

MGA Summer Conference

# Planting for Growth

*THE Premier Event for Direct Marketing  
Professionals within the Gardening Industry!*



July 15-17 • Hilton Hotel • Minneapolis, MN



*Serving the  
Mail Order  
Gardening Industry*  
[mailordergardening.com](http://mailordergardening.com)

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



# Planting for Growth

## MGA Summer Conference

July 15–17, 2009

Hilton Minneapolis | Minneapolis, MN



[www.mailordergardening.com](http://www.mailordergardening.com)

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

There are more than 200 individual companies in the MGA. These are companies who are committed to excellence and strive to improve their service and profits! **THIS INCLUDES YOU!**

I am confident that you will recognize the value and circumvent any budget hurdles to attend the upcoming Summer Conference. **The information gained at the educational programs and the networking opportunities to meet new people, will more than cover the cost of attending this conference!**

I am confident that you can have a positive experience in Minneapolis. MGA Conferences continue to be the place to build relationships with this dedicated, hard-working group of owners, managers and allied professionals. Developing strong connections today will benefit your sales results tomorrow when the economy perks up.

*Join me, your fellow members and those non-member companies we have invited to attend.*

*See you this summer!*

Howard Kaplan

MGA Board Member & Convention Chair

## Conference Schedule

### TUESDAY, JULY 14

2:00–5:00 PM

**MGA Board Of Directors Meeting**

2:00–5:00 PM

**Registration/Networking Room Open**

*Refreshments sponsored by Zed Marketing Group,  
Silver Sponsor*

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 15

8:00 AM–5:00 PM

**Registration/Networking Room Open**

*Refreshments sponsored by Zed Marketing Group,  
Silver Sponsor*

8:00–8:45 AM

**"Jump Start" Continental Breakfast**

8:45–9:45 AM

**PRESENTATION "What Plants & Products Are Gardeners Looking For?"**

People who garden by mail are usually looking for what they cannot get locally—the unusual, the rare, the weird—and something in our psyche is drawn to those things that are "different". **Carol Reece**, an Ornamental Horticulture Specialist with the University of Tennessee Extension Service, will feature those types of plants, the weeping, the contorted, the

columnar, the golden, the variegated—plants with the "wow" factor, that will attract and motivate gardeners to buy. Tools and other products will also be included.



Carol will expand on how to make your business have that bit of quirkiness as well, whether it is in the catalog or website, and how that draws the customer in. Humorous, creative, warm, significant, Carol Reece will both deliver and entertain.

9:45–10:15 AM

**Annual Business Meeting with the Membership**

All members should attend this important meeting. You will get updates on association projects and committees. Members will vote on the new slate of Officers and Directors for 2009-10.

10:15–10:30 AM

**BREAK**

10:30–12:00 N

**PRESENTATION "Managing Your Way to Higher Profits—How to Turn Financial Reporting Into a Useful Tool for Managers"**

Financial reports were developed first and foremost, to meet tax and financial reporting requirements. However, with a little insight and some minor changes to the

chart of accounts, your P & L will become an extremely useful management tool—something you actually look forward to seeing!

This session will review the fundamentals of financial statements, guide you in the reading of them and help you identify the key elements that will help you manage your business. In addition, we will explore ways in which you will make a few modifications to a typical P & L to provide useful reporting that managers can use to monitor performance of and act on controllable parts of the business.

Attendees will leave with useful knowledge about using P & L's as a management tool instead of simply a financial tool and practical tips for making their income statements much more useful.

This session will include examples of useful reporting, will review case studies and participants will leave with a CD-ROM containing examples and tools you can use.



**Al Bessin** is a Consulting Partner with LENSER in the Texas office. Al Bessin is an entrepreneurial multichannel executive with over 25 years of experience. He has worked

in every aspect of catalog, eCommerce and retail operations, both at strategic and hands-on levels. He has experience with small- and medium-sized start-ups, high growth companies, and turnarounds, both nationally and internationally. He has also worked with the investment banking community on several mergers and acquisitions.

