



floramedia CONGRESS NEWS



2003
25.-30. August
SWITZERLAND

A few information about the Garden Centre Congress Switzerland – Presented and produced

by Floramedia (Schweiz) AG

Tuesday, August 26th

The Day for Early Risers:

The Alpine Olympics with Breakfast and Flora Studies on the famous "Ballenberg"

With 100 original buildings from many years of Swiss history, historical gardens, demonstrations of old craftsmen's trades and 250 indigenous animals, the Ballenberg enables you to relive the past in a highly realistic way. A truly original experience. It is in this splendid open-air museum with its view of the stunning Bernese Alps that the leading Swiss fertiliser manufacturer – Hauert – invited everybody to an unforgettable breakfast followed by an Alpine Olympics.

The next highlight was the visit of the Gartenpflanzen-Paradies Schwitser, Inwil. One of the main attractions is undoubtedly the sales show garden covering some 10'000 m².

Next on the programme was the visit of the Garten-Center Zulauf, Schznzach. The Zulauf Nursery is

still one of the most important and innovative operations in Switzerland.



The perfect English Breakfast !



The next years IGCA congress will take place in New Zealand: the hosts Angela Salmon and Jeremy Kennerley



Happy winner: A.P. Desjardins (F)



The traditional Swiss Alphorns



The "Spanish Connection" in the middle of the Garden Paradise Schwitser, Inwil



The Hauert-Team with Ruedi Hauert as Speaker



Per Boisen Andersen, Denmark



Daniel Alleton (F) stone putting



The Bent sisters from Bents Garden-Centre Ltd., England



l. to r.: Monika Lock, VDG Germany, Marion Lichtenberg, Matthias Echelmeyer, OASE GmbH



In a relaxed position: the Canadians Lynn Parker and Bob Sproule



Karl Hautle, in front of the fountain at the Garten-Center Zulauf, Schznzach

Editorial



Dear Delegate, The Floramedia Group warmly welcomes you to this key event of 2003, held at the very heart of Europe. I'm sure the gathering will provide plenty of opportunities to exchange information, and to absorb a wealth of stimulating new ideas for your sales and marketing activities. I hope it will also allow you to spend some time unwinding with your friends and colleagues, in Switzerland's uniquely convivial atmosphere.

You have in your hands the first of three issues of the Congress News, designed and sponsored by the Floramedia Group. We've produced it to underline our steadfast commitment to our garden centre customers in all parts of the world, and to showcase the broad and innovative scope of the service we offer you. Wherever you are, we'll work with you to develop compelling and genuinely innovative media solutions.

Through its network of partner companies, the Floramedia Group is now active in over 30 countries, working hard as a media partner and solutions provider for all branches of the horticultural industry. At the core of our operation is our archive of horticultural pictures, now widely recognised as one of the world's leading horticultural image libraries.

It's a cornerstone of our work in plant promotion and packaging, which sees us designing and producing a huge range of items in every conceivable format. Our constant aim is to provide all our clients with a steady flow of successful promotional ideas – magazines, catalogues, campaigns and concepts, creative packaging, pioneering websites and eye-catching point-of-sale material.

You've drawn together, here at the International Garden Centre Congress, to exchange information and to develop new marketing concepts. In the very same spirit, Floramedia's international partners foregather each year to share market news, to discuss strategies and know-how, and to celebrate success in whatever form it takes.

As our clients, you'll benefit directly from our annual meetings in that they disseminate fresh ideas and best practice, and propagate new marketing initiatives. We hear a lot about the downsides of globalization these days, so it's heartening to remind ourselves that there are some positive benefits to offset them!

The Floramedia network is at your disposal all over the world, and you'll find full contact details for all our partners on the back page. Wherever we operate, we combine outstanding quality and total professionalism with an intimate knowledge of the local market. As members of your own international organization, you'll fully appreciate the value of adhering to consistent global standards.

Let me close by wishing each and every one of you a thoroughly worthwhile and enjoyable IGCA Congress, as well as record-breaking sales in the season ahead.

Ulrich Liedtke
Chairman of the Floramedia Group



The gardening sector needs to increase its marketing effort

Labels and pots greatly enhance the value of products

Up until now, the gardening sector has to a great extent been spared the experience of declining turnover. On the contrary, people's interest in their own home has increased to a satisfying extent. However, the pressure on prices causes everyone a lot of grief, so what can be done?

