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FTD Newsletter

July 2005



LETTER FROM FTD CEO

Dear FTD Members,

I hope you are having a great summer! Each month, I've been sharing with you FTD's position and steps to improve poor quality in the floral industry. This effort is one of many long-term initiatives to help our customers increase revenues and cut costs. Going forward, I will continue to review the initiatives we have put in place to help each FTD Florist prosper in today's marketplace.

DRIVING CONSUMER DEMAND

One of the initiatives that I am the most excited about is our effort to drive consumer demand into your shops. This endeavor, supported by millions of marketing and advertising dollars, is being kicked off this month! FTD is thrilled about this effort, which partners our history with a contemporary look and feel in order to reach new consumers for you today.

You will see this exciting branding effort incorporated throughout all of FTD's communication channels including our strong Co-op print advertising campaign, which is in the works to be expanded, and new high-response efforts that are reaching consumers through the radio.

Other efforts to drive demand include outreach through new innovative Internet marketing channels such as FTDFlorist.com, Online Yellow Pages and the enhancement of the capabilities of FTD Florists Online Web sites. Enhancements made to continue to reach consumers through the power of the Internet will be a big win for FTD Members and will play an integral part in helping FTD Members stay competitive.

OTHER INITIATIVES

As you know from prior months, the fight to own quality in the floral industry is far from over. We continue to send out hundreds of letters providing florists with the opportunity to take corrective actions and deliver every order with the highest quality. I urge you to continue this march with us, and thank each of you who wouldn't dream of allowing any order to leave your shop with poor quality. I look forward to sharing more details with you in future newsletters. In the meantime, thank you for your business.

All the best,

2005 FTD GOOD NEIGHBOR DAY IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

GET READY FOR THIS YEAR'S FTD Good Neighbor Day, which is set for Wednesday, Sept. 7. Since 1994, thousands of FTD Members have been spreading good will throughout their community and giving away free flowers. Start planning your successful Good Neighbor Day now!

- Get your team excited!
- Call the FTD PR Department at 1-800-788-9000 or email prdept@ftdi.com to have your shop listed on the FTD Good Neighbor

Day list of participating florists at FTDi.COM!

- Download the FTD Good Neighbor Day free marketing materials at FTDi.COM.
- Find co-sponsors for the event!
- Recruit local volunteers!
- Order your flowers!
- Spread goodwill and friendship!

Go to page 6 for stories of fellow FTD Members who have had successful events.

FTD MEMBER RECOGNIZED FOR BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS

KUDOS TO ANN KING, OWNER OF **Blooming Cookies Personalized Gifts** in Atlanta, GA, for receiving the 2005 Business Optimist Award from the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) and Mirassou Winery.

Along with the recognition of the award, Ann was also awarded \$10,000 and a trip to the National Association of Women Business Owner's conference in Orlando, FL. Ann plans to donate the money to a local animal shelter.

This award was established to recognize businesswomen, such as Ann, who have overcome adversity and remained optimistic. In 1984, with a \$500 loan from her parents, Ann began growing the business out of her Atlanta home and expanded to become a successful, customized

cookie and gift company. Blooming Cookies has been featured in media outlets such as NBC's Today, *Southern Living*, *Entrepreneur*, *Fortune*, *Inc. Magazine* and Oprah's Oxygen Network.

Blooming Cookies has been an FTD Member since 1999.



Ann King (right) receives her award from Beverly Inman-Ebel, NAWBO president (left) and David Mirassou of Mirassou Winery.

FTD HOSTS AFE FUNDRAISING EVENT AT HEADQUARTERS

"TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME" kicked off the baseball-themed American Floral Endowment Phone-a-thon at FTD headquarters. Volunteers from floral retailers and wholesalers spent two days calling other businesses in the floral industry for support and donations.

The first pitch of the phone-a-thon was thrown by FTD with a \$25,000 donation kicking off the fundraising efforts with a homerun! FTD also hosted the efforts, providing lunch and dinner for the AFE volunteers.

"This phone-a-thon is a great opportunity for florists to reinvest in their own business and in the floral industry," said Jim Phillip, owner of **Phillip's Flowers and Gifts** and a trustee of the AFE.

The American Floral Endowment is a non-for-profit corporation that raises



FTD Member Paul Bachman of **Bachman's**, FTD's Jon Burney, FTD Member Charles Kremp of **Kremp Florist**, and FTD's Mike Soenen celebrate a successful event.



Wanda Weder hits a homerun with a donation and writes the donor's information on a pledge sheet.

Continued on page 4

your words

how do you drive traffic into your shop during the summer months?

“This summer we are moving one of our stores into a new 12,000 square foot building in Baton Rouge in August. We are planning a big moving sale the last two weeks of July and a special grand opening celebration for the new store in late August or early September.

I believe one of the most important things to do to drive traffic into the shop is to get involved in your community. Staying active in working with community boards and service organizations and donating to charities is something special that the ‘big box’ guys do not get involved with and sets us apart. The flower business is a business that touches people’s lives and feelings and I believe it is important to show that through example; therefore we stay extremely involved in the Baton Rouge community.

As for advertising and direct marketing ideas, there are several things we do. We send out flyers in our monthly statements for a free bunch of flowers for customers who pay their bill in person at our store. Customers enjoy stopping by the store to drop off their payment and pick up a bunch of free flowers to take home. We also have frequent buyer cards for our customers. When the card has ten stamps (one per purchase), they receive a free bunch of cash and carry flowers of their choice.