12:00–1:30 PM

**Lunch For Past Presidents,  
First Time Convention Attendees and  
New Member Mentors**

This is a perfect opportunity for new attendees to meet our Association leaders as well as other members attending an MGA Convention for the first time. Mentors who have partnered with a new MGA member are also invited to attend. Our goal is to make you feel welcome and provide you with the opportunity to get the most from your MGA experience

12:00–2:00 PM

**LUNCH ON YOUR OWN.**

2:00–2:45 PM

**PRESENTATION—“Growing an  
Information Source—Plantinfo.umn.  
edu—The Largest Depository of Garden  
Catalogs in the Country”**

“I just saw the most beautiful tulip—Where can I buy one?” “I need sources for Lilac Lights azaleas”. “How can I contact that iris nursery in Minnesota? I can’t remember its name.”



Plant Information Online (<http://plantinfo.umn.edu>), a free service of the University of Minnesota, can answer all these questions and more for the consumer. **Kathy Allen**

will share the history behind the website, detail what’s included (or not), show some searching basics, and take a look at future directions for the site. View some of the oldest garden catalogs on file in the Anderson Horticultural Library’s historic seed and nursery catalog collection, which dates back to the mid-1800’s.

Kathy started as a Librarian at Andersen Horticultural Library in November 2008. As a Plant Sciences Librarian at the University of Minnesota for twelve years before that, Kathy was a long-time contributor to the Plant Information Online website; she is now the Coordinator.

2:45–3:00 PM

**BREAK**

**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION GROUPS**

Bring your burning questions to this roundtable discussion group program. Each roundtable will address a specific, timely issue.

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 needs and questions.

3:00–3:45 PM **Round #1**

4:00–4:45 PM **Round #2**

**Repeat Topics**

- **Plant Material Trends—Products with the “Wow” Factor**, *Carol Reece, Ornamental Horticulture Specialist, University of Tennessee Extension Service*

- **How Do You Use and Apply Financial Reporting to your Day-to-Day Business Management**, *Al Bessin, Consulting Partner, LENSER*
- **Plant Information Online—How These Resource Sites are Useful, Plus, Historic Seed & Nursery Catalogs—Their Use and Significance**, *Kathy Allen, Librarian, Andersen Horticultural Library, University of Minnesota Libraries*
- **Cultivating & Captivating the Young—How the Power of Social Media Can Help Create New, Young Gardeners**, *Sundeep Kapur, Online Marketing Strategist, www.EmailYogi.com*
- **Trends in the Garden Industry & Ways in Which ‘terrain’ is Responding to Them**, *John Kinsella, Managing Director of terrain, Urban Outfitters’ Garden Lifestyle Center.*
- **Results of the MGA 2009 Secret Shopper Survey**, *Tom Beddows, THB Direct*
- **Delve into the Spending Habits of the Green-Aware Consumer and Find Out How They Impact the Garden Catalog Market**, *Mark Peacock, Experian*

6:00–7:30 PM

**Welcome Back Reception**

Say hello to your fellow members and meet some new company contacts too.

*Sponsored by Organic Gardening, Diamond Sponsor*

**THURSDAY, JULY 16**

8:00 AM–5:00 PM

**Networking Room Open**

*Refreshments sponsored by Zed Marketing Group, Silver Sponsor*

9:00–10:15 AM

**PRESENTATION “How Do You Create a Dialog With Your Customers Thru Social Networking”**

Social Networking is contagious, many check their profiles throughout the day to catch up on messages, get updates from acquaintances and just stay in touch. Not only is the usage growing but so is membership. This increase also includes a number of companies attempting to market within the social spaces...while the ads are one method, the better approach would be to incorporate your social media efforts with your existing email program. Interactive dialogue across all channels is the ideal approach.



Say for instance you send an email each week, if you managed to get a response (open/ click/ conversion) from every recipient each month, you would be a happy marketer...but unfortunately, not every recipient is going to give you a response. **Sundeep Kapur**, an Online Marketing Strategist, and daily blogger at—[www.EmailYogi.com](http://www.EmailYogi.com), will address the “power of social media” and instruct attendees how to use it to create raving fans out of gardeners— young & old. Yes, a simpler step by step approach where an hour a week with a

purpose will help you build your brand, grow your reach, and help you create a bond with those you serve.

