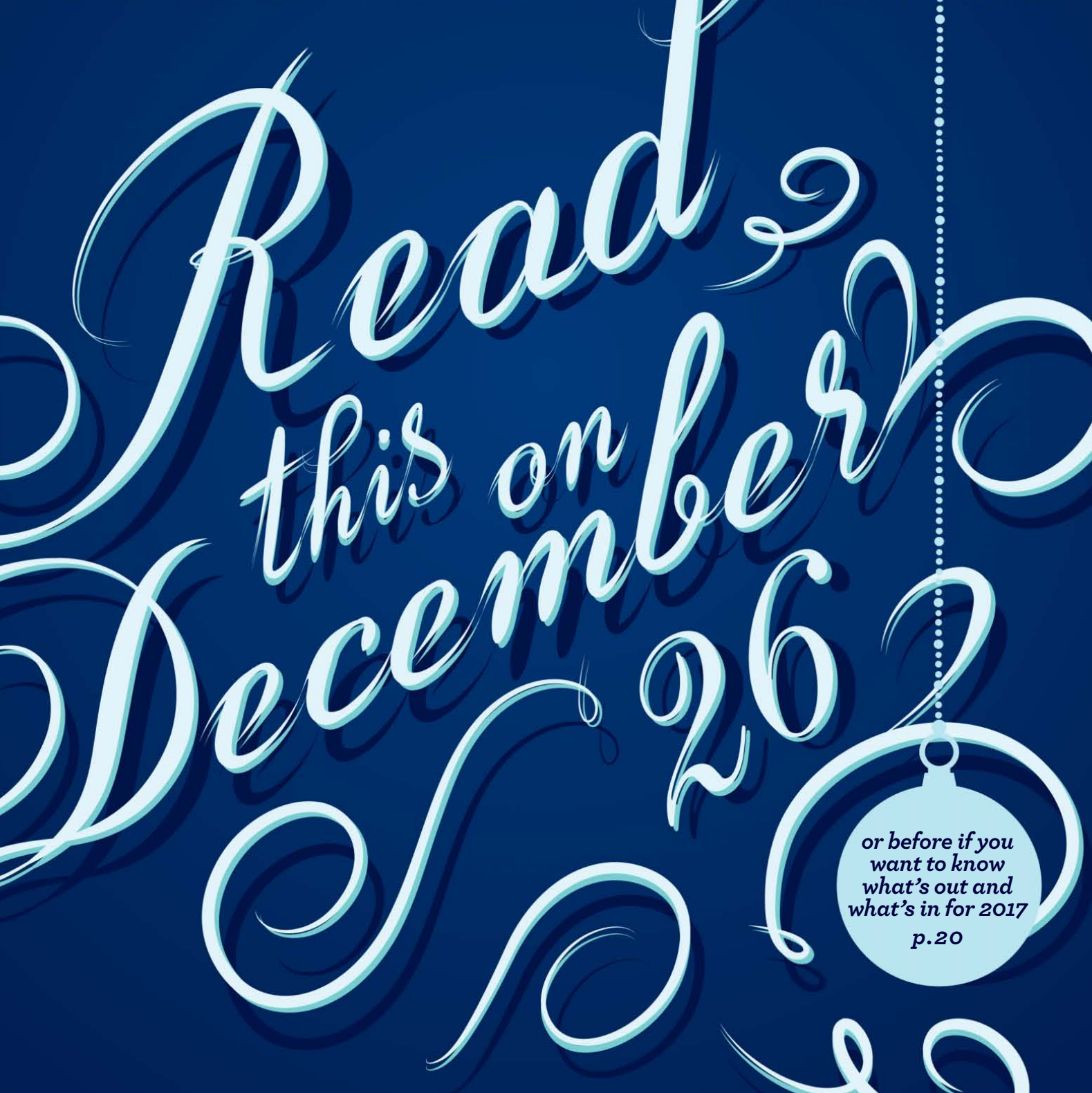


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DECEMBER 2016 | VOLUME 33 | NUMBER 10

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Viewpoint BRAD DENHAM

THE REAL DISRUPTORS

> Last September, Floral Management ran a story on a handful of new start-up companies trying to “transform the way people buy flowers.” The story posed questions about the companies, including how seriously the industry should take them.

The problem is, for these start-ups to disrupt a traditional model of buying flowers, we have to assume the industry still follows a traditional order and distribution channel. The reality is, this model doesn't exist. New technology, improved logistics, increased costs, lower margins and consumer demand already have encouraged disruption, making it possible for businesses in the traditional distribution channel to remove layers from the distribution process, which is why we see many growers and wholesalers now selling direct to public, retailers bypassing wholesalers, etc.

In fact, the traditional floral industry was disrupted long ago, as many younger consumers have grown up in the age of ordering online flowers shipped direct to consumer in a box, a change that was the most significant disruption to the traditional way of buying flowers. Many of these new start-ups simply have found a more unique value proposition, or marketing strategy, to win their share of that business. To say that these new start-ups are disrupting the consumer buying flow from a florist would be a stretch.

Many of these start-ups have a viable, albeit low-margin business model already proven by ProFlowers, FTD and 1-800-Flowers. They are a force to be reckoned with, especially if you are in the business of shipping flowers in a box. This is the segment where these start-ups will have the most impact because of their not-so-mainstream marketing savvy. (Who doesn't want to imagine their flowers harvested off the back of a volcano?)

But the challenges they face are real. Many of the start-ups have already expressed concerns around the high cost of logistics and their ability to satisfy consumer demand while staying true to their models. Building a model that scales with their unique products and specialty services will be hard. After all, how realistic are fresh flower deliveries on a bike in Phoenix, Arizona? In my ex-

perience working with investment companies, the pressure builds to deliver a return on investment. If these start-ups are not delivering profits, they will not last.

The reality is there are things retail florists can do better. The technology gap is closing thanks to a bevy of website, SEO and tech providers. Florists have the unique advantage of consumer preference and benefit of supporting local businesses, whether the flowers being sold are sourced domestically or abroad. In addition, local florists have the unique ability to promote their brick and mortar store for pick-ups, last-minute or impulse purchases, which we see happening more each successive holiday. For proof of the value proposition of “bricks versus clicks,” look no further than the world's largest internet retailer: Amazon is quietly opening physical retail locations to support their multi-channel approach to retailing. They also recently announced their plans to open retail grocery stores as a matter of “convenience” to their customers. Likewise, some of the start-ups in your story have also partnered with brick-and-mortars to address the challenges of delivery and logistics.

These changes prove that local florists have something everyone else needs in order to provide their customers consistent service in real time. Let's just say I wouldn't want to be an investor holding the note on start-ups when local florists stop operating out of fear and start capitalizing on their true competitive advantages. I like to tell florists, “anyone can sell it, but not anyone can make and deliver it!” In my opinion, that makes “traditional” florists the true disruptors. 🌿

Brad Denham is a founding partner of Arizona Family Florist, the parent company of Arizona Florist, Arizona Flower Market and LUX Wedding Florist. Arizona Family Florist was named Floral Management's Marketer of the Year in 2012. brad@azfamilyflorist.com





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What Inspires Us

➤ Jim Dion has a way of making his audience a bit anxious. The internationally known retail strategist was a featured speaker at SAF Maui 2016, and the title of his session hinted that his was no “lite” motivational talk: “The Complacency Trap: Don’t Get Caught Doing What Worked Yesterday When Customers Already Are Obsessed with What They Want Tomorrow.” Indeed, Dion laid out what separates the winners from the losers in retail today and what the 400 or so floral industry members in the audience need to do to ensure their “winner” status. Namely: “Shift your thinking or risk becoming irrelevant,” he said, pointing to cab drivers, travel agents and scores of other fields that are imperiled due to “disrup-

tive technology.” Who started it all? Amazon, of course.

Dion also threw out terms such as “merchaintainment” and “retailtainment” and said that discounts, coupons, loyalty points and omnichannel access are very basic expectations of today’s consumer. And how, despite — or, more accurately, *because of* — the proliferation of online shopping, brick-and-mortar retailers have to make a conscious effort to actually *slow the shopper down* in the store.

What to do with all of this? Those who were in the room for Dion’s presentation went home with a notebook full of ideas to talk about and, presumably, factor into some of their plans for 2017 and beyond. What about the thousands of floral industry members who weren’t in the room (and those who were but aren’t quite sure what to do next)? That’s where we come in.

Floral Management Senior Contributing Editor Mary Westbrook hijacked Dion for a few hours this fall to uncover what retail florists should actually *do* with this information (and what they should stop doing). From there, she sought out savvy retailers already demonstrating Dion’s mandates. To present it in as digestible a format as possible, we borrow from the time-honored “what’s out/what’s in” lists that pepper



lifestyle and fashion publications this time of year. We hope you’ll find some time after the holidays to soak in “Prime Time,” p. 20, and that it becomes fodder for your team meetings in early January.

The convention gave our editorial team plenty of fodder as well. In fact, the most provocative speakers and programs from SAF Maui 2016 will inform much of what we do in Floral Management in 2017, with new monthly columns, cover stories and much, much more. After all, as Dion would put it, we don’t want to get caught doing what worked yesterday, when we know you count on us to help you figure out what you should be doing tomorrow. 🌿

Kate Penn
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More Online ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON WWW.SAFNOW.ORG



UPLOADING ADVICE

Fact: photos and videos net the best engagement on social media. Need a tutorial on how to do it? Search “**mobile madness webinar**” on safnow.org, and watch Episode 3, “Uploading Photos and Video to Social Media.” Then you can really put to use that social media calendar you’ll be creating after reading this month’s Plugged In (p. 42).



GENERATE EDITOR LOVE

Get some last-minute holiday tips in quick 40-second bites, straight from the queen of public relations, SAF Vice President of Marketing Jennifer Sparks. Search “**marketing quick tip for the holidays**” at safnow.org.



ON PUMPKINS AND TURKEYS

How did your shop do compared to other retailers for Halloween and Thanksgiving – not to mention Black Friday, Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday? Check out the results of the survey of all SAF retail florists by searching “Fall survey” at safnow.org.



SEARCH AND YOU SHALL FIND

Trying to locate that that article about the florist in New York with the event business? Or that cool holiday open house idea? Search for them and any other topic in Floral Management’s digital edition archives — log onto the digital edition and use the search tool to locate past articles (be sure to click on “all past issues” if you’re not sure which issue the article you’re looking for was published).

safnow.org/floralmanagement

My design captures the childlike wonder of the holidays.

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The holidays are pure magic when seen through the eyes of a child. My playful centerpiece arrangement embodies this youthful anticipation with fun textures, brushed gold garlands, and the repetition of curled glitter sticks and sparkling ornaments. I also used red rose sprays and assorted pines to balance the design with natural, elegant beauty. Give your customers the gift of creativity this season, and get inspired at oasisfloralproducts.com/inspire.



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'Tis the season for thanking floral designer Shonda Cunningham from Ogden, UT, for this magical inspiration. Enter our Inspire Design Showcase on Facebook for the chance to have your design featured!



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SAF Member Forum

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Overtime Means Overpriced

> [With regards to] this new California bill ("Governor Signs California Overtime Bill," Industry News, November 2016), I am assuming it will affect the cost of flowers passed on to the retail florist. The constant upward swing of flower prices has to stop or the retail flower shop will be no longer.

The cost of flowers for small brick-and-mortar retail shops [versus mass marketers and online retailers who buy in large quantities] is out of control. The average customer is dumbfounded by the cost of a flower arrangement. Real and ongoing conversations about this need to be happening and they're not. I suppose the growers and wholesalers must sell to the drop shippers and large budget event florists in order to stay in business, but what about the retail florists who are just hoping to make payroll?

Claire Waldbart Kramer, Alex Waldbart Florist, St. Louis, Missouri

Mile-High Feedback

SAF 1-Day Profit Blast attendees weigh in on their experience at the event held in late October in Denver.

> These events SAF commits to are great learning experiences for everyone in the business, and I highly recommend others attend. I recommend that SAF have these in regions throughout the US so others can make it as well.

Joel Houston, Flowers Plus, Charlotte, North Carolina

> I am a dinosaur as far as social media goes, so this seminar helped me to understand it much better.

Wayne Perlo, Fioravanti Florist, Rochester, New York

> I finished design school a week before the seminar—talk about perfect timing! [I gained] a ton of valuable knowledge, tips, tricks and strategies that I can start implementing right away. Being able to meet several vendors and other professionals in our industry was also a highlight.

Sarah Rovner, Calla Blue Florals, LLC, Aurora, Colorado

> We brought five members of our team to the Profit Blast. They all agreed it was worth giving up their Sunday to learn more about the topics presented.

Lisa Golter, Longmont Florist, Longmont, Colorado 🌸



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SAF in Action

WHAT HAVE WE DONE FOR YOU LATELY? SAF'S TOP 10 MEMBER PERKS IN 2016

➤ Society of American Florists membership has plenty of perks, and this year members put the resources to good, often profit-producing or sales-enhancing, use.

Here's a round-up of some of the year's most popular services from SAF, along with information on how you can start putting them to work in your business today.

1. Respond to Negative Publicity.

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Give mom what she really wants this Mother's Day. Shop now! ➤

FAST ACTION ESPN removed "Forget flowers" from its Mother's Day promotion after hearing from SAF.

Just two days after SAF asked ESPN to pull its Mother's Day promotion that read "Forget flowers," the global sports network responded with a new ad. "We passed your feedback along to the appropriate teams and, upon reflection, decided it was best to adjust the copy," said ESPN Senior Publicist Ana Livia Coelho in an email to SAF. As the voice of the industry, SAF urges companies to promote their products on their own merits. Members who spot negative publicity should report them to jscala@safnow.org.

2. Recover Bounced Checks.



GET PAID The checXchange Mobile App makes it easier to recover funds from bad checks.

The checXchange Mobile App quickly and effectively recovers bounced checks. Provided by Money Transfer Systems, this app lets business owners use their iPhone, iPad, or Android device to scan bad checks and have them securely processed for recovery of funds within 14 days. For details, visit safnow.org/business-service-discounts.

3. Learn at Your Laptop.

SAF added new offerings to its catalog of online education. Members and their staff can sharpen skills through webinars, such as "Mother's Day Pricing for

Profits" and "The Generations of Flowers Study." Watch them at safnow.org/webinars.

Watch Now Party Like a Pro

Presenter: Derrick Myers, CPA, CFP, PFCL, Crockett, Myers & Associates, Inc.

Ever find yourself wondering how much to mark up your product, how much you should charge for design, labor or delivery? In just 30 minutes, floral industry financial expert Derrick Myers will show you the formulas to make your events profitable every time. We'll also discuss how to bridge the gap between a bride's "Pinterest" dream wedding and her budget, and how to make extra money as the wedding day coordinator.

You'll learn:

- Proven strategies for planning profitable events

PARTY LIKE A PRO SAF webinars tackle specific questions related to pricing, sales and labor.

4. Cash In On a New Vehicle.



HOT WHEELS SAF members, their employees and family can combine a stackable cash allowance with most retail incentives to get a great price on a FCA vehicle.

During the first three quarters of the year, SAF members had purchased 71 vehicles using the \$500 cash allowance though the Vehicle Discount program with FCA US LLC. The cash allowance is off the final negotiated price of a Jeep, Chrysler, FIAT, Ram, or Dodge model and is stackable with most retail incentives, toward the purchase or lease of a vehicle. The program includes "On The Job" incentives — up to \$1,000 for equipment, or a company logo or graphic, for work vehicles. For details, visit safnow.org/fca.