We are trying to expand our bridal registry by sending out letters to brides-to-be and improve our internet site to make it more accessible for our customers. We sent over 200 letters to brides to come in and register for bridal gifts. We represent over 85 different companies with a complete line of china, crystal, silver, pewter and other accessories. We offer brides a free bouquet to throw when booking the flowers for their wedding day and a 10% discount on all orders in the store when they come back with their bridal gift certificates to complete their registry. We also offer a unique service that many of our registered brides have found useful. We send out a formal printed announcement on ivory card stock to the bride and groom’s guest list announcing they are registered with our store.

This summer we will be having a holiday sale from July 5th through the third weekend in July. This sale will include Christmas, fall, Easter, and other holiday items. We also have a garden and patio sale at the end of every June that includes all fountains, outdoor accessories, garden pots, and anything to be used outside. These items compliment our landscape business that stays very busy during the summer months. We have found the two businesses complimentary and bring new customers to each other every month. Our staff is always dressed in the Rickey Heroman’s bright green shirts and aprons that coordinate with the colors on our vans and in our logo used in advertising. Customers are always talking about ‘seeing the bright green vans’ making flower deliveries around town. I truly believe that coordinating the colors of your logo in packing, advertising, van signs and everything you do is extremely important. During the months that we track our call in sales, we always hear the response, ‘we saw the phone number on your van.’”



— Rickey Heroman of **Rickey Heroman's Florist and Gifts** in Denham Springs and Baton Rouge, LA



“We attract new customers into our shop by keeping our property well manicured and interesting. We have turned our carport into a small nursery featuring unusual green and blooming plants. Our yard is kept immaculate by my husband, Tom. We have several flower beds and an inviting park bench under our big oak tree. Another way we attract new customers is by picking a profession each year; i.e., doctors, lawyers, realtors, etc. and sending them personal invitations to establish an account with us. I also personally visit local businesses and give each of their employees a carnation with a refrigerator magnet advertising our store. I stay active in the community, for instance, this year I am being “arrested” for Muscular Dystrophy Association and have to raise \$2,000 bail.”

— Sheri Brooks of **Inverness Florist** in Inverness, FL



“We are hosting a 100th Anniversary celebration on July 10th, 2005 as a way of saying thank you to our customers, past, present and future. We are promoting it through radio, newspaper and direct mail. The day will feature food, entertainment, a clown that does face painting, balloon animals, puppets and ventriloquism. Also, we are attempting to have a youth string ensemble and a step dance group perform. There will be representatives from local government, civic and business groups in attendance. Jim Weedon and David Leavitt from FTD have agreed to be here. We will have raffles, door prizes and giveaways. The event is geared to be a fun family day and to help us promote E.A. Coon Florist and drive customers to our door.”

— Jim Reordan of **E.A. Coon Florist** in Rhineback, NY



“We have always had success during slow summer months with our cash and carry specials such as Roses and Love Bundles. We are currently thinking of trying to build your own bouquet as a Friday special. Local events also help a lot. We use slow times to make arrangements, etc. and carry to the assisted living facilities and nursing homes. Every month we send out a nice arrangement to one of our good customers with a card, letting them know that we appreciate their business. During nice weather try sitting plants, etc. outside your shop doors to draw attention and customers.”

— Rosemary and Jim Greene of **Rosemary's Florist & Gifts** in Kingston, TN



“We send out a newsletter to all of our house customers, as well as attached to each and every delivery. We have been using this as a marketing idea for over seven years. The front side is a sale sheet promoting seasonal products and the back side is our personal side. We feel this brings our customers a little closer to us. Without them, where would we be?”

Here is a section from the **Yardley Flower Co.'s** June newsletter, written by employee Columbia Altieri.

“I am the owner’s oldest sister and have worked for her for many years. We started out on Dolington Rd. in Yardley, PA, where the family all lived. When we were young we worked in the greenhouses with our brothers. Our mom and dad kept us busy in the business. I was the first daughter to marry and move to New Jersey. My husband Tom, our three kids and I spent many days in Yardley.

As my sisters Julie, Lori and Mary got older, they spent more time in the retail area on the property. It got busier and busier and our mom became sick; so Julie asked if I wanted to work in the shop. By then our kids were getting older and more self-sufficient; so I started my daily commute to Yardley. It was nice to work again with my sisters. It was hard work, but we had fun. When Julie and Jeff moved the shop to Morrisville, we followed. Long story short, it has become more than a family business. It is now too busy for just us. We now have more people with us. The women in the shop that work with us are very helpful. They have become real troopers and hang in there during the hectic holidays. We have good drivers too.

All and all it is a good business with many loyal customers, which is appreciated by all of us. As a side note my sisters and I are getting slower, but we are lucky to have Leslie, Lori’s daughter, working with us. She is the sweetest young girl. She keeps us in line and laughing daily!”

— Jeff Sklute of **Yardley Flower Co.** in Morrisville, PA

your words

written by FTD Members

INNOVATIVE IDEAS AT THE GREENHOUSE

Written By: Joey Turner, of The Greenhouse in Hudson, OH



HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE GREENHOUSE? IT IS a flower shop in downtown Hudson, Ohio. Now wait, this florist is not your mother's florist. This florist is a fresh flower market that brings a touch of innovation and creativity to the people of Hudson, Ohio and its surrounding communities. We have a lot more than just fabulous fresh cut flowers! Along with our amazing fresh cuts, we have incredible silks, high-quality gardenware, all kinds of unique vases and containers, and many high-end products that cannot be found anywhere else.

