koppen says. "He always stops by the store to talk in person, rather than just emailing me. I can call him with questions, and if he doesn't have the answer, he will find it.

"That level of personal service is just amazing," he says. "Blish-Mize is a fair, honest family company, and that really fits well with us and our business."



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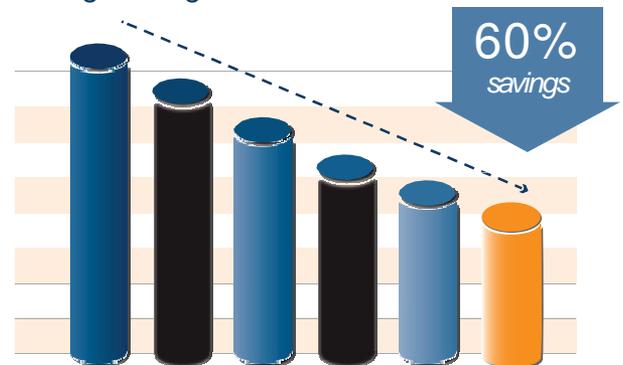
- Is 98% recyclable
- Reduces power consumption by a minimum of 50%
- Is a much healthier alternative to traditional lighting versus many mercury-filled products
- Seldom needs to be replaced, since it provides a lifespan 10 times longer than traditional lighting

Why should you partner with Titan LED? We've helped thousands of businesses achieve lower energy bills and ongoing cost savings while brightening their environments with our innovative LED lighting solutions. Plus, we're committed to American standards, American quality and American manufacturing.

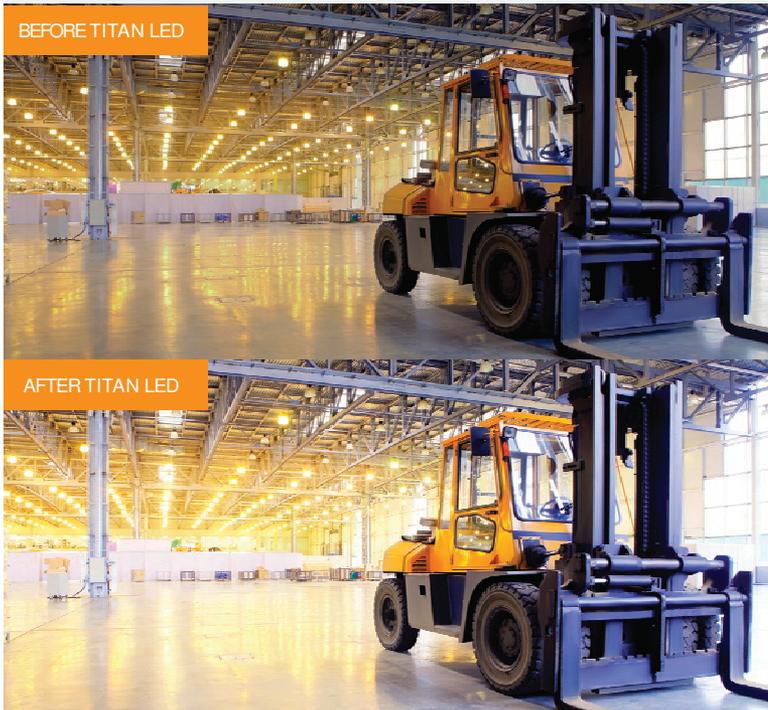
### LED vs. Fluorescent Lighting

LED Lighting	Fluorescent Lighting
Provides steady, constant light (natural white or cool white)	Suffers from frequent flickers and buzzes (yellowish)
Stays cool even if left on all day	Heats up to dangerous temperatures
Made from environmentally safe materials	Contains mercury and phosphor
Uses less than half the power	Uses double the power
Rated at 100,000+ hours	Lasts from 7,000-10,000 hours
Offers ongoing savings (lower energy bills, no maintenance, no ballasts, reduced cooling costs)	Does not offer ongoing savings
Maintains its light output	Loses 30% of its light output in its first 1,000 hours of operation

### Average Savings in First Year



TITAN LED clients saw an average of a 60% drop in their lighting energy bills.



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# Say 'Aloha' to Savings

It's Time For the Blish-Mize Spring Buying Market, March 18-19

**S**pring weather is on its way, and so are great deals, new products and educational opportunities. Find these at the Blish-Mize Spring Buying Market, which will be held March 18-19 at the Overland Park Convention Center in Overland Park, Kansas.