5. Partner Up for Positive Buzz.

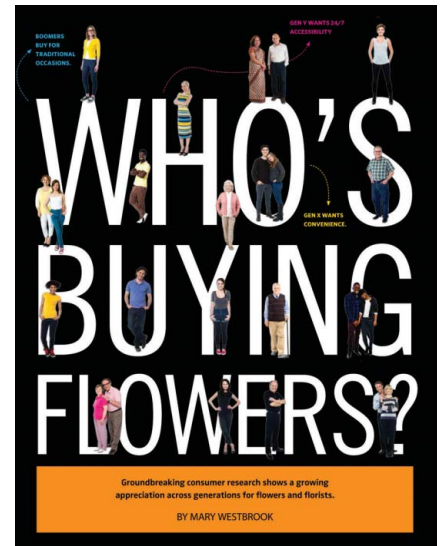


KEEP IT GOING SAF is running paid social media promotions of its Petal It Forward video. Watch and share from aboutflowers.com/youtube.

For the second year, SAF spearheaded Petal It Forward—a random acts of kindness effort where people received two bouquets, one to keep and one to give —

to show the emotional benefits of receiving *and* giving flowers. On Oct. 19, local florists organized 262 Petal It Forward events in 234 cities in all 50 states while SAF staged a kick-off giveaway in New York City. Together, those efforts generated more than 274 million consumer impressions. Read more on p. 30.

6. Put Consumer Research to Work.



GET THE SCOOP The May issue of Floral Management magazine examined the results from the 2016 Generations of Flowers Study.

SAF has been an instrumental part of research initiatives designed to advance knowledge in the industry, including the 2016 Generations of Flowers Study that reveals the attitudes, buying habits, and barriers of three generations of consumers. Funded by the American Floral Endowment through the Floral Marketing Research Fund, the study outlines how the market has grown since SAF's 2009 original study and provides insights that can guide marketing efforts. Access the study analysis and more at safnow.org/generationsstudy.

7. Learn and Network — Close to Home.

Thanks to partnerships with member wholesalers, SAF held 1-Day Profit Blasts in four cities this year: Austin, Texas (February), Cincinnati, Ohio (April), Denver (October) and Columbus, Ohio (November). Presentations included

SAF in Action

customer service, best practices for online marketing, and wedding design inspiration. Rakini Chinery, AAF, AzMF, of Allan's Flowers in Prescott, Arizona, described her experience at the Austin event: "This was a great shot in the arm for my business. I have pages of notes from just a single day of presentations and feel armed with new ideas."



INSPIRED Cyleste Mackey of Fassler Florist Floral & Event Designers in Fort Wright, Kentucky, took advantage of the 1-Day Profit Blast in Cincinnati last spring.

8. Learn and Network — in Paradise.



PERFECT SETTING Jacqueline and Valerie Lee Ow of J. Miller Flowers & Gifts in Oakland, California, and Toi Mulligan of The Gilded Lily Florist in Spokane, Washington, were among the 88 first-time SAF convention attendees in Maui.

SAF Maui 2016, the association's 132nd Annual Convention, attracted 400 industry members across business segments. The 38 educational sessions included "Don't Get Caught Doing What Worked Yesterday When Customers Are Obsessed with What They Want Tomorrow" and "Dealing with Difficult Employees." For Sally Kobylinski of InBloom Florist in Orlando, the lessons were powerful: Less than 2 weeks after

returning home, she utilized strategies from the "ABCs of Social Media Advertising"— which transforming the way she uses Instagram and Facebook.

9. Practical Marketing for Prom and Women's Day.

SAF's social media campaign to promote the Prom Quiz at aboutflowers.com/promquiz, designed to get teens excited about flowers and point them to member florists, generated 2 million impressions. Members got resources at safnow.org/prom.

SAF's Women's Day campaign on Facebook helped raise awareness about the observance and the idea that flowers are the perfect gesture to recognize women. Members also got promotional advice at safnow.org/womensday.



PROM ACED In partnership with Asocolflores, SAF launched a campaign touting the Prom Quiz at aboutflowers.com/promquiz.

10. Connect with Lawmakers and Funding.

After SAF's annual Congressional Action Days in Washington, D.C. in March, some members hosted lawmakers at their businesses. Nick Fronduto of Jacobsen Floral Supply in Boston welcomed Rep. Michael Capuano (D-Massachusetts); Rep. Annie Kuster (D-New Hampshire) visited Doug Cole of D.S. Cole Growers in Loudon, New Hampshire; and Martin Meskers, AAF, of Oregon Flowers in Aurora, Oregon, hosted Rep. Kurt Schrader (D-Oregon). "When members of Congress learn about your business, they become better informed about how their actions affect your ability to grow your business," said SAF's Shawn McBurney, senior director of government relations. He helps members invite lawmakers for a visit. For guidance, contact smcburney@safnow.org.

Beyond CAD, SAF successfully lobbied for \$36.5 million in federal funding that will support floriculture research: studies that focus on how to choose pesticides that protect pollinators and find economical ways of dealing with downy mildew diseases. SAF was also a key player in securing \$58 million for federal studies to investigate ways of preventing the spread of pests and diseases. 🌿



HOME TURF Rep. Pete Sessions (R-Texas) (center) with Charles Ingram (right) and store manager Lizzie Dunnet at Dr. Delphinium Designs & Events in Dallas shortly after CAD.

SAF DUES ANNOUNCEMENT

The SAF Board of Directors approved a nine percent dues increase for 2017 so the association can continue to provide the quality content and practical products and services members value and expect. Dues are not tax-deductible as a charitable contribution but may be reported as an ordinary and necessary business expense (except 16 percent, since it constitutes SAF's direct expense for lobbying activities). Questions? Contact Brian Walrath: (800) 336-4743, ext. 231; info@safnow.org.

Hands On

TIPS, TRENDS AND TACTICS FOR THE SAVVY RETAILER

FIRSTHAND ACCOUNT

POKÉMON DRAWS YOUNGER CUSTOMERS INTO PHILLY FLORIST



WORK IT OUT Once Stein Your Florist Co. in Philadelphia realized it was a Pokémon Gym, the shop embraced its role in the augmented reality game, painting its store entrance and stocking up Pokémon GO goods. This winter, they may have a Pokémon-themed lounge for players.

➤ Last summer, a college apprentice at Stein Your Florist Co. in Philadelphia came to work and said, “Did you know we’re a Pokémon gym?” The owners’ first reaction? Poké what?

Since then, the shop, which has a second location in Burlington, New Jersey, has embraced its role in the augmented reality game — a role, by the way, it had no hand in securing.

Pokémon GO uses the GPS and camera of players’ smartphones to turn the real world into a hunting ground for Pokémon, but it also transforms local landmarks and businesses into Pokémon Gyms (where trainers go to train their Pokémon and battle other teams) and PokéStops, where players can stock up on free accessories and items such as PokéBalls. Business owners have no say in the gym locations and some find it a nuisance to have players lurking around outside. Once Stein Your Florist realized it was part of the game, however, the shop jumped on the fad.

“We’re always striving to be hip and on trend, so within a week we had hired a local artist to paint our shop entrance to look like a Pokémon gym and expanded our product line to include Pokéballs, Pokémon plush and key

chains,” said Jennifer Kelly. “We painted bubble bowls to look like Pokéballs and planted them with succulents and dish gardens and even created our own artificial Pokéball rose.”

Their enthusiasm played well with customers who have gone “crazy over the Poké products and especially love adding them to their floral arrangements,” Kelly said. “People stop on the street to take pics and selfies in front of our Pokémon gym window and players come by daily to battle for Pokémon gym supremacy.”

The Pokémon association has also been a gift for social media — all those selfies include Stein hashtags (#steinflo-ristpokemon), and store employees, who downloaded the game themselves once they were alerted to their gym status, have been posting photos regularly of their own “Poké catches.” (That’s something any shop can do to connect with customers and be part of the craze, even if you aren’t a gym, Kelly noted.)

While the shop doesn’t have a precise breakdown of sales directly related to Pokémon goods, Kelly said they’ve seen more foot traffic and a “bit of a [sales] boost,” with game-related merchandise selling out.

“We started with a modest order and we have since reordered several times,” Kelly said. “We have also noticed an increase in the number of young people coming into our store, typically ages 15-30, making more impulse purchases, single flowers, small bouquets and, of course, Pokémon items.”

And the team at Stein isn’t looking to back away from its Pokémon affiliation soon.

“We are considering a few ‘Poké promotions’ in the form of giveaways, such as a free flower if you are on the team that is currently in control of our Pokémon gym or a free flower if you post a pic on social media,” Kelly said. “As the weather gets cooler, players will be looking for a warm refuge in which to play, so we may add a sitting area to lure more playing customers in and sell pre-packaged snacks and drinks.” 📺



GO DEEPER

Read about how a florist in Trumbull, Connecticut, jumped on another social media fad, “The Mannequin Challenge,” and created a video with nearly 4,000 views (search “mannequin” at safnow.org.)

BEST PRACTICES

BUILD A POSITIVE FEEDBACK LOOP

> According to Christine Porath, associate professor of management at Georgetown University, one single action, providing feedback, can be the difference between employees who cut and run and workers who stay on and grow.

"Research shows that one of the best ways to help employees thrive is to give them feedback," wrote Porath in the Harvard Business Review. "It's one of the primary levers leaders have to increase a sense of learning and vitality."

Positive feedback is especially good at motivating people, writes Porath. Among the research she points to:

- **IBM's WorkTrends survey** of more than 19,000 workers in 26 countries revealed that the engagement level of employees who receive recognition is almost three times higher than the engagement level of those who do not. The same survey showed that employees who receive recognition are also far less likely to quit.
- After **JetBlue** implemented its first global recognition program, which allowed employees to nominate peers for awards, employee satisfaction increased by 88 percent. 🌿



BENCHMARK

SPECIFIC RESOLUTIONS MAKE FOR STRONGER RESOLUTIONS

> Nearly half of Americans will make New Year's resolutions at the end of this month. The bad news? Only about 8 percent of those people will successfully stick to those goals. That's according to research from the University of Scranton. A big predictor of your success, whether you are resolving to make professional or personal changes? Make your resolution clear and make it known: People who explicitly state their resolutions are 10 times as likely to stay with them. 🌿

Popular Resolutions

Self-improvement or education-related resolutions	47%
Weight-related resolutions	38%
Money-related resolutions	34%
Relationship-related resolutions	31%

SOURCE: University of Scranton. Journal of Clinical Psychology

LIFE AT WORK

HOLIDAY BONUS TWEAKS

> 'Tis the season... to feel like the Grinch?

If you can't afford to give staff a bonus this year, you're not alone. But that doesn't mean that you can't recognize hard work at year's end (or any busy time) in other ways, according to Tim Huckabee, AIFSE, of FloralStrategies. In fact, that's exactly what you should be doing if you want to keep morale high and turnover low.



"Giving staff a Christmas bonus is a great way to thank them for their hard work and to make them feel appreciated," Huckabee said. "But don't think about a bonus in the narrow scope of a pile of bills in fancy envelope, they are many, creative ways to spread the holiday cheer."

His suggestions include:

Personal touch. When Huckabee worked at Surroundings Flowers in New York City, the owner would give each member of his 30-person team a Christmas card with a note that commented on some aspect of their duties or job performance. "One year my message mentioned appreciation for the work I had done on the producing the newsletter we mailed to our customers," Huckabee said. "Even if you are not in a financial position to give anything to your team, simply acknowledging them with a holiday card or buying the group lunch on Friday, December 23 will go a long way."

Time off. In addition to the note, Huckabee's boss told him to take two extra vacation days over the summer "in gratitude for your hard work." Think about following that example, Huckabee said. "But there are options too: gift cards for local business, lottery tickets, a voucher for a visit to a day spa, etc.," he said. "There are no right or wrong options, but I firmly believe that it's the thought that counts. Staff want to be acknowledged and appreciated." 🌿

On My To-Do List

JANUARY 2017

Twitter, Facebook posts Calls to b-days, anniversaries Change website products to reflect buying trends Attend networking event

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>1 </p> <p>NEW YEAR'S DAY</p>	<p>2 </p> <p>Manager meeting: VDay scheduling</p>	<p>3 </p> <p>Draft VDay press release (Get help, safnow.org)</p>	<p>4 </p> <p>Confirm VDay products with suppliers</p>	<p>5 </p> <p>Spot check cooler and vehicles</p>	<p>6 </p> <p>Epiphany</p>	<p>7 </p> <p>Drink some herbal tea</p>
<p>8 </p> <p>Try aromatherapy</p>	<p>9 </p> <p>Train VDay seasonal hires</p>	<p>10 </p> <p>Create VDay checklist for quality control in design room</p>	<p>11 </p> <p>Review VDay delivery routes/logistics</p>	<p>12 </p> <p>Pre-write blog posts for Feb</p>	<p>13 </p> <p>Pre-write social media posts for Feb</p>	<p>14 </p> <p>Try aromatherapy</p>
<p>15 </p> <p>Make time for a nap</p>	<p>16 </p> <p>MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY</p>	<p>17 </p> <p>Cut VDay delivery slips</p>	<p>18 </p> <p>Distribute VDay press release</p>	<p>19 </p> <p>Update holiday images on social media</p>	<p>20 </p> <p>Presidential Inauguration</p>	<p>21 </p> <p>Make time for a nap</p>
<p>22 </p> <p>Drink some herbal tea</p>	<p>23 </p> <p>Promote early order offers</p>	<p>24 </p> <p>Foam VDay baskets</p>	<p>25 </p> <p>Make VDay bows</p>	<p>26 </p> <p>Tie raffia on VDay containers</p>	<p>27 </p> <p>Staff meeting: VDay processes</p>	<p>28 </p> <p>Make time for a nap</p>
<p>29 </p> <p>Drink some herbal tea</p>	<p>30 </p> <p>String VDay balloons</p>	<p>31 </p> <p>Promote early delivery offers</p>				

I RECOMMEND: GOOD SCENTS, TEA AND THE SNOOZE BUTTON

Brad Denham, Founding partner of Arizona Family Florist, the parent company of Arizona Florist, Arizona Flower Market and LUX Wedding Florist



Owning multiple businesses comes with a high level of stress and great expense of personal time. I tell people being a serial entrepreneur is not full- or part-time job, it's a lifestyle. A lifestyle that doesn't always allow time to sleep and relax. Disconnecting can be difficult, so when the opportunity arises, I want to take full advantage. **Aroma therapy** is an amazing way to dissolve tension and nothing is

better than Aveda's Blue Oil, a concentrate of peppermint, blue chamomile and menthol. It's small roller bottle is convenient to carry and easy to apply. **Sleep** is a precious commodity and when there is time to catch a little shut eye nothing is better than sliding into soft, natural cotton sheets with a fresh application of Bath and Body Works "Sleep" Pillow Mist, a blend of lavender and chamomile. Stress can be a

barrier to my creative mindset. A great way to relax and unlock that creativity is **herbal tea**. One of my favorites is "Get Relaxed" by the The Republic of Tea. It's made of organic rooibos, chamomile and passionflower, along with eleuthero root, which is reported to have stress-reducing effects. *Read Denham's take on why local, retail florists are the true disruptors in the floral industry on p. 2*

floral management's

floral management
THE FLORAL BUSINESS AUTHORITY

Inside: Pantone's Autumn Hues, p. 20, 42
Dealing with Online Reviews, p. 40
Mark-ups Made Simple, p. 36

OCTOBER 2016 | VOLUME 33 | NUMBER 8



2016 Winner Nielsen's Florist and Garden Shop, Darien, Connecticut

Enter Floral Management's 24th Annual Marketer of the Year contest and you could win \$5,000, sponsored by Design Master color tool, Inc. and be on the cover of the September 2017 issue of Floral Management.

