

newsletter

FEBRUARY 2006

Vol. 47 No. 2 FTD Newsletter © 2006, FTD

LETTER FROM FTD CEO



Dear FTD Members,

We are in the midst of our busiest time of year with Valentine's Day behind us and Mother's Day quickly approaching. As the floral industry continuously changes and consumers are bombarded with more floral and gift options than ever before, it is essential to focus on marketing your shop and keep your business top of mind with new and existing customers. And, the place more and more consumers are shopping for flowers and gifts is the Internet.

To keep you front and center of online shoppers, we have launched a new Internet advertising program, FTD Reach Local. This program places your ad on leading search engines and puts your shop right in front of consumers who are buying flowers in your area. The great benefit of this program to you is FTD Reach Local is pay-per-click advertising and you can set up a monthly campaign budget. That way you only pay when a consumer clicks on your Web site and you control how much you spend. Team this program up with FTD's other two Internet marketing programs, FTD Online YellowPages and FTDflorists.com, and you'll be sure to reach the thousands of consumers shopping online for Mother's Day gifts.

In addition to the Internet marketing program expansion, FTD is also introducing exciting,

new everyday products. These six new products appeal to today's consumers with contemporary, more modern containers and designs. You can even fill these codified products with drop-in bouquets from the FTD Flower Exchange. Not only will you save money, but you'll also minimize waste and labor with these pre-made bouquets.

Lastly, I am very excited to share the great news that FTD's float "Your Wish Is My Command" was the recipient of the 2006 Rose Parade® Sweepstakes Trophy, receiving worldwide recognition for the "Most Beautiful Entry with Outstanding Floral Presentation and Design." Millions of parade viewers saw the FTD Logo at one of the most powerful moments in its history and you are carrying this logo in your shop. We hope you took the time to watch the Parade and that all FTD Florists shared in our victory as winners of this most prestigious award.

Please let us know if you need anything or have any suggestions for this Mother's Day. Competition is tough and coming at us from every angle. Let FTD be your partner to help you survive in the tough marketplace. We open our doors to you because that's how we make our partnership stronger. Thank you for being a part of FTD and for sending your orders FTD!

SEND US YOUR VALENTINE'S DAY SUCCESS STORIES!

Did you implement a marketing campaign that produced incredible results? Or did one of your employees design a unique arrangement with a codified container that received rave reviews? Please include your shop name, member number and pictures to prdept@ftdi.com or 3113 Woodcreek Drive, Downers Grove, IL 60515.



TEXAS FLORIST HONORED AT COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

SUE HABIB, OWNER OF LEXIS FLORIST IN Houston, TX, was honored at a community celebration for her business achievements. Business associates, city officials, family, friends and customers attended the event, which also commemorated Lexis Florist's 20-year anniversary.

Guest speaker and FTD Field Business Consultant Joe Arbona spoke highly of Sue during his speech. "I've been Sue's FTD representative and friend for over 15 years and have witnessed her success. She has created a brand that is recognized all over Houston," said Joe.

Lexis Florist has been an FTD Member for nine years.



Sue Habib and daughter Miriam celebrate the success of Lexis Florist at the community event.



FTD Field Business Consultant Joe Arbona speaks to the audience about Sue Habib's achievements as a business owner.



Florist Sue Habib addresses the group of local business owners, city officials, family, friends and customers at the Tuscany Square Extravaganza in Houston.



FTD Field Business Consultant Joe Arbona (center right) and FTD Regional Vice President John Hurdt (far left) visit with Lexis Florist owner Sue Habib and friend.

BE GOLD. SEND FTD.





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WASHINGTON FLORIST CELEBRATES A COLORFUL CENTURY

LORA CREE AND WAYNE QUEEN OF **KENT FLORAL** in Kent, WA are not only celebrating their shop's 100th anniversary, but a new location as well.

In addition to the new shop, Kent Floral also purchased an FTD POS system and an FTD Florists Online Web Site.

The employees of Kent Floral commemorated the anniversary and new location with four nights of fun: a VIP customer appreciation night, a partnership night and a two-day open house for the entire community.

"Our new technology, signage, and website gave us the opportunity to reach a larger market," said Lora.

Kent Floral has been an FTD Member for 74 years.

FTD Field Business Consultant Connie St. Jean passed out free carnations during the open house. Customers also enjoyed refreshments and design demonstrations.

Lora and Wayne said they relocated the shop to increase visibility.



Kent Floral owners Wayne Queen and Lora Cree support FTD with the logo on their aprons.

"We felt we were missing a market of impulse buyers at our old location," said Lora. "Our new shop is located on a busy street that lets us advertise our specials and events on a message board."

