

Wills said no one in his company can't make a decision.

**"Every manager in every store can do what he thinks is necessary to make business happen," he said.**

"I'd rather have someone make a mistake than not make a mistake. Of course, I don't want them to make the same mistake twice."

Wills has been at the helm of his company during some tumultuous times in the English sector. The disappearance of large distributors such as Eisers, Foxwood and Millers has meant more money spent on sourcing products for the store shelves.

The demise of Millers also sparked another adventure for Wills' daughter and son-in-law, who own and operate Union Hill, an English products manufacturing company.

"It has nothing to do with me," Wills said. "Some of the best retailers in the country are buying substantial amounts of products from them, and so am I."

Wills is a familiar face at trade shows across the United States and around

the world. He is also concerned about the proliferation of plans for English trade shows in the United States.

"We depend on the trade shows ... we need good trade shows with good distributors and good manufacturers," Wills said.

He often takes several staffers to trade shows and they are busy from open to close "and still don't get it all done."

Wills said the challenges to stay on top of the competition and provide stellar customer service are increasingly difficult, even for larger operations such as his.

"The amount of merchandise you need today to satisfy a customer means it's no longer a cottage industry you can run in your garage or your living room," Wills said. "We have 34,000 square feet, and still don't have everything our customers want."

He said retailers "gotta grow or they gotta go."

From his personal perspective, Wills said the next couple of years will be dedicated to "doing a really good job for our customers." 🐾

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## **Ricks Saddle Shop** Best of the Best—English Retailer

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The wooden floor in the center of the Cream Ridge store is designed to create a warm and rich look, a "store within a store."