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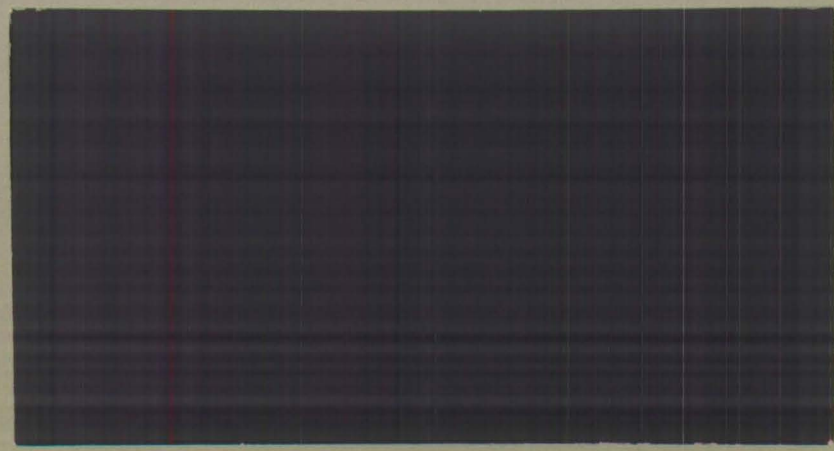
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Realities of the Eighties:
Changing Marketing Lifestyles

Forrest Stegelin

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Realities of the Eighties: Changing Marketing Lifestyles

Forrest E. Stegelin

(The following material is the edited text of the keynote presentation to the 1987 Produce Marketing Association's Floral Marketing Seminar held during PMA's annual convention and exposition in Anaheim, CA, October 26,28, 1987. Requests for copies of the presentation and an invitation by PMA for an encore presentation at the 1988 meeting in Nashville, TN, lead to the publication of the speech text at this time.)

When I was asked to speak to the Produce Marketing Association's Floral Marketing Seminar, I was first elated and then apprehensive. Why me? After all, I'm not a common household name in the floral trade. Granted I have a decade of experiences shared with your industry, but it is has been at the educational level at land grant universities. Furthermore, I'm not a floriculturist nor a horticulturist, nor do I pretend to be. In fact, when I hear that bilingual gibberish it sounds like you're trying to impress someone (perhaps a customer or a competitor) but mostly it reminds me that my mother washed my mouth out with soap for saying less profane sounding phrases as a kid. No, I don't talk genus and specie or cultivar and variety...I only talk dollars and cents. You see, I'm an agricultural economist, specifically a marketing economist who coincidentally favors working on the floricultural-horticultural commodities, instead of livestock or grains or Kentucky tobacco. Given this past week of October 19 on the stock market, I think

it's fair to remind you of the Law of Economics: Just because the undertaker's business is booming doesn't mean the economy is better!

Now don't get me wrong; you and I do share some common ground. We all like green, but just as there are shades of gray there are shades of green. My preference is for the shading and verigation found on the green back, the dollar bill--regardless of denomination. I don't know about your creditors but mine accept dollars for debt payments, and not floral bouquets. If you're like me then, you have the challenge to convert that inventory of flowers and flowering plants into dollars, and we typically do that through successful marketing.

This leads me to my best credential to speak to you on "realities of the 80's" -- I am one of the realities of the 80's called a consumer. Not just any consumer, but a consumer with a changing lifestyle. In other words, I and millions like me, including many of you, have become moving targets. Deer season opened in Kentucky and if you've ever tried focusing on a buck in heavy timber and then getting a clean shot away on target, then you'll appreciate how elusive the consumers with changing lifestyles are to the marketer. So today I want to share with you my ideas on "Realities of the 80's: Changing Marketing Lifestyles."

Economists are notorious for assumptions (that's how we make sure we're always right) and I'll assume this is the typical conference where 18% of you are here because you have nothing better to do, 53% are interested in the subject, and 29% of you

will have sexual fantasies during my speech, so that 82% of us will leave here happy.