“This market will be the best opportunity ever to have fun, save money and see what we have that is fresh and new,” says Blish Connor, communications director. “We are trying new things, having exciting events and of course, serving great food. I hope everyone sees the value in attending!”

Once you finish placing your orders, take some time to attend an educational session, chat with some other retailers, or meet up with your Blish-Mize sales rep or another team member who can help you build your business or answer any questions you might have.

Cash Coupons, a group of special coupons featuring key selling items at hot prices, will be used for cash and prize drawings. They'll be featured at the market, and you can find them in your online or printed SmartBook.

Additional cash spiffs will also be offered on select coupon items. Participating vendors will pay the cash spiff when you place your order at their booth. To learn more, visit [blishmize.com](http://blishmize.com) or refer to your SmartBook.

There will also be some new ways to win cash and prizes at this market. “At this show, our customers will collect prize tickets from eligible vendors, and be able to select which



Make plans to attend the Blish-Mize Spring Buying Market, which will be held March 18-19 at the Overland Park Convention Center in Overland Park, Kansas.

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# DEALS

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cash or prize giveaway to enter their tickets into,” says Clay Uhrmacher, vice president of sales and marketing. “We’ll have a selection of cash drawings and a mix of cool prizes.”

Orders of our Cash Coupons, which should be placed at the vendor’s booth, will be redeemable for one prize ticket, and if the order exceeds \$250, an additional bonus ticket will be awarded, he says. “It will be a fun option for our customers to be able to decide which prizes they’d like to take their chances on winning in the drawings.”

Want to see the newest items in the industry? Visit the “WHAT’S NEW!?”

room, where you can see new products and fresh displays. Take a look and find new products to sell to your customers, or look for some ideas on how to change your endcaps, power aisles or other displays.

When you’re finished on the showfloor, it’s time to take a break and grab some dinner. There will be a frozen drink reception from 5:30 p.m. to 6 p.m., and after that, dinner from Fiorella’s Jack Stack, Kansas City’s famous barbecue, will be served. Stick around after dinner for some music from Soca Jukebox.

## THE 24

One of the biggest features at this market will be THE 24, which includes 24 select items that will be showcased with unbelievable discounts.

“We’re doing a lot of new things at this show, and THE 24 will be the biggest highlight,” says Uhrmacher. “This one is an eye-opener. This is a huge opportunity for our customers to take advantage of deeply discounted buys on top-selling items.”

These items, which cover a variety of manufacturers and categories, will be prominently displayed and can be ordered at the vendor’s booth. As with Cash Coupons, orders of THE 24 will be redeemable for one prize ticket, with a bonus ticket for any orders over \$250.

The deals are offered only at the market. Make sure that you attend to take advantage of the savings. Learn more about THE 24 on Page 26.

## Hardware House

While you’re browsing the market floor, make sure to take some time to check out new products from Hardware House, Blish-Mize’s private label brand.

As you look around, take note of a few changes to these projects, including updates to ceiling fans, lighting, vanities and decorative bath hardware. All changes were made based on research and feedback from customers.

To learn more about Hardware House changes, see the story on Page 28.

## Seminars

The market is the perfect opportunity for some additional educational training. Scott Wright of the North American Retail Hardware Association (NRHA) will present “The 5 Keys to Growing Transaction Size” at 9:45 a.m. on Friday and 9 a.m. on Saturday.

BWI will present both days as well, at 2:30 p.m. on Friday and 12:30 p.m. on Saturday. This presentation will cover the latest in the lawn and garden category and give you some ideas of how to update your selection this year.



At the Spring Buying Market, retailers can look for new products, speak with manufacturers, and network with other retailers.

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At 3:30 p.m. on Friday, Central States will host a presentation that will offer some ways you can make a bigger profit on metal roofing materials.

## SmartBook

Start planning your buying now so you can save time at the market later. The SmartBook is customized for your store and includes out-of-warehouse purchases from the last 12 months and ordering amounts over the next three and six months to help you better plan your purchases.

Personalized SmartBooks are sent after you register for the market. You can print yours out ahead of time or view it online.

In addition to your purchase history, SmartBooks include "Market Coupon Items" from participating vendors and a list of any new items Blish-Mize has added from that vendor in the last year.

