

Small biz slump? Plus Pantone's COY, GT's guide and your thoughts



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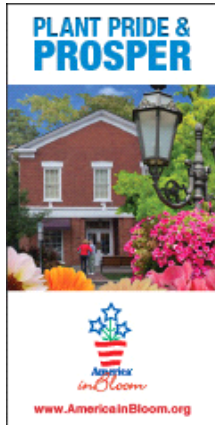


Small Biz Saturday Slump?

It appears Small Business Saturday stayed true to its name in one respect. Apparently turnout to the day that promotes shopping locally has been slumping: this year saw 104 million Americans shopping, with 108 million in 2017 and 112 million in 2016 (I could find only one source for those numbers and it is [HERE](#)). Despite the lower turnout, revenue for November 24 hit an all-time high of \$17.8 billion.

As long as the money is coming in, right? Well, let's rethink this in light of the news on the online shopping front. Instead of hitting Main Street, consumers are shopping via digital channels. RetailNext forecasts a 15% increase in year-over-year sales conducted through digital means. Wow, 15%! Wouldn't you love to see those kinds of numbers? And this year's Cyber Monday was the largest online shopping day in U.S. history (\$7.9 billion) with a 19.3% year-over-year increase. And it looks like folks are shopping from the comfort of their turkey-induced comas on





Black Friday, too. That day's digital sales clocked in at a 23.6% increase over 2017.

How was your Small Business Saturday this year? Let me know how your day went by emailing me at ewells@ballpublishing.com.



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Maybe It's the Millennials

Maybe the Millennials have something to do with it. They seem to be taking the heat for lots of different industries' poor fortunes lately. Did you hear that the canned tuna industry blames slumping sales on the fact that Millennials don't own can openers?

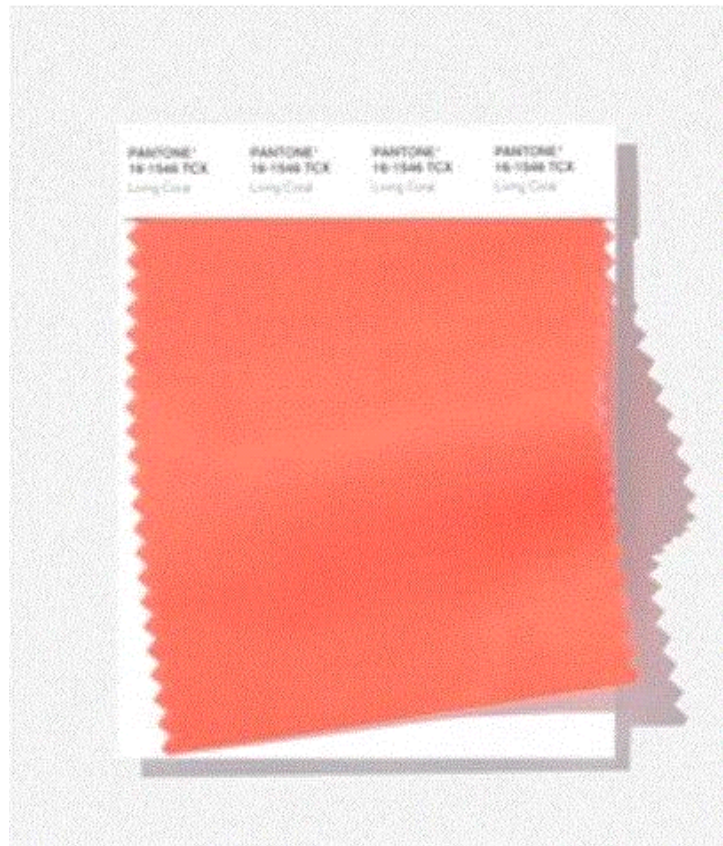
I caught a report on [NPR](#) that Millennials spending less may not be because they don't want to but because they don't have any (or much) to spend. The report cites a study that found that Millennials have "lower earnings, fewer assets and less wealth" than Gen Xers and Boomers at the same age. Why? Because they came of age during the Great Recession with its weak labor market and tight credit. Add onto that increased health care costs, way higher educational costs and relatively stagnant wages, and you get a cohort of Americans whose "attitudes toward saving and spending" are much different than folks older than them.