We’ll discuss how best to tie Web2.0 and emerging mediums with your traditional marketing efforts.

**To try to get to that level, take a few lessons from social networking sites:**

1. **Target Segments**—After all a social network is a collection of friends, there is something common among them, find the commonality and offer accordingly.
2. **Be Engaging**—Discussion is key, ask people to participate, engage them with relevant questions...*What is your opinion? Which one do you like?*
3. **Showcase**—Social sites showcase their network, *John is attending... Reagan is going to... Sharmila is taking her kids...* Apply these same ideas to your communiqués; include user generated content when you can. People like to read real stories and see real pictures.
4. **Cover your Bases**—Set up all your social networks; to cover the full gamut, you’ll need Twitter, Blog(s), Community Profiles (Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn), some Video and lots of Pictures.
5. **Build Excitement**—You have to generate interest, run contests, reward recipients for paying attention and help them stay engaged. It’s the best way to build community and a loyal stream of customers.

Grow a bond with your customers and prospects through our shared inspiration of gardening, the web can keep them engaged and help you Create Attractive Conversations!

10:30–11:45 AM

**PRESENTATION—“Top Trends in the Gardening Industry”**



**John Kinsella**, Managing Director of terrain, Urban Outfitters’ garden lifestyle center, will present the cutting-edge trends and general consumer

developments that affect garden retailers, in both retail stores and direct channels. Learn how the terrain responds to consumer trends to create a compelling customer experience through inspiring merchandising, unique products and engaging customer service.

John helped launch terrain in April 2008. He has held senior level positions at Smith & Hawken, Williams-Sonoma and Banana Republic, focusing on operations, marketing and organization development. He is also consulted extensively in the retail industry to improve strategy and operational effectiveness with over 25 organizations including Home Depot, Cabella’s, Sundance, Smith & Hawken, Sur La Table, Nike, Hewlett Packard and Design Within Reach.

John has been active in gardening and sustainability interests, including earning Master Gardener credentials in 2001 and directing a non-profit organization to create organic community gardens in Petaluma, CA.

**12:15–4:30 PM**

**Tour To Bailey Nurseries**

Bailey Nurseries is a fourth-generation family-owned nursery serving customers throughout the U.S. and Canada. They are widely recognized as one of the United States' largest wholesale nurseries, with products distributed by more than 4,500 independent garden centers, landscapers, growers and re-wholesalers. Their main offices and growing fields are located in Newport, Minnesota, (just outside the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul) and they also operate nurseries in Yamhill and Sauvie Island, Oregon and Sunnyside, Washington.



Throughout their long history, Bailey Nurseries has earned a reputation as a leader in the nursery industry with inventive techniques, high-quality plants and active involvement in industry organizations. Integrity, innovation and quality were the hallmarks of our company when it began—and they continue to this day.

Bailey Nurseries offers a complete line of nursery stock that includes deciduous trees and shrubs, evergreens, fruits, perennials, annuals and roses. Their plants are offered from seedlings and rooted cuttings to finished bareroot and container-grown stock.

Bailey's is very excited to treat MGA attendees to a casual lunch and indepth tour of their nursery and facilities. MGA will provide bus transportation for the tour.

**6:00–7:30 PM**

**Networking Cocktail Reception**

Enjoy your final evening with fellow members in a comfortable, casual setting. "No Member Left Behind"—when making dinner plans, be sure to invite a first time attendee!!

*Sponsored by Quad/Graphics, Diamond Sponsor*

**FRIDAY, JULY 17**

**8:00 AM–10:00 AM**

**Networking Room Open**

*Refreshments sponsored by Zed Marketing Group, Silver Sponsor*

**8:00–8:45 AM**

**PRESENTATION "Review the Results of the MGA 2009 Secret Shopper Survey"**

Survey Administrator and President of THB Direct, **Tom Beddows** will breakdown and review the results of the Secret Shopper

Survey that was conducted this past Spring. The results of each company's performance, is recognized by a different, confidential code word. Participants as well as other interested MGA attendees, will be able to see how companies performed individually and as a group.