## Sales Booth

If you need help with your advertising, website, signage or another related service, visit the sales booth. Staff at that booth can offer information on the following:

- Advertising Services
- Website Development
- Grainger Program
- Retail Services
- Remote Ordering Devices
- Hick's Sporting Goods
- Tradavo Snack Program
- Pricing & Profitability Programs
- Interior/Exterior Signage
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## A Very Good Fit

### Customers Share Why They Partnered With Blish-Mize

Many retailers find themselves switching distributors from time to time. We spoke with some customers who have found a good fit with Blish-Mize—some returning

to Blish-Mize after some time away—and they shared their thoughts on what they like so much about working with the distributor.

#### **Webb Home Center, Abilene, Kansas**

“We’ve been long-time Blish-Mize customers. We feel Blish-Mize is true to their word and delivers what they promise. The sales representatives are dependable and go above and beyond when we ask them to help us with anything. They’ve always been more than accommodating.”

—*Matt Engle*



#### **Garnett Siding and Lumber, Garnett, Kansas**

“We’ve worked on and off with Blish-Mize since 2000. In fact, they’re probably the best company I’ve ever worked with in my 41 years of business. We came back to them in 2013—they had built up their product selection, and I think that selection is now better than ever. They are really easy to work with.”

—*Jim Miller*



#### **Edgewood Hardware, Edgewood, Texas**

“Our Blish-Mize salesman kept telling me how good they were, so we decided to give them a try. I can always call him if I need help with anything, or someone with the company is available to help. I’ve also been very pleased with their billing system; it’s really easy to understand.”

—*Linda Whitfield*

#### **Kingman Lumber, Kingman, Kansas**

“If I need something from my Blish-Mize sales rep, it’s an easy call, and he’s quick to help me out. Everyone is so personable and friendly. Blish-Mize offers that high level of personal service. Their vendors are amazing, and they’re quick to help us with any challenge that comes up.”

—*Ashlee Mertens*

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D/S Special  
**\$516<sup>38</sup>**



# 2704079  
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D/S Special  
**\$209<sup>88</sup>**



# 2630078  
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# Save Big With THE 24



Are you ready to find an incredible deal? You will find 24 of them in a new promotion at Blish-Mize's Spring Buying Market, which will be held March 18-19 at the Overland Park Convention Center in Overland Park, Kansas.

The new promotion, known as "THE 24," debuts at this market and will offer big savings on these special items.

"THE 24 will offer unbelievable deals to all retailers who attend the

Spring Buying Market," says Clay Uhrmacher, vice president of sales and marketing at Blish-Mize. "These are 24 select key items from various manufacturers and categories. The value on this promotion alone will be well worth the trip to Overland Park."

Whether you use those savings toward your bottom line or pass them on to your customers is up to you, Uhrmacher says. "It's going to be an opportunity for retailers to either pass along that savings by offering their customers tremendous promotional prices or increase their margins on these key items."

THE 24 will be promoted and on a display, and anyone who wants to order any of these items can do so at the specific vendor's booth.

"In exchange for orders, the vendors will also be handing out tickets for prizes and giveaways," says Uhrmacher.

"We'll be incentivizing orders of the THE 24 and Cash Coupons with enhanced opportunities to win," he says.

The deals available on THE 24 are only available at the market, so you must attend to take advantage of these prices, Uhrmacher says.

"We have retailers taking time away from their stores for the weekend to attend the show," he says. "We want to reward our customers who attend our show by offering them deals that will not be matched anywhere else."

"Our goal is to provide tremendous value for attendance at the market," Uhrmacher says.

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This compact display is a great way to stay organized. Products are easy to reach and it makes inventory a snap!

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# Metal Roofing Made Easy

Quoting a metal roof has always been simple to those who are familiar with the product. However, for retailers and salespeople who are unfamiliar with the product, it can be daunting. But now,

**CentralLink is also very helpful when upselling to a more profitable metal roof. It is easier than ever to provide multiple quotes and show how little it costs to upgrade to a quality metal roof from Blish-Mize.**

Blish-Mize has the tools to make it easier than ever to quote metal roofing.

While using shingles means simply ordering the number of squares needed to install, metal roofing is much more complex and requires accounting for length of panels, overhang, trim pieces and much more. Ordering the wrong length of metal roofing can result in scrapping an entire section of the roof materials and lost profits.

That is why Blish-Mize has partnered with Central States Manufacturing to offer CentralLink, an online roofing estimator to make quoting easier.