What is marketing? Peter Drucker is quoted to have said "Marketing is so basic that it cannot be considered a separate function ... it is the whole business seen from the point of view of its final result, that is, from the customer's point of view."

Theodore Levitt stated "The purpose of the product is not what the engineer or technologist explicitly says it is, but what the consumer implicitly demands that it shall be. Thus the consumer consumes not things, but expected benefits; not cosmetics, but the satisfactions of the allurements they promise; not quarter-inch drills but quarter-inch holes; not stocks in companies, but capital gains; not numerically controlled drilling machines, but trouble free and accurately smooth metal parts; not low calori ed whipped cream, but self-rewarding indulgence combined with sophisticated convenience."

Francis Rooney described marketing in that "People no longer buy shoes to keep their feet warm and dry. They buy them because of the way the shoes make them feel - masculine, feminine, rugged, different, young, sophisticated, glamorous, "in." Buying shoes has become an emotional experience. Our business now is selling excitement rather than selling shoes."

My family is building a home and somehow the interpretation by the builder of something I thought was explained unequivocally clear didn't bear resemblance to intention. So I went to take things in my own hands and I bought a handsaw at the local hardware store. Did I really need a new handsaw? No, what I really needed and wanted was a shorter board.

Finally, Charles Revson of Revlon Cosmetics put marketing this way "In the factory we make cosmetics and in the drugstore we sell hope."

In "Through the Looking Glass" by Lewis Carroll, the rabbit answers a question by Alice "Would you please tell me which way I ought to go from here? That depends on where you want to get to."

If you are content with where you are in marketing, then you may be in the right spot. Then again it may be just a warm comfortable feeling. The distillery industry in Kentucky stuck with a marketing strategy for a century, but has recently altered its product lines. Distillers are turning to fruit flavored beverages that are low in alcohol after over a century without a major marketing change from the old-style spirits and hard liquor. So why change now? The president of Schenley Distillers (Dewar's Scotch) remarks "People have gone from drinking for effect to drinking for taste." The president of the House of Seagrams states "The days of acquiring a taste for whiskey are gone. Today's drinkers want things that taste good right away." You can even buy Kentucky's Jim Beam bourbon premixed with cola in a pop-top can - that's convenience. Of course, we know all about the wine coolers' war. No longer are the distillers selling a hangover, they're marketing instantaneous taste.

Throughout these examples of marketing I've mentioned was an emphasis on the consumer with changing lifestyles. I guarantee that if you focus on consumer needs in your marketing, you'll most likely achieve profit through consumer satisfaction. Today's

consumers are 4 things: older, richer, wiser, and busier. Your prime customers are 25-55 years old possessing upper middle class affluence with average personal incomes approaching \$30,000 and residing in the urban fringes or suburbia. There are new households compared to the old standards -- dual career commuters, more female headed households, and fewer kids which means fewer targets for the next generation to market to. Consumers today are still transient, although not like the 70's, and have shifted from the rust belt to the sunbelt and now retracing partway to what is coincidentally zone 6/7 plant hardiness zones -- Boston, Long Island, Baltimore, Louisville and Lexington, Kentucky, Dallas-Forth Worth and El Paso, Texas plus the Portland, Oregon pocket. Nearly 1/3 of the population resides 150 miles either side of the line I mentioned.

What makes up a lifestyle? Three things - attitudes, interests, and opinions. Why is it important to understand lifestyles? A market is not a place, building or location but a situation characterized by the needs of the customers. A market is made up of 3 things, as well - people, money, and a willingness by them to spend that money on your product. And there is increasing competition for consumer's leisure or disposable dollars, especially with rising interest rates and alarming recessionary tendencies and signals for a higher cost of living and a lower quality of life, as shown by the vulnerabilities on Wall Street and in our financial institutions.