Tom will address all notable trends and/or areas where the group may have excelled or underperformed. This type of survey is an excellent way to track your company's customer service, ordering process, shipping methods, product sustainability, website and much more.

**9:00–10:15 AM**

**PRESENTATION "MGA Past Presidents on the State of the Industry"**

A panel of MGA Past Presidents representing a variety of industry segments, will share their observations on the State of the Gardening Industry for direct marketers. They will share how they weathered past economic downturns, what they expect for the coming year and what changes they are making to address current market conditions.

As of the printing of this brochure, the following Past Presidents have accepted the invitation to participate:



**Bruce Frasier**  
Dixondale Farms



**Leo Vandervlugt**  
Dutch Gardens



**Jim Zuckerman**  
Zed Marketing Group



**Dan Wells**  
New Growth



**Roberta Simpson-Dolbear**  
Brookside Marketing



**Dick Zondag**  
Jung Seed

**10:30–12:15 PM**

**Brunch and "Special Guest Robyn Waters, Trend Master Extraordinaire—Design With Heart—Go Deep Inside the Hearts & Minds of Your Customers"**



Business leaders are finally embracing the integration of logic and reasoning (left brain) with imagination and creativity (right brain). Now, it's time to add the heart.

While **Vice President of Trend, Design and Product Development at Target, Robyn Waters** developed her "3-H Design Theory" for her design team as a tool to help them connect on an emotional level with customers.

The first H is for Head; it's about practicality and need. The second H is for Handbag, and represents value. The third H is for Heart, and represents desire. Design With Heart presents a case for "using empathy" to *create products that customers will fall in love with.*

To thrive over the long term, organizations have to be able to get beyond their own views and discover not just what's happening in the world; they must go deep inside the hearts and minds of their customer in order to prosper. Break-through thinking, disruptive innovation, and remarkable product development need the creative energy of the right side of the brain, AND the heart.

If you want to create new products and services, powerful marketing messages and compelling corporate missions that will touch your customers' hearts, not just catch their eye, Robyn's concept will help you deliver stellar results while creating strong, emotional relationships with your customers.

*Out of respect for our speakers, we ask that all attendees stay through the brunch program on Friday.*



[www.mailordergardening.com](http://www.mailordergardening.com)

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## MGA Summer Conference

July 15–17, 2009

Hilton Minneapolis | Minneapolis, MN



### General Information

#### ABOUT THE HOTEL HILTON MINNEAPOLIS

The Hilton Minneapolis is the proud recipient of the Minnesota Meetings and Events Awards for Best “Full Service Hotel with Meeting and Event Space” and “Hotel with Best Service.” Located in the heart of downtown Minneapolis, the upscale Hilton Minneapolis offers each room featuring Hilton Serenity Bed packages, accented by warm-shaded designs and beautifully hand-carved oak, all hotel rooms are fitted with large windows, with expansive views of the city, high definition television, MP3 Connections, wireless high speed internet connections, multi-line telephones with voicemail, coffee makers and room service until 1:00 AM.

The Hilton Minneapolis has a complimentary fitness facility with a wide assortment of Precor equipment, including a variety of cardio theatre equipment, free weights and machines. They also have an indoor swimming pool, a whirlpool and sauna.

The Skywater Restaurant is open for Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner where you can enjoy cuisine and cocktails in the AMBiance of custom millwork furniture and exquisite locally commissioned art. Also, onsite is the Ivy Spa Club, with fourteen treatment rooms; you can treat yourself to anything from a massage to a Gentleman’s facial.

**Special discounted room rates for MGA members is \$155.00 for a single or a double room.**

**Reservations must be made on or before June 12, 2009.**

Any unused rooms will go back to the hotel’s general inventory, which means your room rate could be higher after the cut off date!!

