



~ MARK YOUR CALENDAR ~ **DGA 2014 Summer Conference** July 23-25 | Milwaukee, WI



What a Fantastic **RODEO** it Was!

Hate to say it, but DGA members who did not attend the winter conference in San Antonio, missed one of our best ever!

- ◆ Venue -- San Antonio was a great escape from the reality of winter for most attendees.
- ◆ Program line-up -- Right on target for providing valuable and timely information. Plus, the accessibility to marketing experts is always a great benefit of attending.
- ◆ Networking opportunities -- Before sessions, during breaks in the exhibit hall, after sessions, during sponsored receptions, after hours. You'll be hard pressed to find another conference that gives you as many opportunities to visit with peers, talk with suppliers, meet with potential clients and socialize with friends, too!
- ◆ Post conference event -- The two-day trip to Dixondale Farms was truly phenomenal!

Save the Date

Plan Now

to attend the DGA 2014 Summer Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. July 23-25.

Conference headquarters will be the Hilton Milwaukee City Center with room rates of \$150/night for a single or double room. Watch for more information about program plans coming out soon. The meeting will include visits to multiple local DGA member companies.

Check DGA Website for Speaker Presentations



Most of the educational presenters offered to provide the DGA with copies of the PowerPoint presentations they used during their discussions. The DGA will in turn post these on the website.

Listed below is contact information for each of the speakers in case you have questions about their topics you would like to discuss.

Catalog Creative Bootcamp

Gina Valentino, Hemisphere Marketing
Phone: 816-444-5439
Email: gina@hemispheremarketing.com

Translating Garden Trends into Sales

Melinda Myers, Melinda Myers LLC
Phone: 414-727-1818
Email: melinda_myers@me.com

Social Media Marketing Secrets: More Profits with Online Relationship Building

Shawna Coronado, Author
Phone: 630-205-8848
Email: shawna@shawnacoronado.com

(Continued on next page)

INSIDE

Catalog Creative Bootcamp	2
Can You Hear Me Now?	3
Roundtable Groups.....	4
Green Thumb Awards.....	4
Demographics and the Marketing Landscape...5	
Is Your Business Hiring Compliant?.....	5
Social Media Marketing Secrets	6
Turning Garden Trends Into Sales.....	6
The Dynamics of Family Business.....	7

Presentations continued from front...

Workplace Compliance Essentials

Jim Wiseman, ADCOMP Consulting, LLC
Phone: 210-412-0159
Email: jdwiseman5168@gmail.com

Demographics & the Marketing Landscape

Ajay Gupta, Stirista, LLC
Phone: 866-321-8505
Email: a.gupta@stiristamail.com

Dynamics of Family Business

Henry Hutcheson, Family Business USA
Phone: 919-741-1943
Email: henry@familybusinessusa.com

Understanding Analytics & How it Can Help You With Your Business

Alisa Meggison, Green Sky
E-Commerce Development
Phone: 207-409-7200
Email: alisa@greenskydevelopment.com

Preparing for the Most Important Generation of Customers in your Lifetime - What you Must Know for your Business to Survive

Joe Lamp'l, Growing a Greener World
Phone: 206-337-0375
Email: sarah@joegardener.com



DGA President Greg Brown, Brown's Omaha Plant Farms, officially opened the conference and welcomed the attendees and sponsors.

Catalog Creative Bootcamp

Designing your catalog to encourage shopping and increase the average order doesn't seem like it should be too difficult. But it's not as easy of a task as it sounds. "There's a physiology to strategic catalog creative", says Gina Valentino, Hemisphere Marketing.

Valentino, who has 20 years experience in the catalog industry, led the opening educational session of the DGA Winter Conference in San Antonio. The parts of the physiology she referred to include: purpose, catalog components, marketing data, merchandising concept, real estate and hierarchy of a page spread (picture, price, headline and body copy). In addition to understanding catalog design physiology, marketers have to continually ask themselves "What can we do better?" says Valentino.