Most of you are familiar with the thoroughbred horse racing industry in Kentucky, but we also pride ourselves on our mules. Two brothers went to town to get a replacement mule for the old

one on the farm, but the stable's price was too high. As they were leaving, they spied a load of big watermelons laying on hay in a truck. The boys had never seen anything like those melons so they went back in to the stable and asked about the load. The mule trader asked "Don't you know?" and they indicated "No!" Being the sly entrepreneur, he said they're mule eggs. The brothers asked the price, indicating they only had \$50. Wouldn't you know it, just the right amount for the mule egg of their choice. They picked one out and started hitchhiking home. Heading into the hills, they caught a ride in the back of a pickup truck. Unfortunately, the truck hit a bump and the melon, I mean mule egg, bounced out into the grass with the boys in hot pursuit. The melon burst, scaring up a jack rabbit who took off like a shot with the boys trying to keep an eye on those big ears that resembled a mule's. Finally one of the brothers fell to the ground panting "Never mind that baby mule; I didn't need to plow that fast anyway."

I use this anecdote to point out that flowers and flowering plants are not sold to consumers based on need. In fact, I'll bet that the closest my grandfather came to needing your product was at his own funeral. People can be born, raised and pass away without ever having to buy your product. That doesn't mean they don't like your goods, they just don't need to part with this green stuff called dollars to get that green stuff called floriculture.

Unfortunately there are no studies to encourage consumption of flowers and flowering plants for health reasons like the

fruits and vegetables enjoy. For instance, a report issued last week indicates a 40% less likelihood of stroke with eating an extra serving of produce a day because of the increased potassium. Other health stories have surfaced on cancer and cholesterol control from consuming fruits and vegetables, to say nothing about the diet or light food characteristics and the targeting of fresh produce as a snack food from the refrigerator.

Are there any lessons to be learned and opportunities to be seized from looking at consumer profiles? Most recent consumer studies have focused on foods, but there are still market targets because of the changing lifestyles portrayed. In her presentation to the American Society of Agricultural Consultants, Barbara Hunter of the public relations firm Dudley-Anderson-Yutzy recalled how past attitudes were formed to get to her assessment of the future consumer. During the decade following WWII, confidence, conformity and optimism prevailed in the growing middle class. Prosperity, faster economic growth and materialism permeated the next decade. The late 60's were a time of rebellion, questioning and concerned criticism of American institutions such as business, government, education, religion and family. Between 1975-1980, energy costs sky-rocketed, inflation arrived and foreign competitors began to invade U.S. markets, resulting in individualism, political defensiveness and the recognition the economic situation was not getting better. The most recent period in the 80's has provided lower inflation, a stronger dollar and lower unemployment as patriotism re-emerged and business was OK again, and consumers continued pursuit of economic gain and self-gratification.

Where to from here? A year ago, I'd have argued same song, second verse of the early '80's Economically, I'm uncertain and as nervous as you concerning economic investment strategies. From a marketing perspective focusing on the consumer, we do know the population is expected to increase 10% in the next three years so that the population mix will include 31 million blacks, 20 million Hispanics and 7 million Asians. I mentioned earlier how the number of households will increase, but the number of people residing in each household will decline, and yes, we're getting more adult and middle-aged.

The 80's have seen the strategic consumer who is more interested in value than price, who examines purchase options from a cost-benefit perspective. 54% of consumers make fewer impulse purchases (your mainstay) and 58% are comparing prices on purchases (previously unheard of in the floral trade). The baby boom generation (now called the Yuppies or the Fliers, depending on attitudes and actions) is a study of contradictions - "traditional, yet not conforming; tough, yet needing care; socially aware, yet apathetic; and read nutrition labels while eating fast food." There is also the new woman, who accounts for nearly half of the workforce but still has traditional notions of femininity and dependence in spite of her independence.

Favorable price/value relationships, product status and quality, newness and differentness, and convenience are desirable traits of tomorrow's floriculture. Consumer behavioral trends accentuate more travel, more experimentation and more catch-as-catch-can activities. More time is being spent at home by

consumers, and they are entertaining more at home, which forebodes well for your industry. More teens and more men now shop, and consumers in general are developing group brand loyalty for those items consistently purchased.