The last line of the piece says, "...it remains to be seen whether having reached adulthood during those unfavorable years will have permanent effects on their tastes and preferences." I have a hunch it will.



Living Coral

That's the name of Pantone's Color of the Year for 2019. And if you ask me, it's a beauty! Just look.



Officially known as “Pantone 16-1546,” Living Coral is a “vibrant, yet mellow” color with golden undertones, according to one of the globe’s leading color authorities. Says the Pantone executive director Leatrice Eiseman in a release, “Color is an equalizing lens through which we experience our natural and digital realities, and this is particularly true for Living Coral. With consumers craving human interaction and social connection, the humanizing and heartening qualities displayed by the convivial Pantone Living Coral hit a responsive chord.”

Well, I’ve seen many a living thing in addition to coral wearing this color. Geraniums and impatiens are the first to come to mind. Oh, and I recall some diascias and such, too.

Meeting the demand for trendy Living Coral? We got this.



Read This

Friend and colleague Katie Elzer-Peters turned me on to a Medium.com blog post by garden blogger/writer/event planner Teresa Speight. The post, entitled “We Grow More Than Collards,” addresses race in the world of gardening and horticulture. Any description I give of her topic will totally not do it justice, so I encourage you to [READ IT](#).

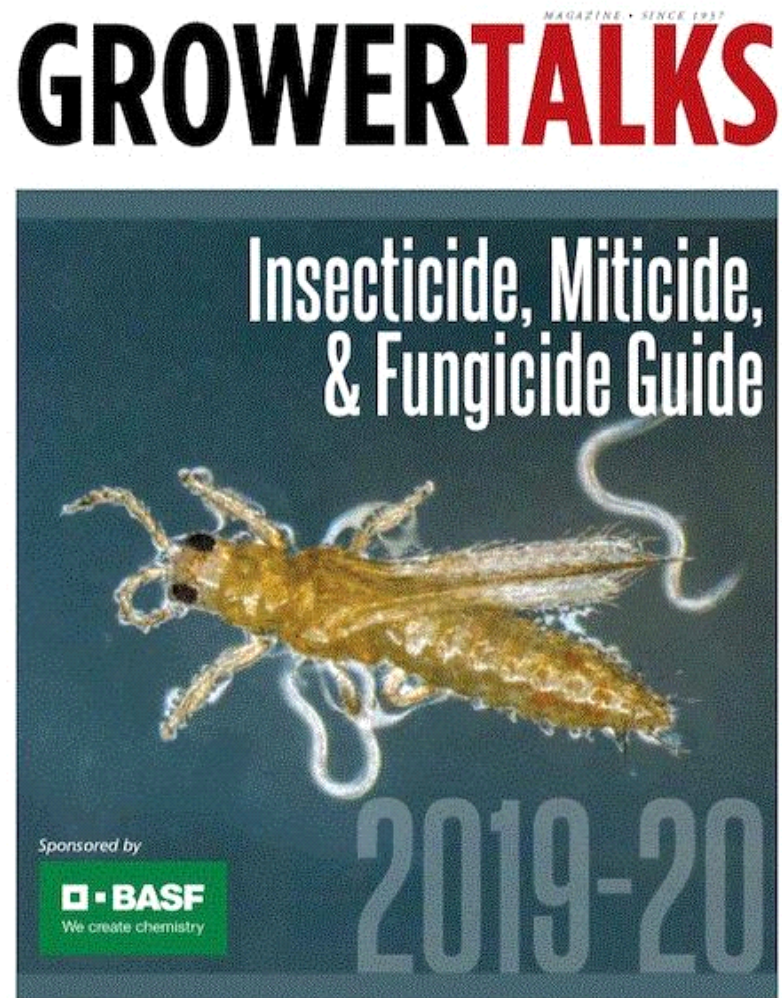
And I encourage you to do so because it's important. It's important for us as individuals and as an industry to take a step back and say, “Whoah, what stereotypes am I/are we holding onto that need to be let go?” Or, “Yes, she's right—where are the African Americans in gardening promotion and advertisements?”

And Teresa, bravo to you for writing what's in your heart and on your mind.



