

## Features

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## Designing Emotion

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## The Curator



## The Minimalist



## The Trendsetter



In an increasingly digital workforce, being more human will be a coveted skill set. For many employers, the future is feelings. Before the eye-rolls begin, let's look at the facts: researchers have shown that our success at work or in life depends on 80% EQ (emotional quotient) and 20% IQ.

EQ is defined as “the capacity to be aware of, control and express one’s emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically.” These human functions can’t be automated and thus the World Economic Forum (WEF) listed EQ as a key job skill that employees will need to thrive in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Google’s 2017 study echoes this sentiment and found that its best managers and performers are higher in EQ than IQ. But it was billionaire venture capitalist Mark Cuban who solidified the value of EQ when he said at a 2017 AOL conference, “In 10 years, a liberal arts degree in philosophy will be worth more than a traditional programming degree.”

People will focus on connecting to their primal selves, and gain physical and mental resilience in the process. So what does this mean for the floriculture industry? We’re clearly in the emotional design business: we create beautiful products that are meant to make people happy. The big question is how our product development process connects with the ever-changing emotional needs of our consumer.

For example, at LiveTrends, we’ve addressed this question by focusing on three main efforts in our 2019 Emotional Design Strategy: Investing in Imperfection, Intelligent Craft and Tribal Marketing.

## Investing in Imperfection

As designers, we’ll focus on adding soul to technology and celebrating the imperfection in human making. Real life isn’t perfect—it’s much more interesting than that. As digital technology enables ever more sleek, flawless designs, we’ll invest in imperfection—the textures, oddities and awkwardness that make us human, and that make the objects we use and the spaces we inhabit special.

With an “oddness is okay” attitude, we accept that nature-inspired “un-programmed nooks and crannies” make all products more human-friendly. Even if the production process uses technology and machines to deliver results that aren’t possible by hand, the product needs to retain the soul of craft.

In 2019, we’ll be looking for roughness, for imperfect textures that reflect people more truly, more inclusively and more kindly.

## Intelligent Craft

We're moving towards a post-industrial world, where ideas and intellect will lead. In 2019, knowledge and the institutions that teach and circulate knowledge will change, as ideas of truth, beauty, technology, craft, work and leisure shift.

The time and patience required for careful thought and creation will be honored, style will be studied, history will be revived and design will see a renaissance with a twist. In a world of global product sameness, taking cues from craft will become an important point of differentiation.

The concept of craft will evolve into a clever mix of handmade and serially produced. It's the spirit behind it that counts, not how you do it. Products will carry their own knowledge, communicating more clearly how they were created and the histories of their design.

It's important to remember that in pursuit of imperfection, great design still leans on to the basic principles for art (example: the idea of the golden ratio—an ancient formula for harmonious proportions that feature across nature and art). And with this, we'll embrace the idea that beauty can be defined theoretically, as well as intuitively.

## Tribal Marketing

People of all ages around the world are shaking off demographic conventions and constructing lifestyles and identities more freely than ever before. We're moving away from the classic norms of demographics-based marketing.

The classic consumer segmentation method for marketing strategies has been to divide the market based on demographics—age, gender, family size, income, occupation, education, religion, race, nationality ... you get the picture. During this new age, customer behavior will increasingly be influenced by the values of Tribes (or Communities) they associate with and less by demographic norms. In plain language, interests and associated Community involvement will trump generational, ethnic and gender influences.

More and more purchase activities are being influenced by the Internet, so it makes sense to start thinking of all marketplace activity in terms of Tribes because of the common interests. A consumer with access to the “tribal” social media becomes potentially dynamic and engaged with endless influencing, connecting and buying possibilities. This means that you may be more likely to reach a 55-year-old female in a Master Gardening Community than you are to reach her as a member of her age, education or income demographic.

At LiveTrends, we started to witness this trend during the last two years: we were quite surprised to discover that Boomers were buying products that were clearly intended for the Millennial market and Millennials were buying some of our more mature designs that were meant for the aging and income-rich older segments.

To address these changes, we decided to ignore demographics and group all of our 2019 Collections into three main Tribal groups, based on common interest in fashion: The Minimalist, The Curator and The Trendsetter.

- **The Minimalist:** For the Person, inspired by the timeless beauty of geometry and simplicity: exclusive, sophisticated and intelligent.
- **The Curator:** For the Person, inspired by the organic shapes and textures found in Nature: original, unique and eclectic.
- **The Trendsetter:** For the Person, inspired by the ever-changing tides and culture: sharp, fun and emotional

The products in each Collection are distinctly different to support each of the Tribal preferences. The description of each Collection is done on the product trays and on the labels for each individual product.

As we enter 2019, we need to remember that we're all in the business of Designing Emotion. With this in mind, we need to search and understand what people want vs. what they need. Consumers will pay more for "wants" vs. "needs." If you want to have profitable customers for life, give them what they want, not what they need by catering to their emotions. **GP**

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