Allow me to itemize the strong points in changing lifestyles as they offer opportunities and challenges at the same time. John Gardner described a challenge as "a great opportunity brilliantly disguised as an insolvable problem," but that is your moving target. The strong points worth considering include:

1. nature, naturalism and environmentalism
2. casual lifestyles
3. elegance and personalization
4. work ethic of working to live and spend now, save later
5. novelty and change
6. role flexibility among partners
7. instant gratification
8. leisure time
9. personal creativity
10. life simplification
11. consumerism issues
12. price/value relationships

Some of you may be starting to wonder if I'm really an economist since I haven't dazzled you with any numbers. It's not often you find an economist who'll tell a joke on his profession, but let me share one with you. Three applicants remained for one final question from the board of directors for a particular job. The 3 were an accountant, a lawyer, and an economist. In turn, each was asked the same question, what is 2 plus 2? The

accountant was first, and after stuttering and stammering answered "an absolute 2 plus absolute 2 equals an absolute 4." He was thanked and next came the lawyer who finally quit hemming and hawing to say "an approximate 2 plus an approximate 2 equals something between 3 1/2 and 4 1/2," and he was excused from the room. Upon entering and being asked the question what is 2 plus 2, the economist, without hesitation, goes straight to the chairman of the board and asks "what number do you want?"

When it comes to public information on the floral industry, I'm almost like that economist. The fall 1987 Produce Business cited the industry as having \$8.3 billion in sales of flowers and flowering plants last year, with 18% of these sales from supermarkets. I won't question the sales figure, nor the supermarket influence. In fact, I'll verify that percentage by reporting a finding of some of my marketing students at the University of Kentucky, that in the Commonwealth about 1/5 of sales are via supermarkets, 1/4 by florists, 1/10 by interiorscapers, and 1/3 by floral jobbers. I'll come back to the \$8.3 billion sales in a moment.

According to a recent Wall Street Journal graph, about 69 million households spent \$13 billion last year on gardening. The most popular activities were lawn care by 58% or 40 million households, vegetable gardening by 26 million or 38% of the households, flower gardening by 44% or 30 million households and 28 million households or 41% participated in indoor house plant gardening. I assume many of you participated in making those sales, but now for the sermonette. \$13 billion spent by 69

million households only equates to an average annual sale per household of \$188 for gardening, including flowers and indoor house plants, or \$15 per month. I know, that's the garden center and nursery business problem, some of you are claiming. I don't agree. Besides, if we return to your \$8.3 billion sales on flowers and flowering plants, the picture is only bleaker. I'd like to think that nearly 100 million households invested in your products last year since not all households are in single family residences tilling a yard, in which case the average annual sales would be only \$83 per household or \$7 per month for the entire household. One cola per work day for one person in the household at 50 cents per cola is \$10 per month. Renting a couple of VCR tapes for a weekend, or seeing one movie will equal the \$7/month spent by a entire household on flowers and flowering plants. Even if only 69 million households contributed to your sales, that's \$120 annually per household or \$10/month.

Folks, if those numbers are correct, you've got a problem with a capital P. There is not demand pull in your industry today, it is demand push. Unfortunately, it's about like pushing a log chain or a piece of string. Marketing economists refer to your dilemma as a thin market whereby there is a thin line between supply and demand balance and oversupply tilts the revenues into the trash barrel as your flowers die. Strategies alone will not solve the problem. In fact, your plight is similar to the jockey who received these instructions from the horse's owner - on the far turn a hole will open up along the rail, go to the rail through the hole in traffic and ride to the finish line. The horse came in dead last, and the owner lashed

out at the jockey - "What happened?, the hole developed just like I told you." The jockey calmly responded "did you ever try to take a horse through a hole when the hole was moving faster than the horse?"

If you want to be in the winners circle with the garland of roses as your reward, I suggest four future needs to focus on:

- 1) newness and differentness, and it need not be just new plant materials - a different color may be a bonanza.
2. growing and marketing what's needed; that discriminating, wiser consumer usually wants something either you don't have or the consumer shouldn't have, but magazines like Southern Living cause consumers to drool and dream, and most importantly spend money on your products.
3. consider what the promise is you're marketing; unfulfilled consumer expectations hurt the entire industry, customer service centers in stores are there for a reason.
4. technology, especially in the production and business firm management aspects; information overload and technology have made it both easier and harder to cope for floral marketers and consumers alike.

