

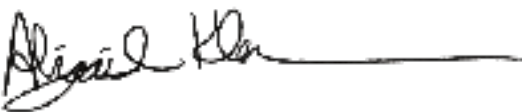
rush to wait

People hate waiting in line. Right? Not so fast. Think about the thousands of people who line up at Apple stores across the country on the day the newest iPhone is released. Or think about all of the hungry people standing outside of a popular restaurant. Customers don't want to wait in line while going about their everyday tasks, but there is something to be said for the excitement of waiting. The lines almost justify the decision you're about to make. I think to myself, "If so many people are standing here, it must be good." Pamela Baker, from Baker's Acres Greenhouse & Garden Center in Alexandria, Ohio, says she and her husband, Nick, love craft beer. This is one industry that has embraced the idea of a release date. As someone who was recently dragged to a bar at 10 a.m. so her friend could try the latest brew right when it came out, I get it. Beer tapping events have become a regular occurrence in Chicago, and why can't they work for other industries as well? This is exactly what Baker's Acres is doing. Flip to page 14 to find out how they are "Creating the Hype" for some of their most anticipated products. Successfully marketing a "release date" can get crowds of people into your store who want to make sure they get the hot item before it runs out — and maybe even make some additional purchases. It, however, doesn't stop there. Take photos and keep the excitement going. People buy the iPhone long after the first day it came out. They're still eager because of all the attention it initially received.

Turn to page 24 to read about three garden centers who have gotten their customers excited about raising money for a good cause, the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. With all these great ideas, you'll need ways to tell people about them. Tara Jacobsen addresses this with some of her "10 Valuable Marketing Ideas" on page 38.

time to show off

You've spent all this time planning for spring, and it's finally here. Make sure to grab your camera and take some photos of the displays that have gone from concept to execution for the season. You very well could be Lawn & Garden Retailer's next Merchandiser of the Year. On page 39, you'll find all the details you need to put your store in the running for the highest honors, bragging rights, and prizes from competition sponsors Braun Horticulture and Dramm. You have until June 15 to send in your submission, so keep this in mind as customers start flooding through your doors. In the meantime, are you interested in seeing what our past eight winners brought to the table? Visit www.lgrmag.com/awards for a complete look at previous Merchandisers of the Year and all the finalists. Need a little help on what makes for a good display? On page 18 you'll find four aspects that sure help. We can't wait to see all of your creativity!



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