CentralLink allows a retailer to generate a quote for four styles of metal roofing. It returns three estimates to choose from.

“The first person to submit a quote has the best chance of getting the job,

and CentralLink helps me get the quote to the customer quickly and accurately,” says Doug Chapuis, owner of Keosauqua Lumber.

CentralLink is also very helpful when upselling to a more profitable metal roof. It is easier than ever to provide multiple quotes and show how little it costs to upgrade to a quality metal roof from Blish-Mize.

CentralLink also allows you to set markups and email the quote directly to your customer, and is also available for contractors who buy through a retailer. Retailers can set markups, and contractors can access CentralLink directly from their smartphones during the sales call.

For more information on how CentralLink can make quoting easier, visit [www.mycentrallink.com](http://www.mycentrallink.com), or ask your Blish-Mize sales representative.

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**“WITH HARDWARE HOUSE PRODUCTS .... IT’S IN THE HOUSE.”**

## Changes to Hardware House

There are some exciting changes taking place in 2016 with our private label brand, Hardware House. As the company is constantly looking for the best categories of goods, we are delivering a fresh selection of products and a better edit of those products that are most successful.

“This change allows us to focus on our strengths and key categories where Hardware House is the leader and primary vendor of choice,” says Jonathan Mize, president and COO for Hardware House. “It also allows us to broaden the selections with new styles and finishes and continue to offer products with improved quality and price.”

These changes pave the way for higher standards, better selection and, most importantly, better margins for Blish-Mize customers. The changes are

based on considerable research and customer feedback.

“A total revamp of the lighting program and ceiling fan lines will bring a designer’s touch to the line,” says Dennis Bigler, Hardware House merchandise manager. “Our outdoor lighting program is also being broadened. We are introducing more decorative bath hardware and more vanities. The line is really moving in a positive direction.”

All of these changes will be featured at the Spring Buying Market in the Hardware House Showcase. Builders’ hardware and cleaning products will be discontinued.

“Hardware House allows the retailer to make good margins at retail, allowing our customers to compete against big-box retailers,” says Clay Uhrmacher, vice president of sales and marketing at Blish-Mize.

“The products offer great quality at a tremendous retail value to the consumer.

“Blish-Mize is planning tremendous promotions in 2016 to give our customers a great opportunity to refresh their offering of all of the new Hardware House products,” Uhrmacher says.



Learn more about Hardware House changes at the Spring Buying Market.

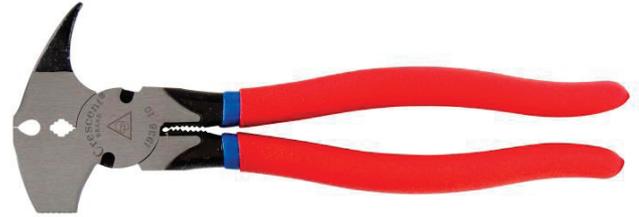
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## IT Staffers Are Here to Help

Have you recently had a technology challenge in your store? If you have, you've probably spoken with Andrew Cross at the IT Help Desk, or maybe one of his colleagues in the IT department.

The six members of the team stay busy updating the Blish-Mize website, working with handhelds, designing ordering software and more. If a retailer or anyone in the corporate office or distribution center has an IT-related problem, the department is there to help.

"There's never a dull moment," says David Griffin, vice president of information technology. "Right now, we're working on voice-picking technology in the warehouse. We do just about any project that comes up that's technology-based. There's always

something we can develop and build to be better."

Besides Griffin and Cross, other members of the department include David Webb, IT technical and database specialist; Darren Reder, IT software developer/analyst; Scott Howard, IT software developer/analyst; and Mary Therese Lee, computer operator.

Webb was responsible for developing the Blish-Mize mobile app.

"The obvious best feature of the app is the barcode scanner that makes it easy to look up item information," says Webb.

"The less-obvious best feature is the way the shopping carts are kept in sync so that you can start an order from the app and finish it on our website, or vice versa."

And the IT department continues to stay busy. "Right now, we're working on a new

look for our website, and we're making some internal updates to keep systems running at optimal speeds," says Griffin.

Have a question for IT? Contact Andrew Cross at the IT Help Desk by calling 800-995-0525, ext. 142.



The IT staff of (left to right) Howard, Webb, Griffin, Lee, Cross and Reder.