Computers are commonplace; too bad only people make decisions. A continuum of decision making runs the gamut from emotion to intuition to common sense to derived logic to scientific fact. A heavy emphasis on logic with fact and a dose of common sense will usually lead to the most appropriate response to a problem. Consider the 2 fellows who went for a hot-air balloon ride. A storm descended upon them tossing them

about in the clouds. When the storm subsided and the clouds parted, they saw someone walking in a lane below. One of them yelled down "where are we?" to which came the answer "Up in a ballon!" One balloonist turned to the other - "That's a computer programmer!" "How do you know?" "Instantaneous response, absolutely correct, and it didn't help one damn bit!"

At issue in technology is the new arena of biogenetics and biotechnology, high touch versus high tech, efficiency of knowledge, and marketing and management tools for strategy development. This does not supersede the need to educate the consumer, nor does it void the marketer from understanding and appreciating the customer.

Market research on floral products is very limited. In fact, the combined subject index for the Hortscience journal of research reports no marketing articles prior to 1970, and only 72 since 1970. Perhaps it's reluctance of the industry to seek marketing and consumer research or perhaps, heaven forbid, it's the questionable quality of some of the marketing research projects, but it's not the lack of research in total. Out of 693 articles in Hortscience from 1971 to 1976, 25 were on markets and marketing; from 1977 to 1981, 11 articles out of 686 were on markets and marketing; and since 1981, 36 articles out of nearly 700 are in the index under markets and marketing, but only a dozen are on marketing and the rest are on post-harvest handling and economics or budgets.

What topics do I suggest for marketing research sponsored by your floral industry? Might I recommend:

price, quality, composition;
preference studies, such as color, form, use;
consumer reactions to merchandising methods;
consumer motives and purchaser habits;
display and packaging in a sales environment; and
consumer preferences versus grower/retailer preferences.

What do you market? Better yet, why do you market what you're selling? Age old excuses like 'cause you like it, 'cause it's easy to grow, 'cause it's popular at holidays, 'cause I sold it last year, 'cause it performed well at the College of Agriculture test plots, and 'cause the competitor sells it won't cut it any longer. Get in touch with the consumer. Let marketing tell you what to produce.

Industry training emphasizes balance, symmetry, lines, scale and other such buzz words. What is the consumer buying? Sense appeal -- color, texture, shape, form, fragrance. What the consumer smells and sees, many of your peers tend not to perceive. Perhaps you can't see the forest for the trees.

Another consumer issue is the purchase response to an observed or perceived price change. Marketing economists call it price elasticity. For instance, in the marketing research you'll observe a price elasticity referenced with a negative sign in front of the number, such as -1.00 . The minus sign merely means that quantity purchased and price change move in opposite directions. That's intuitive -- the price goes up, you typically buy less. But what are the specifics? Let's look at roses,

carnations and gladioli. Market research indicates the price elasticity at retail for roses is -1.20, for carnations -1.00, and for gladioli -.30. A laymen's interpretation for the marketer is that if the price of roses went up 10%, consumers would buy 12% fewer roses. The converse is also true. Roses are referred to as price elastic - sales quantities change more than price changes. Carnations are of unitary elasticity -- 10% price drop would increase sales 10%. Gladioli are price inelastic -- decrease price 10% and sales only increase 3%. People don't care what the price of glads are because they see limited uses for them -- cut flower gladioli sprays at funerals or similar occasions are the market opinions of consumers in the price customer age category of 25 to 35. So change their opinions and perceptions. Other than seeing the consumer buying response to price changes, price elasticities also allow one to view the impacts on revenue from planned price changes. Price times quantity equal revenue, so considering the changes in price and quantity will let you see the consequences in revenue.