We have found that our clientele crave a constant flow of unique and innovative designs that shatter the mold of other florists and designers in the area. Staying on top of this game is no easy task, but we manage to keep the inventive aspect alive in everything we do. This spring and summer we are spotlighting fresh cut flowers and blooming plants along the front of our store's thirty-foot long sidewalk. Our customers are thrilled to be able to walk up to a vast array of fresh flowers and to choose their own assortment for a self-made bouquet. We won't lie; many times we are asked for assistance with choosing flowers, but some customers just love to come up with their own creations. Also, we are featuring a stunning collection of ivy topiaries in countless shapes and sizes, as well as cast iron urns of different colors and designs. The topiaries and urns provide a touch of durable elegance and class, which is just what our customers love!

Our patrons look to us to provide them with matchless originality and vision. It is our determination to continue exceeding their expectations by constantly learning and exploring new avenues of creation and design.

Joey Turner, Gregg Lauck, Lori Myers and Kramies Windt of The Greenhouse proudly stand in front of a display in their shop. The Greenhouse has been an FTD Member since 1996.



INTERNET ORDERS, TOO MANY CHOICES: WHY THE INTERNET WILL CUT INTO YOUR PROFIT AND MINE

Written By: Hugh Mc Hugh of Overhill Flowers, Inc. in Philadelphia, PA



AFTER MANY YEARS OF running a flower shop, I have taken many steps to improve productivity of designing arrangements, especially at holiday and peak times. One of the measures has been to follow design menus and to mass produce a large quantity of the same design. This keeps design time very low and can be done by less costly arrangers as opposed to more expensive designers. On the other hand, custom making individual designs is more time consuming and expensive.

creased significantly and the rise in custom orders at the holidays has been increasing also. This past Mother's Day, many of the orders received from websites and order gatherers were for items in catalogues, which increased the number of custom orders to nearly 45 percent. I also saw a decrease in the number of orders asking for the FTD specials. All of this resulted in more expensive design costs. If this trend continues, the demand for the FTD products will decrease significantly and I know the sales of these items contribute to your profits.

The FTD advertised specials are one of the ways this is done. In order to increase awareness to the consumer during the holidays, a lot of money is spent to create a unique gift idea with flowers in them. The more demand for those products, the easier it has become to prepare for the holiday. With most of our marketing focusing on the FTD specials and a few in-house specials, I was at a point where 80 percent of all arrangements sold could be mass produced and filled with just a few different items. There were always some specific orders that had to be custom made at holidays, but the percentage of overall design of these was low.

I believe during a holiday period, choices on websites for arrangements should be limited to no more than 10-15 designs. All other arrangements should be locked out of sight for a week or so leading up to a holiday. In this way, we could mass produce those items accordingly to keep design costs down.

I will make sure my Web site has the FTD specials and a few in-house specials, but no more than 10 items advertised for Mother's Day. I would like to see most websites and order gatherers do the same to promote productivity.

The trend toward Internet shopping and customers who go to order gatherers has in-

Overhill Flowers has been an FTD Member since 1986.

TG DESIGNS FINDS SUCCESS WITH FTD

Written By: Todd E. Gosset of TG Designs Florist & Garden Center in Hagerstown, MD



AS A TRADITIONAL FLORIST in a growing community, **TG Designs Florist & Garden Center** felt it was essential to become a member of a wire service.

We explored a number of options when we opened in 1997, and joined a relatively small service. The costs were reasonable, the services acceptable, and we were pleased. That all ended when the service was bought out by a much larger service. The costs skyrocketed, the service plummeted, and even the sales rep was unable to answer a simple question - "How can I make belonging to your wire service profitable?" My business is in an area which is served by more than 25 other florists, and percent of them soon belonged to the same service, splitting the same orders.

We briefly joined FTD as we tried to find a company that kept our bottom line in mind, but technology was lagging in the Mercury system, and we left disappointed.

That was then, and this is now...and I'm very pleased to say we made a decision to try FTD again, and it has been a wonderful experience. Every aspect has been handled with great professionalism and courtesy. Our Field Business Consultant, Chad Eggleston, has been terrific to work with, and we look forward to realizing our first profitable wire-service venture in our eight-year history.

Thank you FTD! We appreciate you!

TG Designs Florist and Garden Center has been an FTD Member starting in 2002.

FTD HOSTS AFE FUNDRAISING EVENT AT HEADQUARTERS

(cont'd from page 1)

and invests funds to support research and education programs to benefit the floriculture industry. The phone-a-thon is held every five years and attracts volunteer callers from all over the country.

This year's phone-a-thon had a few significant details that stand out from years past. An addition was made to the payment option, allowing retail florists to contribute to the AFE through their monthly FTD wire service statement. Wanda Weder, Vice Chairman of the AFE fundraising committee and owner of Highland Supply Corporation, said this new option makes it very convenient for busy florists to make a contribution.

The AFE also set record numbers for volunteers and fundraising goals.

"We're very excited to say that this is the most volunteers we have ever had at a phone-a-thon," said Wanda, "We also set a fundraising goal of \$2 million, which is the highest we've ever set."

The volunteers were split into four teams: the Cubs, White Sox, Red Sox and Cardinals. The team with the most base hits, or phone calls, in each inning received a prize.



Bridget White of *Greenhouse Product News*, FTD Member Jim Phillip of **Phillip's Flowers and Gifts** and Terril Nell, president of SAF, enjoy each other's company after the phone-a-thon.



Volunteer callers carefully review the script prepared by AFE before calling potential donors.



Callers take a break from making phone calls and pose for a group photo with their baseball hats in front of the FTD building.