What makes a winner? Judges look for unique, innovative and successful marketing efforts. It can be a single campaign, or a series of promotional and advertising efforts over the course of a year or more.

24th Annual Marketer of the Year Contest

Join the Ranks of Those Who've Won \$5,000!



2015 Winner: Butera the Florist, York, Pennsylvania



2014 Winner: Lane DeVries, Sun Valley Group

Get your entry form today!

Call (800) 336-4743 to request an entry form or get it online at safnow.org/marketeroftheyear.

**Entry deadline:
June 2, 2017**

Dear Tim...

RUSTY OR READY?

I am bringing back extra help for the holidays who have not been here for a year. What's the best way to get them up to speed on all that we have learned in your column?

TIFFANY WESSELER | OWNER | EAGLEDALE FLORIST | INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Thanks for being a loyal reader and a follower of the FloralStrategies process!

Over the years I have stressed the importance of listening better, not being afraid to engage customers and offering higher price points when appropriate. Whether you are welcoming back holiday help, trying to motivate your permanent team or both, here are some easy guidelines to maximize sales this month.

START WITH A MEETING

Gather your staff — each day if necessary — to review your holiday specials, prices and policies. This may seem like a no-brainer but the better prepared your staff, the fewer mistakes they'll make and the bigger your sales will be. This is a great time to offer them an incentive for selling add-ons ("finishing touches") or designs above a certain price point. You should discuss sales and productivity goals, too.

TAKE A BETTER OUTGOING ORDER

As the volume of outbound orders increases make sure the team knows your minimums and fees and basic rules such as not promising delivery times. Review the highlights on taking a second choice, "On the outside chance the shop does not have that container/those flowers, we'll ask them to get as close as possible to create that same look and feeling!"

SELL THOSE FINISHING TOUCHES

Remind the group that customers choose the extras (teddys, balloons etc.) in droves when they shop online so it's important to give them that same opportunity when they're in the store or on the phone. Stay away from the old-fashioned question approach, "Do you want to add anything else?" and instead position yourself as an expert offering advice, "As a finishing touch I can include a box of our delicious locally made chocolates for just \$X."

DON'T SHY AWAY FROM BIG TICKET ITEMS

Many customer send flowers as the Christmas gift (i.e. they won't see Grandma at the holiday so these flowers are coming in their place), so let them spend big! Look up the average sale when dealing with a repeat customer and start a few dollars above that price point. Leverage the card message to start higher, "On behalf of all her children and grandchildren I suggest sending our LARGE Christmas arrangement at \$XYZ"

GIVE YOUR TEAM THE 'RIGHT' PRICE POINTS

Knowing that customers traditionally spend more liberally at the holidays, make sure your your team members have impressive designs and bigger price points to offer on the phone and on the sales floor. When customers come into your shop they should be greeted with some 'WOW' arrangements (\$150 to \$200 or higher) in your cooler to indulge their desire to splurge on their loved ones. Don't turn them into Scrooges by capping their spending choices at \$75! 🌿



Tim Huckabee is the president of FloralStrategies, which provides sales, service and POS system training to the retail and

wholesale sectors of our industry. Tim and his staff have been traveling the globe since 1997 to educate florists of all sizes to engage customers in bold new ways while learning how these successful shops operate on all levels. tim@floralstrategies.com

The Best of Tim
This is Tim Huckabee's last column in Floral Management, but readers can access all of the great advice Tim has given over the years in the "Best of CSI: Flower Shop" and "Dear Tim" collections. Search for both, at safnow.org.





Let's Make Democracy Personal Again.

You're an individual not a statistic. Your concerns can't be summed up in an opinion poll. You have complex business challenges that affect people you see every day — family, employees, customers, suppliers — everyone who relies on you and your business.

After a noisy, chaotic election year, SAF's job in Washington is clear. Refocus lawmakers' attention on floral industry issues, and — most importantly — anchor them with human perspective.

Members of Congress are deluged daily with facts and "expert" opinions on every issue imaginable. What they want — and need — are the personal stories of ordinary citizens about how laws and regulations affect real people's daily lives.



That's something only YOU can tell them.

And they need to hear it from you in person and in Washington, D.C.

Mark your calendar for SAF's 37th Annual Congressional Action Days —
March 13-14, 2017.

It's time to make democracy personal again.

37th Annual
SAF
Congressional Action Days

MARCH 13-14, 2017
WASHINGTON, D.C.

safnow.org/congressional-action-days

SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FLORISTS

Follow  #safcad

Fresh Choices TREND-SETTING TIPS FOR BUYING FRESH CUT FLOWERS AND GREENS

TOP NOTCH TULIPS

➤ Although the perceived value of the tulip has dropped exponentially since its heyday in 1637 (when a single bulb fetched more than 10 times a craftsman's annual salary!), tulip quality is better than ever.

Vase life for the newest tulips is eight to 10 days—double what it was a decade ago, said Jan Ligthart, a breeder in Den Helder, the Netherlands who has created more than 250 varieties in his 40-plus year career. The latest varieties are also more resistant to diseases such as botrytis and fusarium wilt and they grow with upward facing leaves, “which makes picking and packing simpler tasks,” he added.

The tulip breeding process is long and laborious. “Most plants undergo a lab procedure that creates clones via tissue culture, but this is not possible with tulips,” said Tyler Meskers, operations manager at Oregon Flowers in Aurora, Oregon. “Breeders use an old fashioned method of collecting pollen and hybridizing to produce upgraded cultivars.”

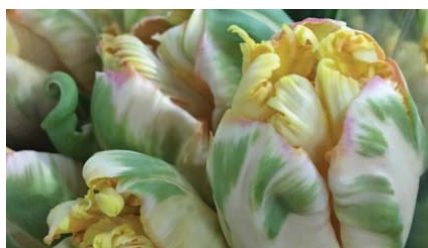
It starts by making a crossing — taking pollen from one tulip and adding it to the pistil of another. The pistil fills with seeds, which are harvested and sown

in trays, where they become bulbs. The bulbs go into fields and eventually grow into flowers. “You wait five years to see a crossing bloom,” Ligthart said. Next, he selects the top 1 to 2 percent to produce more bulbs for trial crops. “Every year, we have about 40,000 new crossings in bloom and only about 150 of them will make it to round two,” he said.

Following 12 years of testing tulips' vase life, stem strength, resistance to disease and other attributes, breeders whittle prospective varieties to about a dozen, which they produce in larger stock for the consideration of growers and brokers. Once they identify a winner, they need to grow about 100,000 bulbs before they can export it. “All told, it takes at least 25 years for a new tulip to come to the market,” Ligthart said.

Here are a handful of varieties that have weathered the very scrupulous selection process. 🌷

Katie Hendrick is a contributing writer of *Floral Management*.
khendrick@safnow.org



'APRICOT' PARROT TULIP
Florabundance



'LADY' PARROT TULIP
Florabundance



'REM'S FAVOURITE' TULIP
Florabundance



'AGRASS GOLD' TULIP
Ligthart Bloembollen V.O.F



'CHERIDA' PARROT TULIP
Ligthart Bloembollen V.O.F



'EYEOPENER' TULIP
Ligthart Bloembollen V.O.F

Fresh Choices



'FLAMING KISS'
Ligthart Bloembollen V.O.F



PARROT TULIP
Ligthart Bloembollen V.O.F



'THE TAUCK' TULIP
Ligthart Bloembollen V.O.F



'YELLOW KING'
Ligthart Bloembollen V.O.F



'ALLEGRETTO' TULIP
Oregon Flowers



'CINCINNATI' TULIP
Oregon Flowers



'COLUMBUS' TULIP
Oregon Flowers



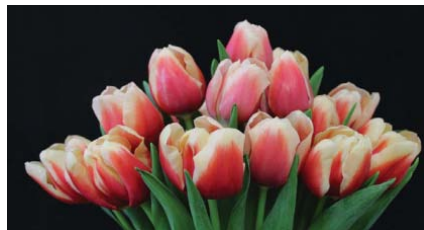
'DENMARK' TULIP
Oregon Flowers



'GANDER RHAPSODY' TULIP
Oregon Flowers



'ILE DE FRANCE' TULIP
Oregon Flowers



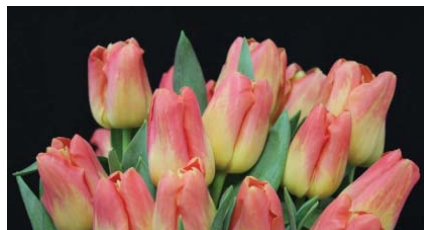
'JAN BUIS' TULIP
Oregon Flowers



'LARGO' TULIP
Oregon Flowers



'LONG ISLAND' TULIP
Oregon Flowers



'MATCH' TULIP
Oregon Flowers



'BREST' TULIP
Sun Valley Farms



'DOUBLE TOUCH' TULIP
Sun Valley Farms



'MASCOTTE' TULIP
Sun Valley Farms




'QUEENSLAND' TULIP
Sun Valley Farms

prime time

Amazon is every retailer's
wake-up call, and 2017 is
the year you answer it.

BY MARY WESTBROOK



As 2016 comes to a close, here's a scenario to consider. Imagine you are one of your customers. You come home from work and realize you need a birthday gift for a child's classmate. Your sister has a milestone anniversary approaching. Plus, you're on the hunt for a hostess gift for the weekend and groceries for dinner *tonight*.

> PRIME TIME

With a few clicks and swipes, you've taken care of those needs. No panicking required. You're even left with enough time to watch a movie, streamed from the platform you just used to run through your to-do list.

If you haven't guessed yet, the scenario above is made possible by Amazon, and specifically Amazon Prime, the online retailer's membership club that provides customers with free shipping and returns and easy access to goods and services from almost every sector.

In all likelihood, though, you knew exactly which company we were talking about. You're probably a Prime member. As of July 2016, Amazon had an estimated 63 million Prime members, according to Consumer Intelligence Research Partners, an increase of about 19 million over the previous 12 months. The introduction of new services has

been steady, including one- and two-hour delivery in some metro areas, a voice-activated "digital assistant" system and Dash buttons that make it even easier to order common products (e.g., laundry detergent) quickly. The innovations aren't stopping, either. Amazon is currently experimenting with drone delivery and has announced plans to open 100 "pop up" stores across the country in the next year.

If all that news isn't giving you pause, it should be, said Jim Dion, a retail expert and head of the consulting firm Dionco Inc. Last September during SAF Maui 2016, the Society of American Florists' annual convention, Dion called Amazon the "five-ton gorilla." Through its size and popularity, the company is elevating and transforming what consumers expect from all retailers, including small, local businesses. If you aren't meeting

those standards — i.e., making it easy for customers to order with their phones, making purchase suggestions based on their previous buys, giving people a reason to linger longer in your showroom — you're pushing customers straight to the competition ... and who can afford to do that?

"Customer service is the real reason sales drop," Dion said. "We all need to look in the mirror. We often think we are really good, but we're not."

Dion touched on far more than Amazon, too, pointing to trends in in-store shopping (some of them favorable for traditional florists), changes in consumer demographics and tech updates that are a gift to retailers who know how to put them to use.

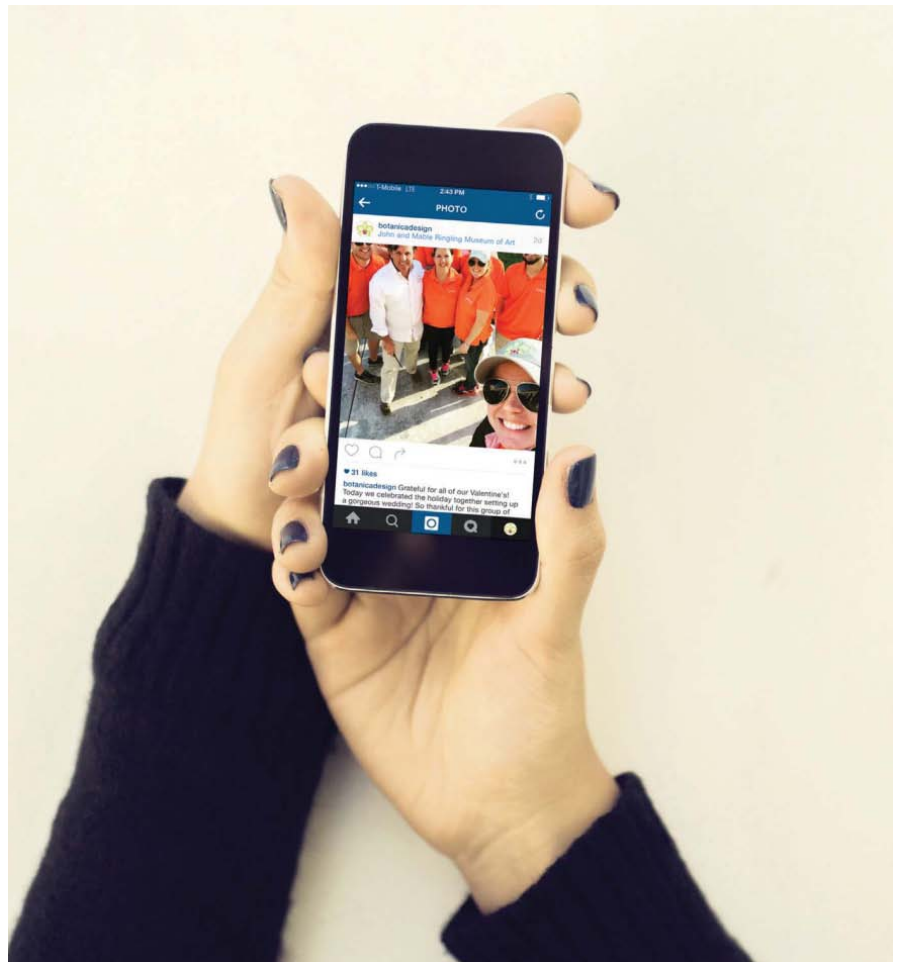
Feeling overwhelmed? Don't. This month, we paired five of Dion's top insights with some of our favorite florist



Drop and Shop

37 percent of Americans say they shop from their beds; 26 percent shop while at work; 24 percent shop on the toilet; 15 percent have pulled out a smartphone to shop while dining at a restaurant.

Source: Jim Dion, Dionco Inc.



STAY SOCIAL "Social media is everything these days," Zöe Prosser Gallina told us in March, when Floral Management turned to the events pro for wedding trend advice. Through her family business, Botanica International Design and Décor Studio in Tampa, Florida, Gallina oversees 125 weddings a year, with an average floral and décor budget of \$15,000. Gallina regularly interacts with those brides through social media.

stories from the past year. Get ready to push your business forward in 2017.

Out: Forcing customers to shop on your terms

In: Seamless customer experiences across channels

Remember when Americans worked 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., shopped for groceries on Saturdays and diligently planned ahead for birthday, holiday and special event gifts?

We don't either. Today, many shoppers buy things on the fly, often using their smartphones to browse and purchase from really (really) intimate places. Consider the following stats that Dion shared during his presentation: 37 percent of Americans say they shop from their beds; 26 percent shop while at work; 24 percent shop on the toilet; 15 percent have pulled out a smartphone to shop while dining at a restaurant.



