

Communicating with Customers During COVID-19 and Hot New Perennials



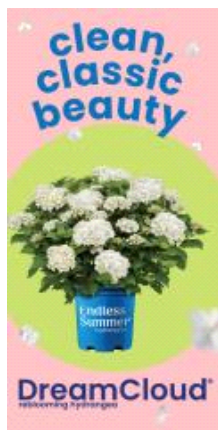
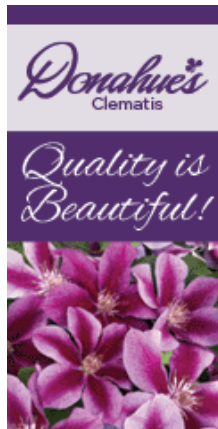
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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

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Perennial PULSE

News and commentary on the global perennial plant market



Communicating During a Pandemic

The ability to communicate effectively is one of the most important life skills to learn. The escalating pandemic is changing the way we do business and the importance of communicating with our customers. I found a good article on [Pen & Petal's website](#) that provides several communication strategies and tips businesses can consider during these challenging times.



The article is built around this premise: "The uncertainty of the current situation creates anxiety in people, so knowing that some things are constant is important. Let your customers know that you're there for them—and that you are their constant."

The article offers numerous ideas on how you can build your strategies and messages to improve your communication and business in the months ahead. Some of the major tips and strategies will help you to individualize, reassure, communicate creatively, provide offsite support, create virtual events and videos, demonstrate how to use social media, and how to remain positive.

The article is too long to post here, but I highly encourage you to click [HERE](#) and read this informative and timely article.



Looking for Romance

Are you looking for "Romance"? I'm not talking about the mushy, lovey-dovey stuff, I'm talking about the new Oriental lilies from ThinkPlants. You'll fall in love with them quickly as they finish and flower in only 60 to 70 days.



Distant Romance



Fine Romance



Smart Romance

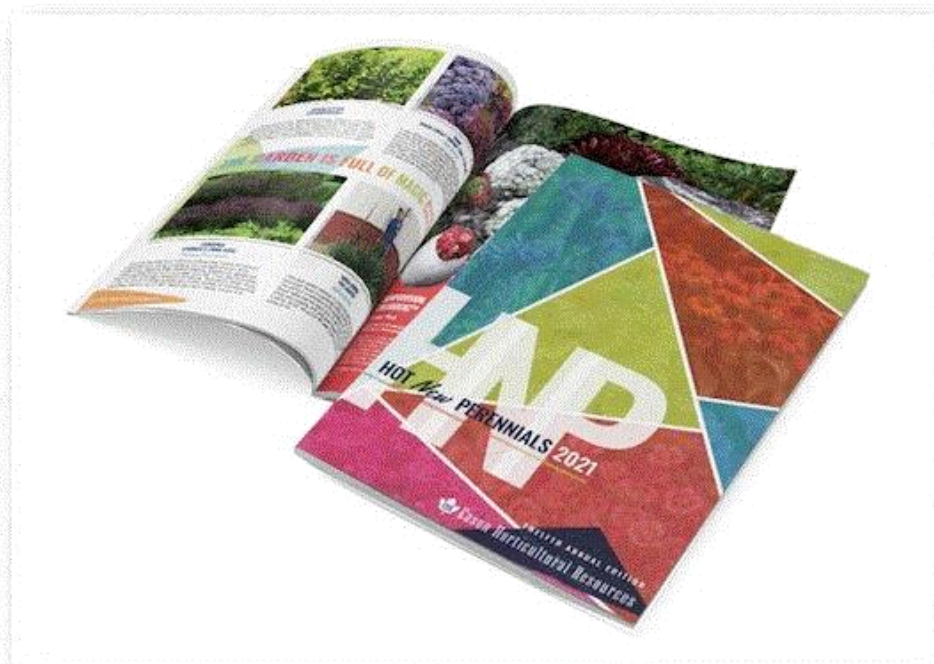
There are four cultivars (Fine Romance, Smart Romance, White Romance and Distant Romance) that finish in 70 days or less. If you're more patient and prefer a slower progression in your quest for romance, there are three cultivars in the Romance series that bloom in 70 to 80 days, five cultivars with 90- to 100-day finish times and two cultivars taking 110 days. As you can see, there's a Romance for everybody.

Click [HERE](#) to see all the Romance Oriental lily cultivars offered by ThinkPlants.