Wanda Weder awards FTD Member Charles Kremp of **Kremp Florist** with an FTD umbrella for having the highest volume of outbound calls.

FTD MEMBER PROVIDES SCHOLARSHIP IN HONOR OF HUSBAND

FTD MEMBER **HUTCHINSON'S FLOWERS** IN Sykesville, MD awarded a \$3,500 scholarship to a senior from a local Sykesville High School.

The scholarship was created by Linda Hutchinson in honor of her deceased husband, John H. Hutchinson, who opened the shop in 1980.

"This is something he would want us to do," said Linda. "He was very involved in the community."

This is the first year the scholarship was given away. The John H. Hutchinson Scholarship Fund is given to graduating seniors who have financial need, academic excellence, are involved in sports and volunteer in the community.



FTD paid tribute to the life of the late John Hutchinson of **Hutchinson's Flowers** in Sykesville, MD through the FTD 2004 Industry Service Award. Pictured are Linda Hutchinson and daughter Suzette Arrington who accepted the 2004 award on behalf of John.

FTD SUPPORTS FLORIDA STATE

FTD SUPPORTED THE FLORIDA STATE FLORISTS' Association Convention with a presentation from FTD Executive Vice President Bill Van Cleave titled "Maximizing Revenues and Profit through E-commerce Marketing" and with a design program by FTD Design Instructor Jeff Corbin AIFD called "Economical Elegance." The design program provided Florida florists with quick and easy ways to turn ordinary products into extraordinary designs while improving productivity and most importantly, increasing profits.



FTD Members Stan and Kay Brock of **LaStan Florist** in Fort Walton Beach, FL enjoy a moment to themselves at the President's Reception. **La Stan Florist** has been an FTD Member since 1981.



FTD Members Lisa Metcalf, Torrey Collins and Jessica Parker of **Blossoms on Monroe** in Tallahassee, FL take a minute to smile for the camera. **Blossoms on Monroe** has been an FTD Member since 2001.



Florida State Florists' Association board members and directors gather for a group photo.

Members also enjoyed previewing the new Fall and Christmas 2005 FTD holiday bouquets and networking at the FTD sponsored President's Reception. At the dinner, FTD was presented with the 2005 President's Award/Vendor of the Year Award from Florida State Florists' Association.



Bali Thigpen of **The Rosery Florist** in Madison, FL and First Vice President of Florida State Florists' Association presents FTD Field Business Consultant Doug Crescimanno, FTD Regional Vice President Bryan Whitehouse and FTD Executive Vice President Bill Van Cleave with the 2005 Vendor of the Year Award.



FSFA President Russ Barley officially kicks off the convention with a ribbon cutting. Also pictured are FSFA board members John Hayden, Ann Hall, Greg Kingery, Russ Barley, Lisa Metcalf and Bali Thigpen.



The FTD Team proudly displays their 2005 Presidents Award/Vendor of The Year Award. Pictured are FTD Field Business Consultant Doug Crescimanno, FTD Field Business Consultant Nancy Alvarez, FTD Executive Vice President Bill Van Cleave, FTD Regional Vice President Bryan Whitehouse, FTD Field Business Consultant Chris Bordes, FTD Vice President Emeritus of Industry Relations Dick Schooler and FTD Field Business Consultant Jill Weishaupt.

OOPS!

Our apologies to **Wyoming Florist** in Wyoming, OH. In the June newsletter, Mary Benken and her co-workers at Wyoming Florist were featured in the "Busy Mother's Day for FTD Members" section. The feature stated Wyoming Florist has been an FTD Member for four years, but the florist has been an FTD Member for 54 years! Thanks for years of partnership, Mary and team!

FTD MEMBER MOVES ON TO ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR FINALS

CONGRATULATIONS TO BING GOIE OF **EASTERN Floral and Gifts** in Grand Rapids, MI for being selected as an award recipient of the Ernst & Young West Michigan Entrepreneur of the Year in the retail and entertainment category.

"This award is such an honor. My recognition is good for our industry as a whole. It puts the floral industry in the news and enhances the visibility of professional retail florists," Bing said.

Bing was recognized in *The Grand Rapids Press* and *Grand Rapids Business Journal* for his achievements. *The Grand Rapids Business Journal* described Eastern Floral and Gifts as "the region's most successful and innovative floral chain."

Best of luck to Bing as his entry is considered for the 2005 National Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year awards in November. Eastern Floral and Gifts has been an FTD Member since 1958.



NEW MEXICO FLORISTS DISCOVER "ECONOMICAL ELEGANCE"

FTD WAS A PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE NEW Mexico State Florist Association Conference. FTD sponsored "Economical Elegance," a program by FTD Design Instructor Jeff Corbin AIFD. New Mexico florists learned how to provide their customers with elegant designs at an affordable price from the ideas Jeff provided during the program.

Members also received a hands-on demonstration of the FTD Mercury and Mercury Advantage systems and a preview of the Fall and Christmas 2005 FTD holiday bouquets.



FTD Designer Jeff Corbin AIFD presents "Economical Elegance" to a group of New Mexico florists.

MEMBERS BENEFIT FROM FLOWER EXCHANGE



THE FTD FLOWER EXCHANGE, WHICH BEGAN IN February, has been a successful service for FTD Members. The Flower Exchange provides florists with access to 2,500 different varieties of flowers offered by hundreds of sellers with flexible shipping options and farm direct pricing 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The free membership is available to all FTD Members.

