

# GROWERTALKS

## GT in Brief

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### LiveTrends Earns Top Target Vendor Award

*Chris Beytes*



Target has named LiveTrends the 2024 Food & Beverage Business Partner of the Year at their annual Vendor Summit in Minneapolis last week.

“Still can’t believe we won,” Bisser wrote via email. “LiveTrends was selected among hundreds of exceptional (and much larger) companies. Thank you to everyone at Target who believed in us and challenged us to create and innovate. And a big thank you to the entire LiveTrends team, who always achieves the impossible.”

L to R: Andrew Schuster, Senior Director of Produce; Terah Reed, LiveTrends’ Sales Director for Target; Bisser Georgiev; Lauren Cadotte, Floral Buyer; Robby Cruz, VP of Produce; and John Conlin, Target’s Senior VP of Food & Beverage.

How did a floral vendor come out on top in the food & beverage category? Well, if you know grocers (which Target is, in part), they put floral under produce and produce is part of food & beverage. But that also means LiveTrends was vending against some heavy hitters like Chiquita, Frito-Lay, PepsiCo and so many more multi-billion multinationals. And to make it even sweeter, it’s the first time the honor has gone to a floral vendor.

The bigger question is how? How did LiveTrends impress Target so thoroughly? It’s taken a few years of hard work and innovation ... “and, most importantly, being able to quickly respond to difficult creative challenges that Target wants to explore,” Bisser explained.

One of Target’s big requests was to come up a vision of the future of the floral department—a vision that would keep the category growing for the next five to 10 years. Bisser’s crew of talented designers set to work imaging a floral department that cross-merchandised with other Target product categories, including home décor, lifestyle and outdoor living. They created a massive retail installation within their showrooms at the LiveTrends campus in Apopka, Florida, utilizing many Target products well beyond LiveTrends’ cool containers. Jetloads of Target execs flew to Central Florida several times to tour and learn the details of the vision.

They were impressed. So impressed, in fact, that they asked Bisser to set up a similar display at their corporate headquarters in Minneapolis ... the next week! Despite the logistical challenge, Bisser’s crew pulled it off, wowing

the rest of the corporate executives who walked past the display for several months.

LiveTrends also innovates with products that fit the Target guest profile and they rotate in new designs every four weeks. Their ability to create unique “targeted” (pun intended) products also impressed the company.

Bisser credits the fact that, unlike those other big Target vendors, his company is privately owned.

“We don’t need to have big board meetings and committees to approve our investments. We can basically decide today and tomorrow we start.”

He said Target hasn’t seen a vendor that can react on any request basically overnight. “And that’s huge.”

This is not the first award LiveTrends has earned from one of its customers. Back in October of 2021 they were named Lowe’s Vendor of the Year for Lawn & Garden. Founded by Bisser in 2013, LiveTrends Design Group operates with the goal of “Making life more beautiful by fusing nature and art.” Each year, the company creates more than 700 collections of unique living home décor. Today, they employ more than 550 people and reach more than 14 million homes each year. **GT**