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News from Nashville

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I was able to catch up with some old friends at this year's Garden Center Group Fall Event, as well as get the lowdown on what's happening in garden retail right now.

You'll be seeing more stories in future issues of *Green Profit* based on themes from the event, but there was some news that came out from sponsors that I wanted to pass along. Three items in particular:

- Border Concepts has a new 20,000-sq. ft. showroom opening this month in Lexington, North Carolina. It'll have a ton of stuff, including 160 lines of cool pottery.

Instead of having a showroom in Atlanta at AmericasMart, the company opted to create its own space that will be open for visitors year-round. Border Concepts now has multiple distribution centers across the U.S., including one opening in Pennsylvania to complement existing Seattle and Lexington, North Carolina, centers.

- Epicor launched a new cloud-based platform at the event called Epicor Retail Cloud. The new solution is available in select retail markets and supplements its Epicor Eagle solution. It eliminates the need for software maintenance and data backups. According to Sam Kirkland, the system is designed to do the following:

- Simplify operational processes and drive efficiency
 - Profitably price, promote and merchandise
 - Reward loyal customers to keep them coming back
 - Make smart, informed decisions quickly
 - Compete with the efficiency and speed-of-service big boxes and online brands offer
 - Reduce IT hassles and complexity
- Monrovia's Tim Barthel provided an update on the e-commerce site shop.monrovia.com, where the company saw 25% growth. The program lets customers buy online and then pick up product at their local garden center. Tim told the audience about 75% of customers had never been to the store they picked up at, driving new visits for those retailers.

That was just news from the vendors. The (record-breaking number of) retailers in attendance spent four days pouring over P&L numbers, networking, touring garden centers and a beautifully restored estate (Cheekwood Estate & Gardens), hearing an extremely valuable HR update, and working on time management and succession planning, along with so much more.

If this all sounds like something you want to jump on for 2020, visit www.thegardencentergroup.com to find out more. Next year's Fall Event is already on the schedule for August 31-September 3 at the Hotel DuPont in Wilmington, Delaware. **GP**