Register now and get your FREE account to the FTD Online Flower Exchange by calling 877-277-4216 or emailing sales@flowerexchange.com to receive your log in information. Then, visit www.FTDflowerexchange.com and save money and time, while growing your business.

Below are a few testimonials from satisfied FTD Members.



"Overnight deliveries to my door, online access to hundreds of varieties of flowers, as well as very competitive prices, have made the FTD Flower Exchange a primary source of cut flowers and greens for my shop. It's a great way to purchase flowers."

— Bob Yedowitz of **Emil Yedowitz Sons, Inc.** in Yonkers, NY

"Yesterday, I received my first order from flower exchange. EVERYTHING was WONDERFUL!!! Sylvia and Tim were very helpful, and in fact I just placed my second order today. Thank you."

— Susie Kilpatrick of **Susie's Uniques Floral & Gifts** of Moses Lake, WA

"I wanted to tell you that we got the Gerbera Daisies in and they were beautiful. The mother of the bride was in yesterday and commented on how lovely they were. Thank you very much for your help."

— Denise Martin of **Shenandoah Floral** in Shenandoah, IA

FTD MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS



(1) Bill Kakis of **Mormile Florists** in Rockville Centre, NY shows off his recent renovation on the interior of his shop to FTD Regional Vice President Jim Weedon. Mormile Florist has been an FTD Member for 21 years. (2) FTD Regional Vice President Jim Weedon visits with Bill Nimmo of **Bethpage Bouquet** in Bethpage, NY to discuss the features of his newly installed Mercury POS system. Bethpage Bouquet has been an FTD Member since 2002. (3) Tad Long, owner of **Whiteman's Flowers** in Pittsburgh, PA, proudly stands in front of his FTD Marketplace display. Whiteman's Flowers has been an FTD Member since 1943. (4) FTD Field Business Consultant Steve Huebner stands with John Herb of **Jack Herb Florist** in Cincinnati, OH and daughter Lauren. Jack Herb Florist was a hole sponsor for the Princeton High School Golf Outing. Jack Herb Florist has been an FTD Member since 1972.

OHIO FLORISTS SUPPORT FTD



(1) The Village Florist & Gift Shop in Lewisburg, OH shows off the FTD logo and its wire-sending capabilities in the window of the shop. The Village Florist & Gift Shop has been an FTD Member since 1978. (2) FTD Member **Kettering Hills & Dales Florist** in Kettering, OH supports FTD by displaying the FTD logo in the shop's window. Kettering Hills & Dales Florist has been an FTD Member for 26 years. (3) **Morris the Florist** in Cincinnati, OH proudly displays the FTD logo and its wire-sending capabilities. Morris the Florist has been an FTD Member since 2004.

FTD GOOD NEIGHBOR DAY: MEMBERS SHARE THEIR STORIES OF SUCCESS



“This year will be our third successful Good Neighbor Day. This event is a great marketing technique that is different and creates a 'buzz' in the media.

We make this event a community outreach by asking all our patrons receiving flowers to donate to a local hospital. Some gave \$1, most people donated \$5 and we received a few \$20 donations. Last year we raised over \$4,000 for two hospitals. This year we plan to co-sponsor our event with McDonald's to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House.”

— Stephen Mangos of **Canadiana Flowers** in Scarborough, ON



“Our first Good Neighbor Day was in 2004. We decided our small community (1,200 population) needed a positive event. Our potato processing plant had closed the previous year, we had local National Guard troops in Iraq, and winter was coming.

We wrote to businesses and service groups and received excellent responses! Bank and business employees delivered carnations to shut-ins and gave one to each customer. The elderly people that the 4-H groups delivered to were so appreciative, and the youngsters were eager to do it again in 2005.

People came in for weeks afterward to tell us how they enjoyed receiving (or giving) the flowers and it was a definite success!”

— Melanie Smith and Linda Seefeldt of **Clark Flower & Gift Shop** in Clark, SD



“We have big plans this year and can't wait for another great day of spreading smiles within our community! We plan to double the amount of roses we give away to 12,000 roses. We participated in the FTD Good Neighbor Day because FTD made it very simple to get started.

It sparked a magic in people. Some knew exactly who they wanted to give each rose to and others handed them out randomly on the street. Customers emailed us stories of who they gave their flower to and why.... it was touching!

The fact that we could provide the means (the roses) and simply ask people to go out and make someone's day by performing a random act of kindness or by showing a loved one how much they care truly expressed the 'Power of the Flower.' I believe this event showed people that a simple flower can really brighten someone's day and that message stays with us all year long.”

— Kristin Velasquez of **Strelitzia Flower Company** in Davis, CA

“We have participated in Good Neighbor Day for 10 years. We get positive comments all year about the giving away of flowers and how we are the only florist to do this in our area. It has brought in new customers, made our customers loyal to us, especially at a time when that is hard to find. It touches the lives of every nursing home in the area plus a 650 bed hospital that is across the street.

I have not found any other promotion that would bring over a thousand people through my door in a few hours. We have gotten news articles with pictures about our shop each year in the local paper and have had the local television station come out to do a spot on the give away. You can't buy this.

We partnered with the Leukemia Society in 2000 and collected over \$1,000. Since then we have partnered with the local Hospice program associated with Spartanburg Regional Medical Center. We have collected about \$3,000 for them since this partnership. We are known as 'The Good Neighbor Florist' with a positive response when anyone talks about it.”