New Guide for 'Cides

The new Insecticide, Miticide & Fungicide Guide from *GrowerTalks* is hot off the presses—and the PDF press, too.



The guide highlights the 2019 pest control materials for managing insect and mite pests in greenhouses, as well as focuses on topics like fall disease prevention, battling whiteflies, chemical class charts for ornamental fungicides, disease facts and controls and much more. You can download the PDF version [HERE](#) or wait for it to arrive in your mailboxes this month. And you can thank BASF for making its production possible.

Webinar Alert!

Speaking of control measures, the latest webinar from the great minds at Ball Publishing concerns the latest developments in the world of beneficial nematodes. They are more popular than ever, but there are some things the beneficial nematode user such as yourself should know. Consider "Beneficial Nematodes: Where Are We?" to be your update on the who/what/where/when/why/how of the nematode playing field.

Who better to talk about beneficial nematodes (or any sort of beneficials, for that matter) than Suzanne "Buglady" Wainright. Suzanne will be joined by BASF scientist Julie Graesch, and both will discuss all matters beneficial nematode.

In this webinar you will learn:

- The commercially available nematode species
- Their biology and target pests
- Available formulations
- How to get the most out of your nematode applications
- What's new in research

Join Suzanne, Julie and the ever-present Chris Beytes for this FREE webinar, taking place Thursday, December 13 at 1 p.m. Eastern (noon Central). Register for it over at www.growertalks.com/webinars. Special thanks to BASF for sponsoring this pertinent webinar!

You Told Me

Last week I asked your opinions on poinsettias presented at the Heimos/Millstadt Young Plants trials and also on the hot trend of black Christmas trees.

For poinsettias, Judy Mitchell responded to the fact that Chris Beytes mentioned Heimos trials not having a lot of white varieties. "Princettia White has sold out at Mitchell's Nursery & Greenhouse. It's the first true white. Lots of customer interest, even if it is a little small. Frozen and White Wonder are both whiter than others, but not as white as Princettia White. I will increase numbers of them next year."



In other poinsettia opinions, Mark Smith called the Christmas Wish series “superb.”

As for the black Christmas tree trend, all but one comment said it was tacky/ridiculous/awful. That one other comment was more of a lesson on how to conduct business, sent in by the folks at All Seasons Garden Center:

“When we first started in business a tree supplier of ours told the story of a customer coming in and requesting a black tree, wreath, garland and etc., to which he replied, ‘Who would be silly enough to want black at Christmas?’ He lost the sale to someone else willing to do what the customer wanted. Another lesson in the business world: Listen to the customer and don’t be quick to say no.”

Isn’t that a fact, I say.

Lastly, Marvin Miller sent along a photo of not only a black tree (extreme far left) but also trees in all the colors of the (florescent) rainbow. He took this while on a visit to Perino’s in 2010.



Wow is what I have to say to that one.

Speaking of Trees ...

What does a New Englander do when it's a wet, windy and generally gross Sunday? Why, they take a 2-hour long ferry ride to Nantucket to experience the island's annual Christmas Stroll. Yes, the ride over was stomach churning, but once I got off the boat (and kissed the solid ground) I basked in the holiday happenings. Wet, but fun nonetheless.

On display at the Whaling Museum were dozens of Christmas trees decorated and sponsored by local businesses. They were all pretty cool and varied in their interpretation of the season. Here are three that stood out for me.







Tree-Rex! I laughed out loud! What creativity to imagine a tree as a dinosaur. I also spotted a Christmas tree formed from green sandbags. Seemed appropriate for the day, unless the proprietor was just getting prepared.

What's the most creative tree you've seen—or created—this season? Send me a pic [HERE](#).

Finally...

There's an effort afoot at Ball Publishing to pick up our social media engagement. And by "social media," we mean Facebook. Let's face it—as colleague Jen Zurko says, Twitter should only be for celebrities and professional athletes (I agree!).

So, I encourage you to head on over to the [Green Profit Facebook page](#) and see what is new, say hello and leave a comment or two. We'll respond—promise!

Comments, questions or suggestions? Email me at ewells@ballpublishing.com.

Ellen

Ellen Wells
Editor-at-Large
Green Profit

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