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Courtesy Photo

The original Bruce Furniture store in Alliance, NE 1977.

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LAURA BEAHM/Tribune

The Hastings location staff members.

Bruce Furniture earns POWER 50 retailer

John Huthmacher

johnh@hastingstribune.com

When customers come to Bruce Furniture to shop, founder Doug Bruce and his staff have but one goal in mind: To solve the problem at hand.

Whether it be finding a sofa to complete a room, finding the just-right bed to sleep on, or replacing an old recliner purchased there years ago, the mission is to meet each customer's need without compromise.

"We don't sell furniture, we help solve home furnishing problems," Bruce said. "That's been our attitude since 1977. People don't like to be sold anything. When they come here, they've got a problem, and we help solve the problem. That's our philosophy."

"Everyone has different needs. Everyone has a different budget. We try to have a little bit of everything in terms of style, color and budget. Just Right For You aren't mere words. We lived by this yesterday, live by it today, and will for years to come."

Bruce's philosophy and devotion to customer service have earned the store

recognition among the top 1% of furniture stores in the country. His five-store operation was recently ranked 16th among 3,200 stores as a POWER 50 Retailer in its division of independents with sales of less than \$50 million in a single state.

Bruce Furniture has placed among the top 20 stores in the November/December 2021 edition of Home Furnishings Business magazine for the fourth straight year.

The nation's most-read industry magazine, Home Furnishings Business, ranks leading furniture businesses, from coast to coast, based on estimated retail sales of furniture and bedding in each of the markets in which the company engages. Factors considered in the methodology include market share, online engagement, and retail expansion.

"Everyone at Bruce Furniture is truly honored by this recognition," Bruce said.

Bruce Furniture has placed among the top 20 stores in the November/December 2021 edition of the nation's most read industry magazine, Home Furnishings Business.

"Starting off where we did to where we are now, it's humbling," he said. "We have dedicated staff at all our locations. We couldn't accomplish what we have without an outstanding group of people working with you."

"We work together to do what's best for the customer and serve them the best we can. Our tremendously loyal customers over the years are why we are who we are."

Prioritizing customer service has served the business well, Bruce said. Exhibiting an attitude of gratitude has set it apart from other stores, letting the customer know they are valued and appreciated.

"We provide a lot of personal services," he said. "You're not a visitor here very long: you're a friend."

"We look for ways that we can better serve the public. We've offered free delivery since 1977 and don't do any of this RTA (ready to

assemble) stuff where you put it together and hope all the parts are there and everything fits. We don't sell anything where it's not fully assembled and ready to use in your home."

A family-owned and operated business, Bruce continues to rely on the support and insights of his wife, Donna, and oldest son, Michael, to help keep his retail business dream alive. The pair were present in Alliance when the first store opened, and in Michael's case, his ownership role began

in 2000.

"It was a blessing when my son came in," Bruce said. "It's hard to find young people who want to be in the retail business. It's a lot of hours dealing with the public, but he has endorsed it. Like my wife said, the apple doesn't fall too far from the tree."

"Donna has been instrumental since day one. She sacrificed a lot of time, especially early on, when she was one of four employees in Alliance. She's been

patient with all the time I've had to devote to the business, and she's my sounding board. I'm fortunate to have her on my team."

Bruce said Hastings store manager Mac Rundle keeps the store on track with his insights and leadership. But it's been a team effort right on down the line, Bruce said, that has enabled him to finally semi-retire at age 69.



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