An early departure fee of \$50.00 will be charged to each guest if departure occurs prior to the agreed upon departure date. This day will be verified upon arrival, if changed after check-in this fee will apply.

Cancellations must be made seventy-two (72) hours prior to arrival in order to avoid a charge for the first night’s room and tax

Reservations should be made by contacting the hotel directly or going online.

**CALL 612-376-1000.**

***Be sure that you mention that you are with the MGA in order to receive the special discounted room rate!***

[www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/MSPMHHH-MAL-20090712/index.jhtml](http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/MSPMHHH-MAL-20090712/index.jhtml)

**Hotel Address:  
1001 Marquette Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55403**

#### GROUND TRANSPORTATION

Super Shuttle—612-827-7777  
\$16 dollars per person one way.

Taxi cost  
\$30–35 one way, from Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport to the Hilton.

#### HOTEL PORTERAGE FEE FOR GUEST PACKAGES

**In order to avoid confusion, any packages being sent to the hotel should be labeled with the name of the company representative attending the conference.**

Boxes and materials sent to the hotel for MGA should *not arrive earlier than one week prior* to the conference otherwise an extra labor fee for storing and delivering to function room of large shipments of boxes is charged based on amount of time spent by hotel staff in handling these materials.

***Any packages being sent to the hotel should be sent to the hotel should be addressed to your company’s representative.***

#### HOTEL PARKING

Parking is done through self-parking in the Hilton Underground Garage. It is \$12.00 per day.

#### THINGS TO DO AND SEE IN MINNEAPOLIS

The MGA encourages and welcomes members to bring their families to the Summer Conference. Minneapolis is beautiful in July and there are lots of things to do and see in the Twin Cities and the Great Lakes Area.

The Hilton Minneapolis Hotel is located in the heart of downtown and the financial district. The Minnesota Orchestra is right next-door and the Guthrie Theater, Walker Art Center and the Metrodome are all within walking distance.

Visit <http://www.minneapolis.org/page/1/see-do-minneapolis.jsp>

#### HERE ARE A FEW SITES TO CHECK OUT:

*Chain of Lakes*  
[www.minneapolisparcs.org/grandrounds/dist\\_CL.htm](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/grandrounds/dist_CL.htm)

*Mall of America*  
[www.mallofamerica.com](http://www.mallofamerica.com)

*Minneapolis Institute of Arts*  
[www.artsmia.org](http://www.artsmia.org)

*Minneapolis Zoo*  
[www.mnzoo.com](http://www.mnzoo.com)

*Mystic Lake Casino*  
[www.mysticlake.com](http://www.mysticlake.com)

*Nicollet Farmers Market*  
[www.mplsfarmersmarket.com/nicollet](http://www.mplsfarmersmarket.com/nicollet)

*Science Museum of Minnesota*  
[www.smm.org](http://www.smm.org)

*Target Center*  
[www.targetcenter.com](http://www.targetcenter.com)

*Walker Art Center*  
[www.walkerart.org](http://www.walkerart.org)



[www.mailordergardening.com](http://www.mailordergardening.com)



