

# floral management

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THE FLORAL BUSINESS AUTHORITY | SEPTEMBER 2017 | VOLUME 34 | NUMBER 6



## BE OUR GUEST

The American Grown movement leverages the power of locally grown and wins Floral Management's 24th Annual Marketer of the Year Award



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# floral management

THE FLORAL BUSINESS AUTHORITY SEPTEMBER 2017 | VOLUME 34 | NUMBER 6



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## A MOVEABLE (FLORAL) FEAST

To get consumers thinking about American-grown flowers, a group of industry members created a high-style dinner series — and won Floral Management's 2017 Marketer of the Year honors.

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## FIRST AND SECOND QUARTER'S A CHARM

How's business? Pretty good! That was the generally cheery picture that emerged from a recent Society of American Florists survey on first and second quarter returns.

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Attendees at SAF's 1-Day Profit Blast in St. Louis got instant inspiration and return on investment, practical and affordable options to grow their business.

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Paying an employee under the table. Not reporting the occasional sale. What seems like a "small thing" can easily become a big thing.



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## Viewpoint BY THADDEUS SERVANTEZ, AIFD

### MAKE AN INVESTMENT IN YOURSELF

> Not long ago, I was “simply” the owner of Westminster Flowers and Gifts, a long-time local florist outside of Denver. I was happy and doing what I love — but I didn’t always feel connected to the larger floral industry. That’s not the case anymore.

Thanks to a handful of organizations, and some encouragement from family and friends, today I feel more invested in and part of our industry than I ever thought possible.

My transformation started in 2015, when my family convinced me to take my online test for the Professional Floral Design Evaluation (PFDE) in Denver. To my surprise, I passed the evaluation and was invited to participate in the hands-on evaluation session at the American Institute of Floral Designers’ annual Symposium.

Once I was inducted into AIFD, on July 5, 2016, I realized I had found the missing puzzle piece to fulfill my desire as an artist. AIFD helped me find a renewed purpose in my work, and it enabled me to better use the principles and elements of design, and to understand my love for flowers as an art form. It was a highlight of my career.

AIFD also opened new doors. Through the organization, for example, I met Lisa Weddel, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, of L Weddel Design in Highlands Ranch, Colorado. She suggested I become more involved with the Society of American Florists. While technically a member of SAF already, I hadn’t utilized many of the group’s resources until I attended a 1-Day Profit Blast event in 2016. As it turned out, SAF also helped me grow my career and share my love for the floral industry and floral education.

I also became more active with the Floral Association of the Rockies (FAR). I can guess what some people might be thinking: Who has the time for all of these groups? After all, we’re all also running our businesses. The level of involvement may seem overwhelming. The truth, however, is that I’ve found endless support and resources available from these floral associations.

During my time on the FAR board, for example, I have helped so many florists, teaching them new ideas and helping them step outside of the box. That’s what FAR and other floral asso-

ciations do: They help us educate each other and learn from each other, so that we can grow as individuals and an industry. Local floral associations can be especially strong on these points.

This month, I’ll also be at SAF Palm Beach 2017, SAF’s annual convention, for the first time. While I’m there, I hope I’ll be able to fill in the missing links within my business plan, which always seems to be evolving, and also learn about tips and practices to strengthen the shop’s bottom line.

As my friend and mentor Lisa Weddel recently reminded me, we florists can go at things alone — but that’s not necessarily the best approach. “My thought has always been that if you don’t put yourself out there, you won’t have a return,” she said. “These organizations are all investments, not costs. What you invest in time and money you will receive in support, knowledge and networking. If a florist sits within their four walls, that is where they will stay: in the confines of their world.”

My involvement in these associations has made me even more proud to own Westminster Flowers and Gifts and honored to be part of the AIFD, FAR and SAF families. I have so much to be grateful for, and I can honestly say that active participation in the floral community has given me a voice and awareness to handle this constantly changing industry. 🌻

**Thaddeus Servantez, AIFD**, traveled the world as an entertainer for more than 20 years before returning home to Colorado. In addition to running his businesses, Westminster Flowers and Gifts and My Denver Wedding Planner, he is vice president of the Floral Association of the Rockies. A version of this article originally ran at [floriologyinstitute.com/aifd-saf-cfd-certification-career](http://floriologyinstitute.com/aifd-saf-cfd-certification-career).



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## What Inspires Us

➤ Experiential marketing is a hot trend in advertising — it's when a company integrates its brand into an environment in a way that allows the customer to actually experience it firsthand. Here are just a few examples of what it can look like:

- As part of its effort to move away from a diet-centric message, Lean Cuisine's #WeighThis campaign asked women passing through New York's Grand Central Station how they wanted to be weighed — not in pounds but, rather, by their accomplishments. Their responses — "I'm 55 and back in college," "I'm the sole provider for my sons," — were hand-lettered on a gallery of paper cut-out scales on display in the station.
- A German relief organization, Misereor, set up digital posters in high traffic areas to display images of the problems it tackles. World hunger is depicted with a loaf of bread, and a child's wrists bound by ropes represent imprisoned children in the Philippines. But here's the "experience" part: The posters, which implore passers to donate 2 euros to "feed a family" and "free a child," are equipped with a card reader, so when you swipe to donate it activates a film sequence on the screen, so you, in effect, slice off a piece of bread and cut through the ropes to free the hands.

- And then there's Charmin's "Don't pee in the sea" campaign. (Careful: Your laugh, or wince, at that moniker will give away whether you're the intended target). As part of its Charmin Relief project, the brand sent traveling bathroom facilities (stocked with, you guessed it, Charmin bathroom tissue) to beaches around the country.

Experiential marketing is being embraced by today's smartest marketers because it works. It's particularly effective with brand-savvy millennials, who tend to ignore ads and favor experiences over material things. But they're not the only ones: Americans across generations are spending more on live experiences and events — 70 percent more since 1987 — and businesses are retooling their advertising approaches as a result.

The fact that the winner of Floral Management's Annual Marketer of the Year award submitted an experiential campaign was not lost on the judges. Veteran public relations expert and longtime judge Dani Mackey called the campaign "very on trend" for its use of experience marketing. SAF Chairwoman of the Board Shirley Lyons, AAF, PFCI, was impressed that the California Cut Flower Commission took a concept that had some traction — the farm to table movement — and rolled it into an experience for consumers. Susan



Bachman West, president of the iconic floral industry retail brand Bachman's in Minneapolis, appreciated that the campaign pulled back the curtain to reveal a part of our industry the consumer rarely sees. "Some of the most beautiful things we have," West said, "we hide behind our greenhouses."

Beyond creativity and innovation, the judges look for success, and CCFC came through there as well, as you'll see in Mary Westbrook's coverage, beginning on p. 22. If you find yourself gazing longingly at the beautiful photos of the Field to Vase dinners (as I was), wanting to attend one yourself (as I most definitely do), visit [AmericanGrownFlowers.org](http://AmericanGrownFlowers.org) for a schedule of upcoming dinners. Experience it firsthand. 🌿

**Kate Penn**  
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## More Online ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON [WWW.SAFNOW.ORG](http://WWW.SAFNOW.ORG)



### PUT YOUR HAT IN THE RING

Want to take a shot at Floral Management's Marketer of the Year Award — and the \$5,000 cash prize that Design Master color tool, Inc. so generously sponsors for the winner? Get your Marketer of the Year primer, by revisiting past winners and soaking in what it takes to win (in two words: creativity and success). [safnow.org/marketeroftheyear](http://safnow.org/marketeroftheyear)



### FOLLOW THAT CONVENTION!

If schedules, finances (or both) prevent you from leaving the shop to attend SAF Palm Beach 2017, stay tuned into at least some of the action by following the convention on Twitter and Facebook. The SAF staff and attendees will be posting a regular stream of photos, soundbites and more throughout the four-day event, Sept. 6-9. #safconv



### RACE FOR KNOWLEDGE

If time and money have been preventing you from attending SAF's annual convention, then SAF has an event that might just be the ticket: SAF's 1-Day Profit Blast. You've got two options this fall: on September 23 in Boston (underwritten by Jacobson Floral Supply) and November Think about attending! [safnow.org/1-day-profit-blast](http://safnow.org/1-day-profit-blast)



### A DEEPER LOOK

Our economic outlook coverage gives you just a glimpse at how the industry fared for the first and second quarter of the year. Want even more detail on we did, broken down by segment? Get the complete survey results at [safnow.org/statistics](http://safnow.org/statistics).

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## Profit Blast Power

Need a nudge to attend an SAF 1-Day Profit Blast (next up: Boston on Sept. 23 and Louisville on Nov. 4; [safnow.org/profit-blast](http://safnow.org/profit-blast))? See what attendees of the St. Louis event had to say:

> I cannot wait to implement many of the ideas and recommit to my social media presence.  
**Kelly Jurotich The Crimson Petal, St. Louis**

> It was like attending a mini symposium. Knowledge is power, and we need to continue to share it with others.  
**Rhonda Lynn-Moeckel, AIFD, Baisch and Skinner Wholesale, St. Louis**

> I enjoyed the interaction with other vendors, meeting people I'd otherwise not meet and learning what other businesses experience in the industry.  
**Joe Ferrara Fresca Farms, Miami**

> I learned a lot, especially about the marketing and business ends of the business, and it's always great to meet other florists and compare notes.  
**Cory Parolin Irene's Floral Design, St. Louis**

> The variety of growers displaying product lines was great. An intensive one-day power boost!  
**Pat Scace Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis**

> So much information and design ideas in one day! It's great to get all segments of the industry in one place at the same time.  
**Greg Goodermote DWF Wholesale Florists, St. Louis**

> The information was very relevant, and presented in an exciting manner.  
**Steve Gandour Rosa Flora Limited, Dunnville, Ontario, Canada**

> It is great to walk out the door with an action plan for ideas that will be put into play tomorrow at our shop!  
**Kim Brannan Stems Florist, St. Louis**

> There were attendees with thriving businesses whom I saw taking plenty of notes and asking questions, so that should tell you something. Just go! You will be glad you did!  
**Kate Bordages Freter freelance floral designer, St. Louis**

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## SAF in Action

### CELEBRATING THE STARS OF THE INDUSTRY AT SAF PALM BEACH 2017



#### American Academy of Floriculture 2017 Inductees

##### Maggie Binet, AAF, AIFD, CPF, PFCI



Maggie Binet, AAF, AIFD, CPF, PFCI, has traveled the world to study with renowned designers, and she embraces any opportunity to share her knowledge with others. Binet, the owner of Le Jardin Binet LLC in Englewood, Colorado, helped create the state's Certified Professional Florist program and, in 2014, founded The School of Floral Arts in Denver. A board member of the Colorado Retail Florists Association (CRFA), the Floral Association of the Rockies (FAR) and the South Central Region of the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD), she frequently gives presentations and leads workshops.

##### Zoë Gallina, AAF



After graduating from the University of North Florida in 2006 with a degree in communications and advertising, Zoë Gallina, AAF, joined her family's business, Botanica International Design & Décor Studio in Tampa, Florida. Her work has been published in many publications, including, *Grace Ormonde Wedding Style*, and *The Knot*. Trained through the Association of Certified Professional Wedding Consultants, Gallina is a sought-after speaker, and she and her father, Ian Prosser, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, NDSF, have presented at SAF conventions.

##### Jodi McShan, AAF, TMF



Third-generation florist Jodi McShan, AAF, got her start filling water picks at age 4. These days, the master multitasker runs her own law firm while also immersing herself in the various responsibilities of her family's Dallas flower shop.