MINNESOTA FLORISTS GET TO THE BANK ON TIME

MINNESOTA FLORISTS GAINED SOME BUSINESS "cents" at the Minnesota Green Expo which included the FTD – sponsored program "Get Me to the Bank on Time." FTD Design Instructor Jeff Corbin AIFD, AAF, PFCI offered solutions for

undersold and improperly priced wedding designs, which leave a florist with hard work and little to show for it. Florists walked away from Jeff's program with improved selling techniques and innovative wedding concepts.



FTD Field Business Consultant Christy Neilson (left) and FTD Regional Vice President Teresa Joerger (right) praise Jeff Corbin for his successful program.



FTD Field Business Consultant Christy Neilson (far right) congratulates the staff of **A. Johnson and Sons Florist** on placing second in the design competition. A. Johnson and Sons Florist has been an FTD Member since 1937.

PENNSYLVANIA FLORISTS ASSIST HURRICANE KATRINA VICTIMS

FOLLOWING THE EVENTS OF HURRICANE Katrina, Jonathan Morrissey of **RichMar Florist** in Allentown, PA called on fellow florists to raise money for the hurricane victims.

RichMar Florist has been an FTD Member for 26 years.

Twenty-five local florists, who all belonged to the Lehigh Valley Floral Association, joined forces to raise over \$5,000. Each shop sold a single red rose for one dollar and donated all of the money to the American Red Cross.



Jonathan Morrissey of RichMar Florist shows off the check for the Hurricane Katrina victims.

"I could never have done something as big as this without the help of everyone who participated in our fundraiser," said Jonathan.

The FTD Team is Working For You! Contact Information:

FIND YOUR FTD BUSINESS CONSULTANT at **FTDi.COM**

FTD MARKETPLACE SALES • 800-767-4000
marketplacesales@ftdi.com

FTD MEMBER SERVICES • 800-788-9000
membership@ftdi.com

FTD TECHNOLOGY SALES • 800-767-3222
technology@ftdi.com

FTD FLORISTS ONLINE • 800-576-6721
floristsonline@ftdi.com

FTD FLOWERS ALL HOURS • 800-669-1000
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FTD CASH-FLO • 800-788-9000 EXT. 4262
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NEWSLETTER • **prdept@ftdi.com**

PUBLIC RELATIONS • **prdept@ftdi.com**

INTERNATIONAL RETRANS • **retrans@ftdi.com**

FTD FLOWER EXCHANGE • 888-776-1424
ftdflowerexchange.com

www.FTDi.COM

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS



(1) FTD Field Business Consultant Joe Arbona (center) congratulates John Hall and Charlotte Sloan Hall, owners of **Sugar Land Florist** in Sugar Land, TX, on their Top 250 status. Sugar Land Florist has been an FTD Member for six years. (2) FTD Field Business Consultant David Galvin (far left) visits the staff of **Feeney the Florist** in Chelmsford, MA during the holidays. Feeney the Florist has been an FTD Member since 1983. (3) Bruce McShan of **McShan Florist** in Dallas, TX celebrates his birthday with wife Sheri and daughter Jodi McShan and FTD Regional Vice Presidents Teresa Joerger (back left) and John Hurdt (right). McShan Florist has been an FTD Member since 1950.

FTD MEMBER WARMS UP COMMUNITY WITH BLANKETS AND FLOWERS

EMPLOYEES OF **ARTISTIC FLOWERS** IN Tallahassee, FL helped keep people in their area warm this winter. The florist accepted donations of new or gently used blankets on behalf of a local United Way Agency. Each generous giver received a free wrapped floral bouquet.

"Our efforts not only promoted our flower shop, but they also helped so many people in need. Nothing like a win-win situation," said Sandy Thompson, owner of Artistic Flowers.

In order to receive as many donations as possible, Artistic Flowers executed a marketing campaign that included television, radio and newspaper

advertisements and store signage and inserts with every delivery order.

Artistic Flowers has been an FTD Member since 1996.



The staff of Artistic Flowers proudly display the blankets they received for their blanket drive.

MEMBERS ENJOY EDUCATION AND NETWORKING

FTD WAS A PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE Chesapeake Floral Association Convention, which had a "Victorian Holiday" theme. FTD sponsored "Get Me to the Bank on Time," a program by FTD Design Instructor Jeff Corbin AIFD, AAF, PFCl. Jeff inspired Maryland florists to capture wedding sales with strategic marketing, improved selling techniques and innovative designs. Florists also enjoyed hands-on workshops, a trade fair and a design competition.



Jeff Corbin explains how to increase profits for florists' efforts during his program "Get Me to the Bank on Time."



Florists work hard on their entries for the Chesapeake Floral Association design competition.



Raechel Norman of the Chesapeake Floral Association teaches a children's scrap booking class during the annual convention.

THE HISTORY OF WAYNE GREENHOUSE

WAYNE GREENHOUSE IN WAYNE, NE BEGAN AS a small greenhouse in 1921. Owners Mads Devig "Dervie" Jenson Holl and his wife Sarah Jane grew mostly vegetables, but also provided flowers for funerals and weddings.