APP APPEAL Nielsen's Florist and Garden Shop in Darien, Connecticut, won Floral Management's 2016 Marketer of the Year honors after owner Sandy Nielsen Baumann and her marketing coordinator, Raya Ward, worked together on an app that includes a built-in loyalty program. The app came about after the pair held a focus group to better understand how customers shopped with the business — and what could be improved.

In other words, people shop on their terms, whenever it's convenient for them.

That shift (which will only grow more pronounced in years to come, according to Dion's predictions) means "all parts of your tech need to be working together," Dion said.

While you may think in terms of your web or mobile site and walk-in versus phone sales, your customers see each of those options as entry points to the same experience — buying flowers. Because any pain point (a mobile site that's clunky, a sales team member who has no idea what's posted on Facebook, an outdated website, etc.) can send the customer running, all of the sales platforms you have must operate together. This is the main idea behind omni-channel retailing: Customers get a seamless shopping experience whether they shop online from a desktop or mobile device, by telephone or in a brick-and-mortar.

Omni-channel is a big buzzword right now, Dion said, and for good reason. Remember, though, that the drive for a more customer-friendly experience isn't only rooted in flashy, new tech. Some national companies, including Amazon with its new storefronts, are acknowledging that customers also want to get off of their smartphones and into an actual store.

"Companies like Best Buy are adding services, like in-store pick-up for online orders — because they understand that they need to seamlessly integrate all of their channels," based on each customer's preference, Dion explained. "Sometimes people want to shop on mobile devices, sometimes they want to come in store. Online companies are recognizing that."

Dion also said he thinks the importance of omni-channel will only accelerate as mobile shopping sites and technology improve.

"Shopping on a smartphone is just four years old," he said. "We're in the infancy of this technology."

Remember, too, Dion said, that social media is here to stay and, increasingly, is one of your branding and selling platforms.

"It takes five seconds to take a nice picture with a smartphone and post to Instagram or Facebook," he said.



All About Me

36 percent of Americans say they are interested in personalized products and services. Among people 30 and under, the demand is even higher: 43 percent of 16- to 24-year-olds and 46 percent of 25- to 30-year-olds are attracted to personalized goods and services.

Source: Deloitte



Tech Nation

Most Floral Management readers planned to spend between \$2,500 and \$10,000 on technology in 2016, a figure that includes POS upgrades, hardware and mobile devices.

- 8 percent spent \$50,000
- 15 percent spent \$10,000 to \$49,999
- 17 percent did not purchase new tech
- 16 percent spent less than \$2,499
- 34 percent spent \$2,500 to \$9,999

Source: SAF's 2016 Readership Study, May 2016

> PRIME TIME



PARTY HERE In-store events can help florists cash in on the idea of “slow shopping.” In Princeton, New Jersey, Georgianne Vinicombe of Monday Morning Flower and Balloon Co. has added alcohol and fun refreshments to her events to better compete against experience-based businesses that offer customers things such as “paint nite.”

**Out: Looking at your store as “only” a store
In: “Slow Shopping”**

Another lesson that’s become clear in recent years, Dion said, is that “the web is great for needs,” such as diapers and ink cartridges, and “less great for wants,” including affordable luxuries such as flowers for both gift and self purchases.

“When we look at understanding and supplying customers’ wants, that is where brick-and-mortars can compete,” he said. “Explaining to a customer how your flowers and business are different from what they get [from online companies] is important.”

Many customers, particularly millennials, want to have an experience when they shop offline, which is why so many companies are experimenting with “category convergence,” Dion said (e.g., a clothing boutique with an on-site restaurant or café).



LOOK AND LINGER The team at Palmer Flowers in Fort Collins, Colorado, starts planning for their Christmas open house in January. The event draws about 2,000 people. Employees work for months on the year’s stylized vignettes, which they start putting up in July. “It has to be a spectacle,” said owner Tim Jordan. That idea plays into a larger theme Jim Dion has presented — the rise of “slow shopping,” for customers who want to take their time and browse.

"[As retailers], we spent years and years building silos," Dion explained "This is a shoe store. This is a flower shop.' Even in department stores, each department was defined."

Those categories, however, are falling away, said Dion, who points to examples such as a new Restoration Hardware in downtown Chicago that includes a restaurant headed by a celebrity chef, a wine bar and an art gallery.

The additions aren't simple niceties or public relations moves intended to grab headlines. They help slow customers down and turn shopping back into that experience, a lesson that retailers of all sizes (not just those who can hire a famous chef) can learn from, Dion said.

"You want to slow people down and give them eye candy," he said. "Temp them" with dynamic visuals and new merchandising.

A caveat from Dion: The wants/needs distinction between online and in-person shopping is a fluid one. Be sure your website has high-quality images and descriptive language, for online shoppers who are looking for an emotional connection ("wants"), not a commodity, and have a clear "grab and go" selection for time-pressed customers who come to your store for more practical purposes ("needs").

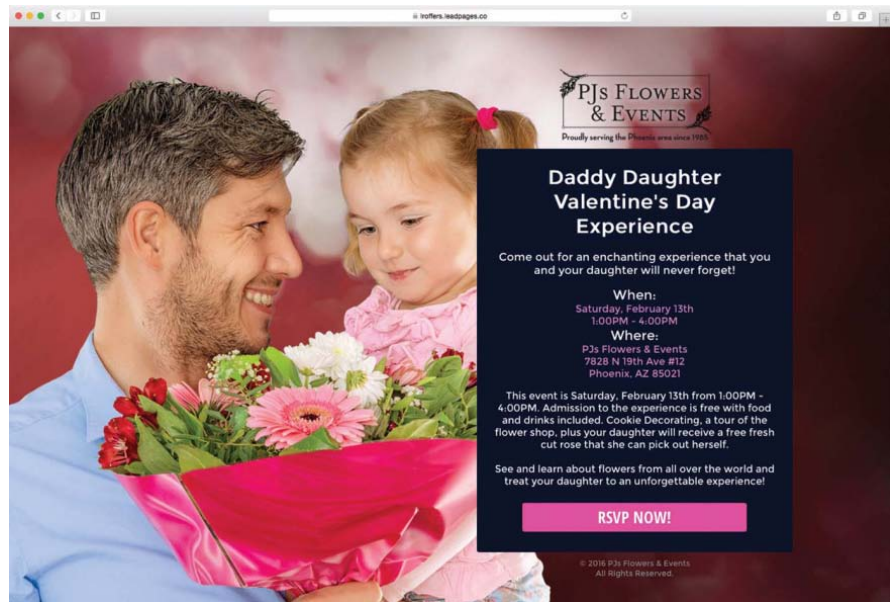
Out: Outdated customer service policies

In: Consistent, "pain-free" shopping experiences

When Amazon Prime customers aren't happy with a purchase, they send it back, often with free shipping, no questions asked. If a Prime member gets the urge to shop for shoes at 3 a.m., she can do so from her phone. And in some metro areas, Amazon now offers delivery in as little as an hour on select goods.

Feeling nervous? You should be, said Dion.

"When I mention Amazon, retailers should tremble," he said. "These guys are becoming stronger — 63 percent of millennials are Prime members, and the average Prime member is spending \$1,100 a year on Amazon purchases."



FAMILY TIME In Phoenix, Arizona, Tony Medlock, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, of PJ's Flowers & Events held a "Daddy Daughter Valentine's Day experience," a three-hour in-store event that drew a crowd of several hundred. Medlock planned the event last year to ward off the ominous predictions for a Sunday holiday situated on a long weekend. At the event, Medlock collected email addresses and made subtle pitches for future business, including the daughters' (still far-off) weddings.



CONSISTENCY AT KING At King Florist in Austin, the team has worked hard to deliver consistent, high levels of service. Detailed protocols routinely updated and shared with staff help make that possible, according to Lynsey Reece, the manager, and Benoit Ballon, the owner.

> PRIME TIME

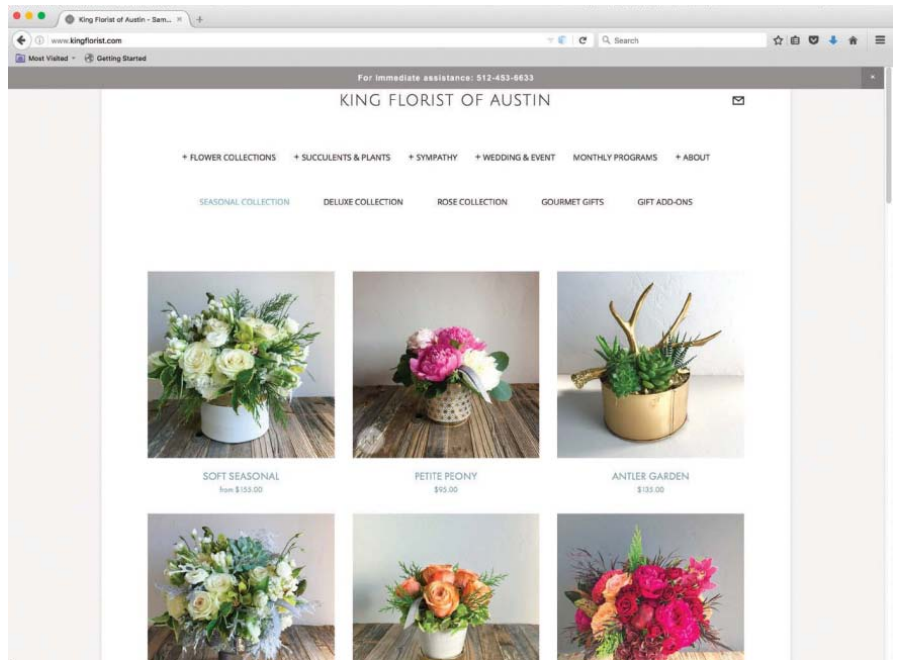
The takeaway for smaller retailers isn't that Amazon is unbeatable, but that the company has made customer service expectations "horizontal," Dion said. In terms of service, "your customers aren't comparing you to another flower shop," he said. "You are being compared to every experience a customer has in their normal day."

That's why it's more important than ever to focus on "pain points," anything that frustrates or deters customers in the buying process across channels.

"Find out what the customer doesn't like and fix it," Dion said. "Study your customers. Know who they are and what their expectations are. There is huge opportunity here."

Here again, consistency is often king. In Austin, King Florist, for example, has a detailed written protocol for phone orders. That document outlines common questions and how to answer them and handle complaints.

"When a customer calls us to place an order, the only thing they 'get' from us is that conversation," said Lynsey Reece, the shop's manager. Phone sales make up about 75 percent of sales. "That's where their experience starts and ends. So it's important to us that they hear a consistent voice and message."



TOTALLY UNIQUE At King Florist in Austin, the shop uses its website to highlight its stylized designs (not a stock photo in sight). A distinct look and feel (online and in-store) can help you stand out with customers who share the same aesthetic. And that group is significant: According to the consulting firm Deloitte, 36 percent of Americans say they are interested in personalized products and services.

And keep an eye on what national companies are doing, because the services they offer will soon affect you. (In addition to Amazon, Dion points to companies such as Zara, with its customer-friendly service policies; Bass Pro Shops, which turn ordinary shopping days into adventures; and Warby Parker and Tom Shoes, which allow customers to feel charitable every time they make a purchase. Read more about national companies Dion takes note of often at safnow.org/moreonline.)

"You are being compared to wherever your customer goes every day," he said.

**Out: Generic pitches
In: Personalized sells**

Smartphones and online shopping have ushered in a world of shopping that includes geo-tracking and targeted ads (the ads for a pair of boots you eyed Sunday night on Zappos that appear in your Facebook News Feed Monday morning). The technology has become so commonplace that many customers now take it for granted; they notice service that *isn't* perfectly tailored to them.

Likewise, almost every e-commerce site offers customers additional options based on their browsing or purchase history ("Customers who like xx also like

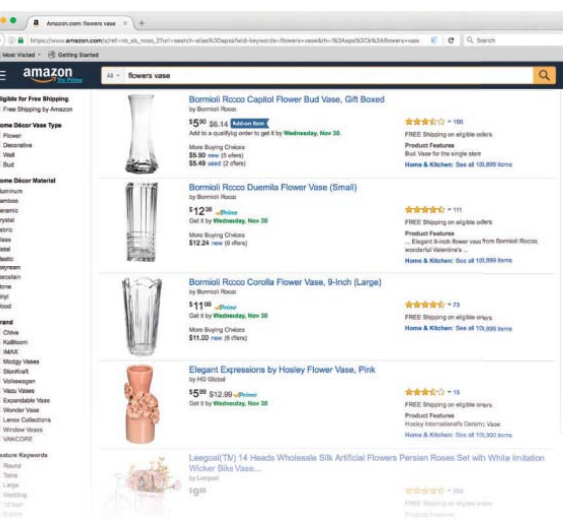
yy"; "Customers who looked at xx ended up buying yy").

Companies now "collect as much information on customers as they can: how much they spend, where they spend it, what time of day they shop," and much more, Dion said.

The challenge isn't collecting data — even small shops have access to tracking data through their POS systems — but using it to serve customers more effectively.

Doing so may require sales training, according to Tim Huckabee of FloralStrategies LLC, who has walked into stores and seen Post-It notes with routine information that's easily accessible in a POS *if* a team member has been trained to use that system properly. At SAF's 1-Day Profit Blast educational events in cities across the country this year, Huckabee also advocated for some decidedly low-tech (but highly effective) approaches to gathering information to improve sales: Always ask for the card message before making purchase recommendations. Once you know the occasion, and the significance of the event, you'll be in a better position to serve the customer.

The bottom line? Customers expect personalization now. In fact, according to the consulting firm Deloitte, 36 percent of



YOU MIGHT LIKE Amazon customers have grown accustomed to getting personalized product recommendations based on their shopping history, according to Jim Dion. ("Customers who bought this item also bought...") As a result, many customers see that kind of service as the default, whether they are patronizing a major retailer or small business, online or in-store.

The challenge isn't collecting data — even small shops have access to tracking data through their POS systems — but using it to serve customers more effectively.

Americans say they are interested in personalized products and services. Among people 30 and under, the demand is even higher: 43 percent of 16- to 24-year-olds and 46 percent of 25- to 30-year-olds are attracted to personalized good and services. Businesses that use technology — and “old-fashioned” sales training — to make a customer feel unique, and uniquely served, are in the best position to attract and keep loyal customers.