The vice president and co-owner of McShan Florist Inc. is an avid reader of industry magazines, business publications and research and trend reports,

> Some of the most accomplished professionals in the industry are receiving honors during the Stars of the Industry Awards Dinner on Sept. 9 at SAF Palm Beach 2017, SAF's 133rd Annual Convention at The Breakers in Florida. Among them are inductees into the American Academy of Floriculture (AAF) and Professional Floral Communicators - International (PFCI).

and uses her knowledge to guide the shop's management team. She helps lead design presentations for consumers, as well as high school students who aspire to become professional florists, and writes a blog about flower and plant care. McShan serves on the Texas State Florists' Association's Legislative Committee.

##### Lynne Tischler, AAF, CPFD, PFCI



Twenty years after she received her advanced floral design certificate from Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon, in 1994, Lynne Tischler, AAF, CPFD, PFCI, became an instructor at the Koehler & Dramm Institute of Floristry in Minneapolis, one of the nation's most renowned flower schools.

With her wealth of knowledge and effervescent personality, Tischler, who also owns Your Enchanted Florist in St. Paul, Minnesota, enthralls not only Koehler & Dramm students, but also members of garden clubs and horticultural societies, television viewers and subscribers to her shop's YouTube channel.

#### Professional Floral Communicators – International 2017 Inductees

##### Lesleigh Kraft Cravens, CFD, PFCI



Like many college freshmen, Lesleigh Kraft Cravens, CFD, PFCI, couldn't anticipate what path she'd take when she arrived at the University of Missouri-Columbia in the fall of 2009. But a work-study assignment at Tiger Garden, the school's student-run flower shop, directed her to a passion for flowers.

Upon graduating in 2015, she became a floral design instructor for her alma mater and advisor for the Mizzou student chapter of the American Institute of Floral Designers.

##### Chris Drummond, AAF, PFCI



Third-generation florist Chris Drummond, AAF, PFCI, is president of Plaza Flowers in Philadelphia and Norristown, Pennsylvania, a company he and his sister, Heather, have grown into a multimillion-dollar enterprise.

Drummond has worked on several presidential inaugurations and the 2000 Republican National Convention. He served three terms as president of the Pennsylvania Floral Industry Association and has been recognized as its "Florist of the Year." He has chaired SAF's Technology Task Force, served on its Retail Council and Consumer Marketing Committee and served as SAF treasurer until September 9, when he becomes SAF president-elect.

##### Shawn Michael Foley, AIFD, PFCI



While studying vocal performance in college, Shawn Michael Foley, AIFD, PFCI, saw a want ad in the newspaper for a floral designer, applied on a whim, got the job and quickly caught the "flower bug." He attended as many conventions and classes as he could afford, and in 2011 started his own business, Design Lab Botanicals in Wausau, Wisconsin.

Foley launched the Human Form Project in 2012. This annual series of photographs highlights the beauty of the human body with grand botanical accessories and has appeared in several European magazines, including *Flowers World* and *Blomster*.

He is HotHouse Design Studio's lead wedding designer. He was named Mayesh Design Star in 2016.

##### Julia YoungJu Kim, AIFD, PFCI



As the present principal of Piverdie France Korea Academy and a founding member of the Asia Floral

## SAF in Action

Design Union, Julia Young Ju Kim, AIFD, PFCI, has studied and led presentations around the globe. She holds nearly a dozen advanced certificates, including France's Lyon Forma Fleur, the Netherlands' Henk Mulder Flower Design School, Texas A&M's Benz School of Floral Design and Phil Rulloda's Southern California School of Floral Design.

For two decades, she has wowed audiences throughout Japan, China, France and U.S., including several American Institute of Floral Designers symposiums. She has designed flowers for the United Nations, World Energy Council, Global Fashion For Development, World Water Forum, South Korea's embassy in Japan and G20 Summit Seoul.

#### Rocío Silva, AIFD, PFCI



Floristry has been a lifelong passion for Rocío Silva, whose family has owned flower shops in Mexico for more than 50 years.

Silva co-created the curriculum for the Instituto Mexicano Técnico Floral in Monterrey, Mexico, and produced and edited its textbooks. Since 2004, she has served as the school's managing director. Under her leadership, IMTF has graduated more than 1,200 students.

Having attended several courses through the National Gardener Association, Silva judges gardening and design. She is also a certified judge for the American Institute of Floral Design. She is a former columnist for one of Mexico's most prominent newspapers and a frequent contributor to the Latin American magazine *Arte Floral*.

#### Lynne Tischler, AAF, CPFD, PFCI

See AAF bio. 📺

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## GET READY TO PETAL IT FORWARD ON OCT. 11

➤ The countdown is on for Petal It Forward on Wednesday, Oct. 11, and there's still time to organize a local event, said Society of American Florists Vice President of Marketing Jennifer Sparks: "Whether this is your first or third Petal It Forward, SAF makes it easy to do." Logistics advice and resources are available to members at [safnow.org/petalitforward](https://safnow.org/petalitforward). Some key points:

- **Ask for a Partner.** Retailers: Talk to your supplier(s) to see if they would be willing to work with you on product. Wholesalers and growers: Talk to your retail customers about how you would like to help them in their Petal It Forward efforts, and/or consider holding an event of your own in your community.
- **Scout a Location.** Choose a busy pedestrian area, such as a bus or train stop, office or community park, in front of your shop. Check with your city to inquire if permission is needed to hand out flowers in public areas.
- **Tell SAF About Your Plans.** Fill out the online participation form at [safnow.org/piform](https://safnow.org/piform). This will help SAF compile a list of events to show the media Petal It Forward is happening all over the country.
- **Order Petal It Forward Flower Cards or Stickers, and T-shirts.** Templates are available at [safnow.org/petalitforward](https://safnow.org/petalitforward).
- **Reach Out to the Press.** "The goal of Petal It Forward is to generate traditional and social media coverage to highlight the benefits of flower power — the positive impact flowers have on our emotional well-being — even beyond the actual recipients of the flowers," Sparks said. To generate local news coverage, SAF provides advice to members for Contacting the Media as well as a customizable Media Advisory and Press Release.
- **Know Your Talking Points and Social Media Messages.** When you talk to reporters, have key talking points in mind. SAF provides suggested Talking Points. It's also important to give your "Happiness Ambassadors" something easy and impactful to say when they're handing out flowers. SAF provides Flower Event Messages and suggested Social Media Messages. "You can make your Petal It Forward Event as big or small as you want," Sparks said. "It's a win-win for your business to participate. For little effort, you give consumers the opportunity to experience the scientifically proven happiness that occurs when you give and receive flowers. At the same time, you position your business as a positive force in your community. That makes consumers feel good about you, which goes a long way in establishing customer loyalty. And, you give a morale boost to employees who play a part."

SAF's goal is to have Petal It Forward events happening on the same day in all 50 states, which could help to capture even more media attention nationwide. 📺



**POWERFUL PUBLICITY** City Line Florist in Trumbull, Connecticut, hosted reporters in store for interviews about Petal It Forward for the 2016 event and shared behind-the-scenes footage of the interview via social media.

# snapshot

Weber's Florist and Gifts | CANTON, OHIO



**NIPS AND TUCKS** "Sharee does a wonderful job buying items that are perfect for her market, with really beautiful packaging, so most of my work was on how to make those areas even more attractive," White explained. He talked with McDonald about using height in displays, and taking advantage of walls and windows, to avoid the jammed-in feeling of an over-filled table. They also spent time on color-blocking — a new concept for McDonald — but one that can help direct customers' eyes.



BY MARY WESTBROOK **Snapshot**

## SMALL TWEAKS, BIG RETURNS

> When J. Keith White, AIFD, got word that the winner of an FTD shop makeover contest was in Ironton, Ohio, his first question was: Where the heck is Ironton? The answer (southern Ohio along the Ohio River) didn't necessarily prepare White, an FTD education consultant, for the business he encountered: Weber's buzzes with sympathy, wedding and everyday work and lots of walk-in. "It was phenomenal," he said. "I really haven't seen anything like it."

Co-owner Sharee McDonald, who bought into the business five years ago with her husband, Shawn, a member of the fourth-generation, said they've been looking for ways to better use existing space. "Our shop was feeling chopped up and cramped," she said. "Our building is 100 years old, and we can't add on." After White finished, word got around town quickly: "We saw a big sales difference right away," said McDonald. 🌿



**CALM, COOL, COLLECTED** In a hallway area, White reorganized to play up soothing neutral tones: white, cream and gray. "We wanted it to look airy and bright," he explained, because that kind of atmosphere draws in customers and creates a soothing effect.



**STYLE AND FUNCTION** White wasn't only focused on making things look pretty. He also wanted to reorganize areas to streamline areas, including this corner area, for higher functionality. "We talked a lot about how to make it so that people are able to work faster and more efficiently, without walking back and forth across the store for supplies and materials."

## The Right Price

BY MARK ANDERSON



### PUT THE 'UNIQUE VALUE EFFECT' TO WORK

➤ Any parent who has procrastinated before the holidays knows that the “must-have” toy of the season — the one flying off the shelves — is marked up significantly more on December 24 compared to the price tag for the same item on January 2.

This is known as the unique value effect: If your product delivers value not available elsewhere, you can charge more for it.

Unfortunately, flowers, which are now readily available through so many channels, tend to fall closer to commodity products. A commodity product is one for which the only differentiator is price. When all other things are equal, the lowest price tends to win.

#### More Than a Commodity

There are ways to escape commodification and increase prices. All mid-grade 89 octane gasoline is the same, but gas stations typically try and justify charging a little bit more by offering a better experience. A covered station can charge a little more on a rainy day. A station that has a better selection of groceries can try and get a few cents more from drivers who want to kill two birds with one stone.

Diamonds are also a commodity product. They are objectively graded according to specific criteria, and the only thing that differentiates similar stones is price. But Tiffany is able to charge three times the price of its least expensive competitor. Customers happily pay triple

the price for the same product because that blue box provides unique value.

Both the gas station and Tiffany are looking beyond their core commodity product and trying to add value in other ways.

Some florists achieve Tiffany-like status. A shop aspiring to that can learn a lot just by placing a test order.

Look at the way the order is packed and shipped. Are the materials used because they're easy and inexpensive or because they elevate and reinforce the brand? A customer who doesn't know good flowers and design from bad is almost certainly impressed by branded ribbons or stickers. The enclosure card is the only part of an expensive gift that will last longer than a couple of weeks, and it may be saved as a keepsake. What does the quality of the card say about your brand? Did you choose it because it was cheap and convenient or because it paints your brand in the best possible light? How are you providing unique value that lets you charge more?

#### The Role of Pricing

In city XYZ, many florists served the downtown core, but one reigned supreme. The oft-expressed sentiment among people that worked in the area was “if you got flowers and they weren't from XYZ ... you didn't get flowers.” People could get flowers anywhere, but that brand offered unique value.

Their work was excellent. They used good product and employed skilled designers. But was it objectively better than the work from other good shops in the area? Not really.

Was it objectively more expensive? Definitely. They could charge more because they were the best but, to some extent, they were the best because they charged more.

Being recognized as the best shop in town gives you a distinct advantage when it comes to pricing. It lets you charge more. Becoming recognized as the best shop is largely a marketing/branding challenge, but pricing plays a major part.

Study after study shows that people associate price with quality. They assume more expensive equals better. The fact is even more pronounced when they don't truly understand a product, and it's safe to say most flower buyers don't truly understand flowers, let alone floral design.