In the 1940s, Dervie and Sarah's son Wilbur and his wife Hattie took over the business. More land was purchased and more greenhouses were built. Although some of their flowers were grown in their own greenhouses, Wayne Greenhouse relied on fresh flowers that were flown in from other areas of the United States.

Wilbur and Hattie's son Kent and his wife Lois began helping out at the greenhouse after Wilbur passed away in 1950. After Kent and Lois had four children and four more sets of helping hands, the entire family took over and managed the business. By the 1980s, over 18,000 poinsettias were grown annually, making Wayne Greenhouse the largest wholesaler in northeast Nebraska.

When Kent Hall passed away in 1988, he left Lois and daughter Lou to run the business. They built even more greenhouses and hired more employees. At one time, there were three generations working at the greenhouse.

Today, Lou is the president of Wayne Greenhouse and continues to carry on her family's business and values. She remembers when her grandparents would receive a letter from a florist in another country and have to find a community member to translate the letter in order to deliver the flowers to the correct person. Now Wayne Greenhouse relies on FTD Mercury orders to send and receive orders from all over the world.

Wayne Greenhouse has been an FTD Member for 48 years.



First generation owners of Wayne Greenhouse, Mads Dervig Jensen Hall and Sarah Jane Hall.



Owner Lou Wiltse is the fourth generation of Wayne Greenhouse.



First generation owners of Wayne Greenhouse, Dervie and Sarah in front of their delivery truck.



Wayne Greenhouse's current fleet of delivery vans.



FTD CELEBRATES A ROSE PARADE GRAND PRIZE WITH MEMBERS

FTD WAS PROUD TO BE AWARDED THE PRESTIGIOUS Sweepstakes Trophy honoring the "Most Beautiful Entry with Outstanding Floral Presentation and Design" in the 2006 Rose Parade®. FTD's magical float "Your Wish is My Command" featured Las Vegas Magician Lance Burton. It was artistically brought to life with a 30-foot bejeweled genie, mechanical camel and monkeys, and a magic carpet covered with Black Magic roses that took flight soaring above lavish rose gardens and a sparking magic lamp.

of Roses recognized FTD by presenting us with the Sweepstakes Trophy."

FTD has been the proud recipient of 35 Tournament of Roses trophies since the first entry in 1933. FTD's beautiful float, combined with Las Vegas Magician Lance Burton as the float rider, reached millions of viewers through national media coverage on CNBC, ABC, NBC, Telemundo, and HGTV, as well as coverage on local television stations.

FTD Members traveled from across the country to celebrate FTD's 53-year partnership with the Tournament of Roses and took home a lifetime of memories. The event package included a behind-the-scenes look at the official float judging and VIP seats at the Rose Parade and the National Championship Rose Bowl Game between University of Southern California and University of Texas.

FTD Members who attended the trip saw the FTD brand at one of the most powerful moments in its history.

"The FTD float was absolutely beautiful," said Katherine Turner of the Flower Barn in Poughkeepsie, NY. "Even though it rained, everyone still enjoyed the parade. It was a memorable experience."

"FTD's Tournament of Roses event is an unforgettable experience for FTD Members. It gives florists the opportunity to see FTD participate firsthand in the most historic and largest consumer floral event of the year," said Michael Soenen, CEO and President of FTD. "I knew when we saw our float on judging day that we had the most beautiful float in the Parade; it was an honor when the Tournament

As the Official Floral Company of the Tournament of Roses, FTD also sponsored well-known floral designer Els Hazenberg from the Netherlands and FTD Design Instructor Keith White to decorate the official cars of the Rose Parade. Hazenberg and her team of volunteers produce incredible floral designs and are recognized by the Tournament of Roses each year through special events.



ROSE BOWL



(1) Dave (left) and Ruth Anne Harris (near right) of **The Last Straw Florist** in San Antonio, TX, Shane Castro (second from the left) and Gary Googins (right) of **Bloomfield Florist** in Denver, CO and Elaine Carrell (center) of **Cypress Floral Designs** in Cypress, TX carry their FTD seat cushions to the Rose Bowl Stadium. Bloomfield Florist has been and FTD Member for one year and Cypress Floral Designs has been an FTD Member for five years. (2) Steve and Katherine Turner of **Flower Barn and Greenhouse** in Poughkeepsie, NY enjoy the National Championship Rose Bowl Game. Flower Barn and Greenhouse has been an FTD Member for 29 years. (3) Susie and Marcos Ramos of **The Flower Box** in Georgetown, TX celebrate a Texas win. The Flower Box has been an FTD Member since 1975.