Hot New Perennials

Maybe you're not looking for romance, but are interested in finding some hot new perennials. I can also help you out in this department. Actually, it's not me—it's [Eason Horticultural Resources \(EHR\)](#). They recently released their 2021 Hot New Perennials booklet.



The Hot New Perennials (HNP) booklet contains a compilation of new perennials from a broad range of breeding companies, breeder representatives and young plant producers. It's chock full of new perennials, ranging from plant collector specialty perennials to many perennials destined to be future best sellers.

Click [HERE](#) to download a digital copy of the HNP booklet, or if you'd prefer a hard copy, simply request one by contacting EHR at info@ehnet.com.



A Few Hot New Perennials

As you already know, I love perennials and enjoy finding new ones to grow and play with in the landscape. When going through EHRs Hot New Perennials booklet, there were lots of awesome new perennials that caught my attention. I can't possibly show them all here, but I can share a few of them with you.

Agastache Crazy Fortune



I love a good agastache nearly as much as the pollinators do and **Concept Plants** has a new one I think you'll like as much as I do. It's called Crazy Fortune. At first glance, it looks like the best-selling cultivar, Blue Fortune, but closer inspection reveals its variegated leaves. It grows about 30-in. tall and produces blue-purple blooms from July through September. Hardy to Zone 6.

Dicentra Ruby Gold



This new dicentra with yellow foliage from **Terra Nova Nurseries** creates contrasting focal points when used in shade gardens. Ruby Gold was bred and selected for its gold foliage and true red flowers. It has good vigor and produces strong, upright stems that bare the iconic heart-shaped flowers. Ruby Gold reaches 26 in. and is cold hardy to Zone 4.

Phlox Spring Bling



Proven Winners is introducing three absolutely eye-catching *Phlox subulata* cultivars in the new Spring Bling series. They are (from left to right) Pink Sparkles, Rose Quartz and Ruby Riot. They all bloom early and have large flowers; the flowers of Pink Sparkles are a whopping 1.5-in. across—that's double the size of most other *P. subulatas* on the market.

The Spring Bling cultivars have a great mounding habit and cover themselves near completely with tons of flowers in the early spring. I think you'll like the appearance and performance of this new series. Hardy to Zone 3.

A Sweet Victory

Leucanthemum Sweet Daisy Birdy from Dümmer Orange was recently recognized by [All-American Selections](#) (AAS) as a regional winner for the Mountain/Southwest region.



Sweet Daisy Birdy has demonstrated both good cold and heat tolerance, and maintained a tidy, sturdy habit over the three-year AAS perennial trials. The 5-in. reflexed daisy blooms feature small feathery petals around golden yellow button centers. This first-year flowering shasta daisy is a good choice for containers and mixed containers, as well as a strong performer in the landscape. Hardy to Zone 4.

Year-End Events

Here are a few industry virtual events I thought you might be interested in. Keep in mind that these events are usually open to everyone; you don't necessarily need to live in that region or be even be a member of the organization to attend. That's actually one of the beneficial side effects of living in a pandemic world—you can easily attend trade events that you would never have participated in the past.

Click the title of the event(s) you're interested in learning more about.



- | | |
|----------------|--|
| November 17 | HRI Thrive Webinar Series—Spotted Lanternfly: Impacts & Strategies for Ornamental Plants |
| November 17 | The Future of Retail in a Post-Pandemic World |
| November 18-19 | ACI's Biostimulants Europe |
| November 19 | AmericanHort Retail Tour: A Virtual Experience |
| December 2 | Northeast Greenhouse Webinar Series: Learn the Newest Strategies to Keep Root Rots from Hurting Your Bottom Line |
| December 8-10 | Great Lakes Expo |
| December 9 | Northeast Greenhouse Webinar Series—Young Plants and Plant Growth Regulators: Saving Time and Improving Quality |
| December 9 | Perennial Plant Association Virtual Edition—Great Garden Tours: Beyond the Landscape—Features with Winter Interest |
| December 9 | AmericanHort Webinar—E-Commerce Mastery Series: Class 1: Zero to E-Commerce |
| December 16 | Northeast Greenhouse Webinar Series: Cleaning Surfaces in the Greenhouse |

Thanks for reading this edition of *Perennial Pulse*. My email is ppilon@ballpublishing.com if you have any comments or suggestions.

Take care,

Paul Pilon

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