Purpose of the catalog is to serve as a sales tool and to help provide a measurement of success for the marketer's business. "A catalog should inspire customers to spend money, and then spend more money. It should also help to acquire new customers and reactivate past customers," Valentino emphasized.

When planning a catalog, Valentino encourages taking an integrated approach, whereby staff involved in circulation, merchandising and creative all communicate with each throughout the planning process.

Valentino discussed the how creating different versions of a catalog is a part of the marketing process. Versioning can be done to see the difference in response between customers and prospects and also to see how customer segments respond differently to merchandise preferences. Valentino stressed that when a cataloger has different front cover versions, it's important that "all versions be consistent in telling the audience who they are and to communicate what you sell."

Other key points Valentino mentioned in her presentation, which will be available on the DGA web site, had to do with developing a copy style that represents the company voice desired, and the importance of using the right typography to enhance the brand and that is easy for the customer to read. Along with correct type style and point size, she touched on the use of color. "Color can be attractive and add fun to a catalog page, and should be used to help organize the page and move the reader from left to right," says Valentino.

Eye flow on a layout spread (two facing pages) should move in letter "C" pattern -- starting in the upper right, moving left and down and then back across to the right. "Typically, the hero product goes in the upper right corner of the spread, because that's where the reader's eye flows when they first look at a spread," Valentino mentioned. "You want the reader to keep moving through the catalog, but you don't want them to develop eye fatigue in looking at your catalog."



Bill Boonstra, Bluestone Perennials, visits with Gina Valentino about catalog techniques after her educational session at the DGA Winter Conference.

Thank You Dixondale Farms!



Approximately 40 DGA attendees and guests extended their stay in Texas, after the conclusion of the DGA conference, to trek onto Carrizo Springs, home of the Dixondale Farms Onion Plants Company. This post conference event culminated the 100th anniversary of the Dixondale Farms business and for those who were unable to attend, "You missed a darn good time!"

Those of us who did participate in this one-of-a-kind event want to thank Bruce and Jeanie Frasier and all of the Dixondale Farms staff for hosting our group and organizing such an informative and fun event. We thoroughly appreciated you opening your business up to us to see first-hand how you do what you do so well. From the shopping time at Peggy's, to the educational morning farm tour, to the afternoon at the cattle ranch (especially the helicopter rides), to hearing about the work of the border patrol in your area and all the delicious meals and two evenings of wonderful entertainment, this trip will be one we remember for years to come. Thank you again for letting us help you celebrate 100 years of business! Best wishes for the next century of selling onion plants.

Editor's note: I'm embarrassed to say that I had problems with my new camera and none of the photos I took transferred properly to my laptop. All I have are the few I took the first afternoon on my old camera and the few I snapped with my phone. If you have any photos you would share with the DGA office, please email Caitlin and she will tell you where to email the photos or where to upload to a connection through Dropbox. Thank you!



A Bird's Eye View . . . If you look in the upper right corner of this photo, you can see some of the Dixondale Farms cattle the helicopters were trying to round up and send towards the holding pen. Helicopters really are used for rounding up cattle there. As part of our tour of the cattle ranch, we got to take ride with the helicopter cowboys -- just call us all city slickers!

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?!

Steve Jobs, founder of Apple, once said "We need to make people want what they don't yet know they need." Joe Lamp'l, host and executive producer of the television show Growing a Greener World, believes learning how to reach the 'millennials' of the world presents enormous opportunities for direct marketing gardening companies. Lamp'l was the keynote speaker on the last day of the DGA Winter Conference.

Who are 'millennials'? They are the youngest and largest consumer group in history. They are 17-34 years old. Other characteristics about them include:

- ✓ They are marrying later in life.
- ✓ They are well educated (54%+ are college graduates).
- ✓ They are eco-minded and live healthy lifestyles.
- ✓ They are fiscally conservative.
- ✓ They are self-expressive.
- ✓ And 37% of them have tattoos and 26% have body piercings.

Where do millennials get their information? Lamp'l says these folks are watching mobile device screens much more than televisions or laptops. But that's not all -- they're accessing the internet from a mobile device much more than they do from a desktop. They connect online much more than they do face to face. And 83% of them sleep with their phone by their bed.

