



# Pots, Plants & Profit

“If you **accommodate others**  
you will be  
accommodating yourself.”

— *Chinese proverb*

**W**ith the rising popularity of mixed containers, we’ve seen a number of retailers offering design/potting services: The customer consults an in-house designer, and for a minimal amount, the next day, they have a custom-designed mixed container. This is a great idea, but what about plain old repotting? No specialized designer, no large time investment, minimum inputs and no extra charge.

Repotting services, like the one pictured above at Echter’s Greenhouses, Arvada, Colo., are an enticing perk for busy customers and a great way to rack up add-on sales. Minimal signage can “plant” the idea — Do you have a container for that? What about something in bloom for that new pot? — and a well-trained staff member can tout

the benefits of high-margin soil amendments such as time-released fertilizer and water-retaining gels, even offering to work the newly purchased product into the soil.

The service should be advertised in both foliage and container sections, as well as at the “potting shed,” with a limited amount of product cross-merchandised in each department for impulse buys. You would be absorbing the cost of soil and labor, but this can easily be recouped through increased add-on sales, which is why an outgoing, suggestive employee will be the most important factor for your success.

The only words of advice from Echter’s are to clearly state that plants and containers must be purchased on the same day and to exclude “special needs” plants such as orchids and cacti to limit the types of materials required. 🌱

—*Bridget White*