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Spruce Up Your Outdoor Room (Display)

Ellen C. Wells

I received a media release from the folks at the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute with their top five ways to create the outdoor living room. First, who knew there was an Institute for Outdoor Power Equipment? Pretty cool! Second, while this information is geared toward homeowners and residential locations, I heartily believe you can use these same tips to get your outdoor living area displays ready to go in your garden center. Or maybe even offer this sprucing up service to your landscape clients.

Tip 1: Declutter and clean. Channel your inner Marie Kondo and tidy the junk that's accumulated in that spot over the winter. Put away anything that doesn't belong in an outdoor living area. Give everything a good scrubbing, including the furniture, pavers and even the canvas.

Tip 2: Create cozy sitting areas. Make sure traffic flow in the area is smooth and offer plenty of seating options (and more furniture to sell!). Umbrellas and outdoor curtains are vital for a comfortable outdoor space—for sale, yes, but even just for customers who need to get out of the sun.

Tip 3: Soften the outdoor space. Suggest rugs, pillows and upholstered cushions to soften the edges of furniture. Add comfort and fun with string lights, candles, water features—and plants! Take advantage of movement and sound to create a sense of mellowness.

Tip 4: Utilize living landscapes. Flowers, shrubs, combo containers ... you've totally got that tip covered! Have you considered suggesting cut flowers on outdoor patios to draw traffic to your floral department?

Tip 5: Invite the outdoors in. Perhaps not totally apropos of the garden center environment, blend the indoor and outdoor spaces by opening curtains to see outside, make sure the indoor and outdoor décor that can be seen at the same time complement each other, and create a consistency of style. **GP**