High prices are the most credible and trustworthy claim you can make about your quality. It doesn't mean you should only offer high prices, but you need to offer some. 🌿

**Mark Anderson** is founder and president of FloristWare. When he's not developing and servicing POS software, he's pursuing his other passion, pricing strategy, as a contributor to *Business.com* as well as through programming at SAF and other industry events. [mark@floristware.com](mailto:mark@floristware.com)



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## Talent BY MARY WESTBROOK

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

**SANDRA DURAN**  
Graphic Designer  
Accent Décor Inc.  
Norcross, Georgia



**“Our B2B is awful.  
How can you fix it?”**

That’s the kind of direct question you should pose to job candidates, particularly those seeking management positions, according to Fast Company contributor and entrepreneur Christian Bonilla. Too often during interviews and on-boarding, owners play down deficiencies. That can backfire.

“The on-boarding process, intended to help people get up to speed on how the business works and what everyone does, morphs into a marketing pitch,” Bonilla argues. “The company’s problems are minimized or avoided, and the team feels obligated to paint the rosier picture of the business they can. That’s dangerous to everyone involved. The worst thing you can do to a capable person is convince them that everything is a certain way for a reason. They should be questioning everything that doesn’t make sense, not trying to rationalize why the status quo is actually just fine after all.”

➤ Sandra Duran joined Accent Décor almost two years ago on something of a whim. The Santa Fe University of Art and Design graduate had been a freelance designer, but then a job posting piqued her interest. The whim turned into a win. “It’s such a cliché, but the best career advice I’ve ever gotten was, ‘Make sure you love what you do,’” said Duran, who works in a department of five as the sole graphic designer, although the company is growing. “I like

the variety of my job and the challenges.”

**The biggest challenge.**

“Keeping things cohesive and consistent. I work on our catalogs, take-away materials for shows, product development, materials for the showroom and website — anything digital, really — and we even do our own wallpaper. I love how diverse my work is, but that’s also the challenge: How do you translate something

from the catalog to the web and showroom? You have to use your imagination.”

**I see myself as ...**

“As a storyteller. That’s a big part of what we do, trend-setting and storytelling. We’re giving our customers not only beautiful vessels, but also a story [behind each product] that they can tell their customers. That’s why consistency is so important. If customers become confused, they won’t share those sto-

ries with their customers. We don’t want that to get lost.”

**But I’m not a magician.**

“With graphic design, people sometimes think you’re a magical wizard — someone who can do anything, and do it fast. Really, it’s a long process, starting with product development, brainstorming ideas, sharing feedback. Behind the scenes, there’s a lot of activity. It’s always a team effort.” 🌿

**No ‘Justa’ Jobs**

When HR consultant Nora Burns went undercover in retail jobs for more than a year, she keyed into a verbal tick among workers: “I’m just a waitress.” “I’m just an assistant.” (Can you hear something similar? “I’m just a designer.”) The phrase became a red flag — a signal to Burns that,

at these organizations, employees had been made to feel less than, even though the same workers also often had the most regular customer interaction.

“These are the people who are your first line when you’re talking with your customers, and they’re

defining themselves as ‘justa,’ which makes you think, at what point are they defining your customers as ‘just a customer?’” she said during the DisruptHR human resources conference last year.

Burns said most employees start a job feeling positively,

but then “meta messages” tear down the worker. The negative messages can be subtle: A team member arrives on her first day to find important info scrawled on scrap of paper, rather than typed neatly. A boss checks his phone while employees talk. Schedules are changed without regard to employee

input. Conversely, employers who communicate the value of every job — even the tedious but necessary work of keeping floors swept and design tables clean — help instill pride.

Check out the entire talk at [vimeo.com/disrupthr](https://vimeo.com/disrupthr). Search for Nora Burns.



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## Growth BY BRAD DENHAM

## HOW AN 'OUTSIDER' CAN HELP A FAMILY BUSINESS

➤ One thing that I have always admired about the floral industry is the rich legacy of family-owned and -operated businesses. At our first Society of American Florists convention in 2007, we met a family-owned florist from Kentucky that had just passed the 150-year mark. As a new startup, we hadn't even considered a 10-year business plan, let alone a plan to help us reach the 100-plus-year mark.

And yet, my startup was a family business: My wife, Cheryl, and I were in business together. So, I studied these family businesses, trying to understand what qualities, traits and actions lead one business to last for a century and another to go under in a few years.

**A Problem of Succession**

I soon realized that although the floral industry is dominated by family-owned and -operated businesses, many florists struggle to pass leadership down the family line. Speaking with florists around the country, I found out that succession troubles come up for many reasons, from family disagreements to lack of commitment from other family members.

In our case, my son and daughter had not expressed an interest in running the business or were not prepared to take over the management. Adding to the complexity, my wife and I realized that one of our greatest barriers to developing a successful leadership succession plan was our ability to let go of control and management. Although we have always had managers outside of the family, we had never truly ceded major responsibilities to them. That changed this year.

**Power to the People**

After 14 years, we finally decided to seek external candidates who could share our vision and give new energy to the business we had sacrificed so much of our lives for. Making the decision was hard, but once we identified the right candidate, we realized that trusting the candidate with our legacy would be the most difficult task. Fortunately, we found an experienced professional manager.

Just like new employees, our new manager needed a period of adjustment to gain the necessary experience

to manage the business on a day-to-day basis. We also learned that the existing family members — in our case, father and brother — needed an adjustment period to allow an "outsider" to help run the family business.

For our business, the transition period lasted a few months and included the existing family members and current managers educating the new general manager on the specifics of his job roles

My wife and I realized that one of our greatest barriers to developing a successful leadership succession plan was our ability to let go of control and management.

and responsibilities. While it was important to bring our new manager up to speed, we were careful not to solely push our own viewpoints and opinions; we wanted to make sure he had an objective view of the business and its challenges and opportunities.

**Lessons Learned**

Only a few months after committing to this new hire, we have seen dramatic improvements to operations and performance, and we've learned lessons

other businesses might appreciate. Namely, we've learned that an outside hire can bring:

**Improved communication.** Being a family is complicated enough; when you pile on running a business and generating revenue, communication can grow more complicated. An outside manager can help everyone communicate more effectively while providing a different point of view.

**Skills for the job.** Outside leadership has brought expertise and skills not readily available in the family, such as a history of managing and motivating larger groups of retail employees. This has removed some of the pressure from my wife and me. In addition, it has allowed family members to focus their efforts on other interests, whether inside or outside the current business. (Cheryl, for example, can now focus her efforts more on LUX, our wedding and event business.)

**Clear direction.** Our leadership with other employees has been strengthened thanks to hiring outside of the family. By clearly endorsing and supporting the leadership position of our new manager, everyone understands our goal is to make the company better.

With all this said, we love working with family! Our business wouldn't be what it is without the hard work and dedication of the family members involved. After all, we named our business Arizona Family Florist for a reason. 🌿



**Brad Denham is a founding partner in Arizona Family Florist, the parent company of Arizona Florist, Arizona Flower Market and**

**LUX Wedding Florist and winner of Floral Management's 2012 Marketer of the Year Award. He oversees the strategic business development, including branding, web development and e-commerce strategy, of all of the brands. Arizona Republic and BizAZ Magazine have named Denham one of Arizona's top entrepreneurs. [brad@azfamilyflorist.com](mailto:brad@azfamilyflorist.com)**

“Branding is to my  
business, as nutrients  
are for flowers... a must!”

- Deborah De La Flor, AIFD, PFCI, CFD.



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

### PLANT PASSION

> Poppy's Garden in Muskogee, Oklahoma, has enjoyed tremendous foot traffic in recent months, in large part due to a prominent display filled with succulents, airplants, cacti and assorted small potted plants. "I'm constantly restocking it," said owner Meagan Ferren. "People are crazy about plants." Over the summer, she met hordes of mothers perusing her petite offerings for their daughters' dorm décor — many of whom returned to buy something green for themselves.

In Neenah, Wisconsin, Cheryl Last-Calo has noticed a similar obsession. Inspired by a recent Floral Management feature, she set up a terrarium bar in her shop, Sterling Gardens Florist & Boutique, in July. She covered a wall with chalk paint, hired an artist to write out directions in an attractive font and advertised classes through Facebook, Twitter, community fliers and Constant Contact. "Classes booked up in a jiffy," she said. "Now, we have people scheduling private

events, such as bachelorette parties. And on any given day, I have three or four people drop in and make a terrarium on the spot."

For the better part of a decade, Sarah Botchick, marketing and product development at Pioneer Imports and Wholesale in Berea, Ohio, has fielded requests for succulents — and expects the demand to continue. Lately though, she's detected a new trend: table-sized pops of color or greenery. "Thank you, Joanna Gaines!" she said of the famed interior designer, HGTV star and self-professed "plant lady" who recommends placing green things on bookshelves, kitchen islands, night stands and various corners of the home.

Here are a few products sure to satisfy your customers' plant lust. 🌿

Katie Hendrick is a contributing writer of Floral Management. [khendrick@safnow.org](mailto:khendrick@safnow.org)



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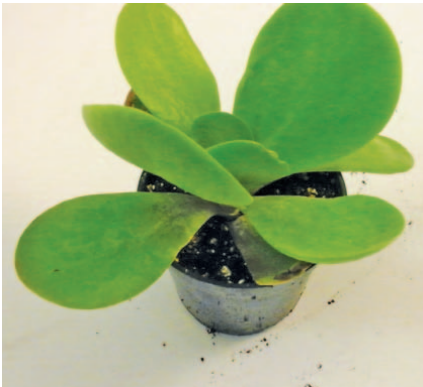


**ORNAMENTAL PEPPERS**  
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**'SAPPHIRE' LISIANTHUS**  
Ball Horticultural

## Fresh Choices



**'CAPTAIN NEMO' ECHEVERIA**

Hillcrest Gardens



**'EVERGREEN ROSE' SUCCULENT**

Hillcrest Gardens



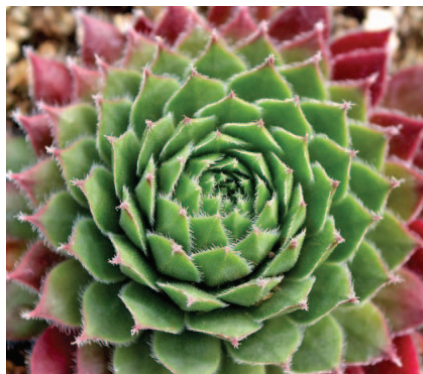
**'MOON' CACTUS**

Hillcrest Gardens



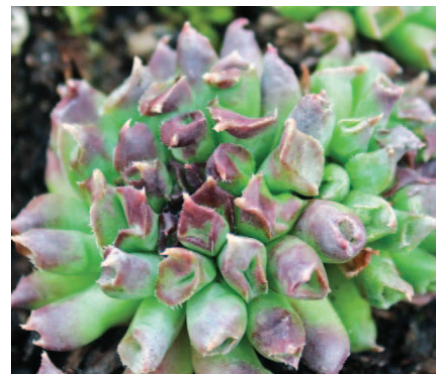
**'HEUFFELII BROTHERS' SEMPERVIVUM**

Mountain Crest Gardens



**'ITCHEN' SEMPERVIVUM**

Mountain Crest Gardens



**'ODDITY' SEMPERVIVUM**

Mountain Crest Gardens



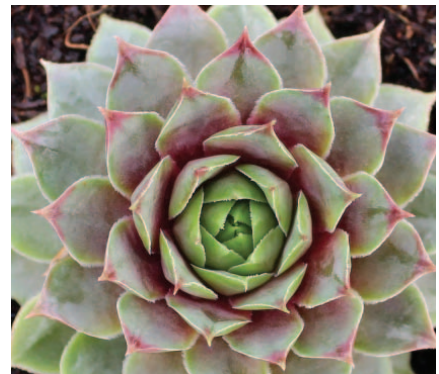
**'SILVER THAW' SEMPERVIVUM**

Mountain Crest Gardens



**'SILVERINE' SEMPERVIVUM**

Mountain Crest Gardens



**'C WILLIAM' SEMPERVIVUM**

Mountain Crest Gardens



**'FAME' SEMPERVIVUM**

Mountain Crest Gardens



**BOXWOOD TOPIARY**

Pioneer Wholesale



**ASSORTED HENS AND CHICKS**

Pioneer Wholesale

**THREE'S COMPANY** California Cut Flower Commission CEO Kasey Cronquist, PFCI, (center) worked with many partners and community members including Chet Anderson, with the Fresh Herb Company, and Alicia Schwede of Bella Fiori Floral and Flirty Fleurs, on the award-winning American Grown Field to Vase Dinner Tour, which has crossed the country to introduce consumers and the media to domestic flowers and plants.







