

Front Lines

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A New Garden Center Show

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There's a new summer trade show for garden center retailers debuting in August. This one is being organized by a media/marketing company out of New Jersey called SmartWork Media, a newcomer to the IGC world, and is scheduled to take place August 10-12 at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee.

The event organizers are expecting 600 booths and "thousands of buyers" at the three-day event. Organizers are also lining up educational opportunities that they hope will address "the most essential purchasing, marketing and management questions that IGCs face today."

Oh, and that's right—this is a show for independent garden centers. The Garden Center Show for IGCs (its official name) will be partnering with Garden Centers of America for a day of touring Milwaukee-area garden centers. This will take place on August 9. GCA is also helping to design the show's conference.

SmartWork Media's CEO Mattijs Braakman explained via press release why this show was created:

"Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there were no Midwest garden center shows in 2020, and at this time, we don't see any schedule for 2021 either. The industry needs to have an opportunity to get together to conduct business in 2021. With our many years of expertise in producing B2B magazines and shows focused on the retail industry, the new Garden Center Show for IGCs fits well into our model, and we look forward to sharing this expertise with the independent garden center industry."

Show organizers aren't some fly-by-nights, either. Rob Bailey, the Garden Center Show for IGCs director, was the show manager for the popular IGC Show. Said Rob of directing this new show: "Over the past five years, I have enjoyed working with thousands of independent garden center owners, building relationships and helping to grow their businesses. I am thrilled that SmartWork Media has provided an opportunity to continue that work with the new Garden Center Show. I look forward to seeing many familiar faces in August!"

Also on the show management team is Jim Reed, a trade show veteran for a range of B2B retail industries. Sounds like he'll be influential in bringing some points of view from other types of retailers into the show's educational line-up.

More information on the Garden Center Show for IGCs can be found at www.gardencentershow.com. **GP**