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NAOT NAMED NSRA 2017 VENDOR OF THE YEAR

Tucson, AZ –The National Shoe Retailers Association (NSRA) honored Naot as its 2017 Vendor of the Year during NSRA's Leadership Conference held Nov. 8-9, 2017 in Memphis, Tennessee.

Naot – which means “oasis” – is an international success story. Its shoes have been designed and handmade on a small kibbutz, or collective farm, since 1942. Kibbutz Naot Mordechai, named after a fallen soldier, is located in the picturesque Hula Valley in far north Israel. In the late 1980s, when the idea “It’s fashionable to walk in comfort” originated, Naot began manufacturing a large variety of footwear with a unique anatomical footbed made of natural cork and latex, and covered in suede. The footbed is a “negative” print of the foot, just like the footprint we leave when walking in the sand, and the uppers are made of high quality Italian leathers. What was once a small factory that made simple work shoes and sandals has become an international business and is now Israel’s leading manufacturer and exporter of shoes.

For nearly 30 years, Yaleet, Inc., headquartered in Melville, NY, has been the U.S. distributor of the brand. In August 2014, Yaleet president Steve Lax and his wife Susan purchased Naot, including its two factories and more than 60 retail outlets in Israel.

Naot recognizes independents as the backbone of who they are as a company and they strive to do whatever they can to support their retailers. Yaleet protects their retailers by maintaining a tight distribution and not allowing consumers to purchase Naot footwear on the company website. They want to give their retailers that business and rather than competing with their retailers, they want to drive as much business to their stores as they can.

In presenting the award, NSRA past Chairman Rick Ravel (Karavel Shoes, Austin, TX) said, “We have been buying Naot footwear for over 25 years. The Yaleet family, headed by Steve Lax, has been an integral part of our business [and] a strong supporter of the independent retailer. It's a great pleasure to acknowledge Naot, and Steve, as NSRA's Vendor of the Year.”

In accepting the award, Lax shared sentiments of his long-time relationship with the association and many of its retail member stores, and said “We are humbled by this award and share it with each of our thousands of employees world-wide, who are responsible for our service and success.”

About NSRA

NSRA was founded in 1912 to represent independent shoe retailers and provide their companies with business services, education programs and information resources that help them remain profitable and on the leading edge of retail. For more information, please visit www.nsra.org.

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