## WHAT MAKES A MARKETER OF THE YEAR?

Meet the judging panel for the 2017 Marketer of the Year award and find out how they pick a winner. Plus get info on entering next year's competition at [saf-now.org/moreonline](http://saf-now.org/moreonline).

# A Moveable (Floral) Feast

BY MARY WESTBROOK

To get consumers thinking about American Grown flowers, a group of industry members created a high-style dinner series — and won Floral Management's 2017 Marketer of the Year honors.

It wasn't just that it was raining in Arcata, California, on March 12, 2016 — although you might expect rain to dampen the spirits of the 153 people driving to Sun Valley Floral Farms.

That evening, Sun Valley was kicking off the 2016 season of The American Grown Field to Vase Dinner Tour, a series of communal dining experiences organized by The Certified American Grown program, a collaborative of several industry groups and companies focused on raising the profile of flowers and plants grown in the U.S.

CONNIE WHITLOCK

## > A MOVEABLE (FLORAL) FEAST

The rain coming down that week on Arcata, however, had reached historic levels. Kasey Cronquist, PFCI, one of the chief organizers behind the dinner series, had driven more than five hours from San Francisco around landslides to get to Sun Valley; a number of guests had done the same. The dinner would take place in the company's greenhouses — the guests surrounded by tulips — and it was sold out, but as the rain intensified, Cronquist expected at least a few cancellations.

Instead, a woman contacted Certified American Grown, pleading for a ticket. She'd called earlier, and staff had explained that the event was already over capacity. Nonetheless, as the dinner was about to begin, there the woman stood, the venue filling up, that rain pouring down.

Everybody showed — but the woman decided to wait in her car, just in case a last-minute spot became available.

By then, Cronquist already was convinced that the dinner series could successfully promote American Grown Flowers to a discerning and highly connected group of consumers, reporters, bloggers and social media influencers. But the image of a woman sitting in her car during a historic rainstorm, holding onto a slim hope that space at the

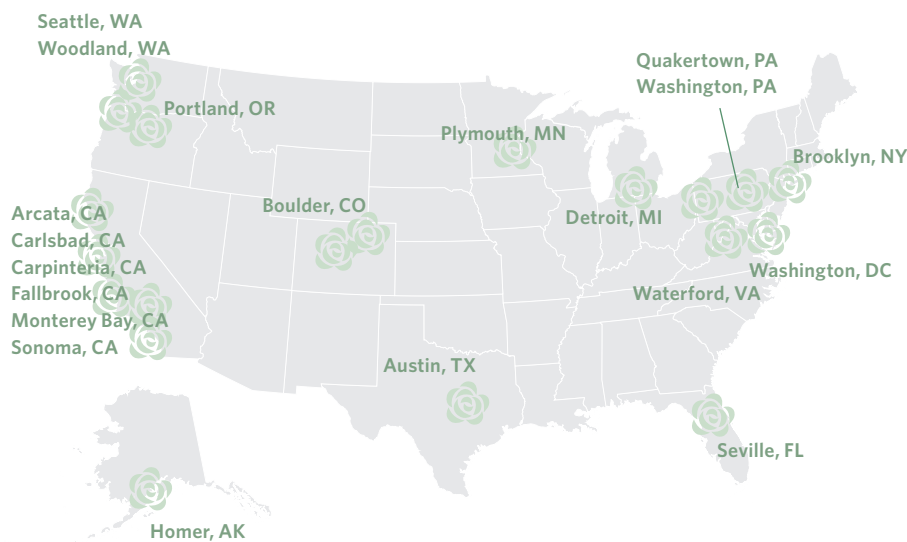
table might open up, and that she was ready to spend \$175 for the dinner there in Humboldt County, erased any doubts about the public's untapped enthusiasm for the idea.

"Clearly, if people were willing to wait in the rain, we were onto something," he said.

Onto something, indeed. Since 2015, 21 floral industry businesses and 20 floral designers in 12 states plus Washington, D.C., have hosted about 2,500 guests through the Field to Vase Dinner Tour. Dinners have taken place in greenhouses, open fields, rooftop gardens and more, racking up coverage on social media and amassing millions of dollars in PR. At each event, locally grown flowers and plants are resplendent around diners and shimmering from the table in jaw-dropping floral designs, where they share center stage with local cuisine, wine and beer.

The dinners have become an idyllic, unforgettable setting for floral industry members to make the case directly to consumers, digital influencers and the traditional press that domestic flowers, in all their variety and abundance, are a thing to seek out, celebrate — and buy. For these efforts — and a whole lot more — The American Grown Field to Vase Dinner Tour is the 2017 Floral Management Marketer of the Year.

**DINNER IS SERVED** Since 2015, 12 states plus Washington, D.C., have hosted about 2,500 guests through The American Grown Field to Vase Dinner Tour. Several cities, including Boulder, Carlsbad and Carpinteria, have hosted more than one dinner.



For a complete list of the farms and floral designers for each event, go to [safnow.org/moreonline](http://safnow.org/moreonline).

## A Marketing Vehicle that Funds Itself

The Field to Vase Dinner Tour began, really, with a question: How do you get consumers thinking about domestic flowers with the same level of attention that they think about locally sourced food? ("Where was this grown?" "Is it organic/sustainably produced?" "Tell me about the family farm behind this product.")

For several years before the series launched, Cronquist, as CEO of the California Cut Flower Commission, had been organizing free greenhouse tours, open to the public. To help earn media and promote those annual events, the Commission began holding dinners for media and sponsors in advance of the "open houses" at one of the greenhouses right there among the flowers. The dinners were so well received that Cronquist began to think, "What if the public could enjoy this, too?"

By "this," of course, he meant acres and acres of blooming flowers and plants, and all of the stories that went into growing them — environmental and economic considerations along with the businesses and their longtime employees, their histories, challenges and love for the work.

"We needed something to connect the dots that people were already making with their food," Cronquist explained.

Some of the growers themselves were less convinced when Cronquist initially floated the idea: How would they attract the public to their businesses? Would people even care?

Cronquist had a hunch they would be. After all, in recent years, Americans, particularly younger generations, have become much more interested in product origin and growing conditions. (Last year Pew Research found that 73 percent of Americans had purchased locally produced fruits and vegetables in the past month.) Farm-to-table restaurants are popping up in major metros and even smaller cities; the term has been a top trend in a National Restaurant Association survey every year since 2009. Agritourism efforts in parts of the country are flourishing.

A well-executed dinner series could combine all of these trends, and a few more, to deliver a message about U.S.

flowers that Cronquist and his team were increasingly eager to share — and increasingly interested in organizing behind.

In 2014, CCFC had joined with other industry groups, including the Association of Specialty Cut Flowers, the Seattle Wholesale Growers Market, Alaska Beauty Peonies Co-Operative and FLGA, to start the Certified American Grown Flowers program, a coalition focused on building awareness around the importance of sourcing from America's flower farming families. The group had enthusiasm and passion but it lacked a marketing budget, a challenge Cronquist believed the dinner series also could answer.

"We had this constituency of flower farmers whose story needed to be told," Cronquist said. "We figured the dollars generated by the dinners would help us tell the story. In that way, it could be self-sustaining: The dinners tell the story and fund the storytelling."

## Dinner Served with Style — and a Message

Certified American Grown Flowers organized its first Field to Vase dinner on March 5, 2015, at Westland Orchids. The first of 10 dinners that year, it fittingly kicked off in Carpinteria, California — an area known as the nation's "flower basket." Tucked in between the rows of orchids, about 125 people attended that inaugural event. Since then, each dinner has benefited from the experience of the one before it.

"We've learned how to better tailor our marketing efforts to consumers, increased our industry sponsorship support and never served chicken as the main course at one of our dinners again," Cronquist said. (The dinners tend to attract sophisticated foodies looking for invention and inspiration on the plate, too.)

Today, each dinner pairs a professional floral designer with a farm location; the designer is then responsible for taking the farm's flowers and creating the American Grown tablescape. Chefs and catering companies are hired based on experience and reputation with farm to fork style dinner events, with preference given to those chefs and companies with "pop-up" dinner experience. During the event, floral designers share their de-



CHRISTINA OLSON

**EAT, DRINK, BE MERRY** Diners at Len Busch Roses in Plymouth, Minnesota, take in food, flowers, good cheer, and lots of information, earlier this year.

## FIELD TO VASE CAMPAIGN SNAPSHOT

**The Campaign:** The American Grown Field to Vase Dinner Tour, a series of farm-to-table dinners held at Certified American Grown farms, where diners learn about locally grown flowers and plants, while enjoying locally produced food and beverages.

**The Objective:** To increase consumer awareness for American Grown Flowers, increase sales of Certified American Grown Flowers and ultimately to increase the market share of the flowers grown in the United States via dinners and the media surrounding them.

**Marketing/PR Budget:** \$40,000 per year to promote the tour and Certified American Grown Flowers

**Dinner Series Budget:** Ticket sales cover the costs for the dinners, which average \$20,000, including party rentals, food, shipping, transportation, service and permits.

**The Results:** Since 2015, 21 floral industry businesses and 20 floral designers in 12 states plus Washington, D.C., have hosted about 2,500 guests through The American Grown Field to Vase Dinner Tour. The campaign has reached an estimated 482 million people through 505 media placements, with an estimated earned media value of \$16.3 million. Growers who have participated in the dinners also say they are experiencing increased sales.

> A MOVEABLE (FLORAL) FEAST



CONNIE WHITLOCK



CONNIE WHITLOCK



CHRISTINA OLSON

sign inspiration with attendees, offering design tips and sharing their passion for supporting and designing with American Grown Flowers.

During dinner, attendees “learn about the growing demand and momentum for American Grown Flowers, why this movement is important and how they can serve as ambassadors to help spread the word and share why origin matters when it comes to the flowers they purchase,” Cronquist said, noting that, in coordination with the dinner series, Certified American Grown has created an easily identifiable logo for sleeves of grower bunches and bouquets — a logo that diners see throughout the dinners to create brand awareness.

“The campaign and the tour not only help communicate a message, but also support a branded program that consumers and the industry can identify in retail and wholesale florist shops across the country,” he explained.

Every recipient leaves dinner with some takeaway goodies, including fresh flowers. Attendance ranges from 100 to 150 people, with 183 people as the largest guest list on record. Guests pay \$175 to \$225 per person, depending on the venue. About 80 percent of that money covers hard costs associated with the hosting of the event; the rest goes to marketing and promotional efforts for the dinner and the series. On average, each dinner costs Certified American Grown \$20,000, a figure that includes party rentals, food, shipping, transportation, service and permits.

The dinners are built around the idea of education and awareness-building, but they’re also planned with an eye toward some less tangible things — style and the feeling for diners that they’re being transported. That’s something host farms say sets the effort apart.