(1) Las Vegas Magician Lance Burton waves to parade viewers from the magic carpet upon FTD's award-winning float, "Your Wish Is My Command." (2) The final touches are made to the genie two days before the Rose Parade. More than 200 volunteers from all over the U.S. worked on FTD's float. (3) A volunteer fills the treasure chest on the FTD float with roses that have the word "magic" in their name or relate to the word magic including Autumn Magic, Magic Lantern, Hocus Pocus and Abracadabra. (4) Thousands of hundreds of viewers watched the CNBC new program that featured the FTD parade entry. News reporter Jane Wells delivered a live report from the top of the FTD float. (5) Steve and Katherine Turner of **Flower Barn and Greenhouse** in Poughkeepsie, NY proudly stand next to the FTD logo. (6) One of the many official cars of the Rose Parade that Els Hazenberg, FTD Design Instructor Keith White and volunteers decorated. (7) A volunteer carefully places white flowers around the magic lantern on the FTD float.

MEMBER NETWORKING (Continued from page 4)



(1) Oralia Espinoza and her son Eugenio of **Spring Garden Flower Shop** in San Antonio, TX. Spring Garden Flower Shop has been an FTD Member for five years. (2) Bobbie and Jim Darnell of **Clayton Flower Bed** in Clayton, GA. Clayton Flower Bed has been an FTD Member since 1975. (3) Dave and Ruth Anne Harris of **The Last Straw Florist** in San Antonio, TX. The Last Straw has been an FTD Member since 1984.

GOOD GRIPES: TEN TIPS TO TURN COMPLAINTS INTO COMPLIMENTS



By Teresa P. Lanker, an assistant professor and coordinator of floral design and marketing at The Ohio State University ATI. —From the pages of *Florists' Review*.

TRUE STORY: A COUPLE YEARS AGO, I MADE A purchase of several baby items in a department store featuring a well-advertised baby sale. The rack from which I selected my purchases displayed a prominent sign announcing "25-Percent Off." With four kids in tow, I didn't pay much attention to the total before signing my name to the credit card slip. Once home, however, I discovered no discount had been taken off my purchases. I returned to the store a few hours later (this time, the kids were home with dad) to straighten out the error. The young lady working in the baby department listened to my story, stating that none of the Carter's items were on sale. Low and behold, the "25-Percent Off" sign was no longer affixed to the rack where I had shopped earlier. Not knowing what to do about the frustrated customer before her, the salesperson (a new employee) called a manager and had a brief phone conversation while I waited. She hung up looking rather bewildered, so I asked her what the manager said. She answered, and I quote, "He said I should either call you a liar or give you your money back".

As an honest and loyal customer of this store; I was no longer frustrated, I was downright mad. I asked to speak to the manager, and the sales clerk hesitantly summoned him to the department. Our exchange was curt, beginning with me stating that I didn't appreciate being called a liar followed by the manager denying he referred to me as such. A downward spiral of dialog ensued, ending with me returning all of the merchandise and vowing never to shop there again. The manager seemed glad to hear it.

Once home, I took out my frustrations on the keyboard, writing a letter to the store's general manager detailing my experience. I expected my letter to land in a deep heap of unanswered complaints, but to my surprise, I received a written

reply within a matter of a few days. The general manager responded with a sincere apology, a commitment to improve service, and a \$25 store gift certificate. I felt vindicated, and eventually returned as a customer.

But the story doesn't end there. Two-and-a-half months later, during the peak of the Christmas season, a beautiful poinsettia, dressed in a bountiful basket with a luscious bow, was delivered to my door. The card wished me a happy holiday, and was signed by that same general manager.

EXCEED EXPECTATIONS

As a retail florist, you probably occasionally deal with customers who are dissatisfied about something. Granted, some are picky complaints, and a few may be devious attempts to test your generosity, but most are honest communications of flowers that withered prematurely, deliveries that went awry, or other unfortunate circumstances. How you react to these complaints can dramatically impact the future of your enterprise. It is said that a single dissatisfied customer will tell his tale of woe to as many as 23 others. That's negative advertising you just can't afford. Considering the cost of attracting new customers to your business (estimated to be upwards of \$100 per customer), you're wise to do everything possible to keep the ones you have. Yes, even the annoying, whining, demanding ones! So use the quick tips that follow as a guide to dealing with day-to-day gripes. Make an effort to exceed the expectations of unhappy customers, and turn your customer complaints into compliments.

LISTEN

Give unhappy customers an opportunity to share their stories and express their frustrations. Encourage them to provide details. Listen with interest, and as many as 40 percent of complaining customers will be satisfied enough to return in the future regardless of how you resolve their problems. Avoid a complaint hierarchy that requires unhappy customers to reiterate their stories to multiple tiers of shop personnel.

DIFFUSE DEFENSIVENESS

Avoid the natural tendency to defend yourself or the shop against the complaint. Don't blame other personnel or the computer, the weather, etc. The department manager in my saga was defensive from the start, claiming he didn't call me a liar and further claiming there had never been a sale sign on the rack in question. His defensive position left no room or desire from either one of us to continue a productive dialog.

