

Mini Gardens = BIG PROFITS

By Derek Woodruff

How retailers can turn the leading trend in plant purchases into incremental sales opportunities.



creative and personal level cultivates loyalty — which means repeat business!

Defining Miniature Gardening

Miniature gardening is defined as any type of indoor or small-scale plant growing. Whether it is in the form of a terrarium, a fairy garden, collection of houseplants, or a window ledge herb garden, these biophilic live plant additions are greening up small living spaces everywhere for both decoration and function.

Due to consumers having easy access to so many different types of plant material in a wide variety of retail outlets, plant collecting has become addictive. In addition, the grow-your-own-food movement has literally pushed balcony vegetable and herb growing to new heights. Considering all of these trends, miniature gardening is a craze that retailers will be able to depend on for years to come!

Miniature Garden and Terrarium Inspiration

Whether in the form of a tabletop terrarium or balcony container garden of vegetable plants, these little vignettes are taking over urban dwellings. Where do these ideas come from? In a world of online inspiration, most motivation for plant projects are driven by Instagram, Pinterest and other social media platforms.

However, today's plant buyers desire more than just a product purchase. The modern plant enthusiast is looking

The boom in urban and suburban living has indoor plant parenthood on the rise. According to Equiflor, millennials are now the largest generation and make up one-third of all gardening households. Due to factors such as limited space, rental housing, and lack of outdoor real estate, miniature and indoor gardening is the leading trend in plant purchases by this group.

Retailers can turn this trend into incremental sales opportunities by providing containers, decorations, plants, tools and supplies for this large group of buyers to customize their own miniature gardens. Providing a space for experiential retail that engages customers on a more

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for a shopping experience that produces a craft — large or small — that is photography worthy. It is important for those investing in these little worlds to be able to put their personal touch on all of their projects.

Customizable elements can be a great way to capture the attention of the millennial plant buyer and are easy additions to any retailer’s inventory. To keep up with the demands of plant buyers, it’s important to engage in the world of social media inspiration. By investing some time in following online plant influencers, retailers can stay one step ahead of consumers in procurement and the overall plant experience.

The Botanical Bar Experience

By setting up a space for consumers to have a creative retail experience, retailers will be able to better connect and engage with their customers and educate them on all of the product offerings. This dedicated space encourages customers to create their own miniature plant project in the form of a terrarium, container garden or small plant collection. By pricing materials such as potting media, containers, plants and decorations à la carte, retailers can make a generous margin by curating a one-of-a-kind experience for their customers.

Participants find value in this à-la-carte method as there is little waste in their creative process and they have access to decorative materials in small amounts rather than purchasing larger bags of each item. Other keys to making



this experience a success are having a variety of containers to choose from, appropriately sized plant pairings and materials to customize the finished look of any plant project, such as colorful and decorative mosses.

If the thought of sourcing, styling, marketing and hosting such an experience sounds a bit too overwhelming, consider the Syndicate Home and Garden Botanical Bar kit that comes with all of the hard goods needed to set up the experiential workspace. All that’s left to do is add the plants.

The best part of the kit is that all of the little details are provided for you, down to marketing materials, signage and training videos. By dedicating a small space and some time to set up, retailers can capitalize on the miniature gardening

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craze. We also recommend starting small with this new selling opportunity, and as the popularity of this experience begins to grow, so can the dedicated space and inventory.

All the Right Plants

A huge trend right now in indoor gardening is miniature everything. Tiny pottery, micro figurines and baby-sized plants are all the rage. The most popular of them all: the succulent. Between their low-maintenance care requirements and all of the colorful options available, succulents continue to be the No. 1 indoor plant purchase. By making the miniature versions of these arid plants available in an experiential environment, retailers can draw regular waves of plant project builders.

Some other popular plant miniatures include mixed varieties of ferns, tropical plants, living stones, Tillandsia (air plants) and small cacti. All of these plant types thrive in miniature gardens and indoor spaces. Since the plant purchase is usually the most inexpensive part of the project, most plant parents aren't afraid of the investment as these tiny plants are easily and affordably replaceable. If building a miniature plant library feels overwhelming, start with just one plant type. As the market begins to grow and staff becomes more comfortable taking care of these little plants, introduce new varieties to keep the interest and momentum going.

Miniature Up-Sells

Customers look to retailers as the miniature garden experts to help in keeping their little worlds thriving. By offering advice on light exposure and watering schedules, you can establish customer confidence that they have come to the right place. This knowledge can also lead to additional sales in post-planting care.

Some excellent options that serve as both decorative and functional pieces are terrarium tools and plant misters. Not only do consumers find these miniature tools adorable but they make building and maintaining a terrarium or tabletop garden a breeze. A plant mister is a great way to introduce a little humidity into terrariums and to indoor plants. They also look great sitting on a shelf! With design finishes ranging from vintage glass to trend-forward metallics, there is a plant mister for any décor type. These pieces also make great affordable gifts for the indoor gardener.

By embracing the miniature gardening craze, retailers can easily expand their offerings to include an experiential component and capitalize on a new group of plant aficionados. Although the price point of these tiny plants may seem small, when combined with the accessory pairings, you can really drive up the size of the overall sale. Remember that these little plants are heavily trending — and once consumers start a collection of these little life forms, it becomes addictive! By implementing everything needed for miniature gardening in a one-stop-shop and combining it all with an experiential component, you can count on guaranteed success for years to come. 🌱

Derek Woodruff is owner of Floral Underground, a fresh floral subscription service based in Traverse City, Michigan, and a brand ambassador for Syndicate Home & Garden.