“The Field to Vase dinner gave many of our customers their first chance to visit the farm, tour the fields and feel like they became a part of the farm,” said Frank Arnosky of Texas Specialty Cut Flowers near Blanco, Texas. “It gave them a sense of ownership and a reason to source American Grown. When they see our flowers offered in Houston, Austin and San Antonio, they are now solid customers, and through their ‘word-of-mouth’ excitement about the

**A GRACIOUS PLENTY** In just a few years, the Field to Vase dinner series has done a remarkable job of bringing together the public with floral industry members, including Lisa Weddel AIFD, PFCI, of L. Weddel Design (shown with a fellow diner, upper left) and Robyn Rissman, of Bare Root Flora, Arthur Williams, of Babylon Floral Design, and Alicia Schwede, of Bella Fiori Floral Design and Flirty Fleurs (upper right). In addition to gorgeous flowers and plants, the series has utilized stylish branding and, of course, delicious food to draw in people.



**TAKE IT BACK** Guests of the dinner series are treated to take home goodies, including branded canvas bags, reading material and plenty of local flowers and plants.

farm, they have become our best marketers and supporters. The legend continues to grow, and we are continuously asked, 'I missed the first one. When are you going to do another?'"

Cronquist said the dinner series has changed each year, adapting to locations, logistics and consumer demand. In 2015, the group held 10 dinners in eight states at 10 farms for 1,174 people. They hosted 85 members of the media, worked with 10 chefs and 10 floral designers and collaborated with 31 sponsors.

In 2016, the group reduced the number of dinners to seven to "better serve our ability to leverage the attention and opportunity that each individual dinner created," he said. They held those dinners in five states at seven farms for 953 people. That year, they hosted 46 members of the media, worked with seven chefs and nine floral designers and collaborated with 42 sponsors. In 2017,

they will host seven dinners in six states, welcoming an estimated 900 people.

"We're in constant refinement of our pitch. The more dinners we do, the more we learn," Cronquist said.

Chefs have been particularly instructive in some of the hospitality elements of the dinner, Cronquist noted, and their feedback has helped shape not only the planning of each meal but also the meal itself (flowers are now often incorporated into the meal, including memorable menu items such as lavender cocktails).

## Read — and Write — All About It

Certified American Grown has a roughly \$40,000 annual budget for marketing/advertising and public relations, an amount that goes fast when you're talking about a national campaign. So, to get the word out about The Field to Vase

dinners, Cronquist and his team developed a comprehensive PR and marketing campaign that's leveraged traditional and digital outreach.

Social media has been a main focus for promotions and advertising. The group started with sponsored posts and eventually created a multi-targeted ad campaign that includes videos. Beyond their email marketing efforts, Facebook and Instagram advertising are the group's primary vehicle for driving ticket sales with consumers. (Cronquist estimates that about 20 percent of sales are generated by social media ads.)

In 2017, the group also began working with "digital influencers," bloggers and social media users with strong followings, to help promote the dinners and share the message about the importance of buying American Grown Flowers. The group reaches out to digital influencers based on their own research about who

## > A MOVEABLE (FLORAL) FEAST

is well known in that area, and also on recommendation of other digital influencers, floral designers, hosts and others involved in the planning.

"These digital influencers have become a valuable resource in telling the stories of America's flower-farming families via their blogs and through beautiful photography on their social media platforms," Cronquist said. His goal for each dinner is to have about five digital influencers and five traditional press members. (That can vary by location.)

The raves of digital influencers have gone a long way in promoting the events and creating interest for future dinners.

"A jug of wine, a loaf of bread, and thou may be pleasant enough," wrote blogger Pam Penick last year after a visit to Texas Specialty Cut Flowers. "But add Crayola-bright fields of flowers, a big blue barn, tables adorned with festive bouquets, chef-made dishes, a western swing band, and the starry skies of the Texas Hill Country, and you have an event not to be missed."

Elizabeth Stillwell had a similarly glowing take after attending a dinner in 2015 at the Brooklyn Grange, a rooftop garden located in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. She wrote in a Conscious Living blog: "I heard someone say, 'Everything

that is good about America is happening here tonight.' Everything good included promoting American jobs... encouraging local and seasonal agriculture, supporting community, and celebrating all of these good things with neighbors and friends."

Traditional public relations efforts have also been key to the group's marketing and promotion efforts over the past three years, and they've generated high-profile placement in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Modern Farmer Magazine*, *Sunset Magazine*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Oregonian* and the *Seattle Times*. (In 2016 *Food & Wine* magazine called the outreach "the ultimate al fresco dinner party.") In addition, the group has secured some TV segments in Oregon, Virginia, Washington state, California and Minnesota.

"Television can be a tremendous driver of ticket sales for our dinner events and is a wonderful way for our designers to share their tips for floral design ideas to a large audience," Cronquist said.

Over the past three years, the program also has amassed almost 5,000 email subscribers to its weekly newsletter.

"The newsletter helps keep our fans up-to-date on the events we've held and has served as one of the best forms of promoting dinners and selling tickets," Cronquist explained.

At press time, those efforts combined had created 62 media placements from January 2017 to May 2017 alone, generating an audience of 289 million people with an estimated earned media value of more than \$14.4 million.

## Selling It with Sponsors

Cronquist is also quick to point out how critical sponsor support had been to the effort.

For instance, *Syndicate Sales* has provided its line of "Made in America" vases and containers for the tablescape design over the past three seasons.

"They have promoted and encouraged their customers to also attend the events and featured the dinner tour in their product catalogs for the past two years," he explained.



**DOWN ON THE FARM** Sold-out crowds have proven that Americans across the country love the idea of dining at flower farms, gardens and greenhouses, including Jello Mold Farm in Mt. Vernon, Washington.

The tour also has worked closely with Mayesh Wholesale Florist, based in Los Angeles; Mellano & Company, headquartered in Carlsbad, California; DVFlora, headquartered in Sewell, New Jersey; and Frank Adams in Portland, Oregon, to help promote nationally and regionally, Cronquist said.

Each dinner also produces a new crop of cheerleaders and supporters, of course, in the form of past attendees, hosts and designers.

“Alumni farms have been a tremendous source of support and encouragement for the tour, recognizing the invaluable benefits the dinner they hosted brought to their farm,” Cronquist said.

Bill Prescott of Sun Valley insists the love is mutual, and that the dinner series is hitting all its marks, and then some.

“Once someone comes to our farm, and walks the fields and greenhouses, their view of our flower farm is forever changed,” he said.

Arnosky agrees. “When the guests left the farm, they felt ownership with our farm and with American Grown Flowers and they went out and became our best marketers. Word-of-mouth promotion is the best, and a year later, there is still a buzz out there.”

For Cronquist, the success of the dinner series over the past three years has helped prove an important point — and created excitement for the future.

“As it turns out, people are fascinated by what we do,” he explained. “We’ve learned that, in fact, they’ll travel great distances to eat dinner on a flower farm. The biggest challenge now is keeping up with it. This is a movement people want to be part of, so, how will we continue to use these dinners not to reach hundreds or thousands of people, but millions?”

As for the big question — is the effort getting more people to buy more American Grown flowers — Cronquist said the answer is yes.

“Evidence of our success is not measured by our sold-out dinners but rather the improving market position of our American Grown Flowers and the increase in our farms’ sale,” he said.

Growers back up the claim.


“Demand for our high-quality flowers continues to rise, actually beyond what we can produce simply because

our labor pool is so limited,” Pamela Arnosky said. “We sell everything, every single week. Quality is everything of course, [but] people only return as customers when they’ve had a good experience.”

Arnosky also noted that, recently, the boyfriend of one of her daughters went to buy flowers in Texas and he made a point of looking for that American Grown logo. The young man didn’t grow up in the

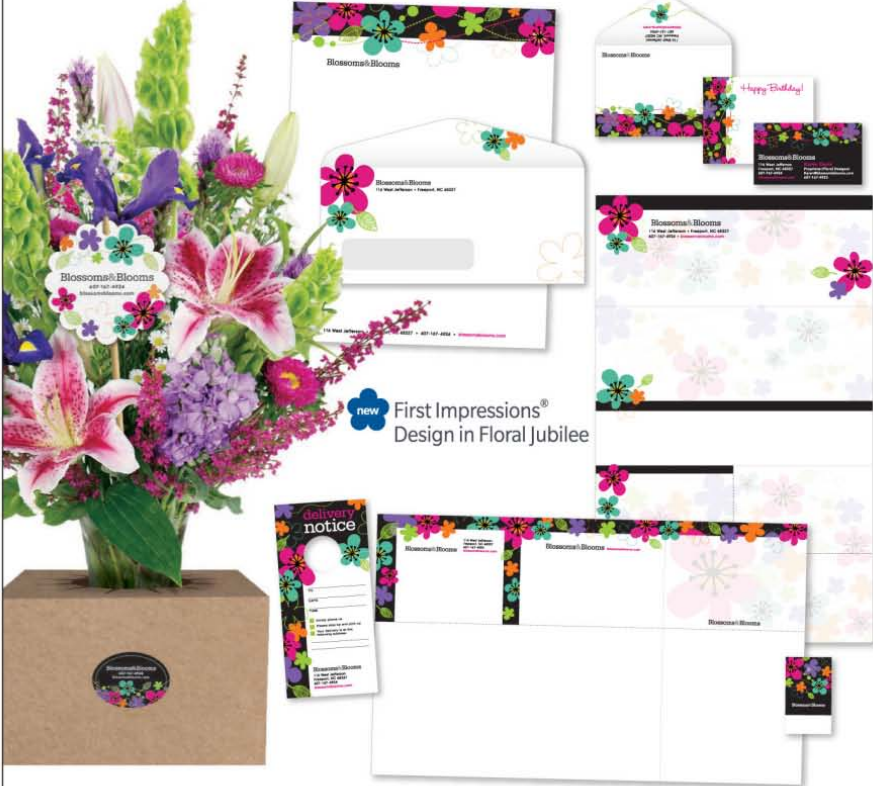
industry, and hadn’t given much thought to flowers before, but his exposure to the family’s effort had trained him: He told Frank and Pamela, “While I don’t know much about flowers, how could I go wrong with American Grown?”

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## SAF ECONOMIC OUTLOOK SURVEY

BY MARY WESTBROOK

# First and Second Quarter's a Charm

How's business? Pretty good! That was the generally cheery picture that emerged from a recent Society of American Florists survey on first and second quarter returns. Forty-eight percent of all respondents — including growers, wholesalers and retailers — reported business is "good." Another 9 percent called it "excellent." Here are some highlights from the survey — for a complete recap of the results, including a breakdown by segment, go to [safnow.org/economicoutlook](http://safnow.org/economicoutlook). 🌸

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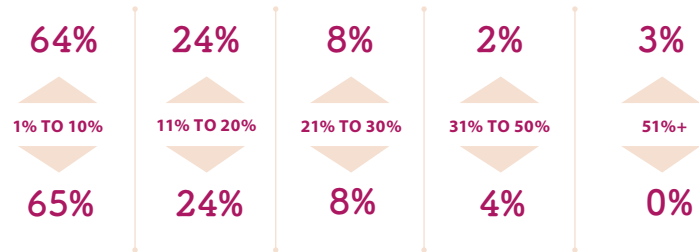


### HOW'S BUSINESS?



### Q1 + Q2 SALES 2017 VS. 2016

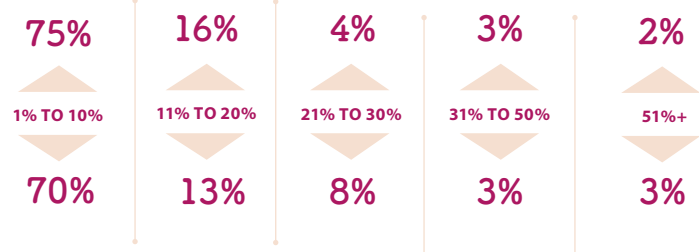
BY HOW MUCH DID SALES INCREASE?