THANK EARLY AND OFTEN

Thank customers for bringing the problems to your attention and for giving you the opportunity to rectify them. Thank them for their patience during the process of recovery. Thank them for their willingness to give you another chance.

EMPATHIZE

Let customers know their complaints are valid. A simple "I understand your frustration" or "I would be dissatisfied, too" will go a long way toward building a feeling of support and understanding.

CLARIFY THE DESIRED OUTCOME

Find out what the customers want as solutions to their problems. Often, just venting the issue is enough. In my case, I would have been satisfied with an apology from the department manager who called me a liar, but he clearly had no intention of providing one.

PROVIDE OPTIONS

When appropriate, give customers choices of how the problems can be resolved. For instance, let them choose whether they would prefer a refund or replacement. Focus on what you can do instead of what you can't.

GO OVER THE TOP

Show dissatisfied customers that they are important to your business. Compensate them for their troubles beyond all expectations. For instance, don't just replace a recipient's inadequate arrangement; deliver a bouquet to the unhappy sender as well. Remember, it takes a lot of time and energy for

dissatisfied customers to follow through on their impulses to complain. An unexpected token or statement of regret can go a long way toward easing customers' "pain and suffering".

MINIMIZE PAPERWORK

Establish a system for handling complaints without volumes of paperwork that keep customers waiting. Empower all shop personnel to use their judgment regarding the best resolution of individual complaints. Then, make it possible for them to do so quickly and efficiently without intervention from a higher authority.

FOLLOW UP

Make it a policy to always follow-up complaints with written apologies mailed within a day or two of the incidents. Show your commitment to customer satisfaction by having both the employees that resolved the issues and the managers who were informed of them send individual notes or letters. In addition, quick telephone calls to make sure the customers are satisfied are usually welcome and worthwhile follow-ups.

SHARE

Communicate each problem that occurs with shop staff. Discuss avenues to avoid similar complaints in the future. Create an atmosphere where employees feel safe in sharing customer gripes and staff errors, so improvements can be made for the betterment of the business.



As an FTD Member, you can receive a 15% discount on a *Florists' Review* subscription, and the subscription can be billed on your FTD Clearinghouse Statement. Simply fill out the online subscription form available at www.ftdi.com/education/industrynews.asp or call 1-800-367-4708 to subscribe today!



BE GOLD. SEND FTD.

GET READY FOR MOTHER'S DAY WITH FTD BOUQUETS

BE SURE TO GET CODIFIED FOR THE NATIONALLY advertised FTD® Mother's Day Bouquet, The FTD® Spring Garden® Bouquet, the Laura Ashley® Mixed Rose Bouquet Presented by FTD® and The FTD® Timeless Elegance® Bouquet. They are perfect for every mom, daughter, aunt and grandma.

Spread the word about these incredible products with the FTD Marketing Kit which includes quality shop posters. Ad slicks, radio scripts and telephone reference sheets help you reach out to your customers and drive business into your shop. These items are available at FTDi.COM for free downloads and are featured in the Canadian Directory.

CODIFICATION DEADLINE MARCH 7!



GUIDE CONSUMERS DIRECTLY TO YOUR SHOP WITH A MOTHER'S DAY CO-OP AD

CO-OP ADVERTISING IS A COST-EFFECTIVE WAY to reach consumers during peak holiday selling periods. The FTD Mother's Day advertisement will be delivered to homes and newsstands just before the holiday when people are starting to think about their Mother's Day purchases.

FTD will feature The Laura Ashley® Mixed Rose Bouquet Presented by FTD® in the Valassis coupon section within over 600 Sunday newspapers in the U.S. on May 7. In Canada, FTD will be advertising in the Canadian *TV Guide* magazine on May 12. A \$3 coupon will appear in the U.S. ad and a \$4.50 coupon in the Canadian ad. FTD will reimburse all florists for the coupons they accept from consumers.

Sign up today and put your shop's name in front of millions of potential customers. The deadline to sign up for the Mother's Day Co-op advertisement is March 5 for US members and March 25 for Canadian members.

Sign up online at www.FTDi.com or call the co-op Advertising Department at 800-788-9000, ext. 6409.



NEW FTD PRODUCTS ARE THE PERFECT ADDITION TO YOUR EVERYDAY SELECTION

YOUR CUSTOMERS WILL BE PLEASED TO SEE you've expanded your everyday gift selection with the following six new FTD products.