Out: Overwhelmed customers
In: Curated collections

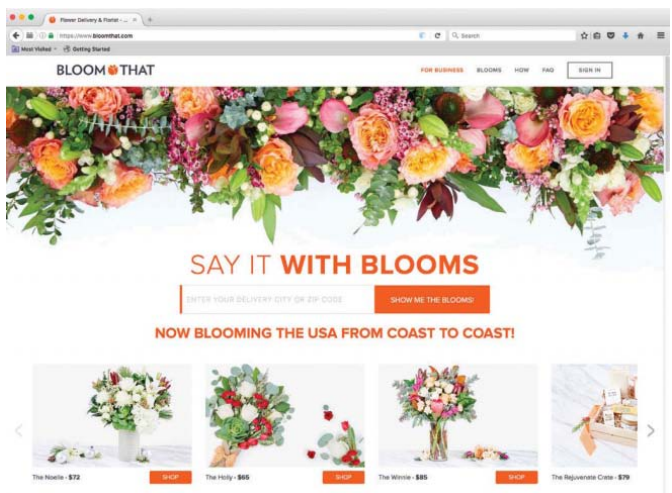
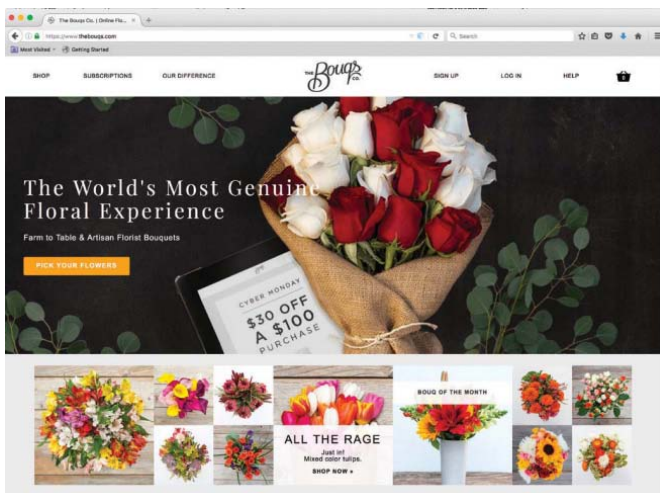
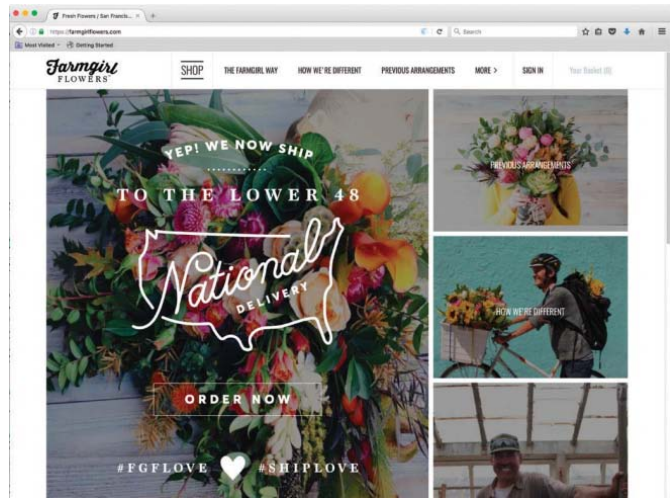
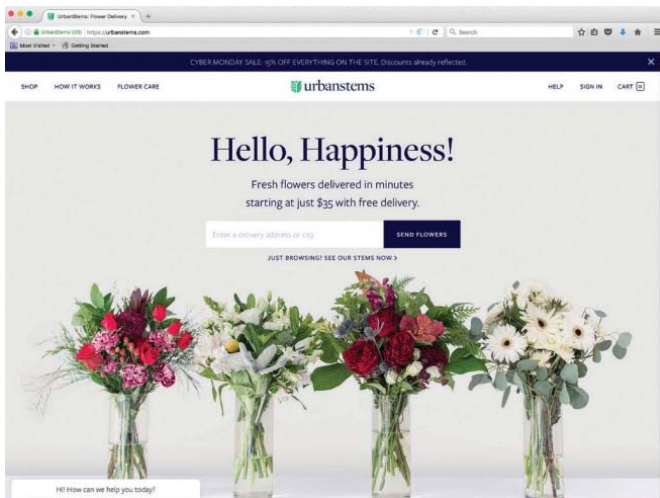
In the past, retailers, including florists, have loaded their websites with dozens, sometimes hundreds, of choices, thinking that approach was the best way to send the message that the business could handle any (and every) need. As a

result, customers are now “bombarded with options” for every purchasing decision, from laundry detergent to vehicles, Dion said.

The problem? Giving people so many options actually works against the human brain.

“When consumers are given a website with 400 to 500 choices, they won't make a choice,” Dion said. “A human can keep five choices in their head at any given time.”

The solution, according to Dion, is to try to limit choices across channels, so that you're only presenting customers with a handful of options. Even better, tailor those options so that they speak to the customer's specific motivation (need vs. want) and past purchase behavior.



SHOP EASY The start-up companies Floral Management covered in September 2016, including The Bouqs, BloomThat, UrbanStems and Farmgirl Flowers, have varied business models but all of them featured a tightly edited collection of flowers and floral designs — the better to appeal to time-crunched young professionals who want to point, click and buy.

> PRIME TIME



POWER COUPLE “The difference between someone who just ‘works there’ and someone who feels a part of the mission and goals is huge and makes a vital distinction in a company that sees itself as a brand, rather than just a flower shop that sells flowers,” said Raya Ward (right), the marketing coordinator of Nielsen’s Florist and Garden Shop in Darien, Connecticut, pictured with owner Sandy Nielsen Baumann.



RISING TIDE Benoit Ballon (second from right) and his team at King Florist in Austin: Ron Navarette, Cami Gray, Rose Kleefman, Lynsey Reece and Anna Nygaard. Since purchasing the business a decade ago, Ballon has seen sales and transactions rise, feats he credits to a team that’s fully engaged in the business. “I always try to say yes to new ideas,” Ballon told Floral Management last spring.

Out: Clock-in, Clock-out employees In: Empowered team members

If you’re reading this story in your back office without any intention of passing it along, you’re missing an opportunity, said Dion, who said empowered staff members are engaged staff members.

“Staff need skin in the game,” he explained.

At King Florist, Benoit Ballon said he likes to start from a position of “why not?” instead of “no.”

“I always try to say yes to new ideas,” Ballon said. “If they don’t work out, OK. We move on. If you don’t try something new, you don’t go anywhere.”

Ballon’s openness has translated into an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing ideas ... and those ideas have led to real promotions and

changes, including wrapped bouquets that appeal to DIY brides and an expedited delivery service that now accounts for about 25 to 30 percent of all shop deliveries.

“A big part of being such a great team is that we all get to bring these ideas,” Reece said. “We may throw out 20 ideas; maybe one good one gets picked up. But at least we are thinking in the direction of growth and profit. We are all here, Benoit included, as part of the team.”

That’s a position Raya Ward, of Nielsen’s Florist and Garden Shop in Darien, Connecticut, agrees with. Ward worked with her boss, Sandy Nielsen Baumann, to create an app with a built-in loyalty program — an initiative that won the business Floral Management’s 2016 Marketer of the Year honors.

Go Deeper

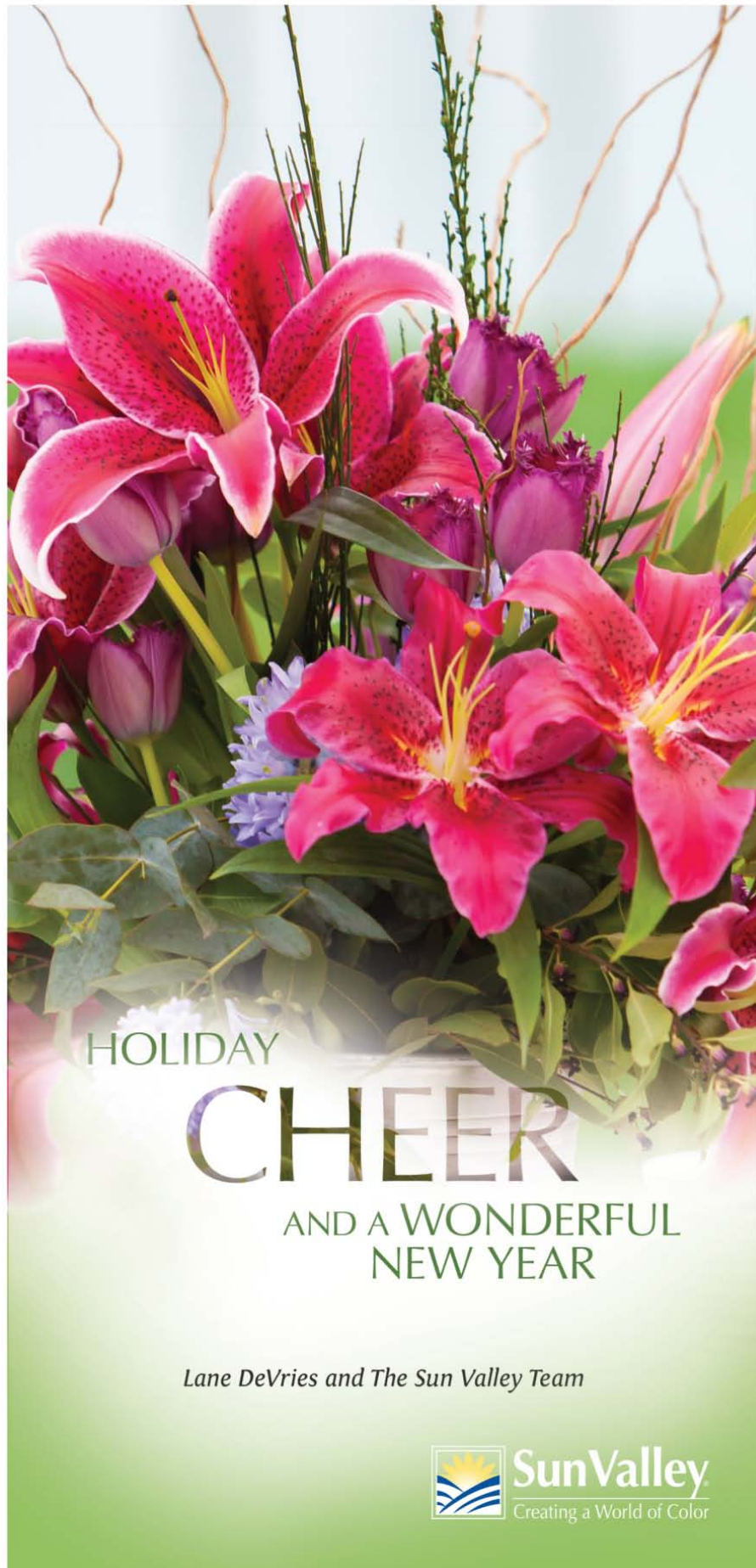
In the past 12 months, Floral Management has gone into detail on many of the topics broached this month (and much more). Some stories that you might want to revisit before the New Year include:

- A [step-by-step guide](#) from former SAF CIO Renato Sogueco on how to improve your online ad campaigns.
- The secret to [creating an in-store app](#), directly from the winners of our 2016 Floral Management Marketer of the Year winners.
- Tips on how to [create a positive, productive workplace](#) — and how managers can transform their own attitudes.
- Detailed info on findings from [SAF's Generations of Flowers Study](#).

Go to safnow.org/moreonline to access these articles, or click on them directly in the digital edition, safnow.org/floralmanagement.


"I think the difference between someone who just 'works there' and someone who feels a part of the mission and goals is huge and makes a vital distinction in a company that sees itself as a brand, rather than just a flower shop that sells flowers," said Ward, the shop's marketing coordinator. "When the company has a clear voice and a clear goal, it gives the employees something to work towards and encourages open lines of communication between staff and management." 🌿

Mary Westbrook is a senior contributing editor for the Society of American Florists. mwestbrook@safnow.org



HOLIDAY
CHEER
AND A WONDERFUL
NEW YEAR

Lane DeVries and The Sun Valley Team



SunValley
Creating a World of Color

BY MARY WESTBROOK

FLOWER LOVE FEST

For the second year, the Society of American Florists led the industry in a feel-good giveaway that reminded consumers and reporters how great it feels to get and give flowers.

The morning of the Society of American Florists' second annual Petal It Forward event, on October 19, one thing was certain: Americans needed a pick-me-up. The presidential election was grinding toward its conclusion and many communities were recovering from a devastating season of natural disasters.

"Our neighbors in the town about 25 miles to the north of us had experienced a devastating tornado the week prior and the election negativity goes without saying," said Natalie Rieger of Sunflower Flats in Tillamook, Oregon.

For Rieger and the Sunflower Flats team, the idea of giving people two bouquets, one to keep and one to pass on to someone else, was appealing — the kind of guerilla marketing effort that could help the shop build goodwill and brand recognition among new and existing customers. By the end of the day, the shop had passed out 100 bouquets, including to assisted living residents. At press time, they were still fielding messages of gratitude.

"[Petal It Forward] was a great reminder that it doesn't take much effort to brighten someone's day," Rieger said. "The surprised gasps, smiles and thanks that I received while delivering made my day as well. It was a reminder that it's always more fun to give than to receive."

Sunflower Flats wasn't the only shop to join in the fun. This year, more than 260 local florists worked together with grower, wholesaler and supplier partners to organize Petal It Forward giveaways in 234 cities in all 50 states. SAF kicked off the year's event with a giveaway in New York City that saw "happiness ambassadors" from Starbright Floral Design handing out 4,400 bouquets to busy (and very) surprised commuters. From there, the happy recipients shared their enthusiasm for the campaign and the flowers themselves all over social media.

"It was an incredible morning illustrating the Rutgers University research that flowers create true delight and enjoyment," said Jennifer Sparks, SAF's vice president of marketing. "As

much as people were thrilled to get flowers, being able to experience giving flowers to someone else excited them even more."

Indeed, the happiness Petal It Forward delivered, often to people in desperate need of a smile, seems to be the lasting message of this year's campaign. In Philadelphia, a recipient of a Petal It Forward bouquet contacted Ten Pennies Florist to share her gratitude (in a note the retailer later shared with one of its partner in the outreach, Pennock Floral.)

"I was in center city yesterday leaving a doctor's appointment. I've been struggling and going through a tough time," she wrote. Then, a Ten Pennies team member approached with roses and the Petal It Forward message.

"Before I left the area, a gentleman handed me a rose and told me now I have three, so when I petal it forward I'll have double the smiles," she explained. "Thank you so much for turning my frown upside down."



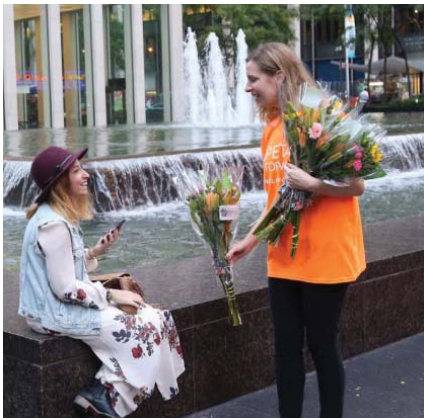
SCIENCE SAYS One of the messages shared as SAF handed out Petal It Forward bouquets: “Flowers are scientifically proven to make people happy.”



ALL HANDS “Petal It Forward is important because all aspects of the industry can help each other out to create a nationwide positive campaign,” said Ben Dobbe, COO of Holland America Flowers in Arroyo Grande, California, who donated flowers and assembled the 4,400 bouquets given out in New York City.



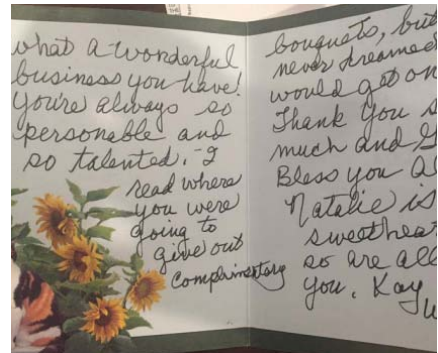
CUSTOMER FEEDBACK Sunflower Flats in Tillamook, Oregon, asked for suggestions for Petal It Forward giveaway sites. One overwhelming response: retirement homes.



HAPPY, HAPPY The feel-good Petal It Forward campaign builds on SAF research showing that 80 percent of people said flowers make them happy; 88 percent said giving flowers makes them happy.



MORNING COMMUTE SAF “happiness ambassadors,” including employees from Starbright Floral Design, hit Manhattan with 4,400 bouquets to surprise busy commuters with flowers and provide them with two bouquets — one to keep and one to “Petal It Forward.”