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## 90th Birthday Celebration

Gwen Hendricks, who founded Hendricks Hardware in Alma, Kansas, with her husband Marvin in 1952, celebrated her 90th birthday last year. The birthday celebration included an open house at the store, as well as a presentation of the Golden Hammer award, sponsored by Estwing. The award was given to Hendricks for her 63 years of involvement with the hardware industry.

“I’ve learned so much over the years,” says Hendricks. “And I really appreciate the Golden Hammer award.”

Blish-Mize Territory Sales Representative JR Rodgers and Marketing Director Jason Drury presented Hendricks with the award.

“For more than 60 years, Gwen and Hendricks Hardware have been Blish-Mize customers,” says Drury. “We are so proud to include them in our Blish-Mize family and to be able to celebrate this milestone with her and her two sons, Larry and Don, who have grown up in the business.”

Larry and Don now own the store, but Hendricks still comes in daily.

“I just help my sons out now,” she says. “I’ve been here for so long that it’s just part of my life now.”



Gwen Hendricks, who founded Hendricks Hardware with her husband Marvin, celebrated her 90th birthday and received the Golden Hammer award for her 63 years with the hardware industry.

## Long-Time Blish-Mize Employee Retires

After nearly 50 years in the hardware industry, Blish-Mize employee Lloyd Evans retired December 31, 2015.

Evans worked as the customer service manager for Blish-Mize, joining the company in 1989, and quickly becoming a “go-to” employee everyone could rely on and learn from. He developed many friendships during his time at Blish-Mize.

Evans’ plans for retirement include spending more time with his family and cockatiels, as well as working more on some of his hobbies, including photography, woodworking, traveling and volunteering at the Patee House Museum in St. Joseph, Missouri.

## Employee Appreciation Week

Blish-Mize celebrated its annual Employee Appreciation Week in October. The highlight of the weeklong festivities was a company tailgate cookout.

Office employees were provided a ride aboard the Atchison Trolley to the distribution center, where CEO and President Jonathan Mize and Executive Vice President Greg Lutz grilled as a special treat.

Blish-Mize recognized employees for outstanding service, and employees participated in a company trivia game for prizes.

## Making Hardware EASY4U

We recently introduced our new Blish-Mize Mobile App. This tool will allow you to use your mobile device as an inventory and ordering device. Once this tool is loaded onto your mobile device, you will be able to use it to scan a product UPC code or bin label to see if that item is in the Blish-Mize inventory. This enhancement is available ONLY on Blish-Mize Mobile, available from your APP store. Blish-Mize Mobile includes the following features, ALL IN THE PALMS OF YOUR HANDS!

- Full inventory availability, in real time
- Full product image
- Current product pricing
- Your custom retail price
- New items show up instantly
- Quantity buy savings
- Complete ordering functions
- Search and sort

If you have any questions or just want help getting started, more information will be available at the Spring Market.



Blish-Mize’s annual Employee Appreciation Week was held in October.



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# Supplier of the Year

Home Lumber & Supply Co. of Ashland, Kansas, recently awarded Blish-Mize Co. with its Supplier of the Year award. It was the seventh time that Blish-Mize has received this award.

Home Lumber, which has 16 locations in Kansas, is Blish-Mize's oldest customer. Blish-Mize has been serving Home Lumber since it was founded in 1905.

"We are honored to be named Supplier of the Year with Home Lumber & Supply Co.," says Jonathan Mize, CEO and president of Blish-Mize. "This award is voted on by all of the store managers of Home Lumber. It is a testament to our service and longstanding 115-year relationship with this company that we accept this award."



Jonathan Mize, CEO and president of Blish-Mize; John H. Mize, Blish-Mize executive chairman; and John Humphreys, president of Home Lumber.

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- Allows for use of 20V MAX\* Compact Batteries in most DEWALT 18V Tools



### DCN660D1 20V MAX\* 16ga Angled Cordless Finish Nailer Kit

- Drives 16GA 20 degree finish nails 1-1/4" to 2-1/2" lengths
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\*With respect to 12V MAX\*, maximum initial battery voltage (measured without a workload) is 12 volts. Nominal voltage is 10.8.

\*With respect to 20V MAX\*, maximum initial battery voltage (measured without a workload) is 20 volts. Nominal voltage is 18.

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MW Blish Mize New Items Ad 121615.ai/lh/GDS/15-50715

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