- The FTD® Inspiration Bouquets allow your customers to choose from four elegant pastel ceramic vases that share eternal wishes of inspiration. (SRP: \$32.99 US, \$42.99 CDN)
- The FTD® Comfort Planter offers an uplifting and graceful way to express wishes of peace, strength and sympathy. (SRP: \$35.99 US, \$44.99 CDN)
- Give your customers the ideal gift option for friends and loved ones putting down roots in a new home with The FTD® Home Sweet Home Planter. (SRP: \$42.99 US, \$53.99 CDN)
- The FTD® Congratulations Bouquet will dazzle your customers' eyes and delight their senses with burgundy carnations, orange tulips and solidago stems. (SRP: \$32.99 US, \$42.99 CDN)
- The FTD® Corporate Bud Vases make a graceful statement in any office environment. (SRP: \$32.99 US, \$42.99 CDN)
- Your customers will truly appreciate the sweet sentiment and lasting versatility of The FTD® Thanks Bouquet. (SRP: \$32.99 US, \$42.99 CDN)



The FTD® Inspiration Bouquets



The FTD® Comfort Planter



The FTD® Home Sweet Home Planter

These new products are sure to be a hit in your shop and can be found in the Feb/Mar/April FTD Directory. Call 1-800-767-4000 or visit www.ftdi.com.

Save money filling your new containers with flowers from the FTD Flower Exchange. Full floral drop-in bouquets allow you to buy only what you need, which helps minimize waste and labor. Order your floral drop-in bouquets at www.FTDFlowerExchange.com or call 1-888-776-1424 for more details.



The FTD® Congratulations Bouquet



The FTD® Thanks Bouquet



The FTD® Corporate Bud Vases



FTD Upcoming Events

March 3-5, 2006

Michigan Floral Association Spring Conference

The DeVos Place • Grand Rapids, MI

Featured FTD Design Program: "Designing on the Right Side of your Brain" presented by FTD Design Instructor Tina Stoecker AIFD. For registration information, contact the Michigan Floral Association at 517-575-0110 or visit their website at www.michiganfloral.org. Look for FTD Team Members Julie Atkinson and Bob Martin.

March 4-5, 2006

Northeast Floral Expo

Crowne Plaza Hotel • Cromwell, CT

Featured FTD Design Program: "Economical Elegance" presented by FTD Design Instructor Jeff Corbin AIFD. For registration information, contact the Connecticut Florists Association at 203-268-9000 or visit their website at www.flowersplantsinct.com. Look for FTD Team Members Roger Cohen, Roberta Belanger, Jim Weedon and Dick Schooler.

March 10-12, 2006

Illinois State Florists' Association Spring Conference

Crowne Plaza • Springfield, IL

Featured FTD Design Program: "A Celebration of Life – Today's Sympathy Flowers" presented by FTD Design Instructor Keith White AIFD. For registration information, contact Jerry Hankins at 800-416-4732 or visit the Illinois State Florists' Association website at www.illinoisflorists.org. Look for FTD Team Members Sarah Andersen, Dina Dandelles and Tom Spain.

March 10-12, 2006

Alabama State Florist Association Convention

Hilton • Birmingham, AL

Featured FTD Design Program: "Put some Pizzazz in your Everyday Work" presented by FTD Design Instructor Deborah De La Flor AIFD. For registration information, contact Kathie Yenulis at 205-989-8001. Look for FTD Team Member Michael Woodson.

March 11-12, 2006

Wisconsin & Upper Michigan Florists Association Spring Conference

Radisson Hotel • Green Bay, WI

Featured FTD Design Program: "Translating Trends into Everyday Designs" presented by FTD Design Instructor Toomie Farris AIFD. For registration information, contact Jeanne Rhodes at 262-246-4944 or via email at wumfa@wi.rr.com, or visit the Wisconsin & Upper Michigan Florists Association website at www.wumfa.org. Look for FTD Team Member Teresa Joerger.

March 15, 2006

Long Island Retail Florist Association Meeting & Design Show

Milleridge Inn Carriage House • Jericho, NY

Featured FTD Design Program: "Supersizing Sympathy Sales with Affordable Designs" presented by FTD Design Instructor Jeff Corbin AIFD. For registration information, contact Sean Beckert at 516-767-0925. Look for FTD Team Members Andrew Himmelstein and Jim Weedon.

March 17-19, 2006

South Dakota Florists Association Convention

Ramkota Inn • Pierre, SD

Featured FTD Design Program: "Put some Pizzazz in your Everyday Designs" presented by FTD Design Instructor Deborah De La Flor AIFD. For registration information, contact Ilene Gilbertson at 605-692-6466. Look for FTD Team Member Tim Stelter.

March 20-21, 2006

SAF Congressional Action Days

Fairmont Hotel • Washington DC

For registration information, contact the Society of American Florists at 800-336-4743 or visit their website at www.safnow.org.

March 25-26, 2006

Allied Florist Association Convention

Radisson Hotel • Norfolk, VA

Featured FTD Design Program: "Wedding Floral Review" presented by FTD Design Instructor Keith White AIFD. For registration information, contact Lynn Sears at 757-482-5686. Look for FTD Team Member Bill Winckler.