— Jim Coggins of **Coggins Flowers & Gifts** in Spartanburg, SC

JOIN THE FUN! START PLANNING YOUR SUCCESSFUL GOOD NEIGHBOR DAY NOW! DOWNLOAD A FREE FTD GOOD NEIGHBOR DAY PROMOTIONAL KIT AT FTDI.COM. THEN CALL THE FTD PR DEPARTMENT AT 1-800-788-9000 OR EMAIL PRDEPT@FTDI.COM TO HAVE YOUR SHOP LISTED ON THE FTD GOOD NEIGHBOR DAY LIST OF PARTICIPATING FLORISTS AT FTD.COM!



“We are in our ninth year. We have several co-sponsors who participate in the event. All have give-aways placed in a bag that is given to all who pick up roses. Everyone that picks up flowers is asked to bring a non-perishable food item or school supply, all to be given to the ministerial alliance food pantry. Cash donations are handled through the Benton Kiwanis Club Foundation and will be used for the food pantry. Over 1,500 food items and several hundred dollars in cash were collected. Just another way of being a FTD Good Neighbor.”

— Dave Webster of **Flowers by Dave** in Benton, IL



“We first participated in 2001. Our participation in Good Neighbor Day was good preparation for what was to follow. The infamous day of 9/11 occurred several days later. A customer from Australia gave us some money and asked us to give free flowers to people in New York—sort of as a memorial to those we lost in 9/11. After their money ran out, we continued giving away free flowers until it got too cold that winter. And, we still give away flowers that are past their prime but are still nice for someone to take home. Neighborhood people often thank us and tell us that they appreciate our kind gesture.

Although we try to publicize our participation in Good Neighbor Day, there is a lot of great competition for news stories in New York City. We plan to try again this year too.”

— Jeffrey Gaster of **CitiFloral Inc.** in New York City, NY



“We've participated in Good Neighbor Day for the past two years and plan to again this year. We have five locations but only promote the day in a shop that is located in the tallest building in Birmingham in the middle of the downtown business area. The first year gave away 100 dozen and last year increased to 200 dozen that were gone in 20 minutes.

While the customers are in line we have them complete a form promising to take one rose and give away the other 11. We get their name, address and email. A simple flyer is distributed the week before from the store, in the food court and placed on the desks of all tenants by the building's janitorial service. So the word gets around quickly. We send a press release to all media outlets. A popular local TV personality from Fox News does two live interviews in the morning with me and people on the street at the main entrance to the building which draws quite a crowd. Other stations tape interviews for the 5 pm and 10 pm local news. We ask participants to email us to describe any special experiences

We have a very loyal customer base in the downtown and consider Good Neighbor Day as an opportunity to make people have fun giving away flowers and making others smile. I would say 99% of the roses are taken back to the offices in the area and reach 2,400 customers and prospects. It's the 'office buzz' of the day. This year we'll give away 200 dozen plus another 300 loose roses, three at a time to serve another 100 customers.

If we gave away roses at our other neighborhood shops I'm afraid the 11 roses might not make it to 11 other people in our market. There are many non-working customers that may not see 11 people that day.

The event occurs around Labor Day when everyone is back from vacations, plus the rose prices have typically been lower that time of the year. Ultimately it's a feel good day for our customers, potential customers, Birmingham and Norton's Florist. What a wonderful way to share our flowers with others, say thank you and make someone smile.”

— Gus Pappas of **Norton's Florist** in Birmingham, AL

education:

effective and sympathetic sympathy sales

By FTD Design Instructor Tina M. Stoecker AIFD, owner of Designs of the Times in Melbourne, FL



ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT situations we as florists need to deal with is assisting a grieving family who is ordering funeral flowers. It is a fact of the business that few of us are truly comfortable dealing with bereaved customers, however, since funeral related sales make up nearly 15 percent of our work, it is critical that we learn how to approach such customers with sensitivity and professionalism. An uncomfortable sales staff will not engender future sales from these customers.

There are several ways that your shop can help make these sales a comfortable experience for your customer as well as a successful order for your sales staff. Take these ideas into consideration.

CREATE A COMFORTABLE ENVIRONMENT

Remember that the experience in your shop is as important to the client as the end product. In an environment that is somewhat secluded or private, try adding several chairs, a floral selections guide or sympathy materials and a box of tissues to create a warm environment where the family can discuss options together.

IMMEDIATELY ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR LOSS

Open the conversation with an appropriate heart-felt statement such as "I am so sorry for your loss" to let them know you care about them as people, not just customers. Statements such as "I know this is a very difficult time" will tell them you will help and be sensitive to their situation. Soften your voice and address the sales calmly to ensure you are not perceived as a pushy salesperson. Don't be afraid of silence or gaps of conversation; understand how overwhelmed they may be with making decisions about sympathy floral choices. They may need to digress from the business at hand to share a personal story and may appreciate you taking the time to listen, even as you gently guide them back to the subject.

ASSIST AND INFORM SYMPATHY CUSTOMERS OF PRODUCT OPTIONS AND PRICE POINTS

Few sympathy customers come into a floral shop with a clear understanding of what products they want and at what price point. It is our job, through a series of diagrams or photos and open-ended questions, to move the customers through the selection process. Use pictures to illustrate your



let them discuss and digest all of this data before trying to pin down the specific order or types of flowers; this will save them confusion and feeling overwhelmed and it will save you from becoming frustrated. Sample materials can be found at www.FTDi.COM, click on FTD Education Team and then on Education Resources.

DISCUSS LOOKS AND FEELS OF ARRANGEMENTS, AS WELL AS COLOR

When approaching the specifics of the arrangements chosen, ask about the deceased's favorite colors, hobbies or profession.