BY HOW MUCH DID SALES DECREASE?

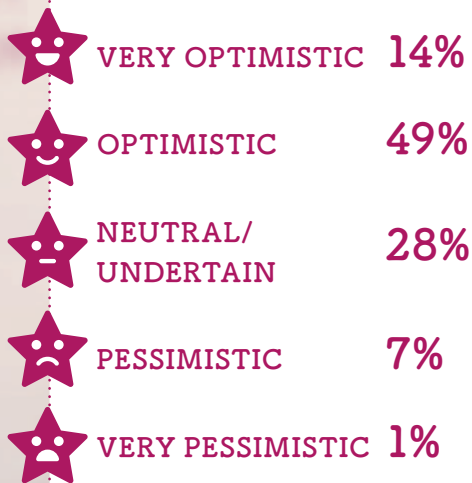
### Q1 + Q2 NET PROFITS 2017 VS. 2016

BY HOW MUCH DID NET PROFITS INCREASE?



BY HOW MUCH DID NET PROFITS DECREASE?

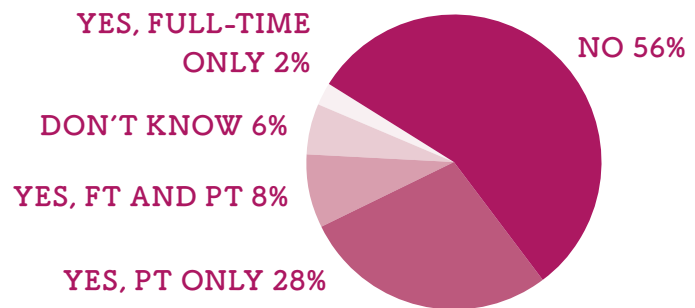
### SALES EXPECTATIONS FOR 2017



AVERAGE RETAIL TRANSACTION

**\$34.30**

### WILL YOU ADD NON-SEASONAL STAFF IN NEXT 6 MONTHS?



SOURCE: SAF ECONOMIC OUTLOOK SURVEY, Q1 AND Q2. EMAILED JULY 16, 2017, TO SAF MEMBERS. 9.3% RESPONSE RATE. RESPONSES HAVE BEEN ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST WHOLE NUMBER



1



2



3



4

## Profit Blast Packs Immediate Inspiration

BY MARY WESTBROOK

Talk about instant inspiration and return on investment. Two days after attending the Society of American Florists' 1-Day Profit Blast in St. Louis on July 22, Kim Brannan was back at Stems Florist setting up a terrarium bar, a new in-store concept she'd heard about during the event.

"SOOOO excited to announce the Stems' Terrarium Bar is opening Wednesday! Stop by anytime and create a terrarium that is 'Uniquely Yours!'" wrote Brannan on the shop's Facebook page.

Alongside the text? Some truly gorgeous shots of the shop's new area. Customers were clearly enthusiastic about the addition to the store — the post was shared more than two dozen times and customers were clamoring for more info.

"Two people have already stopped by and we booked a private session for five people for next week," Brannan said, noting the bar only officially opened that Wednesday morning.

It's an exciting outcome that doesn't surprise Derek Woodruff, AIFD, CF, PFCI, one bit. Woodruff headlined the St. Louis event with his presentation, "Tiny Houses, Big Design Opportunities," sponsored by Syndicate Sales. The session touched on topics such as connecting with millennials and creating in-store experiences, including terrarium bars, that set florists apart from mass market competitors.

"Florists used to be a necessity," Woodruff told the more than 60 floral industry members from 13 states who gathered in St. Louis for event. "You had to call a florist to send flowers to a funeral or you had to go into a florist to get anniversary flowers. Nowadays, it's different. If you don't evolve and bring in experience, the florist dies out." (Woodruff also shared his experiences in sourcing and marketing plants to customers in the July issue of *Floral Management*. Read the story at [safnow.org/floralmanagement](http://safnow.org/floralmanagement))

Beyond Woodruff's presentation, attendees also got valuable info on social media marketing, the secrets to finding hidden profits and best practices in customer services, along with a Supplier Showcase.

"Profit Blast opened my eyes to a much bigger game I could be playing in my boutique floral business," said Kelly Jurotich of The Crimson Petal in St. Louis. "The classes offered practical and affordable options to grow my business to a more successful and sustainable company. I cannot wait to implement many of the ideas I had, and recommit to my social media presence."

Cory Parolin of Irene's Floral Design, also in St. Louis, agreed. "It was well worth the investment of time and money," Parolin said. "I learned a lot, especially about the marketing and business ends of the business, and it's always great to meet other florists and compare notes."



**1** Improving sales and profits was a key driver of the day's content. **2** More than 20 exhibitors, including Kelly Nethken, Smither's Oasis NA Operations, took part in the Supplier Showcase. **3** Derek Woodruff, AIFD, CF, PFCI, dishes plant inspiration. **4** Derrick Myers, CPA, CFP, PFCI, helps attendees discover hidden profits. **5** Social media guru Crystal Vilkaitis talks selling in the social age. **6** Jennifer Pryor, White House Florist, Lexington, S.C., joined florists from 13 states to soak in the education at the event. **7** From right, Kate Bordages Freter, Kate Bordages Interiors, St. Louis; Ardell Burchard, Fresh Art, Clayton, Missouri; and Barbara Giblin, of event co-sponsor Baisch & Skinner, Inc, in St. Louis, squeeze in some valuable networking and catch-up time.

### Highlights from the day include:

**Personalize that pitch.** Crystal Vilkaitis has worked with thousands of business owners to help them save time, gain confidence and increase local exposure, foot traffic and sales via social media. Vilkaitis presented "The Social Selling Mindset," and argued for more personalization in social media marketing. "So often brands post pictures of what to buy, instead of asking [customers] questions," she said. "Go back to your social media over last several months and see how many times you ask questions."

**Stop stuffing.** During "Treasure Hunt: Finding Your Hidden Profits," financial advisor Derrick Myers, CPA, CFP, PFCI, said many shops fall into a profit-sucking cycle when it comes to cut flower inventory. "Flowers come in on Monday," he said. "On Thursday, it's looking like there are some extra flowers, so designers start putting more flowers in the arrange-

ments, but at the same prices. Friday, the arrangements are really getting stuffed, so all of the flowers get used. Then the buyer sees an empty cooler on Saturday and orders the same amount for the next week." That cycle leads to lost profits, inconsistent work and ultimately dissatisfied customers, Myers said. The solution? Inventory control and recipes.

**Yes, we can.** In "Delivering the 'Wow' Factor," Art Conforti, PFCI, owner of Bloomerang Solutions, argued that customers don't "always have to be right, but they have to feel heard." At the flower shop he ran for three decades in Sarasota, Florida, Conforti pioneered an always-say-yes policy. "You must always say, 'yes we can,'" he said. "If the customer calls the day before Valentine's Day and requests delivery on the holiday, the temptation is to say we can't get it done. Instead [at my shop] we said, 'I understand you want flowers delivered. Due to the orders that came in before yours did,

we're completely committed. However, I can create a beautiful arrangement for you to pick up in the store.'" The message: Find a way to get to yes. 🌿

**Mary Westbrook** is senior contributing editor of *Floral Management* magazine. [mwestbrook@safnow.org](mailto:mwestbrook@safnow.org)

### MARK THAT CALENDAR



Couldn't make it to St. Louis? Don't worry! Additional SAF 1-Day Profit Blasts will be held in Boston on September 23, sponsored by Jacobson Floral Supply; and Louisville, Kentucky, on November 4, sponsored by Bill Doran Company. Find our more at [safnow.org](http://safnow.org).

SPONSORED CONTENT

## FOUR WAYS TO DIMINISH DRIVING DANGERS

Delivery — it's a valuable service that differentiates professional florists from big box retailers, but it can also subject your business to serious liability. Brent Bates, director of safety services for Hortica, shares best practices to prevent accidents and pricy claims.

### 1. Be Selective

"You need to be discriminating," Bates said. "Don't hand over your keys to just anyone with a driver's license."

Run a motor vehicles record check (available through your state DMV) on every candidate to identify red flags. "Many people have never had a car accident and many have had several," he said. "You often come across a driver who's had more than one accident." If you learn someone's rear-ended another car, sideswiped a mailbox or pulled out in front of oncoming traffic, it should give you pause, because he or she will likely do it again one day.

Also make sure drivers' eyesight, hand-eye coordination and reflexes are up to par. "These things are critical for safe driving," Bates said. He recommends giving drivers periodic vision and driving tests to ensure they can still handle the job. "You should take similar care with seasonal hires," he added. "Often your friends may volunteer to make Valentine's Day deliveries, but you shouldn't let them unless they prove that they're up for the task." On that note, don't procrastinate in your hunt for holiday help. "You should start looking weeks, if not months, in advance — not days," he said.

### 2. Train Them Well

"Driving a van full of floral arrangements — or hauling a trailer with landscaping equipment — requires skills beyond what a typical motorist has," Bates said. If your drivers will be operating large and complex vehicles, training should include both classroom and hands-on driving. Be sure to include safe backing proce-

dures as part of your training program and require a trained spotter to be present if there are passengers in the vehicle.

If a commercial driver's license is required, "make sure they not only have this license, but that they actually know the rules accompanying it and are in compliance with the rules," Bates said. "You don't want a driver who is not legally able to do their job from day one."

Bates recommends that flower shop and landscape owners know the rules themselves, as there are requirements for the business as well. (Federal regulations can be found at [fmcsa.dot.gov](http://fmcsa.dot.gov), or you can visit your state's DMV site.) "Get behind the wheel with new hires and make sure you are 100 percent comfortable with them operating your vehicle and that they are aware of traffic rules before you ever send them out alone," he said.

Get drivers in the habit of conducting daily maintenance checks. At the end of the day, they should look for leaking fluids, inspect that lights and reflectors work, examine tires and make sure that doors shut properly. By doing a check at the end of the day, it gives time to make repairs before the vehicle is needed again. A quick walkaround looking for things like leaks and low tires should also be performed in the morning before using the vehicle. Any deficiencies should be reported immediately and, if they pose a safety risk, should be repaired before the vehicle is used.

Additionally, teach them to make smart decisions with their routes. Efficiency is important, of course, because you don't want to burn through your profit on gas money — but safety is paramount, too. Train your drivers to plan routes making right turns and to avoid left turns. "If you watch UPS and FedEx drivers, you'll notice they hardly ever make left-hand turns," Bates said. "The risk isn't worth it. Left-hand turns require very careful timing from two



directions and greatly increase the likelihood of an accident."

### 3. Use Technology Wisely

The National Highway Safety Commission has reported a steady increase in accidents over the past decade and points the finger at a single culprit: smartphones.

"Distracted driving is the biggest danger on the road today," Bates said. "Under no circumstances should your drivers have their phones out." A strict "No Cell Phone Policy" should be adopted and enforced by all businesses. Eliminate drivers' excuses for using personal devices by equipping your vehicles for GPS navigation. (Lost drivers aimlessly looking for their destination present a whole other danger, Bates said.)

He also recommends investing in dash cams and other technology that track what happens in your vehicle. "They can be expensive, but they provide tremendous peace of mind," he said. "Furthermore, people who know they're being watched tend to drive more carefully."

### 4. Stick To Your Guns

"Rules exist for a reason," Bates said. "Be vigilant in outlawing cellphones and unauthorized passengers in your vehicles. Discipline speeders and those involved with drugs or alcohol while driving for work," Bates said. "Tolerating such behavior may jeopardize your business."