In order to reach millennials to entice them to buy from you, you must think like a millennial, says Lamp'l. "Offer products to fit their lifestyle. Provide purchase assurance and validation. Anticipate their customer service needs. And help them express themselves by offering an array of choices for personalization." He also mentioned that a marketer who helps the millennial build confidence in their ability, will find the millennials is willing to invest in more long term projects.

Lamp'l encourages direct marketers to connect with the millennials' communities, by engaging in community initiatives they're interested in and adopting their sense of community. "Learn to speak their language. Connect where they communicate. Remember, 80% of the research/decision making by millennials is done before they ever pick up the phone."

Roundtable Discussion Groups Answer Timely Questions

We often use the phrase "Come with questions, leave with answers", to describe roundtable discussion groups. That phrase says it best -- roundtable discussion groups give DGA conference attendees the opportunity to visit one-on-one with experts in the direct marketing industry and to ask questions they are sometimes hesitant to ask during a large educational session. Most presenters invited to speak to entire the group of DGA conference attendees are very gracious about leading a roundtable discussion group as well. The DGA members, many who are experts in their respective fields, are also very willing to lead discussion groups when asked.

Five topics were offered at the winter conference. Attendees had the opportunity to set at two different table discussions for about 45 minutes each. If you would like to discuss questions or comments you have, concerning the topics that were addressed. You may contact the respective moderator.

Acquisition Marketing &
Catching Your Online Buyer
Ajay Gupta, Stirista, LLC
Phone: 866-321-8505
Email: a.gupta@stiristamail.com

Social Media 101 Question & Answer Session
Shawna Coronado, Author
Phone: 630-205-8848
Email: shawna@shawnacoronado.com

Workplace Compliance Open Forum
Jim Wiseman, ADCOMP Consulting, LLC
Phone: 210-412-0159
Email: jdwiseman5168@gmail.com

Circulation, Mail Plans, Analysis,
Testing and Cooperative Databases
Gina Valentino, Hemisphere Marketing
Phone: 816-444-5439
Email: gina@hemispheremarketing.com

Data Seeds: Are you planting, nurturing and
harvesting your data properly?
Jerry Joyce, Wiland Direct
Phone: 303-485-8686
Email: jjoyce@wilanddirect.com



And the Green Thumb Award Winners Are . . .

The 2014 winners of the Green Thumb Award were announced at the DGA Winter Conference in San Antonio. Press releases describing each of the award winning products in detail, along with photos of the products, are available on the DGA website under the link 'Become a Member'. Five winners were selected in each of the two contest categories and are listed below:

PLANTS, BULBS & SEEDS --

- Clematis 'Sweet Summer Love' PPAF, CBR AF - Spring Meadow Nursery
- Vaccinium Complex Hybrid 'Blueberry Glaze™' -- Fall Creek Farm & Nursery
- 'Habitat Hero' Birdwatcher Pre-Planned Garden -- High Country Gardens
- Bloomerang® Dark Purple Lilac PPAF, CBR AF -- Spring Meadow Nursery
- Baptisia 'Blue Towers' PPAF -- Plant Delights Nursery

TOOLS, SUPPLIES & HARDGOODS --

- Square Foot Garden Seed Mats -- Gardens Alive
- Growbox™ Planters in Designer Colors -- The Garden Patch™
- Growbox™ Support Cage -- The Garden Patch™
- Brolly Protective Canope -- Brolly, LLC
- Snip-n-Drip Pot & Planter Soaker System -- Gardener's Supply Co.

Some of the benefits of participating in the Green Thumb Awards program are:

1. Winners are promoted via press releases to Garden Writers, Gardening Magazines, Garden Industry Periodicals and online gardening sites.
2. New products receive greater visibility and brand recognition more quickly than they might otherwise get.
3. DGA members testify that when their products receive the Green Thumb Awards, incremental sales are usually 10-20% higher (or more in some cases) than new products that did not receive the award.
4. Companies who win the Green Thumb Award may in turn use the GTA logo in their catalog, on their websites and in other print media to help further increase sales.
5. Companies are recognized and honored by their peers as providing award-winning, quality and innovative products to the gardening community.

