Staycations, loyalty programs, award winners and joy interrrupters



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Green Profit's buZZ!

Retail news from inside and outside the green industry

COMING UP THIS WEEK:

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Workshops to Promote Products
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Joy Interrupters







Sid on Staycations

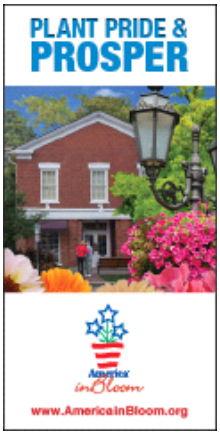
In last week's *buZZ!* I proposed that recent Shopify sales numbers for lawn tools, patio products and even outdoor pet supplies may be an indication that consumers are planning on spending more time at home this summer. Industry consultant Sid Raisch couldn't agree more.

"The 'staycation' trend is officially in full motion, driven heavily by painful prices at the fuel pump. We have already seen consumer behavior shift, with traditional spring milestones like Spring Break, Mother's Day visits, and upcoming Memorial Day weekend road trips and flights being drastically altered or canceled altogether. We can expect plans for summer vacation will be closer to home for those who do travel. This also indicates the willingness to invest in making the home place a bit brighter for those who don't make the longer trips.

"Compounding this economic friction is uncooperative weather, which has been actively inhibiting customer traffic across several regions. Interestingly, the media's news of bad weather—







specifically the looming predictions of late-season cold fronts and frost warnings—is actually doing more damage to foot traffic than the physical weather itself. With social media, many IGC freeze warnings also send the 'not time to plant' message loud and clear. With an important weekend like Mother's Day behind us, the opportunity to have those once-a-year and first-time customers is diminished because they can't come back if they didn't come and see what they would come back for.



"With inventory at a full load, time is our scarcest resource right now, and the calendar is working against us. With every spring weekend that slips away, the window for capturing essential repeat customer visits—especially from Gen X and Millennial shoppers—shrinks. As the season advances, these busy demographics become increasingly hesitant to start major planting projects, knowing they are committing themselves to a summer of tedious maintenance. If they do not visit your garden center now, we lose the chance to secure those secondary appearances for items they spotted during their initial trips but delayed purchasing. Even if energy markets react to global shifts and gas prices drop tomorrow, it will take weeks for lower prices to hit the pump, meaning this staycation mindset is locked in for the immediate future.

"To clear your benches and move product fast, your single best action right now is to aggressively promote home vegetable gardening to these younger homeowners. We all know the economic reality: It usually costs consumers more money to grow their own food than they will ever save at harvest time. However, logic is not driving the consumer right now; emotion is. Planting a backyard garden gives Gen X and Millennials a sense of tangible control in a world that feels completely out of control. Edible gardening is universally viewed by these generations as a positive step for health, wellness and personal food security, making it the perfect high-margin message to drive traffic through your gates today.

"Forget discounting as a strategy to do anything except lower profit. You need quality of revenue—full margin. It is not possible to make this up with discounted volume. Instead, promote the positive benefits of one plant at a time (your favorites) in each post and you'll get more buying customers in the door. Think Deer Resistant, Native, Pollinator Friendly and Low Maintenance. When customers more easily perceive that they can take care of that one plant, they will then get carried away while they're in your store."

Thanks for that insight, Sid. And I totally agree on those categories you listed (add in rabbit, groundhog and earwig resistant, too). Everyone I've spoken to this spring has mentioned the growing importance of natives.

Is the staycation mindset showing up in your store? Drop me a note about it HERE.



Using Workshops to Promote Products

About a month ago I had linked to a Marketing Brew article about how Gen Alpha are interesting in spending time in brick-and-mortar stores. That's good news for us! Hosting events is one sure way to bring in Alphas and their parents (who hold the wallets). The folks at Flamingo Road Nursery in Davie, Florida, must have read that article before I did because they had a nice in-store Mother's Day event held in conjunction with Oberland Agriscience.

Yes, *that* Oberland Agriscience, the company that produces 2nd Nature Organic Fertilizer from black soldier fly larvae frass. You and I know what frass is all about, and we aren't skeeved out about handling the product. But do consumers know? Not particularly. That's why you hold an event!





During a special planting workshop held that day, participants learned all about a product that might otherwise not be appealing without some sort of experiential learning. They incorporated the slow-release pellets as they potted up their green onion plants and were able to learn that it's easy to use, not smelly and nothing to be afraid of handling. Of course, customers were able to take advantage of a good deal on the 2nd Nature product—also an important part of the experience.

