

Online-shopping application Rosie wins \$200K Startup Labs Syracuse prize

BY ERIC REINHARDT

JOURNAL STAFF

SYRACUSE — CenterState CEO on April 8 awarded the \$200,000 top prize in its Startup Labs Syracuse business competition to Rosie Applications, Inc., an Ithaca-based maker of an online-shopping application.

Rosie Applications receives a cash prize of \$150,000 and \$50,000 in marketing and branding services from Syracuse-based advertising agency Eric Mower + Associates.

The Ithaca company says that its Rosie shopping tool will save customers time, money, and stress by predicting household products they need, before they run out, and ordering them from local grocers and online retailers. Customers purchase online through rosieapp.com or through Rosie's iPhone app and their orders are sent to their favorite local retailers for in-store pickup, Rosie Applications says on its website.

Winning the grand prize means Rosie Applications will have the ability to grow more quickly, hire two full-time employees, and scale nationally by 2014, Nick Nickitas, founder and CEO of the company, said in his remarks while accepting the Startup Labs Syracuse contest victory during CenterState CEO's annual luncheon meeting.

Rosie's patent-pending prediction capability is powered by a proprietary recommen-



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Rosie Applications, Inc. founder and CEO Nick Nickitas addresses the audience after winning the Startup Labs Syracuse business competition on April 8.

dation engine based on machine-learning concepts, the company says. The business is an eLab company, part of Cornell University's incubator, which aims to accelerate the development of startup firms.

Rosie Applications beat out four other businesses — Full Circle Feed of Syracuse; SnagMobile, LLC of Delmar; Pretty Padded

Room of New York City; and Yorango, Inc. of Ithaca — to score the win in the Startup Labs competition.

A panel of judges selected the winner following the competition's demo day on Feb. 7 and after an "intensive" 22-day program where the five finalists worked daily with more than 50 mentors and advisors at The Tech Garden, according to CenterState CEO.

CenterState CEO, the region's major economic-development organization, held its annual meeting at the Nicholas J. Pirro Convention Center at Oncenter. More than 1,000 people attended.

Also at the meeting, a prominent upstate New York business executive discussed how Central New York business and community leaders could adapt to meet new challenges facing their companies.

Kevin Warren, president of U.S. client operations at Xerox Corp., gave the keynote address.

"The key to sustainability and growth is being open to reinvention and the opportunities that come with it," Warren said. "Regardless of industry, businesses must be skilled at changing. There is tremendous opportunity with change, but most people associate change with loss because it's a disruption. No one can avoid disruption, but we can choose how to drive change."

CenterState CEO also honored four companies with its annual "Business of the Year" award, including Tops Friendly Markets in the category of firms with more than 50 employees. It named Terakeet Corp. the winner among the finalists with fewer than 50 employees.

Syracuse University earned the award for community involvement. And, the Onondaga Historical Society won in the nonprofit category.

Based in Syracuse, CenterState CEO is a nonprofit organization focused on business leadership and economic development in a 12-county region of Central New York. It represents more than 2,000 members. □

Contact Reinhardt at ereinhardt@cnybj.com