Consider using photographs of personalized work you have done in the past to help the customer understand how you could incorporate their love of golf,

phrases such as "easel spray" or "casket saddle". Use a chart to illustrate how three different price points may translate into sizes. I find it useful to



military experience or musical passion into the pieces. As a professional, it is your job to listen and make suggestions that may lead the customers to finding the appropriate purchase.

OBTAIN ACCURATE INFORMATION

It is a must to record correctly the full name of the deceased, the name of the service location and the correct addresses and times. Be sure to follow up with the funeral director



to confirm all of the information. Due to this sensitive and overwhelming time for the family, be sure to get the information correct the first time, but always have full contact information as a back up in case you need to contact them.

BE CLEAR AND SPECIFIC IN CLOSING THE ORDER

Closing a sympathy order takes time and patience, especially when several different products are requested. Go over each item, the cost and what the card or ribbon should say. Although this feels

Continued on page 8

FTD Upcoming Events

July 22-24, 2005

The 2005 FTD Floral Extravaganza

Gaylord Texan Resort • Dallas, TX

Extended FREE Room Offer! Register at www.FTDi.COM or contact your local Field Business Consultant.

Aug. 5-7, 2005

Tennessee State Florists' Association Convention & Central Tennessee Professional Florists' Association Christmas Show

Franklin Marriott Cool Springs • Franklin, TN

FTD Design Instructor Deborah De La Flor AIFD will be commenting. For registration information, contact Jerry Hankins at 615-846-4185 or visit the Tennessee State Florists' Association website at www.tnsfa.org. Look for FTD Team Members Chris Gilliland, Ed Castillo and Dick Schooler.

Aug. 6-7, 2005

Virginia Professional Florists Association Convention

Holiday Inn Select Koger South Conference Center • Richmond, VA

Featured FTD Design Program: "Special Events – The Wedding Reception" presented by FTD Design Instructor Keith White AIFD. For registration information, contact Wayne Wagenbaur at 804-355-0625 or Bill Pensyl at 434-295-5683. Look for FTD Team Member Bill Winckler.

Aug. 6-7, 2005

Heartland Floral Convention

Mid-America Convention Center • Council Bluff, IA

Featured FTD Design Program: "Vase It!" presented by FTD Design Instructor John Klingel AIFD. For registration information, contact Sylvia Samuel at 402-731-5253. Look for FTD Team Members Pam Adler and John Wearda.

Aug. 11-13, 2005

FloralWorld – SNA 2005

Georgia World Congress Center • Atlanta, GA

Featured FTD Design Program: "When the Florist Meets the Forest" presented by FTD Design Instructor Jeff Corbin AIFD. For registration information, contact the Southern Nursery Association at 770-953-3311, or visit their website at www.sna.org. Look for FTD Team Member John Sternitzky.

Aug. 12-14, 2005

North Carolina State Florists Association Convention

Embassy Suites • Greensboro, NC

Featured FTD Design Program: "Vase It" presented by FTD Design Instructor John Klingel AIFD. For registration information, contact the North Carolina State Florists Association at 800-889-7118 or visit their website at www.ncflorist.org. Look for FTD Team Member Brad Coggins.

Aug. 19-21, 2005

Arkansas Florists Association Convention

Hot Springs Convention Center • Hot Springs, AR

Featured FTD Design Program: "Special Events – Chic Celebrations" presented by FTD Design Instructor Keith White AIFD. For registration information, contact Bill Plummer at 501-354-1160 or Margaret Abbott at 888-809-6207. Look for FTD Team Members Terry Thiel and Dick Schooler.

Aug. 26-28, 2005

Southern Retail Florist Association Convention

Charlotte Convention Center • Charlotte, NC

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 the Southern Retail Florist Association at 804-986-1701 or visit their website at www.southernretail.org. Look for FTD Team Members Brad Coggins, Keith Bock, Dick Schooler and Marci Chapman.

Aug. 27-28, 2005

New Hampshire State Florists' Association Convention

Radisson Hotel • Manchester, NH

For registration information, contact Janet Desmarais at 603-669-6060. Look for FTD Team Members Dave Galvin and Roberta Belanger.

Oct. 22-23, 2005

Ontario Florist Conference

Taboo Resort & Conference Center • Muskoka Beach, ON

For registration information, contact FTD at 800-788-9000 x6240 or register online at www.ftdi.com/ofc/. Look for FTD Team Members Tim Casson, Tammy Sablic, Cam Wilson, Angelo Pace, Marc Farand, Jason Gleaves and Frank Stornelli.

EDUCATION: EFFECTIVE AND SYMPATHETIC SYMPATHY SALES (cont'd from page 7)

By FTD Design Instructor Tina M. Stoecker AIFD, owner of Designs of the Times in Melbourne, FL

very business like to you, the customer will greatly appreciate the full understanding of the choices made. Speak slowly so they do not feel rushed and can easily understand you.

REASSURE YOUR CUSTOMER



Your sympathy customers are depending on you and your shop during one of the most intimate rituals. Con-

firm that their choices are personal and appropriate, as many people fear appearing inadequate or inappropriate at this sensitive time. Repeat that you will contact the funeral home immediately and reassure them that the floral tributes will be professionally handled. Once again, express your sympathy and thank them for allowing you and your business to assist them.

New or experienced staff will continually need reminders on how to handle these sensitive customers. Try these tips for your sales staff to keep progression, growth and the highest level of customer service in your shop.