If your company will be introducing any exciting, new products for 2015 that will be for sale to the general public after July 1, 2014, there is no better way to promote it than by entering the Green Thumb Awards program! It's quick, it's easy, and winning can increase sales to your company. Entry forms for the 2015 awards will available July 1, 2014. Please refer to the DGA website or contact the DGA office for more details.

Demographics and the Marketing Landscape

Marketing in America is undergoing a fundamental shift as companies attempt to corner the previously neglected marketing to first and second-generation Americans. The multicultural buying power is increasing rapidly due to growing populations and better economics. Statistics presented by Ajay Gupta, CEO of the San Antonio-based marketing agency Stirista, LLC, indicate that “in 13 years, 50% of Americans under the age of 18 will be minorities. And by 2048, the minorities will be the majority.”

Gupta, who has lived on three different continents, says he has learned to appreciate diversity and the marketing challenges that come with it. He said that marketers have to look at the market they’re trying to target and focus on the needs of that specific group. “What’s easiest for the marketer to do is not always best for the customer,” Gupta mentioned.

Minority groups are becoming tech savvy, too, according to Gupta. “Of 24.6 million Hispanic consumers, 54% use the internet,” says Gupta. “Internet access among Hispanics is growing faster than any other cultural group,” adding that mobile devices are the preferred online method. Gupta shared that among YouTube users, 81% of Hispanic online consumers view YouTube videos, 76% of African-Americans use YouTube and 69% of non-Hispanic whites do. As far as Twitter users go, 19% of Hispanics tweet, 25% of African-Americans do and only 9% of non-Hispanic whites.

Dealing with language issues when marketing to different cultural groups also presents challenges. Gupta encourages direct marketers to not take a one-size fits all approach when marketing to different cultures. “Create marketing strategies that focus on individual cultures,” he suggests.



Nighttime Adds to the Ambiance of a Ghost Tour
Whether you believe in ghosts or not, a nighttime historical ghost tour is a fun way to learn about the history of a town (and perhaps some not so pleasant pieces of information about persons who contributed to that history). Many DGA attendees enjoyed the guided evening stroll around the more historical area of San Antonio.



San Antonio's History Based Around Alamo
The famous historical landmark, the Alamo, was just a stone's throw away from the DGA Winter Conference venue. Without a doubt, the Alamo is a main tourist attraction to San Antonio for the role it played in U.S. history. The Alamo is also the starting point for a nightly historical ghost waling tour, which many DGA attendees participated in on Monday evening of the conference. Although no one reported actually seeing any ghosts on the tour, we've yet to hear whether any orbs were captured on camera.

Is Your Business Hiring Compliant?

So you're looking for a new employee or maybe several employees, do you know the current employment laws concerning the application and interview process? Does your business have an employee handbook with company policies that is given to each employee that comes on board? Are there guidelines in place that management follows when needing to deal with problem employees or difficult situations? Is the personnel staff and management consistent with how problems are handled?

These were some of the questions Jim Wiseman, ADCOMP Consulting, presented in his educational session at the DGA Winter Conference. ADCOMP Consulting works with companies in several different industries in the areas of basic interviewing techniques, hiring processes, discipline procedures and documentation, harassment policies and termination procedures. And even though some laws may vary from state to state, Wiseman gave a good overview of employee hiring, discipline and termination guidelines all businesses should follow.

If employers expect employees to know and follow company policies, the employees must be given a handbook when they are hired. “It's equally important that a signed document be kept in the employees's personnel file that verifies he or she received the handbook,” Wiseman stated. Likewise, he stressed the importance of “being consistent with what you do” when handling performance issues.

