



Summer is here, and people are getting restless. Consumers are eager to start their summer activities and that means making their outdoor areas fit the season.

It's summer, the time for barbeques, pool parties, garden parties, baseball games, the beach, heat-loving planting and so much more. Summer is a time of fun; moods brighten, people get to go outdoors for sports, walks, bike rides and more. There are festivals, street fairs, art fairs etc. Long story short, it is a great time of year to get out and have a great time. That means even at home.

Summer is full of bright, neonish, melon-type colors. Colors that scream warm, sunny days filled with lots of things to do, like play in the garden. There are so many great plants out there with those colors that are made for the heat like vinca or torenia, amongst others. Those bright and exciting colors can really make a yard pop when planted.

Plants aren't the only things that have that summer spice to them. In fact, manufacturer companies have hopped on the summer wave right now. Everyone knows that flip-flop designs continue to be popular along with beach stuff in general. All of that new décor that includes seashells, sail boats and bamboo furniture is really hot, and companies are on top of the trend. A lot of people work during the day, so having that décor inside and outside of their homes gives them a feel they are not missing as much of the outdoors as they think being cooped up all day inside.

In most places around the country when summer hits, it's let the fun begin. People are out do-

ing all sorts of things for their homes to get ready for the summer season and enjoy it while it is here. Planting up containers, adding that extra garden accent here and there, and even setting up each weekend for those outdoor dinner parties.

A lot of you already do some great summertime displays, but think about how much more you can do with specifics. Create a beach end cap or a neonish, colorful display with plants, pots, gloves, tools, etc. Show your customers you have everything they need to enjoy their homes for the summer. There are so many fun ways to show that you are part of the summer fun. Include displays for the 4th of July, local events or festivals in your towns or local baseball teams. You can even create picnic or barbeque displays. It is all a matter of getting in the summer spirit and making your customers feel the same way.

Consumers love the summer season. Kids and teachers are out of school, and businesses offer summer hours. These are advantages you need to take. Offer these people discounts, have discount days on a Friday afternoon when the summer-hour workers are on the way home. Have a teacher's day or even a bunch of seminars for kids to provide them with something fun to do in the summer. There are endless possibilities; go ahead and use them to their full potential.

— Catherine Evans

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1. Stretch gloves

These stretch gloves consist of colorful spandex tops with machine-washable micro suede. They have reinforced fingertips and lightly padded palms. Three colors are available. Womanswork. (800) 639-2709. **Write in 1443**

2. Birdbath collection

These birdbaths are part of a new ceramic line. Birdbaths are offered in three 2-tone colors: red, blue and green. Alpine Corporation. (877) 710-0162. **Write in 1444**

3. Ceramic container

The Contemporary Collection by Exotic Angel Plants is characterized by German ceramic fired at high temperatures for durability. The collection comes in four styles, each with a built-in drainage reservoir. Each container is matched with one of more than 300 foliage plants to complement it. Hermann Engelmann Greenhouses, Inc. (800) 722-6435. **Write in 1445**

4. Plastic mats

These colorful plastic floor mats are intended for use indoors and out. Various colors, sizes and patterns are available. The Koko Company. (718) 392-7799. **Write in 1448**



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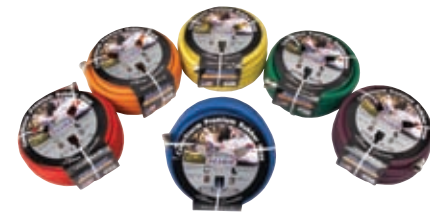
MARKET WATCH



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5. Miniature pots

Taterpots are potato-shaped pots with faces and little feet. Two styles are available: Slim and Shorty. They grow one of three herbs: basil, mint or oregano. Made in Japan, Slim stands 2 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches tall and is 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. Shorty is 3 inches in diameter and 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches tall. They are sold in 12-piece assorted packs. Noted Co. (800) 600-7216. **Write in 1447**

6. Planters

Inspired by colors from nature, Mesa Planters are made of a lightweight resin, giving the facade of a weathered look. Mesa Planters are angular with a stylized band at the top. Inside, a water-minder feature provides for extra drainage. Four incrementally sized planters are available in lemon, lime, denim and terra. Novelty Mfg. (800) 442-7336. **Write in 1446**

7. Reversible patio mats

These patio mats measure 6x9 ft. and weigh approximately 5 lbs. Made of woven polypropylene, the mats should not allow mold or mildew to form. Mats are UV stabilized for durability and sun exposure. Stakes can be put through the corner loops to anchor in high winds. Available styles include Equestrian, Racing, Floral and Patriotic. Patiomats.com. (888) 409-6806. **Write in 1449**

8. Rubber hose

The new ColorStorm Premium Rubber Hose is made in the United States and molded from EPDM rubber, which should not crack, check or separate. This 50-ft. hose is designed to coil easily and be resistant to hot water up to 160° F. Six colors are available: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and berry. Dramm Corporation. (920) 684-0227. **Write in 1450**

9. Retro furniture

This 1950s-style steel outdoor furniture features a powder-coated, UV-resistant finish and stainless steel hardware. Chairs and gliders are available in 12 colors. The tables are available in white. Torrains Manufacturing Company. (888) 228-2421. **Write in 1451**

10. Tree swing

These old-fashioned tree swings are hand-painted. The weather-resilient wood swing includes 24 ft. of treated manila rope and hanging instructions. Choose from four designs: lime zest, red swirl, purple haze and pink swirl. All is Well. (615) 650-5281. **Write in 1452**