- Ask new or experienced staff to observe a sympathy consultation and discuss with you what they found effective or where they had questions.
- Compile a training manual that outlines everything from appropriate phrasing of questions to product knowledge. Mandate review of this manual on a regular basis.
- Roll play with your staff to help generate quick thinking during a sympathy sales situation.
- Hold regular staff meetings and open the room for discussion of clear objectives and unusual cases of sympathy sales.

Remember that not everyone is naturally comfortable in handling grieving customers, but oftentimes rewarding improvement financially can provide some motivations towards skill building.

MARKETING MADE SIMPLE WITH FTD'S PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

IT'S EASY TO MARKET YOUR BUSINESS WITH FTD's wide range of marketing materials. FTD's complete line of holiday and everyday marketing materials provide great target-marketing opportunities. Each of the pieces has the option to be customized with your shop imprint or logo. Add pricing, special offers and even your postal indicia for easy mailing. Below are a few of the marketing materials available to help promote your shop.

CALENDARS

- Use as an incentive during your shop's open house
- Give away to walk-in customers
- Enclose with monthly statements

BUSINESS CARD MAGNET

- Attach to outgoing orders
- Use as an incentive for walk-in customers
- Leave as take-ones on your counter

STUFFERS AND MINI-CATALOGS

- Perfectly sized to enclose with monthly billing statements
- Attach to outgoing deliveries
- Available with your shop's or FTD pricing



Calendar



Mini Catalogs



Stuffers



Magnet



Press 1, then 3, then 3 again to speak with your very own Imprint Specialist! Or visit www.FTDi.com to view our complete Imprint collection.

FTD SAVES YOU TIME WITH NEW REPORTING PROCESS

FTD WOULD LIKE TO ANNOUNCE AN EXCITING change to the way you process manual orders from FTD.COM! Starting July 1, any order manually called out to you from FTD.COM for delivery on July 1st or later, will not need to be reported on a ROF/REC form. FTD.COM will automatically report the order for you, saving you valuable time and

energy, especially during the holidays. At the time the order is being called out, the FTD.COM representative will remind you that you will not need to go to the additional step of reporting the order. Please let FTD know if there are other areas that we can improve to make your business lives easier.

If you would like to find out more about receiving FTD.COM orders, simply call our Florist Hotline at 800-554-0993 or send a GEN message to our Customer Service Department, using shop code 90-8400AA.

SUCCESSFUL VALUE-PRICED PROGRAM EXPANDS

FTD.COM IS EXCITED TO EXPAND THE VALUE-priced rose and flower program. The success of this program and consumer demand for these new arrangements has encouraged us to increase the offering. The program now includes the following arrangements:

VALUE PRICED ROSE ADDITIONS

Dreamland Pink Bouquets

6 pink medium stem roses and pink alstroemeria, wrapped: \$29.99, arranged in a vase: \$38.99

8 pink medium stem roses and pink alstroemeria, wrapped: \$35.99, arranged in a vase: \$44.99

10 pink medium stem roses and pink alstroemeria, wrapped: \$39.99, arranged in a vase: \$48.99

You may not substitute the number of rose stems; however, you may fill the alstroemeria stems to value.

Citrus Burst Bouquets

6 yellow medium stem roses and yellow alstroemeria, wrapped: \$29.99, arranged in a vase: \$38.99

8 yellow medium roses and yellow alstroemeria, wrapped: \$35.99, arranged in a vase: \$44.99

10 yellow medium stem roses and yellow alstroemeria, wrapped: \$39.99, arranged in a vase: 48.99

You may not substitute the number of rose stems; however, you may fill the alstroemeria stems to value.



VALUE PRICED FLOWER ADDITIONS

Mixed Peruvian Lilies Bouquets

Mixed colors alstroemeria, wrapped: \$29.99, arranged in a vase: \$38.99

Mixed colors alstroemeria, wrapped: \$37.99, arranged in a vase: \$46.99

Mixed colors alstroemeria, wrapped: \$45.99, arranged in a vase: \$54.99

FTD Fresh Flowers provides a full offering of product direct from growers. Call 1-888-521-8590 for additional details and pricing on growers bunches, JAWS bouquets and valued priced roses.



Dreamland Pink Bouquets



Citrus Burst Bouquets



Mixed Peruvian Lilies Bouquets

EXPAND YOUR MERCHANDISE SELECTION WITH FTD WEBGIFTS

FTD WEBGIFTS IS A CONVENIENT, RISK-FREE WAY to turn your business into a full service, one-stop gift destination. FTD WebGifts is an inventory-free gift service offering a collection of both floral and non-floral gift items such as gourmet foods and gift baskets for FTD Members to sell in their retail location or off their Web site. You send the orders to us and we ship the product directly to your consumers – no inventory and no hassle. From delicious cookies to pre-made gift baskets and designer planters, these are all items that will compliment your current offerings and enhance your shop's image.

You have the control and can feature as many or as few items as you prefer, at the retail prices you prefer. You also determine the shipping charges. Most importantly, you get 100% of the order value.

Once you get an order, just send it to FTD as a Mercury order via the Mercury Network to Marketplace (90-0233AA). FTD will handle the rest. The recipient will receive the selection directly from our vendors and you'll get all the credit.

To find out more about how the FTD WebGift program can help give you an edge on your competition, reduce inventory investment and increase add-on sales, email webgifts@ftdi.com to request more information. Be sure to include your shop code in the email. You can also find information by going to www.ftdi.com/webgifts or call us at FTD Marketplace (ext. 6558).



VC932 Victorian Charm Gift Basket



WGBA293G Baby and All Gift Basket – Girl



WGGC412 Gourmet Chocolate Gift Basket



WGMFTT Thank You Cookie Tin