April 2, 2006

Niagara International Association of Florists Spring Design Show

Sheraton Fallsview Hotel • Niagara Falls, Ontario

Featured FTD Design Instructor Keith White AIFD. For registration information, contact Helen Rietveld at 905-687-3490. Look for FTD Team Member Tim Casson.

NEW INTERNET ADVERTISING PROGRAM WILL DELIVER CONSUMERS TO YOUR BUSINESS

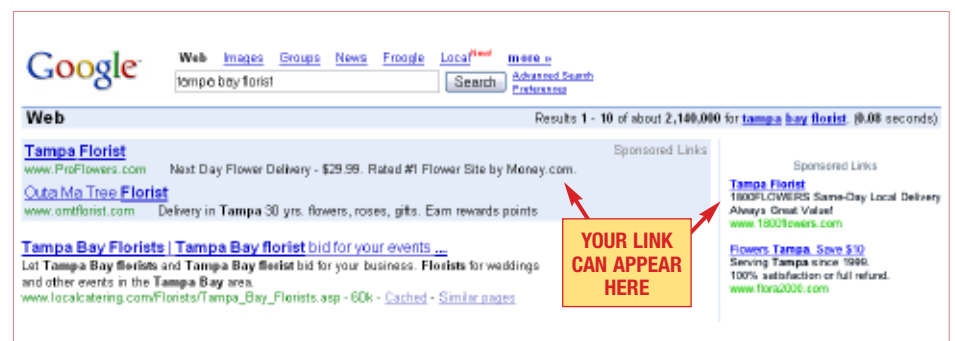
DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE ARE OVER 10 million searches per month on Google, Yahoo, MSN, AOL and Ask Jeeves for terms related to "flowers" and "florists"? Thousands of potential customers are buying flowers in your service area! FTD's newest internet advertising program, FTD Local Search, is a pay per click advertising service that will place your ad on leading search engines.

With FTD Local Search you can easily advertise directly on Google, Yahoo!, MSN, AOL and Ask Jeeves. This gives thousands of consumers the opportunity to shop from your web site or by phone and you will receive 100% of every order. Best of all, you only pay for visitors who search for your product online, look at your ad AND chose to enter your site. You can also set up a monthly campaign budget to control the amount of money you spend.

In addition, you will receive reports that give you the phone numbers and email addresses of the customers that contact you. Your easy to-read report will show you the results of your Internet advertising:

- Site Visitors
- Phone Calls
- E-mails
- E-Commerce Transactions

Combine FTD Local Search with FTD's two other internet marketing programs, FTD Online YellowPages and FTDflorists.com, and you'll be sure to reach the millions of consumers shopping online. Begin targeting customers in your area today! Call 800-788-9000, ext. 8990 or email myfbc.com.

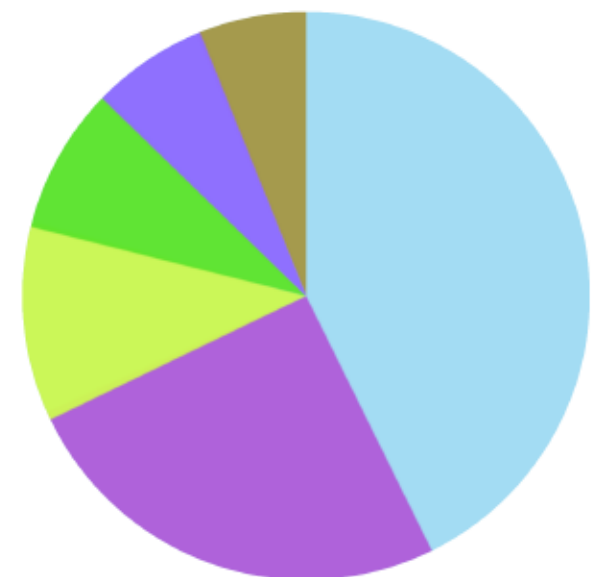


DID YOU KNOW?

US Internet users do 5 billion searches every month directly on major search sites.

With FTD Local Search, you can easily advertise directly on these search sites and attract targeted visitors to your business.

- Google 43%
- Yahoo! 28%
- MSN 13%
- AOL 7%
- Ask Jeeves 5%
- Other 4%



Share your media exposure or buzzworthy news with the FTD Newsletter at prdept@ftdi.com. Or FTD Newsletter, 3113 Woodcreek Drive, Downers Grove, IL 60515. We look forward to hearing from you!



FTD'S SPECIALTY CATALOGS - THE PERFECT MARKETING TOOLS

THESE CATALOGS ARE DESIGNED TO PROMOTE your floral products and drive traffic into your shop. By customizing these materials with your shop's name, you create a co-branded vehicle that promotes your business with the FTD brand. Below are some low cost marketing tools that will help you increase your order volume.

