

INTERNATIONAL BUILDERS' SHOW

Language program's goal: safer work sites

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Lowe's is putting its logo on a language-learning system produced by Retention Education, a California-based company that has an office in Orlando.

The building-supplies retailer announced its sponsorship of Sed de Saber Construction Edition Thursday at the International Builders' Show. The electronic curriculum uses a modified version of the children's LeapFrog system to teach English to Spanish-speaking adults.

As part of the sponsorship, Lowe's will offer the product at a discount to its commercial customers. It will be available through Lowe's commercial Web site, lowesforpros.com.

"It's a very significant event for us," said Peter Groux, vice president of sales for Retention Education. Groux works in the company's Orlando office.

Retention Education worked with the Home Builders Institute to develop the curriculum, which will have a strong focus on work site safety.

"We know language barriers play a big role in safety on the job site," said Steve Kramer, a vice president with the Home Builders Institute.

In addition to the Lowe's sponsorship, the National Association of Home Builders has agreed to buy 15,000 units, Groux said.

And Pulte Homes is going to do a pilot test in South Florida, Arizona and Nevada, said Kari Lawry, national director of diversity and college recruiting for the home builder. The company hopes the Sed de Saber system will help break down language barriers that may prohibit Hispanic workers from achieving their full potential.

"It's all part of a design to create a more inclusive culture," Lawry said.