Granted I may have a limited perspective on your business since I don't have any money on the table. I may even have an occasional mis-interpretation. Flying out here last night I was going over this speech in my mind and I noticed this lady across the aisle who had a certain aura about her that said she was above my lifestyle economically, even though she was doing a crossword puzzle. Once she leaned across the aisle and asked my vocation, I replied "agriculture" and she responded "Very well, perhaps you can help me on my crossword puzzle. I need a 4-

'letter word ending in _ _ _ t' that describes the contents of a bird cage." I thought a moment and responded "grit, g r i t." She thanked me, paused and then asked if I had an eraser, explaining "I think I've erred!"

My next comments may be in error, as well. In fact, I may be meddling with this observation. Primarily the only time I see flowers emphasized in marketing is in remembrance and/or celebration. Examples include weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, funerals, Valentines or other special days like Mothers Day, Fathers Day, Grandparents Day, Childrens Day, Boss's Day, Secretary Day, or even a new day to me - Sweetest Day. Why are special occasions the only apparent appropriate time to buy flowers? Perhaps you need to follow in the footsteps of the orange juice industry -- it's not just for breakfast anymore. Give the consumer other reasons to buy flowers than those printed dates or occasions on the calendar.

Merlin Olsen and the FTD commercials have been good at relieving tension or stress by easing one's conscience, but these commercials are better known for selling expensive coffee mugs, wicker baskets, ceramic vases or plastic bags, so claim the consumers. Once the bouquet arrives, the recipient wants to use the attention grabber so they want to put the flowers into something they consider more appropriate for display, only they find themselves with a handful of stems, a block of styrofoam and a puddle. The emphasis is no longer on the flowers which unfortunately are frequently found in the trash barrel still in reasonably good shape, all things considered. Again I ask, what are you marketing?

In today's dynamic everchanging market trying to focus on the moving target of a consumer which changing lifestyles, I'm afraid some of you are guilty of the Klondike philosophy of marketing. The Klondike school of philosophy is where only the lead dog gets a change of scenery.

What are some marketing lifestyle changes you might pursue? Well, there's no copyright on success, so let's see what's worked for other commodities and consider if it'll work on floral products. Let me make a grocery list of possibilities since time is eluding us:

- 1) coupons
- 2) samples
- 3) natives, perennials, or decorative veggies (peppers)
service/education workshops (not flower arranging or wreath-making but design or interiorscaping for the home)
- 5) spotlight flower-a-month, such as Spathiphyllum: a low-light plant for home or office (in January), Gloxinias for showy color (in February), Pothos making a versatile creeper (in March), bring springtime indoors with Exacuum (in April), potted Chryanthemums: a favorite everywhere (in May), and on and on, not to mention Easter Lilies and Christmas Poinsettias as perfect gifts for the season.
- 6) tours for school kids, be sure they take home a stem with your card attached.
- 7) ethnic cultures appreciation
- 8) sponsorship of events like a walk or bike ride through the arboretum, using your employees to provide a dialogue.

9) bouquet-a-day

10) create-a-day.

Advertise, advertise, advertise. Create a need for floral goods. Accentuate the positives. A better mousetrap does not sell itself unless the consumer knows it is available and why it is better. Business changes daily and there is always someone out there trying to steal the business away, even in economic calamity prone weeks such as this following the Crash of '87 or Black Monday. Anyone selling a product or service must set their product apart from the others to gain and keep sales by using advertising. After all, everyone has heard of Coke, so why does Coke spend \$80 million annually in advertising? 'Cause Pepsi wants to be the leader.

Consumers don't buy based on price. If they did, no one would have a "loaded" car. It's the price-value relationship. If transportation is what you really need, a car with all the belts and chrome gets you down the road just as far as a stripped one will, but you can't park a stripped down plain Jane car in the driveway - what will the neighbors say? In floriculture, what the eye sees, the eye buys. Exposure and visibility; don't sell price, sell a feeling. Recall the Toyota commercial ... "Oh, what a feeling!," not oh what an automobile.