VOLUME 45 MINI CATALOG

- Mail out in customer statements
- Attach to out-going orders
- Leave as take-ones on your counter
- Custom or FTD prices available

BRIDE'S GUIDE

- Hand out to brides-to-be when they stop in your shop
- Distribute at bridal shows
- Partner with local bridal shops, tuxedo stores and photographers
- Available with your shop imprint/logo

THE FTD® GIFT COLLECTION CATALOG

- Mail to top customers to offer gift ideas
- Distribute to corporate offices
- Use as give-aways at open house parties throughout the year
- Fully customizable with copy, pricing and special offers

Call FTD® Marketplace at 1-800-767-4000, press 1, press 3 and then 3 again and your very own Imprint Specialist will guide you through the ordering process. View all the pages of these catalogs online at www.ftdi.com.



Volume 45 Mini Catalog



Bride's Guide



Gift Collection Catalog

PARTICIPATE IN THE FTD HEALTH INSURANCE SURVEY!

IN RESPONSE TO SIGNIFICANT INTEREST FROM FTD Members, FTD in coordination with US Specialty Underwriters is developing a new health care program. The national FTD health insurance program should be able to offer increased benefits at substantially reduced costs exclusively for its FTD member florists.

Simply put, a network of 20,000 florists can form a buying cooperative and purchase health care insurance at very favorable terms. A large participating group offers a leverage that would otherwise not be available. It's like the advantage of buying products at wholesale or in bulk prices.

You should have received a letter and survey in the mail regarding this opportunity. In order to determine the scope of a national FTD health insurance program, we need you to respond to the survey. This potentially, with your participation, could be the single biggest benefit to you, your family and your employees.

Thank you for your time in completing the survey to kick off what is anticipated to be an important FTD initiative that can directly benefit all FTD Members.

SAVE TIME, MONEY AND DRIVE SALES WITH FTD MERCURY 7.0

FTD IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE RELEASE of FTD Mercury® 7.0, which offers new ways for florists to save time and money, while helping increase shop efficiency. This release include multi-store support, as well as a new Accounting module with third party payroll and timeclock features.

"We are extremely excited for the release of FTD Mercury 7.0. FTD Mercury continues to push the envelope as the most advanced and easy to use, windows-based flower shop POS system on the market," said Larry Johnson, Executive Vice President of FTD Technology. "The feedback we have received from florists and from within FTD has been nothing but positive. This is by far our strongest release to date."

HERE'S WHAT FTD MEMBERS ARE SAYING ABOUT FTD MERCURY 7.0:

"We chose this system for its time-saving features. The accounting feature is helpful; the balancing wizard saves me hours!"

— Brenda VanDerSluys of **Dobbie's Florist**

"The Timeclock is a great time management tool; it keeps my employees accountable for their actions. This is a very affordable system... it will pay for itself in a year."

— Dan Brennan of **Brennan's Flowers**

"We are very happy with FTD Mercury 7.0. It's simple to use and the integration with QuickBooks makes payroll easier than ever."

— Gretchen Catlin of **Aitkin Flowers**

NEW ACCOUNTING MODULE

- New systems ship fully integrated with Quick Books® 2006 Pro
- Easily create your QuickBooks Chart of Accounts and balance your books from within FTD Mercury

NEW PAYROLL

- Run payroll straight from QuickBooks – including tax table updates
- Florists chose from a variety of discounted Intuit Payroll Services' products

NEW TIMECLOCK

- Provided by Count Me In®, the Timecard Monitor transfers time "punches" to QuickBooks Timesheets
- Employee's clock in and out using a biometric sensor that identifies individuals by fingerprint
- Managers can easily edit timecards, reconcile, view and print reports, as well as adjust rules and settings

NEW MULTI-STORE CAPABILITIES

- Customers are assigned to all stores
- Reporting and statement printing allotted to individual store or all stores consolidated
- Products associated with all stores or individual store

NEW DIRECTORY BANNER ADS

In addition to printed directory ads, as of the November 2005 Directory, FTD Mercury includes equivalent electronic banner ads viewable from within "Florist Search".

NEW FTD MERCURY REPORTS

FTD Mercury 7.0 includes a more robust Business Snapshot, Product Sales and Product Comparison report, as well as Employee Analysis.

For more information about FTD's latest technology solutions, call a professional Mercury Technology representative at 1-800-767-3222.

Own an FTD POS System for less than \$130 a month*

*60 Months
Offer ends March 31, 2006



The FTD Newsletter is sent to approximately 20,000 FTD Members across the United States and Canada. If you have feedback, a letter to the editor, or have a story and photos you'd like to share, please send it to the editor of The FTD Newsletter at prdept@ftdi.com or FTD Newsletter, 3113 Woodcreek Drive, Downers Grove, IL 60515. We look forward to hearing from you!