

2010 MGA Summer Conference



MGA CONFERENCES DELIVER

- A Vibrant Learning Community
- Essential Tools and New Ideas
- Stimulating Discussions and Engaging Presenters

August 16–18 • DoubleTree Hotel Magnificent Mile • Chicago, IL

Focusing on the **Economy &** **Improving** *Company Performance*



**Serving the Mail Order
Gardening Industry**
mailordergardening.com

THE Premier Event for Direct Gardening Marketers, Wholesalers & Allied Providers!

Conference Attendees come from large and small companies who sell everything from greenhouses, to bulbs, seeds, fruits, onions, flowers, potatoes, hardgoods and much more.



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DIAMOND Quad/Graphics	SILVER Actinovate
PLATINUM Arandell Corporation	Brookside Marketing Growing Interactive
GOLD Fine Gardening Magazine	Mantis Wiland Direct
LENSER	Zed Marketing Group

www.mailordergardening.com

The conference exclusively for Direct Marketers and Suppliers in the Mail Order Gardening Industry

Conference Schedule

SUNDAY, AUGUST 15

Registration/Networking Room Open

Refreshments sponsored by *Zed Marketing Group, Silver Sponsor*

MONDAY, AUGUST 16

8:30 am–1:30 pm

MGA Board of Directors Meeting

12:00 pm–5:30 pm

Registration/Networking Room Open

Refreshments sponsored by *Zed Marketing Group and Growing Interactive, Silver Sponsors*

2:00 pm–3:00 pm

STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

PRESENTATION—"State of the Industry" Panel

We've all witnessed our economy go through what experts are calling 'our generations most challenging time' in the last year. This panel of industry experts will discuss in depth the challenges faced by the horticultural industry as well as the positive things that have happened over the last year to 18 months. They will also discuss the numerous challenges we are all still facing going forward. The panelists have unique expertise from several different

sides of the industry—catalog, retail, wholesale, mailer, and printer. They will answer all the crucial questions from the audience so come ready with all your tough questions for these industry leaders.



Moderator—
Dick Chamberlin
President, Harris Seed

Panelists:



Claire Watson, Thompson & Morgan, develops future strategy for the North American retail division of Gardens Alive! for Business-to-Business sales including the Thompson & Morgan brand.



Steve LePera, Mantis, is the Director of Mailorder Marketing for Mantis, manufacturer of the famous Mantis Tiller/Cultivator.



Gary Meagher, Quad/Graphics, is a Manager in the Sales Division at Quad/Graphics. Quad/Graphics is the second

largest printer in North America and has been a proud sponsor (since 1981) of the MGA.



Diane Blazek, Executive Director of All-America Selections® and National Garden Bureau, brings a passion to our industry based on a history in the field of horticulture publishing as well as a love for gardening and culinary exploration.

3:15 pm–5:00 pm

Roundtable Discussion Groups

Come with questions, leave with answers! Each roundtable will address a specific and timely issue pertaining to our industry. Attendees will have the opportunity to sit at two different table topics for approximately 45 minutes each. An industry expert will briefly introduce the session topic and facilitate the discussion. Table participants will shape the session content based on their own specific questions.

Round #1: 3:15 pm–4:00 pm

Round #2: 4:15 pm–5:00 pm

- » **Tried and True Catalog Design Techniques**, Lisa Hodgson Balch, Sargeant House Design Studio
- » **Performance Based Internet Marketing**, Steve LePera, Mantis

- » **Cooperative Databases 101: The Miracle-Gro for your File**, Brent Eskew, Wiland Direct
- » **Best Practices for Reducing Email List Attrition**, Val Gosset, Evergreen Marketing
- » **Web Site Statistics: Making Sense of the Numbers and Knowing Which Ones to Monitor**, Ross Lasley, The Internet Educator
- » **Multi-Channel Marketing—How to Integrate the Channels (web, catalog, email, inserts, PR & 3rd Party Advertising) for Better Results**, Geoff Wolf, LENSER
- » **Making Social Media Work for Your Company: Understanding the basics, learn where your customers go and how much time you will need to commit**, Frank DiPaolo, EarthBox
- » **How to Begin the Process of Making Your Shopping Cart PCI Compliant**, Alisa Keimel, Green Sky Development

6:00 pm–7:30 pm

Welcome Back Reception

Say hello to your fellow members and meet some new contacts!

TUESDAY, AUGUST 17

8:00 am–5:00 pm

Networking Room Open

Refreshments sponsored by *Zed Marketing Group and Growing Interactive, Silver Sponsors*

7:45 am–8:30 am

Continental Breakfast

8:30 am–9:00 am

Meet the 2010 Summer Conference Sponsors

9:00 am–9:30 am

MGA Business Meeting

9:45 am–11:00 am

SOCIAL MEDIA

PRESENTATION—“Social Media—What’s Working, What’s Not, What’s Involved”

Social media lets everyone be a part of the conversation, giving customers a collective voice they never had before. In recent years, the popularity of social media platforms like user forums, blogs, Twitter, YouTube and Facebook has greatly affected the way we interact with our customers. Our MGA member panelists will share their experiences with various social media outlets. They’ll compare notes on what’s working for them, what’s not, how to get started, how much time is required, and where they see the future of social media headed.

Moderator, Anneliese Valdes, blogs occasionally and maintains a Facebook page and Twitter presence for **CobraHead LLC**.