As you know, workshops are an excellent way to expose customers to new products. Create one of your own for any product you think needs a little more customer attention. And if you're interested in learning more about the Oberland product line (it's more than just frass!), give Courtney a shout HERE.



Loyalty Programs

Above Sid mentioned repeat customers. I just received some information on new research that mentions repeat purchases. Research from the folks at LoyaltyLion shows that 91% of survey respondents said being a part of a loyalty program drives them to make repeat purchases. This research pertains specifically to e-commerce brands, but perhaps it would hold up for in-store shoppers, as well.



The research also found:

- The average loyalty member consumer has more than three e-commerce loyalty programs not counting supermarkets and coffee shops.
- Younger shoppers keep closer track of their loyalty programs, with folks between the ages of 25-34 logging into their memberships 15 times per month, while those over 55 log in about 8 times.
- 88% of shoppers value the ability to engage with loyalty programs in physical store, 86% expect the programs to be available on a brand's site, and 81% want to earn rewards when buying products through third-party sellers.

This research backs up a 2025 Consumer Loyalty Program Survey from Deloitte that found loyalty programs are increasingly important ways for brands to stand out.

Have you assessed your loyalty program lately?



Tops at Chelsea

The most prestigious flower show in Europe is happening and its judges have spoken. Taking home the RHS Chelsea Flower Show Plant of the Year Award is Hosta Red Ninja. And unlike some of those “hostas” you might see on Pinterest, Red Ninja is actually red!



Its foliage is deep red and later in the season it offers up purple flowers. The variety is a selection by its breeder, Ninja Kramer (bet you didn’t see that name coming) and was exhibited at the show by Sienna Hosta. The judges gave it the top spot for its innovation in the hosta category, it’s ornamental value, strong garden performance and its broad consumer appeal. Red Ninja is represented by Netherlands-based royalty management and licensing company Plantipp. Red Ninja is represented in North America by sister company Concept Plants, which has given Bloomin’ Easy exclusive rights to introduce Red Ninja Hosta in North America. And it’s currently available!

Another Plantipp plant took home second place, and this one is also a stunner.



This is Hydrangea Groundbreaker Ruby, what they are calling the world's first truly ground-covering panicle hydrangea. It has a naturally spreading habit, a compact size and a ruby red color that is what I'd call a Jolly Rancher red (I think it's the fruit punch flavor—it's a high compliment, me calling something a Jolly Rancher color). It's in production to build up numbers but not yet available.

For more information on these varieties, visit the Plantipp website.

More Award Winners

Star Roses and Plants did it again! They've taken home several awards from the 2027 American Rose Trials for Sustainability (A.R.T.S.) I don't know how many years in a row this is, but I feel like I've been making these announcements every year for quite some time.

The A.R.T.S. program rigorously tests all categories of roses to identify the most sustainable, hardy, pest-resistance and of course beautiful roses out there on the market for American landscapes and gardens.

Star's winners for 2027 are:

Buttercream Drift, a groundcover rose with creamy yellow blooms.



Veranda Fiesta, a bright flower that does well in containers or as a low hedge.



Raspberry Cupcake, a rebloomer that grows on its own roots and stands up to black spot on the East Coast—and it’s fragrant!



Top Cream, a creamy white hybrid tea rose with large, old-fashioned, very fragrant blooms.



All very beautiful. And I am sure they are working on varieties now that will be listed here next year.

Joy Interrupters

I came across an interesting article in *Psychology Today* on the topic of “joy interrupters.” It’s really a misnomer because what they are getting at is not something that interrupts joy, but is a joyful interruption during an otherwise tedious, difficult or emotionally draining time.

Like checking work emails, for example, or going through spreadsheets. Work life for many people is a drag, and it ends the day with a heavy feeling. “Joy interrupters” are tiny moments of positive emotion that help alleviate the drudgery of the day. Sure, the tediousness is still inherent in some tasks, but the emotional weight is less, and leaves one feeling a bit happier. Good for the person, good for the employer. One line from the article that stuck with me is, “Joy is not simply a reward after work. Sometimes it is fuel for the work itself.”

What are plants if not joy interrupters? A plant on a desk, an office community garden, a beautiful landscape with seating outside an office building—all of these and probably a ton of other ideas are plant-related “joy interrupters.”

Read the ARTICLE and get some ideas of how to market yourself and your wares as joy interrupters in your local community. Hey, it’s your civic duty!

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, etc., drop me a line if you'd like at ewells@ballpublishing.com.



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Green Profit

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