Hortica offers commercial auto coverage that includes hiring guidelines, training material and other hallmarks for developing a safety fleet program. Visit [hortica.com](http://hortica.com) for more information.

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EDITORS' NOTE *Paul Goodman, CPA, PFCI, and Derrick Myers, CPA, CFP, love a good financial management challenge, however big or small. Send your questions to [fmeditor@safnow.org](mailto:fmeditor@safnow.org), and we'll challenge the experts to tackle them in an upcoming article.*



Paying an employee under the table. Not reporting the occasional sale. What seems like a "small thing" can easily become a big thing.

# FINANCIAL SINS TO AVOID

BY PAUL GOODMAN, CPA, PFCI

> It should be simple as business owners to avoid legal problems. You learn what's required under the law, and you do it. Reality is not quite that simple. After all, we are human. As humans, we are often tempted to push the boundaries or out-right cheat.

Let's look at a simple example of a common event. Back when I used cash for most of my transactions, I would periodically be faced with the temptation to keep something that wasn't mine. At the checkout counter, the cashier handed over too much change. As the customer, I knew it. As soon as I realized the cashier mistake, I faced an internal struggle. Keep silent and walk away or give it back.

The temptation was strong. Who would know? It's a large company. They can afford it. How often have I been short changed and not known it? These and other common justifications come rolling forward.

The same happens in business every week. You are tempted to keep money that doesn't belong to you. The risk is rarely worth the perceived payoff.

## Under Pressure

Some legal missteps stem from a simple misunderstanding about the law's requirements. Others aren't quite so innocent. Financial pressure can cause an owner to bend his or her principles. Anywhere from a little "white lie" to an outright attempt to cheat.

There are really no good reasons to break the law. Especially considering the potential consequences to you or your business. Here are some of the most common illegal practices business owners in the floral industry should stay clear of:

## Payroll Taxes

One of the most dangerous legal mistakes is not paying payroll taxes on time. When cash is short and it's time to pay your employees, you might have enough cash to give out the paychecks, but not enough to pay the payroll taxes. So, you hold up on making the appropriate payroll deposit with all the good intentions of making up for it as soon as your cash loosens up.

You see where this is heading: Other obligations keep coming up and the payroll taxes get pushed back again and again.

Do this more than once and pretty soon you could owe thousands of dollars in back taxes and penalties. You may

## LEGAL DO'S & DON'TS

To stay on the right side of the law, burn this list in your brain (and tack it in your office).

- Do pay payroll taxes on time.
- Do collect and pay sales taxes on time.
- Don't pay employees in cash without withholding payroll taxes.
- Don't pocket rebate or refund checks.
- Don't skim cash receipts.

face a debt you can no longer hope to repay out of your operating income any time soon.

Remember, payroll tax obligations never go away. Even if the business totally fails and you declare bankruptcy, back payroll taxes are not forgiven. You'll come out of bankruptcy still owing the money.

So, play it safe. Always pay payroll taxes on time.

## Sales Taxes

Like payroll taxes, sales taxes can add up quickly. If you're living off sales tax collections instead of putting them aside, you are headed for trouble. Sales tax penalties and interest can be stiff.

If you have a hard time keeping your hands off sales tax money, open a separate bank account for these funds. As you collect sales tax make daily deposits in this new account. It is the only surefire way to ensure you have enough cash to pay those taxes on time.

## Paying Employees Cash

It's not always easy to find good workers. If an apparently qualified person offers to work, providing you pay them in cash, you might be tempted to say "yes." After all, that seems like a fairly minor accommodation.

Remember, the only reason the person wants to be paid in cash is to avoid paying taxes. That's both illegal and immoral. These are not qualities you want to promote.

Instead, you should always put employees on the payroll and withhold the appropriate payroll taxes. Any other system is illegal and could subject you to some sizeable penalties. Think of all the congressmen and women who paid only

cash to childcare workers. It eventually caught up with them, became public and in many cases cratered an otherwise successful career. If potential employees won't go on the payroll, don't hire them.

## Rebate Checks

It might be tempting to pocket the rebate checks you get from a wire service. Instead of depositing the check in the bank, just cash it. Spend it as you wish.

That rebate check is revenue to your business. It should be reported on your financial statements as additional income. In that way, a rebate check is just the same as any other check you might receive from a supplier. A refund on insurance. A volume discount reimbursement. A refund for returned merchandise.

Each of these is revenue to the business and must be reported as such. To handle it any other way puts you in the same category as the individual who wants to work for cash.

## Skimming

Skimming occurs when orders paid for with cash (or checks that the customer makes out to you instead of the business) are not rung up at the register. The owner simply pockets the money. It never gets reported.

Once again, this is tax evasion. If an employee were to take cash from a sale, you would call it stealing. Clear and simple. It is still stealing when the owner does it. All cash sales should be rung through the register properly.

## Life Is Too Short

There are many opportunities to make money in the retail flower business. Use your efforts to maximize those opportunities.

Control your Cost of Goods Sold and payroll. Become an aggressive marketer. Make money the right way: by running a solid business. Don't take a shortcut and end up facing a potential grim future with authorities and a guilty conscience to boot. 🌿

**Paul Goodman, CPA, PFCI** 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](mailto:plgoodman@aol.com)

## Industry News

### AIFD SYMPOSIUM DRAWS CROWD OF 800-PLUS



**WHO'S WHO** American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD)'s Symposium "X" drew a crowd of more than 800 people in July.

➤ More than 800 floral designers gathered in Seattle in July for a mega dose of inspiration during the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD)'s Symposium "X."

"The Symposium was an amazingly artistic success this year," according to AIFD's new President **Kim Oldis, AIFD**, of Details.....it's all about the flowers in LaConner, Washington.

Among the highlights: More than 100 designers worked to achieve Certified Floral Designer (CFD) status; student designers from more than a dozen universities and colleges competed in the student design competition; and nearly 80 designers were inducted into AIFD membership; new officers took on roles and two industry stars got their moment to shine.

The event kicked-off with AIFD's Annual Professional Floral Design Evaluation (PFDE) on June 29, when 112 floral designers attempted to dem-

onstrate their design capabilities in an effort to achieve CFD status and/or an invitation to become a member of AIFD.

Student designers from 13 universities and colleges in the U.S. and Canada competed in the annual AIFD Student Design Competition on July 1. The Overall School Award went to the **City College of San Francisco (CCSF)**, led by advisors **Holly Money-Collins, AIFD**, and **Steven Brown, AIFD**. **Dawn Mones** of Cal Poly State University took home the Overall Student Highest Score Award. **Junghwa Han** of City College of San Francisco earned the People's Choice Award.

AIFD also presented "Xpand Your Horizons," its annual Awards and Induction Ceremony and Dinner in which 77 floral design artists were inducted into membership. **Tim Farrell, AIFD, CFD**, was recognized by the AIFD National Board of Directors with the Award of Distinguished Service to the Floral Industry. **United Floral Inc.** and General Manager **Tony Graaf** were recognized with the Award of Merit Industry.

**Cindy Anderson, AIFD**, a freelance designer in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and **Wil Gonzalez, AIFD**, of Ukiah, California, coordinated Symposium 2017.

#### Stanley F. Bachman: June 8, 1924 to July 15, 2017

The floral industry lost one of its most beloved leaders July 15, after Stanley F. Bachman died at the age of 93. Bachman, a member of the Society of the American Florists' Floriculture Hall of Fame and a former president of his



family's retail florist, Bachman's Inc. in Minneapolis, was known as a visionary, mentor and, above all, a man of integrity and kindness, said

**VISIONARY SPIRIT** Stanley F. Bachman died July 15 at the age of 93. The beloved industry leader and member of SAF's Floriculture Hall of Fame once said, "Even as the world becomes more sophisticated and mechanized, the role of flowers, plants, and trees will become increasingly important in everyone's lives."

former SAF President Rod Saline, AAF of Engwall Florist & Greenhouses in Duluth, Minnesota.

"First and foremost, he was just this extraordinary gentleman — one of the kindest people you'd ever want to know," said Saline, who was around 10 years old when he first met Bachman, a longtime friend of Saline's own parents. "He was a real pioneer of change in the flower business, too. All of us learned a lot from the Bachman family, and from Stan. Whenever you saw him he was so engaging and interested in you. He always asked lots of great questions."

Bachman was born June 8, 1924. As it was within the Bachman family, at an early age he started working in the family vegetable business established by his grandfather, Henry Bachman Sr. The company transferred its emphasis to flowers in 1930, and in 1946, it was incorporated as Bachman's Inc., and the younger (third) generation assumed management; this was the generation of Bachman, his brothers and sisters, and his cousins. Bachman served as president of Bachman's Inc. from 1971 to 1989, and was chairman of the board of directors from May 1989 to May 1994.

Among many other roles in the industry, Bachman served multiple terms as the president and director of the former North Central Florists' Association (today, the Minnesota Florists Association). He was also an active volunteer leader within FTD, SAF, the American Floral Endowment and the American Floral Marketing Council. In 1989, he was named to SAF's Floriculture Hall of Fame, the industry's highest honor.

Bachman was preceded in death by his wife of 66 years, Georgia. He is survived by two sons, four grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren. 🌸

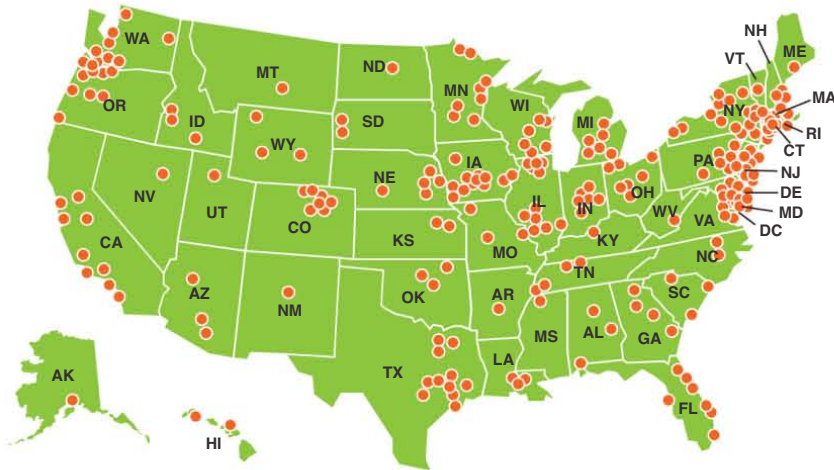
— **Mary Westbrook**





# Wednesday, October 11, 2017

## Will you join us?



In October 2016, the Society of American Florists and florists nationwide randomly surprised people on the street with flowers in more than 234 cities in 50 states. Lucky recipients received two bouquets – one to keep, and one to share with a friend, family member, co-worker, or even a stranger. There were a lot of smiles going around as the country experienced flower power.

Get ready now to **Petal It Forward** on October 11, 2017

Fill out the participation form at [safnow.org/piform](http://safnow.org/piform) so we can add you to the list of events we share with the media. For step-by-step instructions on conducting your own event, visit [safnow.org/pif](http://safnow.org/pif).



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](http://safnow.org/prfund).

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## Your Digital Brand BY CRYSTAL VILKAITIS

### PARTY TIME ON FACEBOOK

➤ Everyone loves a good event, but even the most well-planned event can flop if no one attends. Gone are the days when you sent out a paper invitation and waited for RSVPs. Events are now digital, and if you want party people in your store, you need to put out the word on social media.

#### Make a Plan

Facebook is the place to start for events. You can send tweets about events or post information and photos to Instagram, but Facebook is the only place where you can create an event page, invite people and advertise.