Social Media Marketing Secrets: *More Profit with Online Relationship Building*

Social media is a marketing channel that's definitely on the rise in popularity. Of the different social media tools available to marketers, Facebook ranked number one in number of users for 2013 -- 901 million of them in fact! Twitter had 555 million users last year, Google+ had 170 million, LinkedIn users totaled 150 million and Pinterest had 11.7 million. Anyway you look at it, that's a lot of people communicating online!

But are direct marketers able to make money using social media? Shawna Coronado, a successful social media marketer in the green industry, says profitability comes from building relationships with your online audiences. Coronado shared with DGA attendees why she left corporate America and how her desire to live a more green lifestyle propelled her into the online world of social media. Her goal of having an online presence is to "better the world by utilizing community involvement and simple green living to encourage social good." Continually working towards this goal has generated 68,000+ followers on her social media outlets and 170 videos on YouTube with over a half million views. And as a result of her online connections, Coronado now speaks internationally about her goals.

Coronado says her theory with social media is to "Tell my story, then get my target market to be my friend and share my story." Some of the tips she offered for success with social media included:

- ✓ *Be inspirational, unique or different from what others are doing.*
- ✓ *Attack your market with great content.*
- ✓ *Think of common things people use (or want) that you can use in conjunction with what you're selling.*
- ✓ *Don't be afraid to use YouTube videos -- they can take a topic viral.*
- ✓ *Consider 'cross-pollinating' -- for example, gardening and cooking work well together. To encourage folks to garden, talk about how they use their produce in cooking fresh, healthy meals.*

Although Coronado recommends linking to all social media tools, she encourages starting with a blog. "A blog is home base for relationship building," says Coronado, pointing out that a blog can:

- Humanizes a company and helps build a customer network.
- Connects you with customers in a two-way conversation.
- Increases SEO and brand recognition.
- Can serve as the center of your social marketing initiatives.



Shawna Coronado

When utilizing social media, Coronado says "being real" is a must. "Be authentic . . . Keep your conversations relaxed. . . Let people see your real self. Talk about your customers, share something interesting, target your market over and over (aiming posts towards who you're trying to reach), and have fun."

She suggests blogging once per week, with each blog post only being 400-500 words (learn to write concisely). Coronado also said to use photos in blog posts whenever possible, adding that with a photo, you only need a couple of lines of copy.

Here are some social media experts Coronado recommends following:

- Kristen Lamb -- [warriorwriters.wordpress](http://warriorwriters.wordpress.com)
- Seth Goodin -- sethgoodin.com
- Chris Brogan -- chrisbrogan.com
- Jay Baer -- jaybaer.com

Turning Garden Trends Into Sales

Nationally-known gardening expert, TV/radio host, author and columnist Melinda Myers believes beautification is still the biggest reason people garden and that it is the fastest growing segment of gardening. According to the results Myers shared from the Fall 2013 GWA Foundation Trend Survey, 41% of the participants spent most of their gardening dollars on weed control for their lawns. "The survey results also revealed that time constraints and economics are the two main reasons limiting consumers involvement in gardening. Time constraints is also why 31% of the respondents said they don't grow vegetables as part of their gardening efforts."

So how do catalogers successfully reach potential gardeners? Myers says they may have to consider several marketing channels and then pick a few they can work with. "Currently, emails are still effective. 77% of consumers prefer to get information via email and 66% purchase gardening supplies as a result of email communications."

Myers mentioned that younger gardeners are attracted to "garden-tainment". "When you grow the ingredients you're cooking with, they taste better," says Myers. "Herb gardens and pots of grilling herbs and



vegetables are a big draw with younger gardeners."

Good content in gardening articles is the key to getting the attention of media such as newspapers, TV and radio. Many advertising mediums are cutting staff, Myers says, so they're looking for writers that can provide the appropriate content they want. "Be prepared, however, to keep your message on target."

When working with garden communicators, make it easy for them, suggests Myers. "Provide the story ideas or better yet, provide the story."