## Schedule at a Glance

Date/Time	Name of Function
<b>Tuesday 7/14/09</b>	
2:00–5:30 PM	<b>MGA Board of Directors Meeting</b>
2:00–5:00pm	<b>Registration/Networking Room Open—</b> <i>Sponsor: Zed Marketing Group</i>
<b>Wednesday 7/15/09</b>	
8:00 AM–5:00 PM	<b>Convention Registration/Networking Room Open—</b> <i>Sponsor: Zed Marketing Group</i>
8:00–8:45am	<b>“Jump Start” Continental Breakfast</b>
8:45–9:45 PM	<b>PRESENTATION “What Plants &amp; Products Are Gardeners Looking For?”—Carol Reece,</b> Ornamental Horticulture Specialist, University of Tennessee Extension Service
9:45–10:15 AM	<b>Annual Business Meeting</b>
10:15–10:30 AM	<b>Break</b>
10:30–12:00 N	<b>PRESENTATION “Managing Your Way to Higher Profits—How to Turn Financial Reporting Into a Useful Tool for Managers”—Al Bessin,</b> Consulting Partner, LENSER
12:00–2:00 PM	<b>Lunch on Their Own</b>
12:00–1:30 PM	<b>Lunch for Past Presidents, First Time Convention Attendees and New Member Mentors</b>
2:00–2:45 PM	<b>PRESENTATION “Growing an Information Source—Plantinfo.umn.edu—The Largest Depository of Garden Catalogs in the Country”—Kathy Allen,</b> Librarian, Andersen Horticultural Library, Minnesota Landscape Arboretum
2:45–3:00 PM	<b>Break</b>
3:00–3:45 PM	<b>ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION GROUPS—Round 1</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Plant Material Trends—Products with the “Wow” Factor—Carol Reece,</b> Ornamental Horticulture Specialist, University of Tennessee Extension Service</li> <li>• <b>How Do You Use and Apply Financial Reporting to your Day-to-Day Business Management—Al Bessin,</b> Consulting Partner, LENSER</li> <li>• <b>Plant Information Online—How These Resource Sites are Useful, Plus, Historic Seed &amp; Nursery Catalogs—Their Use and Significance—Kathy Allen,</b> Librarian, Andersen Horticultural Library, University of Minnesota Libraries</li> <li>• <b>Cultivating &amp; Captivating the Young—How the Power of Social Media Can Help Create New, Young Gardeners—Sundeep Kapur,</b> Online Marketing Strategist, www.EmailYogi.com</li> <li>• <b>Trends in the Garden Industry &amp; Ways in Which ‘terrain’ is Responding to Them—John Kinsella,</b> Managing Director of terrain, Urban Outfitters’ garden lifestyle center.</li> <li>• <b>Results of the MGA 2009 Secret Shopper Survey—Tom Beddows,</b> THB Direct</li> <li>• <b>Delve into the Spending Habits of the Green-Aware Consumer and Find Out How They Impact the Garden Catalog Market—Mark Peacock,</b> Experian</li> </ul>

Date/Time	Name of Function
3:45–4:00 PM	<b>Break</b>
4:00–4:45 PM	<b>ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION GROUPS—Round 2</b>
6:00–7:30 PM	<b>Welcome Reception—</b> <i>Sponsor: Organic Gardening</i>
<b>Thursday 7/16/09</b>	
8:00 AM–5:00 PM	<b>Registration/Networking Room Open—</b> <i>Refreshment Sponsor: Zed Marketing Group</i>
9:00–10:15 AM	<b>PRESENTATION “How Do You Create A Dialog With Your Customers Thru Social Networking”—Sundeep Kapur,</b> Online Marketing Strategist, NCR eCommerce and www.EmailYogi.com
10:30–11:45 AM	<b>PRESENTATION “Top Trends in the Gardening Industry”—John Kinsella,</b> Managing Director, terrain, Urban Outfitters’ garden lifestyle center
12:15–4:30 PM	<b>Tour Of Bailey Nurseries—</b> Lunch provided onsite at Bailey’s
6:00–7:30 PM	<b>Networking Cocktail Reception—</b> <i>Sponsor: Quad/Graphics</i>
<b>Friday 7/17/09</b>	
8:00–10:00 AM	<b>Registration/Networking Room Open—</b> <i>Refreshment Sponsor: Zed Marketing Group</i>
8:00–8:45 AM	<b>PRESENTATION “Review the Results of the MGA 2009 Secret Shopper Survey”—Tom Beddows,</b> THB Direct
9:00–10:15 AM	<b>PRESENTATION: “MGA Past Presidents on the State of the Industry”—</b> MGA Past Presidents Panel
10:30 AM–12:15 PM	<b>BRUNCH AND PRESENTATION “Design With Heart—Go Deep Inside the Hearts &amp; Minds of Your Customers”—Robin Waters,</b> former Vice President of Trend, Design & Product Development for Target

Out of respect for our speakers, we ask that all attendees stay through the brunch program on Friday.

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