Social Media for Greenhouse Growers and Garden Centers

76% of U.S. adults use the internet and 65% use social media
Source: Pew Research Center
http://pewrsr.ch/1Zgn7F7

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How do you decide which social media outlets to use?

• Step one: “Who” are you targeting?

22% are between age 25 and 34
19% are between age 35 and 44
18% are between age 45 and 54
53% are female

39% are between age 18 and 29
39% between age 30 and 49
57% are males

26% are between age 25 and 34
23% are between age 35 and 44
19% are between age 18 and 24
55% are male

95% are between age 18 and 24
70% are female

More likely to be female

More likely to be male

How do you decide which social media outlets to use?

• Step two: What is your goal?

Build relationships and brand loyalty
Drives traffic to websites

Relationship building and "conversation," ideal for retail, art, food, entertainment & beauty businesses

News and public relations
Consumers tend to engage and interact more on Twitter

Incentives/contests, new product "teasers," and "pulling back the curtain"

"Scrapbooking," ideal for clothing, art, and food businesses

Drives traffic to websites

How do you decide which social media outlets to use?

• Step three: What are you sharing?

Should you post to Facebook, Twitter, or both?

One study suggests:
• Use Facebook to drive traffic to your website
• Consumers tend to engage and interact more on Twitter

"Strength" of Facebook posts
Images and video are the “strongest”
Next, posts with links to external content
Text only posts rank third

What should you post?
• Your achievements, business milestones, anniversaries, and events
• New products and services (e.g. event space, wedding venue)
• Job announcements
• Links to other businesses – one way to develop partnerships and cross promote

Use a tool like Google Alerts to receive notifications about items that you can repost, retweet, etc.

https://www.google.com/alerts

Two monitoring tools that search blogs and social media:
• Social mention (free)
• Mention (free trial)
Pinterest: The power of images

• Of the existing social media sites – it is the “2nd largest driver of traffic”
• “An estimated 47% of US online shoppers have made a purchase based on a recommendation from Pinterest”
• “Pinterest buyers spend more money, more often, and on more items than Facebook, LinkedIn, and Tumblr”


Search Pinterest to learn about products or consumer interests

• Search “garden,” “garden products,” “cool gardening products,” “gardening trends”

• Be sure to add important information about the pic and redirect pinners to your website

What type of Instagram image gets the most likes?

According to research conducted by Dan Zarrella

• Photos with faces
• “Busier photos”
• Cool colors
• Brighter photos
• Desaturated photos
• No filter


What hashtags could you use?

Hashtagify.me

Check that your hashtag is appropriate

• This step can help prevent your business being associated with anything negative
• Search on Instagram, Twitter, and other social media sites for the hashtag
• Use a tool like hashtagdictionary.com to learn possible meanings
**Periscope (periscope.tv)**

The intent of the tool, according to the blog, is to “let people discover the world through someone else’s eyes” (http://bit.ly/1CcAkkl) by allowing them to witness live events and experiences – anywhere in the world.

Uses for Periscope
- **Tradeshows**: Document setup, periodically showcase a new item, show live giveaways, interview customers who attend about their success with your products
- **Air “how to” segments**
- **“Show” a customer the tree/shrub/etc. that you want to select for their landscape - and get their immediate response**
- **Broadcast during events**

**After the event:** Upload the video to YouTube, the “third most visited website in the world”
- **YouTube:**
  - 8 out of 10 consumers age 18 to 49 watch YouTube during an average month
  - 6 out of 10 consumers “prefer online video platforms to live TV”
  - 2015: 18 to 49 year olds “spent 4% less time watching TV, while time on YouTube went up 74%”

Source: http://bit.ly/1MKNHDs

**Recognize your customers**
- **Ask users to post images, tweet, broadcast etc. enjoying their garden or visiting your garden center. Then….**
- **Use their images as your Facebook page cover photo**
- **Be your customers’ preferred source for relevant information**
  - Post, comment, forward other complementary businesses’ and/or customers postings
  - Be proactive - ask readers to reply to your posts
  - Use Periscope to answer questions live
  - Host a Pin it to win it contest

**Surprise and Delight**
- **Give “customers unanticipated perks to renew interest in their products and services and to amplify messaging.”**
- **Reward your most engaged fan(s) with a newly published book**

**What is your strategy and is it working?**
- **Increase foot traffic online and in the store**
- **Increase garden club membership**
- **Promote awareness of event facility rental**
- **Use tools such as Facebook Insights, SumAll (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram), YouTube stats, etc. to learn where traffic originates**
- **Document: clicks, likes, retweets, coupon use, garden center visits, etc.**
- **Adjust your strategy if necessary**

**Questions to ask customers**
- **What social media networks do you actively use?**
- **Which ones do you use to connect with businesses?**
- **What activities and events would encourage you to visit the garden center?**
- **How would you prefer to learn about activities, events, and new products?**
- **Wholesalers: Ask retail customers which “how to” videos would be the most helpful to them**