HEARTFELT A thank you note sent to Sunflower Flats in Tillamook, Oregon. “[Petal It Forward] was a great reminder that it doesn’t take much effort to brighten someone’s day,” Natalie Rieger said.



PR PUSH SAF implemented a strategic social media plan on all of SAF’s consumer channels, with paid promoted posts on Facebook and Instagram to take the Petal It Forward message viral, according to Jennifer Sparks, SAF’s vice president of marketing.



BUZZ ALL DAY Spreading the positive message about flowers, through the unique strategy behind the “keep one, give one” giveaway, as well as generating traditional news coverage and social media buzz on sites such as Instagram, is the goal of SAF’s Petal It Forward campaign.



TEAMWORK “We were absolutely thrilled with the outcome of the event,” said John Burk of DV Floral Group’s Philadelphia office, which supported 40 customers in the Northeast and mid-Atlantic who handed out a total of 8,000-plus bouquets, including Richardson’s Flowers in Medford, New Jersey (pictured). The company also provided transportation, delivery and on-site coordination of the SAF New York event product through its New Jersey office.

> FLOWER LOVE FEST

SAF'S NATIONWIDE EFFORTS GARNERED MORE THAN 67 MILLION IMPRESSIONS. COVERAGE OF PETAL IT FORWARD THROUGH LOCAL EFFORTS BY MEMBERS NATIONWIDE TOTALS MORE THAN 206 MILLION IMPRESSIONS.

WORKING FOR EXPOSURE

**MEDIA MOGUL**

Ericka So, a reporter in Sacramento, joined Jim Relles and staff members from Relles Florist for the giveaway. So posted about the event across her social media platforms many times.

On the morning of October 19, Jim Relles had something just about every local florist dreams of: Reporters from all three network affiliates were in Relles Florist, begging Relles to tell them more about his flowers, his business and why every person in Sacramento, California, should be buying and giving more flowers, more often.

The carrot that lured the journalists? Petal It Forward.

"The campaign worked really well for us," said Relles, who gave out about 700 bouquets in a four-hour period. and was also featured in the Sacramento Bee.

Even more amazing: That kind of story — glowing press coverage and happy, happy people — played out across the country, as florists of all sizes, with significant support from their wholesaler, grower and supplier partners, endeavored to make this year's campaign even bigger than the 2015 outreach.

In fact, local florists' giveaways, combined with the SAF kick-off Petal It Forward effort in New York City on the morning of October 19 and a strategic PR push by the

association, generated hundreds of high impact news stories in outlets such as CNBC, New York Business Journal, The Wall Street Select and The Miami Herald, along with the kind of goodwill and good feelings that advertising dollars can't buy, said SAF's Vice President of Marketing Jennifer Sparks.

"To see the amount of media coverage generated by members nationwide is so impressive," Sparks said. "It just goes to show that a little bit of time and effort to capture great PR can go a long way to increase visibility within the community."

Press coverage, of course, wasn't a guarantee. While SAF positioned the giveaway as an antidote to the negative news of the presidential campaign, a debate held on October 19 made it hard for some florists, particularly those in large metro areas, to attract coverage. That was the case for Chris Drummond, AAF, of Plaza Flowers who tried to get in touch with 30-plus reporters via email, phone and arrangement deliveries without much luck.

"The major affiliates in Philadelphia sent reporters to cover the debate, which left fewer staff to cover local stories," he said.

Despite the challenges, SAF's nationwide efforts garnered more than 67 million impressions, according to Sparks, who added that coverage of Petal It Forward through local efforts by members nationwide totals more than 206 million impressions.

-M.W.



DOWNTOWN DELIGHT The team at Allan's Flowers headed to downtown Prescott, Arizona, to hand out their Petal It Forward bouquets.



EXTENDED SERVICE Megan and Annie of "Team Blumz" (of Blumz by JR Designs) drove two vans of flowers to Campus Maritus Park in Downtown Detroit to hand out more than 1,000 bouquets. "We planned to be at the park for about three hours but all the bouquets were gone in less than 45 minutes," according to a shop blog post. "In fact, there was a large crowd of locals waiting for us and waving when they saw our vans pull up."



A FRIEND IN NEED Chester's Flower Shop and Greenhouses in Utica, New York, handed out 850 bunches of flowers, including some that ended up in the hands of a hospitalized senior citizen "who really needed to smile." "We had lots of PR and lots of smiling faces," said Bill Waszkiewicz.



THREE'S COMPANY Mike Mooney, sales manager at Dramm & Echter in Encinitas, California, hit the streets with John Hamala, account & sales specialist, and Lani Conklin, marketing manager & sales support, to give out 3,000 gerberas from their farm. The team shared funny videos of their interactions throughout the day, including a stop at the beach, where they gifted a bouquet to a lifeguard. "It was cool to see the community embrace our farming," said Mooney, president of the California Association of Flower Growers & Shippers.



GRATITUDE FOR HEROES Both Flowers by George in Arlington, Washington, and Lafayette Florist, Gift Shop & Garden Center in Lafayette, Colorado, made sure to deliver bouquets to first responders.



DRESSED TO IMPRESS Team members with Oasis Floral Products sport Petal It Forward T-shirts while promoting the giveaway. Industry members across the supply chain worked together to make this year's event a success.



TEXAS TURNOUT In downtown Dallas, Dr. Delphinium Designs & Events handed out hundreds of bouquets. The shop also scored some great press coverage for its giveaway, including coverage by the local CBS affiliate.



WINDY CITY GETS FLOWERS Kennicott Brothers Wholesale, headquartered in Chicago, helped many of its retailers participate in Petal It Forward, including including K Mike Whittle Designs in Marietta, Georgia, which handed out 650 bouquets in 25 minutes.



GETTING SOCIAL Staff members from Peoples Flower Shops handed out flowers in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and then shared images of happy recipients throughout the day on social media.



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT On Instagram, the civic group ThisIsBoise.com gave a shout-out to local florists handing out flowers, including Fifty Flowers, a shop that handed out 6,500 roses with support from its grower partners in Ecuador and Colombia, said Liza Roeser Atwood. Before the giveaway, Atwood and team rallied a group of florists to band together for the event. The group also reached out to the Ada County Sheriff Department and the Boise Police Department who came with their K9 unit. "Boise was fired up about flowers that day," Atwood said.



PICTURE PERFECT "The shock and the joy... all in one shot," is how the team at Monday Morning Flower and Balloon Co. in Princeton, New Jersey, described a recipient's reaction to free flowers, when the shop shared the sweet series of images on Instagram.



VITAL AND VIRAL MESSAGES SAF's social media campaign, funded by Asocolflores, featured posts and tweets on SAF's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter consumer pages. To boost the reach beyond SAF's page followers, SAF employed paid promotion on Facebook and Instagram to take the message viral. Total social media impressions to date, generated by the SAF social media campaign is 1,006,324, and 50,235 engagements (likes, comments, shares). Claudia Castellanos of Asocolflores (pictured) joined the NYC Petal It Forward team.

> FLOWER LOVE FEST



EDITOR'S CHOICE While local florists handled their events and made a big pitch for press, often with the help of SAF support materials, SAF worked for national coverage. One example: First For Women did a live Facebook event from SAF's Petal It Forward effort in NYC. At press time, the event had been viewed by more than 5,600 people.



PROMOS, PLEASE The Bill Doran Company helped with promotion of the event and spent "several weeks encouraging our customers to participate," said Michelle Friebel. "We worked closely with our vendors to provide a great price-point for product." By the end of the day on October 19, the company had helped "put smiles on the faces of 11,238 Petal It Forward recipients," she added.



GENEROUS GROWERS "At the Sun Valley Floral Farms, we tallied up all the donations, to find we donated over 30,000 stems to Petal It Forward," said Bill Prescott, marketing communications specialist for the company, located in Arcata, California. The company also posted a detailed blog entry promoting the event (pictured). "By all accounts it was a great day, and we were very happy to support the SAF and all their members."



SIDE BY SIDE FTD partnered with City Scents Floral & Home in Chicago for Petal It Forward. The shop distributed bouquets on the Magnificent Mile.



TALKING POINTS City Line Florist in Shelton and Trumbull, Connecticut, hosted reporters in store for interviews about Petal It Forward (and then shared the behind the scenes footage of the interview via social media — smart!)



LIVE AT FIVE Flowers. When Botanica International Design & Décor Studio in Tampa, Florida, gifted Petal It Forward flowers to to Fox-13 reporter and anchor Jennifer Epstein, they ended up with a double PR win: Epstein later gifted a bouquet to another reporter and anchor, Anjali Davis.



ON SET BLOOMS Florabundance shared the message of Petal It Forward (and some beautiful bouquets) on the Fox affiliate in Santa Barbara, California. In a special video to viewers, two female anchors promoted the local giveaway and oohed and ahed over the flowers.



SHARED EXPOSURE Jefferson City Magazine, in Missouri, promoted the Petal It Forward efforts of Longfellow's Garden Center in an Instagram post.

PR FOR THE PEOPLE

The planning, media relations, overall promotion of the Petal It Forward event, and the online tools and advice offered to local participants, is a direct result of the SAF Fund for Nationwide Public Relations, which encompasses a percentage of retail dues and voluntary contributions by forward-thinking companies.

For a list of SAF PR Fund supporters, check out safnow.org/more-online. If your supplier is on this list, please thank them for their leadership in industry promotion.

-M.W.



SUNNY DAYS “We’re bloomin’ thrilled to be surrounded by roses,” wrote Sue Serio, the weather anchor of Good Day Philadelphia. Her post included lots of love for the local florist behind the generosity (and the savvy media placement): Ten Pennies Florist.



PETALS IN PRINT Sharon Grubbs of Foisters Flowers in Muncie, Indiana, was featured in the Muncie Journal. “We see the positive impact day in and day out when we make our flower deliveries,” said Grubbs. “People love flowers ‘just because’ so we wanted to create random smiles, and give people a chance to do the same for someone else.”



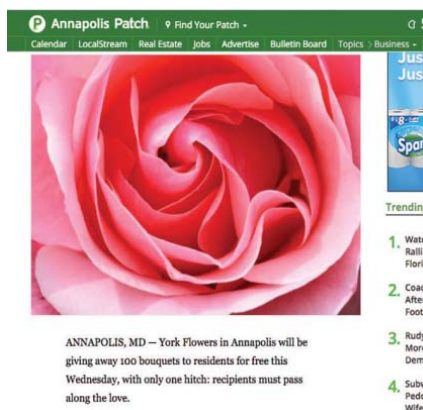
RADIO STARS In the Washington, D.C., metro area, Palace Florists teamed up with well-known personalities from Hot 99.5 radio to surprise commuters and passersby with flowers. The smart pairing meant that the radio station and its hosts were sharing and reposting their own Petal It Forward messages throughout the event.



MEDIA STAR Former SAF President Shirley Lyons, AAF, of Dandelions Flowers & Gifts in Eugene, Oregon, was featured in a number of local outlets, including The Register-Guard newspaper.



BOSTON LOVE The radio station Hot 96.9 plugged Roche Bros.’ downtown giveaway of 1,700 bouquets in Boston. Roche Bros. scored a number of great media hits, including a mention in the Boston magazine blog.



SURPRISE AND DELIGHT York Flowers in Annapolis saw “great turnout” and got some great coverage for its Petal It Forward efforts, according to Anna Deriquito. “People loved this idea. Of course they thought we were selling [the flowers], but they were pleasantly surprised when we said, ‘They’re free!’”

BRAVO! BRAVO!

SAF thanks the following companies for providing product donations, shipping and other support for the New York City event:

- Asocolflores
- Delaware Valley Floral Group
- Dramm & Echoer
- Dos Gringos
- Holland America
- Mellano & Company
- Floral Trade Distributors
- Flores El Capiro
- Smithers-Oasis
- Starbright Floral Design

In addition to these companies, participating local florists said they are indebted to the many wholesalers, growers and suppliers who supported retailers with donated or discounted product and logistical help.

“Without these partnerships, Petal It Forward would not be possible,” said SAF’s Vice President of Marketing Jennifer Sparks. “This year’s event is a great representation of what SAF is all about — bringing all segments of the industry together to promote flowers. Whether taking to the streets or working behind the scenes, everyone played a part.”

-M.W.



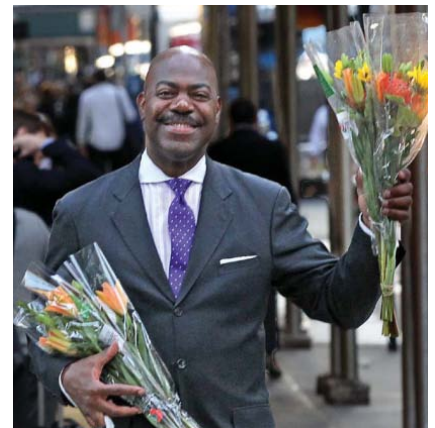
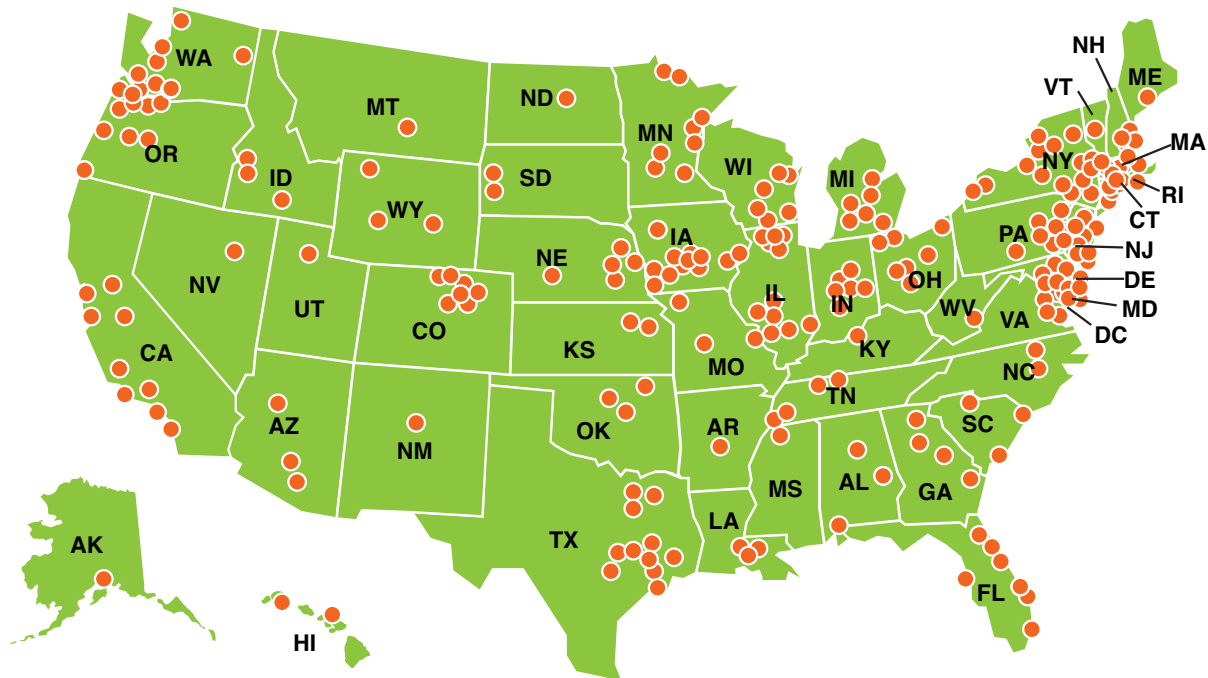
MICHIGAN MENTIONS J Schwanke, AIFD, PFCI, of uBloom.com, helped get coverage for Petal It Forward from many high profile outlets in the Grand Rapids area, including a spot on a lifestyle morning show and a live event during the nightly news.

