

Keeping Horticulture in Popular Culture

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“Plant Blindness,” a coined twenty years ago by botanists, Elizabeth Schussler, of the Ruth Patrick Science Educator Center in Aiken, South Carolina, and James Wandersee, of Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge.

The digital world is causing people to see plants with “new eyes” and to be exposed to all different aspects of the natural world. It’s up to us, in the green industry, to keep up. Here are my thoughts about doing so.

Who are our customers and what do they care about?

Most people don’t think of themselves as “gardeners” but they are gardening.

Holiday Gift List Ideas: Gifts for the first-time vegetable grower. Gifts for the new homeowner. Gifts for the gadget and tool geek. Gifts for remote workers. Gifts for parents of small children. Gifts for foodies. Gifts for the houseplant hoarder. Gifts for people who don’t want “more stuff.” Gifts for the recently retired. Gifts for the mixologist. Gifts for the COVID-Cranky. (And who doesn’t fit into *that* category?)

Outdoor Living Continues to be Huge.

Remind people about fire pit plantings (white flowers, fragrant plants, and herbs) and how to create an outdoor office that’s surrounded by plants that refresh the mind and eye, draw hummingbirds and other wildlife, and feed your work productivity in the natural world.

How about including icons for Fire Pit Plantings and Outdoor Offices along with the symbols for deer-resistant, water-wise, sun/shade etc on plant lists?

Keep up With Current Buzz Words – and apply them to horticulture.

Quick Win – a project that’s easy to complete. (Container garden, herb garden, cocktail hour garden, window-sill houseplant display, flower bed around the lamp post.)

Pivot – a drastic change. (Create a window that’s filled with hanging houseplants. Make a privacy screen of plants for your balcony. Install raised beds for herbs and vegetables all around a patio. Plant a river of blueberry bushes, highbush and low, in the front yard.)

Disruptor – a person or business that creates something that replaces the existing way of doing things. (Front yard vegetable gardens. Front yard a pollinator pathway. Fruit trees and berry bushes in front. No lawn.)

Startup – in the first stages of operations. (Designs for “Startup Gardens” for first time homeowners. Startup houseplant collections.)

Sustainability – the effect on the environment. (Native plant gardens. Low-water use plantings. Composting. Grouping plants according to water use.)

Hyperlocal – building a local ecosystem. (Supporting IGC's, native plants for your area, all gardening is regional, making an environmental difference.)

Self-care – taking care of yourself so that you can accomplish all you need to do. (Mediation gardens. Houseplants for reducing stress. Outdoor office.

Cutting gardens. The freshest, most tasty food on earth is in your yard.)

Work-Life balance – how people manage time at and outside of their jobs. (Labor saving products and easy-to-care-for plants.)

People are Living Online

Constantly be giving them ideas for ways that plants make good posts.

Seasonal displays inside and out. Staging of houseplants. Plant crafts such as marigold garlands, flowers-on-the-lawn art, grapevine plant supports, mini-indoor gardens, planted stumps.)

Tie Horticulture to Their Special Occasions

Find ways to connect plants with important holidays and events. DIY weddings continue to flourish. (A symbol for plants for DIY Brides/Grooms?)

Food and Drink

Get creative about garden-inspired menus. Offer recipes and images of unusual plant additions to the same-old-same-old. (A symbol for plants good for cocktails?)

Get Out of the Garden Center

Take the plants and plant projects on the road. Local breweries or restaurants. Pop-up plant displays. Plants as art.

Take a Hint From The National Parks

<https://everykidoutdoors.gov/>

The Silly But Fun Stuff

#cherrioschallenge #leafstackchallenge Create one...start something.

People Like to Be Part of Something Good

There is so much that we can't control in our world, but people like to know how they *can* make a difference. From composting to saving the butterflies and bees, people are interested in doing something good for the planet.

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