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Shop Corner: More Response to Cancellations

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Editor's note: In this space, we'll highlight business tips, marketing, buying and other topics from houseplant shops told from a variety of angles that will help smaller shops make their businesses more effective. To contribute your thoughts, please email me at jpolanz@ballpublishing.com.

Tina Mast from Homewood Nursery in Raleigh, North Carolina, wrote in recently about their Houseplant Expo

at the behest of her boss, Joe Stoffregen. It's a one-day sale held on the first Saturday of February. This was the second time they've held this special event and "we have had a great response to it," Tina said.

"Besides featuring houseplants and pottery at 25% off, we also had two talks on houseplants given by our houseplants expert, Kathy Krokus, and we offered free re-potting the whole day. We had a 'Propagation Station' set up and demonstrated taking cuttings of Tradescantia Nanouk and gave away a free cutting to anyone who wanted one. There were a couple of selfie stations set up and we had free refreshments. It was a fun event and it seemed like customers and employees (AKA 'Homies') all had a great time."

Trying to quantify "a great response," I asked Tina for some numbers. She believed it was four to five times what they'd normally bring in for that Saturday. The sessions with Kathy each had 15 to 20 people.

How did they draw folks in that day? Tina, the store's Communications Director, took a multi-pronged approach:

- Emailed the store's list
- Included it in their January e-newsletter
- Sent a text message to their text message list
- Set up a promoted Facebook event post
- Set up a promoted Instagram post
- Included it in the local Triangle Gardener magazine event list

- Included it on their website banner and Events page

Tina also took it upon herself to do some additional social media posts in the days before the event that highlighted all the plants that were coming in for the sale.

Promoting an event takes hard work and planning! But with results of nearly quintupling sales for that day, I'm pretty sure it's worth it. **GP**