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Change of Plans

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I'll let you in on a little secret in our world of magazine publishing—the finished product rarely looks like the plan we began with each month (sound familiar?).

Of course, you have to have a plan to get started, so we set the size of the magazine, assign each article a length, place the ads in between and get ready to put it all together.

Then stories start coming in. And the changes start. One story came in longer than anticipated; photography from another story is really impactful and deserves to be played larger on the page requiring more space; yet another story needed some cuts and will be shorter than expected, etc. Our favorite is when unexpected ads come in and we need to find space for them (no joke, we don't mind this at all).

It takes lots of communication and patience to make the changes work and to get everyone on the same page. I'm proud of the fact that we're pretty good at this because we're all working toward the same goals.

Why am I giving you the inside scoop on our production? Because I imagine you've gone through some similar instances this spring and summer where the plan you started with wasn't the one you ended up with. This year required a lot of patience, communication and flexibility to adjust to selling the product you actually received. And from what I heard, it sold—boy, did it sell.

So now we try to look ahead to see what's coming down the pike for fall and make a plan. Last month in this space I wrote about some of the problems with shipping to explain delays and half orders (or no orders). This month my colleague Jen Zurko takes a deep dive on the *GrowerTalks* side into shortages overall and where they're causing issues.

Back on our side, I talked with representatives of structures companies who were sure to note there'll be some delays in building and adding on this fall, winter and into the spring due to rising prices and shortages of raw materials that go into making steel and polycarbonate. Their warning? Don't kick the tires too long if you're looking to build or add on.

Sometimes the best-laid plans are challenged, and there's no better example of that than launching a new enhanced e-commerce website and then getting sued for lack of ADA compliance for said website. AmericanHort hosted a

webinar this spring to make the industry aware of the topic and we asked freelance tech expert Joe Dysart to look into it more. You can read his story, complete with a list of companies you can hire to keep your website compliant.

And, finally, there's been little slowdown in the insatiable consumer appetite for tropicals, foliage and houseplants this year, as evidenced by growers struggling to keep up with demand. AmericanHort also had a webinar on that topic, hosted by our very own Ellen Wells. Well, the questions outpaced the answers during that session and a couple of the experts on the call were kind enough to offer up additional answers.

And now, you'll have to excuse me—it's time to start planning the August issue. **GP**