Mary Westbrook is a senior contributing editor for the Society of American Florists. mwestbrook@safnow.org

#PETALITFORWARD

Floral Industry, you did it!

262 Events in 234 Cities in all 50 States



On October 19, 2016, the Society of American Florists and florists nationwide randomly surprised people on the street with flowers. Lucky recipients received two bouquets — one to keep and one to share. This effort created a lot of smiles and positive feelings as the country experienced the power of giving and receiving flowers. Read about Petal It Forward at safnow.org/petalitforward and watch and share the video at aboutflowers.com/youtube.

SAF's Petal It Forward is possible thanks to the voluntary contributors of the SAF PR Fund. Find out if your supplier is a PR Fund supporter at safnow.org/prfund.

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1.76 BILLION AND COUNTING

That's how many consumer impressions have been generated by SAF's public relations and social media programs, such as the Petal It Forward campaign.

And these supporters helped make it happen. Read about Petal It Forward at safnow.org/petalitforward and view the video at aboutflowers.com/youtube.



IF YOUR SUPPLIER IS ON THIS LIST, THANK THEM!

PLATINUM: \$20,000 or More

Growers

Asocolflores

Suppliers

Smithers-Oasis USA/
Floralife

GOLD: \$15,000 - \$19,999

Suppliers

Syndicate Sales, Inc.

SILVER: \$10,000 - \$14,999

Wholesalers

Delaware Valley Floral
Group
Kennicott/Vans/Nordlie

BRONZE: \$5,000 - \$9,999

Wholesalers

Pennock Co.

Suppliers

Accent Decor, Inc.

Growers

Equiflor/Rio Roses

COPPER: \$1,000 - \$4,999

Wholesalers

Amato Wholesale
Florist
Baisch and Skinner
Wholesale Florist, Inc.
Bay State Farm Direct
Flowers

Cleveland Plant &
Flower Co.

Dreisbach Wholesale
Florist
DWF Wholesale Florist
Co.

Flora Fresh, Inc.
Greenleaf Wholesale
Florist, Inc.

Hillcrest Garden, Inc.
Mayesh Wholesale
Florist, Inc.

Mueller Supply Inc.
Pikes Peak of Texas, Inc.

Sieck Floral Group
The Roy Houff
Company

Tommy's Wholesale
Florist, Inc.

Zieger & Sons, Inc.

Suppliers

Candle Artisans, Inc.
Design Master color
tool, inc.
Floral Resources
Sacramento

Growers

Burnaby Lake
Greenhouses
Dramm & Echter
Holland America
Flowers, LLC
Miaflora Farms LLC
Ocean View Flowers
Oregon Flowers, Inc.
Sun Valley Floral Group
Washington Bulb Co.,
Inc.

Importers/Distributors

Liberty Blooms
USA Bouquet Company

FRIEND: \$100 - \$999

Wholesalers

Berkeley Florist Supply
Co. in Miami
Dillon Floral Corporation
Ensign Wholesale Floral
Frank Adams Wholesale
Florist Inc.
GM Floral Co.
Gassafy Wholesale
Florist, Inc.
Georgia State Floral
Distributors
Henry C. Alders
Wholesale Florist
Inland Wholesale
Flowers, Inc.

J.B. Parks Wholesale
Florist
Louisiana Wholesale
Florists, Inc.
Lynchburg Wholesale
Floral Corp.
Mears Floral Products
Metro Floral Wholesale,
Inc.
Miller Sales Wholesale
Distributor
Reeves Floral Products
Inc.
Rojahn & Malaney Co.
Schaefer Wholesale
Florist, Inc.
Seagroatt Riccardi, Ltd.

Suppliers

Berwick Offray LLC/
CSS Industries, Inc.
Chrysal Americas
FloraCraft
Garcia Group, Inc./
Floral Pak Co.

Garcia Group, Inc./Plus
One Imports
Highland Supply
Corporation
Lion Ribbon Co., Inc./
CSS Industries, Inc.
Reliant Ribbons, Bows
& Trims

Growers

Green Point Nurseries,
Inc.
Pyramid Flowers, Inc.

CONTRIBUTOR: \$50 - \$99

Wholesalers

Coward & Glisson
Wholesale Florists
LaSalle Wholesale
Florist, Inc.
Younger & Son Inc.

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We thank these companies who voluntarily contributed \$135,000 in 2016 to the SAF Fund for Nationwide Public Relations, which promotes flowers and florists to consumers through groundbreaking research and media outreach as well as Aboutflowers.com, AboutflowersBlog.com and NationalFloristDirectory.com. A special thanks to Asocolflores for the contribution of \$30,000 in 2016 to enhance SAF's Petal It Forward campaign through social media efforts.

**Want to help sell more flowers
(and see your name on this list)?
Support the SAF PR Fund!
safnow.org/prfund; jsparks@safnow.org**



EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the twelfth in an 18-month series that tackles essential flower shop accounting, financial management and benchmarking best practices. See previous columns in the digital archives, safnow.org/floralmanagement.



CASHFLOW FORECASTING

BY PAUL GOODMAN, CPA, PFCI



What is a Cash Flow Forecast?

Without cash, you can't pay your bills. Your business will fail. It's as simple as that. Many businesses have experienced great sales volume only to find that too much of it was charge business. The sales weren't yielding cash quickly enough. Those businesses often don't survive. A cash flow forecast can help you avoid that scenario. It is one of the most important forecasts you can make, but it's often neglected.

Traditionally, a large percentage of a flower shop's business is charged. Many florists get 80 percent or more of their daily sales over the phone or via the internet. All these sales are charged. Some to credit cards, and the balance to House Accounts. Managing your receivables is critical. Making sure that the money owed to you comes in as quickly as possible can be the difference between failing and surviving.

Cash flow forecasting tells you both how cash will come into the business and how it will go out. When you put the two together, you get a picture of what your cash situation will be each month of the year.

What Makes Cash Flow Forecasts Tricky?

The single most common reason a business fails is under-capitalization; not enough cash to run the business. Your cash flow forecast will show you approximately how much capital will be required in addition to that produced by daily operations. It may take several years for the operations to generate enough cash for the shop to maintain itself. The cash flow forecast will tell exactly how much cash you will need upfront to get from here to there.

For an established business, a cash flow forecast will show in which months, if any, you will temporarily be in a negative cash position. You will know how much cash you need on hand to get through, or when you will have to make other arrangements to keep operations running smoothly.

Best Practices:

Pull out your financial data from the previous year (or two). This data will be the basis of estimating your cash flow:

Project Sales. Look at last year's records and adjust for any increases or decreases you are experiencing. Make sure that you are counting only 20 percent of Outgoing Wire Orders and 73 percent of Incoming Wire Orders in

your sales. If you are already doing that for your Income Statements, your job is easy. If not, you'll have to back out the 80 percent of Outgoing Wire Orders and 27 percent of Incoming Wire Orders that are included in your sales numbers.

Next, determine the percentage of sales that will be received immediately in the current month. They will be cash, check and credit card sales. Then what percentage will be received in the next three months from House Charges and wire activity? If you are not sure, it's fairly safe to assume you will get 60 percent of these receivables in the first month, 30 percent in the second month, 9 percent in the third month, and the remaining 1 percent will most likely be bad debts so you needn't count it. Your revenue for each month will be a combination of that month's cash, check and credit card sales plus the revenue received from each of the previous three months' House Charges and wire activity.

Project Your Cost of Goods Sold. If you've been in business a few years, this step will be fairly easy. Look at your total COGS percentage for the previous two years, take the average and assume that will be your COGS percentage for the coming year. To get the COGS for each month, multiply this estimated percentage by the sales for each month.

Project Expenses. You can make a comprehensive list of each expense item to help you estimate expenses for each month of the year. Alternatively, you can take a broader approach. Simply take the total expenses for each month during the previous year (not including COGS) and adjust slightly for any increase in rent or payroll due to raises.

Total Cash You're Going to Use. After you've totaled the expenses for each month, add the COGS for each month and you will have the total amount of cash you expect to use each month.

Cash Flow. The final step is to subtract the total cash spent from the total cash available each month. If the answer is positive, you're doing OK. If it is negative, you know that you are going to be short in that month. You'll either have to figure out how to cut expenses or bring in some extra cash.

Don't Do This:

Don't forget to set aside cash to cover months when you come up short. It is typical, for example, for retail flower

shops to run short of cash in holiday months. Expenses are up. Cash from house charges won't start to show up for one to six weeks after the sale depending on how often you send invoices. If you don't set aside enough cash, you will need to borrow money to make up the difference. You can do that for a month or two. Beyond that, you will probably lose the business. The goal over time is to build up the necessary cash reserve to get you through the entire year. 🌸

Paul Goodman is the founder of Floral Finance Business Services based in Tulsa, Oklahoma, editor of Floral Finance and author of *The Profit-Minded Florist*. plgoodman@aol.com

RESOURCES

Download Paul Goodman's customizable spreadsheet to help better forecast cash flow at safnow.org/moreonline.

Or, if you want to do it yourself, here are general instructions. You'll need 16 columns: Three from the end of this year, so you know the amount of House Charges and wire activity that will generate cash for the first three months of the year. Twelve months for the current year. One added column to total the activity for the 12 months. You'll need 10 rows.

- Cash, check, cc sales
- Month 1 charge sales
- Month 2 charge sales
- Month 3 charge sales
- Total Cash Received
- COGS
- Expenses
- Total Cash Used
- Net Cash for Month
- Cumulative Cash

At the end of each month, enter the data for each row, total the cash received and cash used amounts. Subtract the cash used from the cash received and you'll have your net cash for the month. Add that to the cumulative cash balance from the previous month and you will have your new cumulative cash flow. (For the first month, add that month's cash flow to your beginning cash to get the cumulative cash flow at the end of the first month.)

Industry News

FTD ANNOUNCES LEADERSHIP CHANGE

> After an eight-year tenure that included a high profile spin-off and acquisition, FTD's president and CEO, Rob Apatoff, will be stepping down. This change was announced prior to the company's third quarter results, which showed improved profitability despite modest declines in consolidated revenues (excluding foreign currency fluctuations and other factors).

Christopher W. Shean, one of FTD's directors, is now interim president and chief executive officer. He succeeds Robert S. Apatoff, who stepped down from these positions but will continue in a transitional advisory role through December 31, 2016. The FTD board of directors will conduct a formal executive search for this position and is not enforcing any deadline.



TAKING THE LEAD Christopher W. Shean is FTD's interim president and chief executive officer, succeeding Robert S. Apatoff.

Shean has served as one of FTD's directors since December 2014. He is CEO of Liberty Expedia Holdings. He serves on the board of directors of Expedia Inc. and the Atlanta Braves, along with the advisory committee for the Pamplin School of Business at Virginia Tech, where he earned a bachelor of science degree in accounting in 1987.

Robert Berglass, chairman of FTD's board praised Apatoff's leadership, especially during the company's "spin-off from United Online and the acquisition of Provide Commerce," which began two years ago.

"FTD has tremendous opportunities to aggressively pursue growth initiatives," Shean said. "We have a talented management team, world class brands, and now that we have nearly finalized the integration of Provide Commerce, we have a strong foundation from which to build."

Tom Moeller, who leads the company's Florist segment, noted that "with our integration of Provide Commerce nearly complete, the board and Rob mutually agreed to this change."

Apatoff's departure, Moeller added, "will not impact our day-to-day operations." 🌿

REPORTERS COVER FLORIST'S ROLE IN URBAN REVITALIZATION

> In Indianapolis this fall, reporters from four local affiliates and Mayor Joe Hogsett gathered to celebrate Society of American Florist member McNamara Florist's newest location and its commitment to the revitalization of a once blighted area of the city.

"What I hope to see next are entrepreneurs, artists, manufacturers and innovators following in McNamara's footsteps by finding unique spaces and resources in the Mass. Avenue-Brookside area and being part of this neighborhood revitalization," Hogsett told reporters and a gathered crowd of about 150 people. 🌿



WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD Mayor Joe Hogsett attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for McNamara Florist's new headquarters, in a section of Indianapolis that's being revitalized. Pictured with him is owner Toomie Farris, AAF, AIFD.

AFE CREATES INTERNSHIP GUIDE FOR BUSINESS OWNERS

> For many business owners, internships provide a way to pass along valuable skills to young workers while building a next generation workforce. That's one reason the American Floral Endowment recently developed its new "Employer Resource Guide" for building a successful internship program.

"This comprehensive guide will walk you through how to establish a program to create a pipeline of fresh talent for your organization," said Lori Ostrow, AFE's manager of communications. "With easy-to-follow guidelines, checklists, and other tools and resources, you can immediately begin developing an internship program at your organization, and ensure an internship experience that benefits you, your company and your intern."

Find out more at endowment.org. 🌿

FRESH TALENT AFE's new employer resource guide was created to help small business owners in the industry build a successful internship program.



Industry News

WF&FSA CONFERENCE DRAWS RECORD CROWD

> Almost 860 floral industry members were in Miami for the 2016 Floral Distribution Conference — making it the best attended conference in the history of the Wholesale Florist & Florist Supplier Association.

This year's event, held at the Miami Airport Convention Center, featured networking opportunities, including an Oktoberfest celebration on Wednesday, educational programming, products, 110 table top displays, as well as a Breeders Showcase.

Other highlights from the conference:

New Leadership. Rob Shibata, AAF, President of Mt. Eden Floral Company passed the gavel to new President Santiago Cock-Rada, General Manager of Liberty Blooms. Cock-Rada is the first Colombian president of WF&FSA. Marla O'dell of Berwick Offray was elected president-elect.

LTK Award. Charles Walton of Smithers-Oasis received the 2016 LTK Award. Walton led his company for the next three decades. "This is a bit of a shock," he admitted. "I have never imagined walking in the footsteps of the previous recipients of this award." Walton was inducted into the Society of American Florists' Floriculture Hall of Fame in 2015. 🌿



IN WITH THE NEW Former President Rob Shibata, AAF, President of Mt. Eden Floral Company LLC passed the gavel to President Santiago Cock-Rada, General Manager of Liberty Blooms.

INDUSTRY, ACADEMIA COME TOGETHER AT MEETING IN PHILLY NEXT YEAR

> When the National Floriculture Forum meets next year during the Philadelphia International Flower Show, participants will discuss the intersection of production and academic floriculture and horticulture.

The meeting is "one of the few events where academia and industry come together to discuss pressing issues," said Krystal Snyder the 2017 event coordinator and a member of the American Floral Endowment's Young Professionals Council.

The meeting will include greenhouse growers, industry leaders, university faculty members and government scientists, among others.

NFF also has recently partnered with AFE to permanently host NFF information on the AFE site and to help the group create a new logo. Find out more at endowment.org/nff. 🌿

NEW IDEAS IN SALES, TECH, PROFITS AND SERVICE DRAW 90 TO MILE-HIGH CITY

**THE GANG'S ALL HERE**

Many shop owners brought multiple employees to SAF's 1-Day Profit Blast, including Marsha Jones (left), owner of Little's Woodlawn Florist Inc., who brought her entire 4-person team (shown with team members Amber Winter and Ryan Bresee).

> Ninety floral industry members gathered in Denver on October 23 for the latest round of the Society of American Florists' info-packed 1-Day Profit Blast.

