

Snow, coronavirus, and ways to be the light



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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Happy Spring (Er, Sort Of)
Resources
Marketing During COVID-19
Nature During COVID-19
Now, Go Share

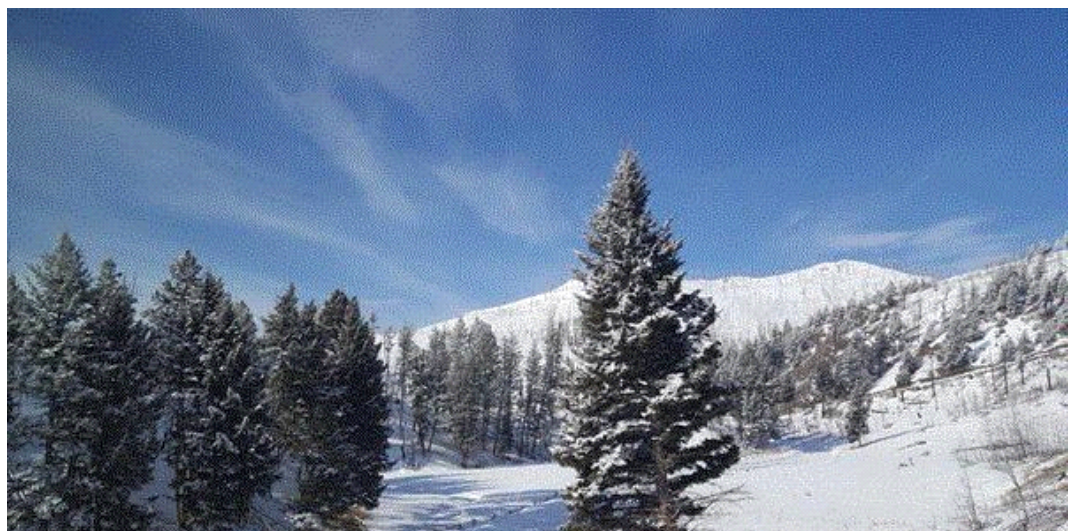
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Happy Spring (Er, Sort of)

I think I have whiplash from the last week. Probably most of you do. I was working at the finish line of the NCAA Skiing Championships last week and within an hour I was fielding calls from clients and writing press releases about the impacts of COVID-19.

I'm not going to pontificate on the unknowns, the fears, or the economic implications right now—plenty of that elsewhere. But one thing I keep coming back to is how grateful I am to have my outdoor lifestyle, my gardening skills and the landscape around me. Not only do these things mean I have a lot of food security, outdoor space and self reliance, but they ground me and will continue to bring me joy no matter how long I'm stuck here at home. I'll admit, I have to consciously seek out the beauty laid out so plainly before me.





As I stare out the window at my winterscape at 6,000 ft., I'm a little jealous of those places where you can search for buds and blooms and shoots of green each day. (I'm still skiing up the hill with the dogs every afternoon.) I'm itching for that day when I can get down on my knees and appreciate spring at the macro level.

The point is: share that beauty, give people that moment. You have a lot to offer the world right now—your plants, your knowledge about those plants, but also the gift of helping people breathe in the beauty around them.



Resources

I'm going to keep with the glass-half-full tone here and remind you that the internet is bursting with resources right now. Look for the help. Use it.

In particular:

AmericanHort has set up a **coronavirus resource center**. It has everything from news on legislation and foreign labor to communication tips and infographics on the benefits of plants.

Purdue has an **online guide** to help agricultural producers navigate changes in the market.

Society of American Florists has a series of **webinars** to help businesses navigate some of these changes, including communications, HR management and financial planning. You can watch them recorded or live at <https://safnow.org/events-education/webinars/>.



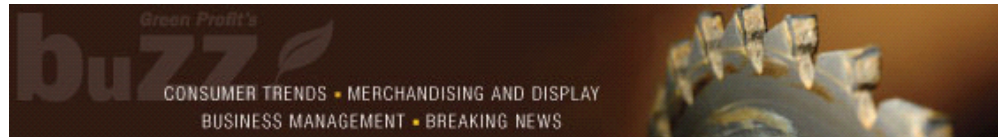
Marketing During COVID-19?



It's easy during a stressful time like this to focus only on COVID-19 or only on sales in your communications. A better strategy is to make sure that you rotate through multiple themes in your social media and email communications, while still being relevant (and avoiding those tone-deaf posts). It might look something like this:

- Promote a product or service.
- Share a post about another organization in your community.
- Update on how your company is handling COVID-19.
- Encourage self-care and share the benefits of plants. The National Garden Bureau has a few ideas [HERE](#) and some great graphics to share on their social media. AmericanHort has infographics [HERE](#).
- Simply celebrate plants/gardens with a beautiful photo.
- Thank an employee or supplier for something great they did.
- Offer a piece of garden advice.
- Share a suggestion to help with today's reality: like a fun do-at-home activity for kids. (I've come up with a few ideas below.)

Each of these themes makes up what is called a "content bucket" and by repeatedly hitting content buckets that define your business, you share not only your story as a company but WHO you are and what you represent. This keeps it authentic. If helping others is part of who you are, yes, toot your horn when you help someone else. But walk the walk and encourage your audience to help others in need, too—whether it's a neighboring business who needs support or a local food pantry.



Ways Families Can Use Plants & Nature During COVID-19

So you've got a whole bunch of parents out there with kids home from school, and they're looking for ways to keep the peace and stay sane. Nature has never been more needed.

Here are some suggestions you can offer your audiences—be it on social media or in emails. And hey, you don't have to be social distancing for these; they're good ideas to share anytime. (They just might be more desperately appreciated right now.)

1) Easy art project: design gardens on paper. Have your child draw their dream garden. Make sure they include paths, plants, whimsical features, maybe something including water.

LINKS:

[American Society of Landscape Architects Activity Book for Kids](#)

[More nature and garden art projects](#)

2) Play in the dirt. I stole this idea from [Children & Nature Network](#): "Set aside a piece of ground in the backyard for kids to dig in. Research suggests that children strengthen their immune systems by playing in the dirt—and weaken those systems by avoiding dirt. In South Carolina, Norman McGee bought a pickup-truck-load of dirt and delivered it to his yard for his kids to dig in. He reports that the dirt pile cost less than a video game and lasted far longer."

3) Plant a tree, flower or shrub and have your child adopt it. (Or adopt an existing one.) Put them in charge of watering and nurturing it. Make it part of their daily chores. Have them start a journal about it.

4) Plant seeds. It's the perfect time of year to start seedlings in the windowsill, or maybe even in the ground. After planting, have them record growth and daily changes.

5) Press flowers, leaves, and other plant bits. If you have access to even a little bit of backyard or nature, go on a collection hunt, and then press your findings between the pages of a heavy book or in a flower press. After they dry (about 7 to 10 days), turn them into an art project. If you collect and press every day, you can do an "unveiling" of a pressed page each day.

My good friend Ali Haas, at [Wildly Pressed](#), makes these fine creations, which should serve as a great inspiration.



Now, Go Share

Hope that helps you out! If nothing else, follow [@WildlyPressed](#) on Instagram and enjoy her new creations each week. Flowers make magic in the compost, but I'm learning that they can also create art long after they've dried up.



Until next time,

Jennifer

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