By now I hope you're getting some ideas to consider. Interpreting the signs along the highway may be difficult if everything has to be couched in past experiences or understanding. Consider Johnny who enters grade school the first day as a first-grader. He stays in class an hour and talks the teacher into letting him see the principal. Johnny wants

promoted to the 3rd grade, he knows it all. The principal agrees to let him take a test given by the teacher. If Johnny passes the oral exam, he gets promoted. Ms. Smith, the teacher, gives him the first question - what do you have in the front of your pants that I don't? Pockets! Correct, what does a cow have 4 of that I only have 2? Legs. Correct, what do I do sitting that you do standing that a dog does on 3 legs? Shake hands! Very good. At which time the principal interrupts saying "pass him! I missed all 3!"

Here's the question for you -- what three things important to your business do not come with written instructions? Instructions for care, handling and use come on boxes of pesticides or in owners manuals for equipment but I have yet to see an employee come to work with instructions imprinted on their forehead. Nor have I seen customers enter a store with instructions emblazoned across their chests. Employees, consumers and money makes three. My dollars don't come with written instructions on how to make the money work hard for me. The closest thing to written instructions is the phrase "In God We Trust" and sometimes I'm skeptical of God. Manage these three assets wisely and profit will surely be yours.

I want to give you a baker's dozen of management tips (13 if you count them):

- 1) Know your business
- 2) Know your customers' interests
- 3) Anticipate your customers' problems
- 4) Solve at least part of the problem

- 5) Make promises realistically
- 6) Be a team member
- 7) Help the customer become a hero
- 8) Feed your customers ideas
- 9) Be truthful
- 10) Use your time productively
- 11) Innovate
- 12) Communicate fully and completely and openly
- 13) Serve, and serve willingly.

You've been very patient. I want to close with the 10 Commandments to Floricultural Marketing.

Just as Moses handed down the 10 strategies for living, consider these 10 commandments as strategies for successful floricultural marketing in a time of changing lifestyles. The Greenhouse Grower magazine was nice enough to publish these for me several years ago.

I This is the first commandment. It is the Law of the Profits that good markets exist only where demand goes ahead of supply. Therefore, build demand, and yet more demand for your horticultural products.

II And the second commandment is like unto the first: Teach your customer diligently the merits of plants and flowers; for only a fool buys that for which he knows no use. Prepare the market carefully in advance, for education costs only cents per sale, but the price of ignorance is in dollars.

- III A thousand growers shall not attempt to sell their horticultural products to seven buyers, for verify the growers will cut each other's prices to pieces and the buyer will wink and laugh. But a similar number of sellers and buyers makes a firm market and lightens the pocket book of all.
- IV He who sells by undercutting his neighbor's price has thrown a boomerang which will return to smite him. His neighbor shall cut him in turn, and both will be sorely wounded in the hip pocket.
- V You shall not attempt to market a bulky volume of horticulture, for the seller of a million plants attracts the hard-cash buyers, but the pushcart peddler must hunt the by-ways and alleys for a bad check customer.
- VI Unless you are a professional salesman as well as a grower, hire yourself a marketer, for the amateur cannot compete equally with the professional, and the buyers of horticulture products today are surely professionals.
- VII Guard diligently against overfilling the nearby markets, for a glut ruins the price level and the blight spreads like wild fire over land and sea. Offer your plants and products to many cities for foliage and flowers grow only in certain spots on this terrestrial ball, but all the people of all nations appreciate nature's beauty.

- VIII Strive mightily for a stable market, for therein the merchant buys tomorrow's needs freely and with confidence. But when the price cutters enter, the merchant withholds buying lest his competitor buys cheaper or tomorrow's price be lower; and the unsold plants pile up like a dammed river, unto the bursting thereof.
- IX An honest grade and quality is delight of all merchants and brings reorders; but a deceitful or a sloppy pack induces wrath and rejection.
- X Forget not that the eye controls the purse strings; that dying plants are repulsive and poor condition looks shabby; and that your horticultural products must sell themselves alongside scores of other plants and flowers from your competitors.

Thank you.

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