The event, sponsored by Denver Wholesale Florist, drew a cross section of retail florists, from rookies to seasoned pros, looking to refine their tech skills, make industry connections and gain insight on best practices in sales, customer service, financial management and event work.

Lisa and Brad Golter of Longmont Florist in Longmont, Colorado, brought five team members to the event. Lisa said that investment paid off quickly.

"They all agreed it was worth giving up their Sunday to learn more about the topics provided," she said.

Thaddeaus Servantez of Westminster Flowers in Westminster, Colorado, said Profit Blast delivered ideas with immediate application, including the opportunity to see vendors and goods at the Vendor Spotlight and Supplier Showcase.

During "Tech Strategies to Capture More Online Sales," led by SAF's digital strategy manager Max Duchaine, for instance, "I realized there are things I need to do with our CEO [right away] to go in and look at different layers of our online pres-

ence," he said, adding that he also picked up tips on increasing transaction size from Tim Huckabee of FloralStrategies Inc. during "Building the Perfect Sales Script."

Part of the appeal of the Profit Blast series — and a big reason SAF kicked off these events in 2013 — is that events are situated throughout the year and the country, making it easier for industry members to take advantage of the educational opportunities in a close-to-home location.

That was the case for Lori Wheat, AAF, of Lafayette Florist, Gift Shop & Garden Center in Lafayette, Colorado, who has attended many SAF events in the past, including the group's annual conventions.

"Profit Blast gave me the chance to bring key staff members, who typically wouldn't be able to attend an SAF program" because of the travel expense and time away from the shop, she said.

Still, the event wasn't a locals-only affair. Wayne Perlo of Fioravanti Florist traveled from Rochester, New York, to improve skills related to social media use. Duchaine's session helped him "understand much better. I am going to use it much better than I have in the past."

Joel Houston made the trip from Charlotte, North Carolina, for Profit Blast. He wanted to learn in-person from Huckabee and Jerome Raska, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, CAFA, MCF of Blumz by...JRDesigns in metro Detroit ("Successful Events—From Conception to Completion").

The event also attracted newcomers to the industry, including Sarah Rovner, of Calla Blue Florals in Aurora, Colorado, who finished floral design school a week before Profit Blast.

"Being able to meet several vendors and other professionals in our industry was one of the highlights," she said. 🌿

Plugged In BY MAX DUCHAINE

SCHEDULE YOUR ENGAGEMENTS

➤ You know the adage: “Failing to plan is planning to fail.” The sentiment rings true in so many areas of business management, and it extends into the digital space.

I speak to a lot of people who take a “ready, fire, aim” approach to their digital content strategy. (Digital content being your social media platforms, blogs and website.) That approach, however flawed, is understandable. Owners and managers have only so much time to devote to tweeting, posting and blogging. You have a business to run. When it comes to social media and online updates, you get an idea during the day, pull out your smartphone and let the characters (and pictures or videos) fly.

There’s nothing wrong with that approach as a component of your overall strategy (i.e., “post timely, personal updates”), but if your entire strategy is to post as the mood strikes, you’re likely missing out on real opportunities to build your brand and bring in more sales through your online outlets.

Get Organized

In today’s world of search engine optimization (SEO), micro-moments and social media, your digital content strategy is as integral to your brand as the sign in front of your shop. It’s how people find you online, build their trust in you as a brand, and ultimately decide whether or not you are worth their business.

Just as with every aspect of your business operation, your digital content strategy requires proper management and a rock-solid plan. A central part of that plan should be a **digital content calendar**, which will help you plan your content across your digital channels, stay organized and efficiently schedule messaging to optimize your digital experience.

Get Started

The first step in creating a calendar is straightforward: Take an afternoon (or several) to brainstorm important dates, including holidays, events, marketing campaigns, deadlines for the next several months — and anything else you can think of that you will want to promote, post or make note of. You want your list to be comprehensive,



so review sales records, holiday notes (“Christmas 2015: Sure wish we’d promoted those candle deals sooner!”) and engage your staff. (Each month in Floral Management, editors also include some ideas on calendar items, including social media posts. See p. 14.)

Once you see all of these elements in one place — ideally on a calendar that’s accessible to your team — you will begin to have a better grasp for how to approach them from a content perspective.

You can plan your digital content as far in advance as you wish, but I recommend planning on a monthly basis to ensure you give your channels the attention they deserve. It also saves you time down the road, as you only need to do this once a month. Remember, you don’t need to have original posts across platforms: The great photo you took on Instagram can easily be repurposed on Facebook, although you want to strive to make each outlet unique. (In other words, don’t repost every Insta pic on Facebook, and consider different copy for different social networks.)

Once you have a monthly snapshot of your content opportunities, start mapping out your social media posts. I like the free social media planning tool from HubSpot. It’s basically an Excel spreadsheet with tabs set up to help you organize the process. My favorite feature is the “content repository” — consider this a virtual bucket for all of your upcoming social media content, including links. Anytime you post a blog

article to your website, shoot video or just take a snapshot of a gorgeous design before it goes out for delivery, document its name, purpose, URL or digital location on the content repository. When it comes time to schedule your social media posts, you’ll know where all of your content is without having to hunt around on your website.

From there, you can map out the day, time and specific message for posts for each of your social media channels. You can do this for the entire week or month. You might consider including a column for engagement, so you can make a note of a post that was particularly popular — at the end of the month (or year), you might be able to suss out some patterns (people really like questions or photos, etc.).

As for doing the actual posting, I’d recommend using a social media manager, which allows you to preschedule posts. Hootsuite is my favorite, because it allows you to monitor and post to all of the main social channels, including Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Google+ and LinkedIn. It’s just shy of \$10 a month, but that will buy you the ability to streamline the effort, so whoever is doing the posting can “get it done” and move onto their other tasks. 🌱

Max Duchaine is the digital strategy manager for the Society of American Florists. Got a question? Need some tech advice? He’s an email or phone call away. mduchaine@safnow.org



Perks of Your SAF Membership

Vital Industry Knowledge

- 1. Floral Management magazine
- 2. Wednesday E-Brief
- 3. Washington Week in Review
- 4. Saturday Sales Wake-Up

Sales Builders

- 5. Listing in NationalFloristDirectory.com
- 6. Web graphics and floral photography
- 7. Wedding Flower Calculator
- 8. Customizable press releases and talking points for media interviews
- 9. Discounts on SAF products from statement stuffers and postcards to Business-to-Business Portfolios and posters
- 10. SAF Fund for Nationwide Public Relations raises floral awareness

Bottom Line Improvement

- 11. Retail Pricing Worksheet
- 12. Customizable employee handbook
- 13. Discounts on FedEx shipping, \$500 Vehicle Discount with FCA US LLC (formerly Chrysler), Paychex payroll management services, Ford Fleet Vehicles and more, and access to Association Health Care Insurance Plans administered by Hortica Insurance & Employee Benefits

Education & Networking

- 14. Free webinars for you and your staff
- 15. 1-Day Profit Blast
- 16. Annual Convention

Expert Consultations

- 17. Contact SAF staff for advice on technology, marketing and more
- 18. Free 15-minute legal consultation with attorney Paula A. Calimafde with law firm Paley Rothman, and a free test call and analysis with sales trainer Tim Huckabee of FloralStrategies

Industry Watchdog

- 19. Negative floral publicity response
- 20. Government advocacy

This is just scratching the surface!



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Business of Design

PRETTY IN PINK

> A dozen red roses or something unexpected? According to SAF's 2016 Valentine's Day survey, consumers' floral preferences are split right down the middle.

We know you can assemble the former in your sleep, but do you have any template designs for customers who want a Valentine of a different color (or style)?

At SAF Maui 2016, we spied former Sylvia Cup winner and Tommy Bright recipient Joyce Mason-Monheim, AIFD, PFCI, admiring 'Tabledance', the "Best in Show" entry in the SAF Outstanding Varieties Competition. "Perfect for Valentine's Day," she said of the pink Oriental trumpet lily from Green Valley Floral in Salinas, California. "It has such tremendous volume, you only need a few stems to make a simple arrangement look showy." Her comment led to a challenge: Could she come up with a few chic 'Tabledance' designs Floral Management readers could recreate in a jiffy when the Valentine madness hits? Here, find four looks to mesmerize your nontraditional clients this February. 🌸

Katie Hendrick khendrick@safnow.org

Find complete recipes at safnow.org/moreonline



SIMPLE ELEGANCE This design, perfectly sized to sit on a desk, provides a clean and fresh look for the customer who appreciates minimalism. "These are long-lasting lilies, so you can prepare this days in advance," Mason-Monheim added. Labor time: 5 minutes. Wholesale costs: \$23. Retail price: \$90.



SPECTACULAR SPHERE Mason-Monheim focused volume at the base of the design and added two midollino sticks to play with negative space. "The effect is that it appears larger than it really is, which boosts the perceived value," she said. Labor time: 15 minutes. Wholesale costs: \$21. Retail price: \$83.



ALLURING ARCHITECTURE Reminiscent of a zen garden, this modern arrangement has a calming effect. Rocks take up space without adding much to your costs or labor, Mason-Monheim said. Labor time: 12 minutes. Wholesale costs: \$19. Retail price: \$76.



FUNNY FACE This fast and easy novelty design will appeal to millennials' love of whimsy. Labor time: 5 minutes. Wholesale costs: \$20. Retail price: \$81.

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SPRING THINGS



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Made of quality wood and tin, Mr. and Mrs. Rabbit and their little ones welcome spring with an armful of flowers. These bunnies make an adorable addition to planters or can serve as simply charming yard ornaments. > ABfloral.com



COLOR THERAPY

It's been a long, stressful year. Couldn't we all use a little relief? These adult coloring books will lend some much-needed catharsis. Each book includes 45 relaxing patterns and wonderfully calming illustrations accompanied by inspirational messages. > CQbookstore.com/wholesale



PRECOCIOUS PUPPET

Luxuriously soft, this tan and cream plush puppet will enchant children. Its mouth and forelegs move in a lifelike fashion, and a pocket inside the nose makes for extra twitching fun. Pitch it as the perfect gift for baby showers and young'uns birthday parties. > Folkmanis.com



BUZZING BEARS

Turn bud vases into something truly precious with these plush bears. Standing five inches tall, they sport soft fur, cute expressions and adorable spring outfits. They're perfect for dressing up floral gifts from a dad to a daughter. > AuroraGift.com



LAPINS IN LOVE

These tiny figurines, made of wood and wool, depict a budding bunny romance. The design is simple but heartwarming and would make spring decorating a cinch. > Mwcbk.com



PEEP SHOW

These vibrant chicks sport their finest Easter bonnets (or bunny ears) and create instant cheer. Tuck into planters or arrangements for a little whimsy and an easy upsell. Made of metal and polyresin, these chicks stand five inches tall. > GforGifts.com



SPRING FLING

The Bubble is no ordinary balloon. Made of stretchy, see-through plastic, the bubble inflates into a perfectly round shape that resembles a beach ball. This fun pastel design is just the thing to perk people's moods and get the party started. > Qualatex.com

A TISCKET A TASKET

Bright and playful, this 39-inch basket balloon is a showstopper that coordinates beautifully with many colors of latex balloons. Market this to parents looking for a striking backdrop for Easter photos. > Betallix.com



Classifieds

Minimum order is three consecutive months: \$35 per month for 3 lines. Display classified: \$75 per inch. Address written replies for confidential ads to Floral Management, 1601 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314-3406. Confidential ads cannot be answered by a telephone call or personal visit to the management office. A confidential ad costs \$50 in addition to the cost of space for the ad. Contact Sheila Santiago at ssantiago@safnow.org or (800) 336-4743.

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Care and Handling BY TERRIL A. NELL, PH.D., AAF, PFCI

HOLLY, JOLLY HOLIDAY PLANTS

> During the holiday season, shoppers head for colorful flowering plants and decorated foliage plants. In addition to traditional favorites, retailers can offer customers a wide range of new varieties to incorporate into seasonal decorations. With proper care, these plants can remain beautiful into the New Year. Temperature, water and light are the keys to success. The goal is to have plants that maintain flower (bract) color while preventing bud, flower and leaf drop.

Four Easy Steps

Improving the plants in your store is relatively easy and based on four steps:

- **Inspect plants** for diseases and insects, yellow leaves and dropped or yellow buds upon arrival.
- **Remove sleeves** from plants carefully so leaves and flowers are not damaged. Do not leave sleeves on plants since moisture may collect on the sleeve and promote Botrytis.
- **Check soil moisture.** Many florists water plants immediately upon arrival. That might not be necessary and could damage roots. Water only if the soil feels dry to the touch. If the soil is moist, delay watering. Remember, overwatering

can cause root rot. This disease can be a serious problem with plants in pot covers or no-drain containers where water can stand in the bottom. If plants are in these containers, dump water from the non-draining containers 30 minutes after watering. Soil moisture should be checked every day.

- **Display plants properly** at 65 to 70 F. Flowering plants need to be displayed in areas with high light (not direct sunlight) to allow flowers to open without fading.

Special Considerations

Some holiday plants do require particular care. Here are some things to look out for:

- **Bud drop on Christmas cactus.** Buds and flowers will drop on Christmas cactus if the plants dry out or if they are exposed to ethylene. Plants should be treated with an anti-ethylene product by the grower.
- **Petiole bending on poinsettias.** Don't panic! Some poinsettia varieties may appear wilted when sleeves are removed. This problem, known as epinasty, is caused by a hormonal change in the leaves

when the leaf petioles are bent upwards while sleeved. The plants will recover in 24 to 36 hours in a lighted display area. The bending is not caused by dehydration. Do not water the plants as a means of correcting this problem.

- **A final note:** Do your best to store plants properly for best quality. If plants are going to be held for more than two days, it is best to store potted tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, cyclamen and potted roses at 38 to 40 F. At these temperatures, flowers will be slower to open. Remove plants from the cooler for several hours to allow soil to warm up before placing plants in brightly lit areas. Poinsettia, Christmas cactus, amaryllis and foliage plants should be held at temperatures no lower than 53 F and no higher than 75 F for best plant quality. 🌿

Terril Nell, Ph.D., AAF, PFCI, is professor emeritus from the University of Florida, a consultant to the floral industry and the research coordinator for the American Floral Endowment. terrilnell@gmail.com



MAGNUM

XXL FLOWER

HUNDREDS OF PETALS

STRONG STEM

LONG LASTING BEAUTY

The word 'magnum' means 'big', and this is exactly why we called this disbudded chrysanthemum Magnum. Its flower is huge: to call Magnum a size XXL is no exaggeration! Not only does its flower get even bigger in the vase as the weeks go by, but it also becomes more spherical. This large eye-catching white flower with bright green at its centre is simply packed with petals. In fact, Magnum has so many ray petals that the flower never opens completely to reveal any disc petals in its centre, even after weeks in the vase. Magnum is an ultra-strong variety that has passed every transport and post-harvest shelf life test with ease – and without any sign of petal damage or loss. These chrysanthemums are delivered in a net – not to prevent any damage but simply to get enough of these large flowers into their box. This unique flower with its high petal count, sturdy stems and beautiful green leaves has already reaped rave reviews. With the introduction of Magnum, Deliflor is taking a new step in chrysanthemums. Magnum will become available in quantities of around 40,000 stems a week early in April.

More information

www.deliflor.com, info@deliflor.com, www.facebook.com/deliflor

DELIFLOR

Chrysantem

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We're in the business to help grow your business. With our worldwide florist network, technology systems, marketing tools and customer support, you can focus on what's most important—delighting and inspiring your customers with handcrafted arrangements.



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