The first rule of event promotion: Give people plenty of notice. As soon as you set a date — ideally several weeks ahead of time — create the event page on Facebook. (More on that process soon.) If you still have small details to work out, note that in the event description. For now, you want to get customers to save the date and indicate their interest level; once they do so, they'll receive automatic updates on the event as you make changes, as well as reminders as the date nears. Use this planning time to map out any social posts, emails and live broadcasts.

#### Event Page

To set up a Facebook event page, go to your business page, click the three dots in the options below your cover photo, and choose "Create Event." (Do this from your business page so that you don't build an event from your personal profile.)

Your event page is going to need information and a graphic. Create this collateral ahead of time to make the process seamless. If you don't have a go-to design software, try [Canva.com](http://Canva.com). It's free and lets you work from a template or create your own design. You can also choose your canvas size. The optimal dimensions for an event page cover are 1920 x 1080 px. Remember, this image will be displayed in several places and could be cropped differently in each placement, so play with the design to make sure it displays correctly in all variations. (Note: Unfortunately, you can't see how the image displays in

an ad beforehand, but you can always re-edit the image in Ads Manager so it displays nicely.)

Include the name of the event, date, time, location and description. Again, if you don't have all the details just write, "More details TBA!"

Now, invite attendees. While you can't automatically invite your page likes to the event, the event page will show up on your timeline. Invite your personal friends by clicking "Invite" below your cover photo. Add store employees as hosts in the event settings and encourage them to invite their friends.

#### Event Ad

Once your event is created, promote it with a Facebook event ad. Go to the Ads Manager, choose "Engagement" and then "Event Responses."

Ad photos should be 1920x1080 pixels and include minimal text. You are limited to how much copy goes into the ad: 25 characters for the headline, 30 characters for the link description and 90 characters for the ad text. You have the same targeting options for this ad as you do with any other, and can set a radius of how far users should be from your location in order to see your ad. (You don't want to invite people to the event who aren't local.) You can further break down the targeting by age, gender and other demographics.

I recommend setting a "lifetime budget" for event ads (a minimum of \$1 per day), which Facebook will spread throughout the length of your ad's run time.

#### Facebook Live Invite

Once your event page is ready and you've started promotions, it's time to stream an event invitation on Facebook Live.

Let people know the who, what, when, where, why and how of the event. Encourage them to RSVP on the event page and invite friends. Give them a behind-the-scenes look at event prep, from decorations to prizes you'll be giving away.

Don't forget: Once this video has streamed, you can promote it through Ads Manager. Doing this will help gain



#### PRETTY PICS

Your event page is going to need information and a graphic. Create this collateral ahead of time to make the process seamless.

additional views on the video and exposure for your business.

#### Additional Promotion

Once the foundation of your event is laid out, you'll need to keep it front-of-mind to your customers. Here are some ideas:

- Include a link to the event page in your newsletter.
- Create a dedicated email announcing the event.
- Create reminder emails about the event to go out a week before, a day before and a few hours before.
- Be sure to mention the event in your subsequent Facebook posts.
- Before the event begins, go live to show people that you're ready or go live during the event.
- Share photos after the event to get people excited for the next event.
- Share the event on your personal Facebook profile.
- Ask employees to share the event on their personal Facebook profile. 🐦

**Crystal Vilkaitis** is a social media teacher, owner of [Crystal Media](http://CrystalMedia.com), founder of [heycrystalmedia.com](http://heycrystalmedia.com), and founder of [Social Edge](http://SocialEdge.com), a membership website for retailers on social media trends and changes, [socialedge.co](http://socialedge.co).

# 1.86 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](http://safnow.org/petalitforward) and view the video at [aboutflowers.com/youtube](http://aboutflowers.com/youtube).



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#### Suppliers

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

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#### Growers

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

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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.

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Pikes Peak of Texas, Inc.

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#### Suppliers

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Floral Resources  
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Sun Valley Floral Group

Washington Bulb Co.,  
Inc.

#### Importers/Distributors

Liberty Blooms

### FRIEND: \$100 - \$999

#### Wholesalers

Allied Growers, Inc.

Berkeley Florist Supply  
Co. in Miami

Dillon Floral Corporation

Ensign Wholesale Floral

Frank Adams Wholesale  
Florist Inc.

GM Floral Co.

Gassafy Wholesale  
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Inc.

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Schaefer Wholesale  
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We thank these companies who voluntarily contributed \$165,000 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](http://Aboutflowers.com), [AboutflowersBlog.com](http://AboutflowersBlog.com) and [NationalFloristDirectory.com](http://NationalFloristDirectory.com).



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Support the SAF PR Fund!**  
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## Business of Design

### PETITE POWERHOUSES

> The yard, once a marquee element of the American dream home, has lost some of its status in recent years, as millennials (eager to escape debt) and baby boomers (ready to downsize) gravitate to small apartments and condominiums rather than sprawling suburban lots.

But that's not to say these diminutive dwellers eschew nature. "They love green things and embrace creative ways to bring the outdoors inside," said Derek Woodruff, AIFD, PFCI, who sells oodles of terrariums at his shop, Floral Underground in Traverse City, Michigan. Woodruff headlined SAF's 1-Day Profit Blast July 22 in St. Louis, with his presentation, "Tiny Homes, Big Design Opportunities," in which he shared how small arrangements can make a big profit. Here are a few designs from the event. 🌿

See [safnow.org/moreonline](http://safnow.org/moreonline) for complete recipes.

**Katie Hendrick** [khendrick@safnow.org](mailto:khendrick@safnow.org)



**MIXED MATERIALS** The combination of glass and stone create "an urban garden feel," Woodruff said. "Ideal for a small space with bright light, this terrarium has minimal watering requirements, which appeals to busy individuals," he said. Design time: 7 to 10 minutes. Wholesale costs: \$32. Retail price: \$90.



**LAVISH LANTERN** "This wire lantern vase plays right on-trend, with a mix of rustic and bohemian elements," Woodruff said. "Minimal ingredients allow for a great price point in this cocktail table-sized arrangement, perfect as a stand-alone piece or in a tablescape on a large farm table." Design time: 3 to 5 minutes. Wholesale costs: \$15. Retail price: \$53.



**GLAMOROUS GLOW** A small rose gold cylinder beautifully frames this caramel-colored arrangement of carnations, roses, stock and berries. "The harmony of warm hues pairs well with a mix of foliage," Woodruff said, adding that, "neutrals are still trending in both event work and every day arrangements." Design time: 5 to 7 minutes. Wholesale costs: \$17. Retail price: \$70.



M

— MAGNUM —

# 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](http://www.deliflor.com), [info@deliflor.com](mailto:info@deliflor.com), [www.facebook.com/deliflor](https://www.facebook.com/deliflor)

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Chrysanthem

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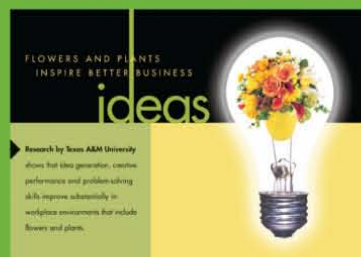
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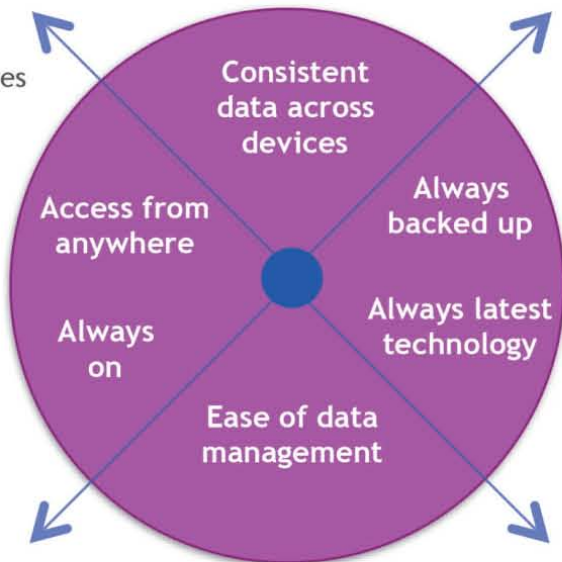
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## Quality BY TERRIL A. NELL, PH.D., AAF

### OVERLOOKED CARE TIPS

> Why isn't everyone benefiting from the best technology in cut flower care? Sometimes the latest research isn't communicated effectively. Other times, people ignore new technology because it contradicts long-standing practice. So, with an open mind, let's look at a few best practices that are known but not used consistently throughout the industry.

#### Ethylene Affects Roses

**The Research:** Ethylene, a colorless and odorless gas, is often the culprit when roses do not open, die prematurely or drop leaves and petals. Growers may not see the effects of ethylene because they are subtle and may be delayed.

Ethylene damage to carnations, delphinium and other flowers is routinely prevented by treating flowers with anti-ethylene products. Unlike other ethylene-sensitive flowers, most roses are not treated with anti-ethylene products, even though research since the 1980s has shown many roses varieties are ethylene sensitive. Treatment costs just a fraction of a penny per stem.

**The Solution:** Demand high-quality roses protected with anti-ethylene treatments to help them last longer and look better after they are purchased.

#### Wet Cuts Hurt

**The Research:** The long-held practice of cutting stems under water often involves doing so without changing the water. As a result, microbes and small stem bits are introduced into the water, and these particles are sucked into the stems. The

microbes decay and block the stems, and the stem pieces serve as a mechanical block to water absorption. Research for the past 20 years or more has demonstrated that cutting dry leads to the best vase life and flower quality.

**The Solution:** If you are cutting flowers under water, abandon the practice now. Cut stems dry with sharp, clean cutters and immediately place stems into a properly mixed hydration solution or flower food.

#### Cold Temps Matter

**The Research:** Keeping flowers (except tropicals) cold (33 F to 36 F) has long been a common practice, and for good reason. Cold temps reduce the use of stored sugars in the leaves and stems of flowers, slow the growth of foliar and flower diseases, and lower the sensitivity to and internal production of ethylene. Keeping flowers cold should be the highest priority for anyone handling, processing, storing and displaying flowers, yet flower coolers are often maintained at 40 F to 45 F or higher, perhaps to save money on refrigeration. That's a mistake. As temperatures increase, vase life is reduced. An even bigger problem involves displaying flowers outside the cooler at room temperature, with the idea that proximity will increase impulse buying. The possibility of quick profits from impulse purchases must be weighed against the long-term benefits of providing flowers that last longer. Studies have shown that for each day flowers are stored at room temperature, one to two

days of flower life are lost, depending on the type of flower.

**The Solution:** Check your cooler temperature several times daily and maintain it at 34 F to 36 F. If you must display flowers in your showroom, limit the time out of the cooler to one day so you maximize vase life for your customers.

#### Flower Food Increases Vase Life

**The Research:** Flowers need flower food to achieve maximum vase life and to open fully. Flower food lowers pH, resulting in increased water absorption and lower microbial growth. Flower food also supplies supplemental sugars needed as the flowers open. Commercial hydration and flower food solutions costs \$0.001 per stem or less. University of Florida studies have shown that flower food increases flower vase life consistently.

**The Solution:** There is still some unfounded skepticism about the efficacy of flower food, but the research is indisputable: It works. Educate your team and share the information (and flower food) with customers.

#### Clean Coolers Make a Difference

**The Research:** Foliar and flower diseases result in significant losses every day. The spores of diseases such as Botrytis will survive on cooler benches and walls for up to a year, unless removed regularly with an antimicrobial solution.

**The Solution:** Often, cleaning is neglected as a "do when there is time" option, but clean and sanitary coolers are critical to the health of the flowers sold. Clean coolers every two to three weeks. 🌿

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