

breathe new life

I'd be remiss not to start my note this month with the obvious. Hopefully you noticed a large change to the cover of the magazine: a new logo. As you flip through the pages of this issue, you'll see many other modern design transformations I hope you enjoy.

In all 17 years of the publication, the Lawn & Garden Retailer team has aimed to offer you the business knowledge and inspiration needed to make your garden centers better, and earlier this year, we decided it was time for a refresh to help accomplish those goals.

One of my most favorite quotes about progress, and I'd argue success, comes from Walt Disney: "We keep moving forward, opening up new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths." This attitude can encompass all things big or small in every part of life.

In this month's issue we have a lot of articles that focus on "new" in one way or another.

On page 42, you'll find breeders' most exciting introductions from the 2018 California Spring Trials. From varieties sure to steal the show in designer containers to those bred for superior landscape performance to premium petunias and much more, I'm sure there will be some intros you won't want to wait to add to your benches.

Starting on page 30, you'll also find products that will be featured at the IGC Show, Aug. 14-16. Many of these are new, so either get a sneak peek before heading to Chicago, or get an inside look if you won't be attending.

a brand update

We decided to update our brand image this month, and I've seen many garden centers doing the same with their logos and especially their websites.

Timothy Howard walks you through five measurable goals your website should accomplish on page 38.

I noticed one business that has done an overhaul of its website in the past three months is Dickman Farms Greenhouses & Garden Center. They were on our Upstate New York garden center tour this spring, the highlights of which can be seen beginning on page 16. I guarantee you'll find at least one new idea — signage, displays, branding, combinations, etc. — to take with you from this dozen or so garden centers.

We also have two articles on one of the most important "new" topics in the industry: gaining new customers.

On page 10, Mason Day talks about creating an advocate marketing program in which your customers act as your largest ambassadors. This has worked well for them with mobile-app GrowIt!, but here Mason will give you specific steps to implement it for a garden center.

Lastly, Blumen Gardens in Sycamore, Illinois, has found a unique way to add a whole new demographic of clients and customers, along with increasing its sales throughout the slowest times of the year. Find out why weddings work for them in this month's Event Central on page 66.

Hopefully this month you'll come across many new ideas or products that speak to your curiosity. And as you're flipping through the issue, I'd love for you to send me an email letting me know how you like the new design.



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