Ever earlier special offers, ever dwindling quality and worsening prices: Anyone who is placing his faith in out of season and tempting offers, will always come upon more beneficial offers from competitors, as in the story of the tortoise and the hare. Worse still, the gardening sector is cutting off the branch on which it is sitting, since poor-quality and stunted plants provide no pleasure; they merely wind up the customers.

Numerous profitable examples, such as big shrubs in pots, selling of roses in the summer or summer fruits in containers, indicate that excellent turnover can be achieved with plants and in particular with high-quality types and specialities. The enhanced image that can be gained from customers by means of high-quality goods is also not to be underestimated. Many quite ordinary plant gems are still awaiting their acceptance and purchase by a public that displays curiosity and a willingness to experiment.

The best strains make the most effective marketing

What costs nothing is worth nothing. The activities of growers and distributors work in opposition to this adage. They make great efforts to increase the extent to which they are well known, by means of press coverage, catalogues, flyers, videos or exhibitions. These activities are clearly

quantifiable in their effect and are reflected in the turnover of garden centres accordingly.

"Grapevines - mildew-resistant" - unbranded goods marketed in this way are regrettably even to be found in specialist outlets. Who can be surprised if the same plants are available at the major chain store next door at a much better price and if the specialist outlet's own advertising efforts for these and many other items are revealed as ineffective. Not giving the name of the correct strain is hardly a matter of choice: It alone will guarantee its desired properties and ensure customer satisfaction. All promotional activity, staff training, grow-

New labels for Swiss nursery. ZULAUF AG, who specialise in perennials and trees, have been buying stock labels from Floramedia Switzerland for quite some years now. The graphics and pre-press work were executed by Floramedia Switzerland, and print and finishing were carried out by Floramedia Nederland.

ers' efforts and consumers' increased expectations will be in vain, if the plants are sloppily labelled or if goods are sourced from a different supplier each week.

Labels need to appeal to people's emotions

The fact that every sales item (pot, pack of seedlings, box) requires an informative label is unfortunately far from being a matter of course for many producers and sales assistants. Yet at the same time, all garden centres and nurseries will benefit from higher concepts and from promotional activities that make selling easier. For these reasons, labels should communicate important basic information in a factual manner. But is that enough?

A range of shrubs offered for sale that consists of sparsely-leaved seedlings appears somewhat spartan in the eyes of the consumer and does nothing to conjure up any inclination to purchase. Black



square or round containers and a white and austere stick label may save space and be economical and practical, but they require a would-be purchaser to perform the impossible: To be in possession of a lot of imagination, specialist knowledge and have prior acquaintance.

How much more pleasing are the ranges of seedlings for bedding plants, shrubs or speciality plants in Australia for example. Even if their little plants do not display any real colour or healthy growth, they communicate a stimulus to purchase, good feeling and a desire to design something. Pleasing colours, a cheerful and sometimes even slightly kitschy design (something which we encounter more and more even in Europe, and for good reason) and big and attractive illustrations; all these make it possible to imagine their future development. Newer types of ticketing indicate that even here change is in the air.



High-quality plants in attractive pots

Sales concepts such as those of Kiepenkerl-Profiline for improved vegetables, herbs and summer fruits, Benary und Kientzler for bedding and balcony plants or Rosen-Tantau, who lend their goods an air of fineness by means of their coloured pots; they all put their faith in subliminal effects. This way, high-quality goods are easier to sell, their packaging loses its plainness, but remains identifiable and the consumer has an easier task when he returns to buy more of these strains.



Just how to arrange product groups in line with given themes (summer fruits, colour coordinated, scent, exotic) or even events (Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Halloween) and thereby create an incentive to purchase is not exactly a new motto, but one that is being put into effect forcibly by many marketing strategists. Using super strains, reasonably priced plants and smart wrapping (e.g. a tray with 9 bellis in bloom for Mother's Day), Ball Pan-American Seed makes original and yet useful gifts that are a cut above mass-produced goods and are easy to sell. Attractive packaging and high-quality and reliable plants are a combination likely to be a hit that is appropriate to today's awareness of life.

Siegfried Stein



SWITZERLAND'S "GREEN PROFESSIONALS" is a leading marketing forum involving 29 garden centres and groups from all over the country. 2002's promotional campaign encompassed a 92-page catalogue called Garden Panorama, a full-colour newspaper with 4 editions in 4pp and 8pp versions, POS material for special promotions, press distribution and the authoring of web sites.



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