The Dynamics of Family Business

Did you know that:

- *Between 80-90% of all businesses are influenced by families?*
- *Of all new jobs created today, 78% of them are with family-owned businesses?*
- *One-third of the Fortune 500 companies are family owned?*
- *Family-owned businesses outperform non family-owned businesses?*

Why is it family-owned and operated businesses do better? According to Henry Hutcheson, president of Family Business USA (a firm that specializes in helping family businesses improve their operations, prepare for transitions, secure wealth and strengthen family relationships), family-owned businesses hold themselves to higher ethical standards. "Trust is also a major reason family-owned businesses outperform non family-owned businesses," he said. Hutcheson led an educational session

at the DGA Winter Conference about the dynamics of family business. Some of the topics he covered were: best practices for succession, leadership, ownership, communication and optimizing business operations.

He pointed out some interesting facts about family-owned businesses:

- *Only 33% will pass onto the next generation.*
- *Going from the second to the third generation, only 11% will be passed on and*
- *Only 4% will move from the third to the fourth family generation.*
- *Only 45% of CEOs, who plan to retire within 5 years, have thought about a succession plan.*
- *31% of these businesses have no estate/transfer plan in place.*
- *85% have identified a family member as a successor.*
- *25% have a female CEO.*
- *60% of the CEOs plan to die in office.*
- *86% believe their business will remain family owned.*

Hutcheson encourages family businesses to develop a mission statement that everyone believes in.

He also emphasized the importance of establishing sound governance guidelines, suggests that regular business meetings be held (it may be desirable to involve some independent advisors that provide input from outside the company), create a code of conduct and that the family develop an employment policy they all follow.

He also touched on the importance of "active listening", which helps maintain good communication.

People need to know they've been heard. So by asking "If I heard you correctly, you said . . . Is that correct?" If the person being asked can say "Yes, you heard me correctly," then the family members are communicating well. If their response is "No, that's not what I said," then the person should clarify what they said, and the interactive process starts again.

DGA Members Hold Business Meeting

DGA President Greg Brown, Brown's Omaha Plant Farms Inc., led the semi-annual business meeting, held January 15th, during the DGA Winter Conference in San Antonio. He asked the various committee chairs to give brief summaries of the activities of their respective committees. Treasurer Polly Welch, Washington Bulb Co/ Tulips.com, reported that the 2013 budget year ended in the black with an actual net income of \$17,605.

The board announced locations of upcoming meetings as follows:

SUMMER 2014 - Milwaukee, WI;

WINTER 2015 - New Orleans, LA; **SUMMER 2015** - Philadelphia, PA;

WINTER 2016 - Memphis or Nashville; **SUMMER 2016** - St. Louis, MO
(in conjunction with Stark Bro's 200th Anniversary).

2nd VP Mike Zuckerman, Zed Marketing Group, encouraged members to utilize the Coach's League if they need assistance on business topics.

1st VP Frank DiPaolo, Earthbox, was thanked for his work to place information about the conference on the free Guidebook mobile application.

Education Committee Chair Ken Oakes, Oakes Daylilies, asked for ideas for future webinars.

MTAC Liaison Ken Lane, Stark Bro's Nurseries & Orchards. Co., gave a brief update on future postal increases and the importance of bar code compliance.

Understanding Google Analytics and How it Can Help Your Business

Without a doubt, Alisa Meggison, Green Sky Development, knows her stuff when it comes to helping direct marketers better understand what Google analytics are and how they can help their online marketing efforts. Meggison is immediate past president of the DGA. She led an educational discussion session concerning Google Analytics on the last day of the DGA Winter Conference.

Direct marketers can extract a lot of helpful information from Google Analytics once they know what is available to them, which of the metrics matter and where within Analytics to find the information. Meggison shared insight on changes that will be occurring with Analytics in the near future. She also informed the group that Google Analytics allows you to do custom reports and to create custom dash boards for your company's information.

If Google Analytics is still a foreign language for you, don't hesitate to contact Meggison for assistance in gaining a better understanding of how Analytics can provide you with information you need to make smarter business decisions.

Trade Show Exhibitors	Arandell Fine Gardening Gardening How-To	MACH Software Novozymes BioAg, Inc. Organic Plant Magic	Quad/Graphics Schmidt Printing Todd Valley Farms
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