Panelists:



Shayna Lashway
Internet Sales & Marketing Manager, Botanical Interests



Frank DiPaolo
General Manager, EarthBox



Dave Waterman
President, Ink-IT Digital



Susan Robbins
Director of Commerce, National Gardening Association

11:00 am–12:30 am

Past President Luncheon with First Time Attendees and Their Mentors

Sponsored by *LENSER, Gold Sponsor*

1:00 pm–7:00 pm

Tour and Reception at Ball Horticultural

Bus transportation sponsored by *Actinovate, Silver Sponsor*

Beverages & snacks on the Bus sponsored by *Fine Gardening Magazine, Gold Sponsor*

Reception sponsored by *Quad/Graphics, Diamond Sponsor*

The Garden Gateway showcases some of the newest seed and vegetative varieties produced from both Ball genetics and plant material from other suppliers around the world.

The serene home setting of the Cottage Garden features Impatiens, Coleus and



other shade lovers, plus a delightful cutting garden. The Cottage itself houses a gallery of images from Ball Gardens around the world.

Both sun and shade-loving varieties are highlighted in the Patio Garden. A wide range of succulents and foliage plants are showcased for gardens, planters and even indoor use. Showy flowering plants are featured in containers and hanging baskets.

Compare new and existing seed and vegetative varieties in traditional row trial style in the Comparison Garden.

The 38 permanent containers in the Hillside Garden are overflowing with unique color combinations and vines reaching skyward on custom copper towers.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18

8:00 am–1:00 pm

Networking Room Open

Refreshments sponsored by *Zed Marketing Group and Growing Interactive, Silver Sponsors*

8:30 am–9:45 pm

CATALOGUE CRITIQUES

PRESENTATION—“Catalogue Critiques”

Would you like your print catalog critiqued by an expert?

In this fast-paced session, Lisa Hodgson Balch, president of Sargeant House

“I had a great time at my first MGA conference. It was well-run and scheduled and packed full of interesting information. Unlike any other that I’ve been to from the perspective of one-on-one opportunities. I thought the mystery shopping program was brilliant. Very timely, live interaction that will probably go a long way in helping the attendees improve their customer service”

—Clare Liberis, *Fine Gardening*

Design Studio, will use the critique of some of our members' catalogs to demonstrate how simple improvements can produce better sales and convert prospects to loyal customers.

If you are interested in having your catalog critiqued, please mail your catalogs to:

Lisa Hodgson Balch
Sargeant House Design Studio
1433 Johnnys Way
Westchester, PA 19382

Each volunteer company will receive a mini makeover, so come prepared to take away some great design and marketing tips to apply to your own catalog. These critiques will be the basis for this session.



Lisa Hodgson Balch is owner and president of Sargeant House Design Studio. She has provided creative catalog and marketing services for over 25

years from her studio at Twin Oaks, a picturesque pre-Revolutionary farm in Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Sargeant House was founded by Dick Hodgson, a legendary Direct Marketing Hall of Fame member and international consultant whose advice and teaching still guide today's most successful catalogers. Working side-by-side with her father, Lisa has run the graphic design and catalog creative division since 1984, and became president of Sargeant House when Dick retired in 2005.

10:00 am–11:45 am

WEB STRATEGIES

Brunch and "Web Strategies to Make More Money Today—and Tomorrow"

Sponsored by *Quad/Graphics*, *Diamond Sponsor*

As Editor in Chief of Internet Retailer Magazine, Kurt Peters gains unique insights into how companies are harnessing the Internet to run their

businesses more profitably. What's more, his position at the center of Internet reporting allows him to spot trends as they're developing.

In this informative session, we'll learn about:

- » **What trends in Web marketing will have the biggest impact on gardening catalogers and online merchants**
- » **Who the online buyers are in 2010 and what you must do to reach them—and sell to them**
- » **How catalogs need to change to remain viable**
- » **New technologies you must master**
- » **Case histories from other industries that provide valuable lessons for garden marketers**
- » **Best practices for marketing to Gen X and Gen Y**
- » **And more!**



Kurt Peters is Editor in Chief of Internet Retailer magazine. Kurt oversees editorial content for Internet Retailer, InternetRetailer.com,

The Internet Retailer Conference & Exhibition and other Internet Retailer conferences, and the Top 500 Guide and other Guides that Internet Retailer publishes. He previously was Executive Vice President of Faulkner & Gray, a \$90 million unit of The Thomson Corp., where he headed up the team that launched Internet Retailer in March 1999. In 2000, he and his partners founded Vertical Web Media to purchase Internet Retailer from Thomson. He has been Editor in Chief since that time.

MANY THANKS TO OUR EDUCATION SPONSORS

SILVER LEVEL
 Brookside Marketing
 Mantis
 Wiland Direct

Many thanks to Arandell Corp., a Platinum Level Sponsor, for sponsoring the Convention Giveaway.

"We are very happy to have participated in the MGA's Live Consumer Panel recently held at the winter conference in Baltimore. It is often difficult to have the viewpoint of a new customer interacting with us their first time. The panel's thoughtful and frank comments challenged some of our assumptions—especially in regards to our website's functionality. We are confident that applying what we learned will make us a stronger company."

—Bill and Sara Boonstra, *Bluestone Perennials*

Catalogers

you can expect to take home...

- » a solid network of providers to help your business succeed
- » tried and true business techniques to increase your sales
- » improved management and marketing skills
- » insight into the world of social media and how it can help your business
- » catalog design techniques
- » web strategies that will help you run your business more profitably

Wholesale & Allied Providers

you can expect to take home...

- » potential business leads
- » strengthened business relationships
- » new sources for selling your products and services
- » a better understanding of your customers' needs and challenges



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