

Front Lines

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What's a Tree-osk?

Ellen C. Wells



Why, it's a kiosk for trees, of course! More specifically, the Tree-osk is a merchandising fixture that Bower & Branch is installing in member garden centers.

Bower & Branch, as you recall, is a network of independent growers and garden retailers that's merging e-commerce and in-store sales to provide more convenience for shoppers. Search for and buy trees, shrubs, perennials and grasses online and they'll be delivered to a member retailer near you—or even delivered and installed!

So why the in-store Tree-osk if folks can shop for a pear tree in their pajamas at home? Because the Tree-osk is another way that member retailers can provide an interactive experience with their customers while really expanding their inventory beyond what might be in the nursery yard.

The Tree-osk includes a touch screen computer connected to a big monitor so browsing customers can really see what the plants look like. There's even a live chat option that allows shoppers to connect with a Bower & Branch rep if they have questions.

Bower & Branch has found that more than 60% of folks visiting their site also buy companion items, so the Tree-osk

will be stocked with Bower & Branch-branded fertilizers, watering systems and tree stakes. That means more sales for member retailers.

Director of partnership development Steve Maddox told me that the idea actually came from their members. Apparently some folks have been creating their own Tree-osks over the last couple of years and have had great success with it. The Tree-osk is really just a formalization of this great idea. **GP**