

A SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

FOR FLORAL RETAILERS AND WHOLESALERS

Case Study: North Haven Gardens

Company History

The Pinkus family started North Haven Gardens in Dallas, TX, in 1951 on a nine acre plot of land that was then on a country lane. The business began primarily as a landscaping company, but the demand for their plants lead to the opening of a retail garden center. They were recognized throughout the community for introducing new plants while keeping their commitment to high quality. In 1972, the company started a production facility in Wylie, TX, which today is more than 280,000 sq.ft. In the 1980's, the company underwent some big changes, separating the production facility from landscape and retail, and in 2000, the landscape division was sold to ValleyCrest. In January, 2005, Leslie Finical Halleck was hired as general manager of the retail division. In 2007, the production facility introduced a new brand, "Blue Label Herbs" to provide gardeners with a reliable source of their own fresh herbs.

We talked with Leslie Finical-Halleck and Nikki Rosen about North Haven Garden's use of social media and how that contributes to the retailer's success today.

Sound Marketing

NHG believes in sound marketing as knowing the fundamentals of your market and communicating with them. They stressed the importance of understanding the local customer base (minorities, cultural groups, special interest groups, the political, entertainment and music preferences, etc.) as an essential first step to effective marketing. They have targeted a diverse customer base by using alternative newspapers or magazines. These local niche papers may have

NORTH HAVEN Gardens Specials This Just In
Events Directions

Newsletter | Services | Garden Solutions | Edibles | Garden Coach | Shop Online | Facebook | Blog

Cool Season Veggies are HERE...Plus our New Raised Bed Kit Installation!

We have a new Raised Bed Installation Program! All the details are [here](#). Broccoli, Cauliflower, Mustard Greens, Kale, Swiss Chard are in-stock now. More arrive next week.

Events

Specialty IRIS! In stock now!
Limited quantity of colors you find anywhere else in town!
Drought tolerant. Hardy Texas spring/fall bloomer. See varieties in stock [here](#).

FRI, AUG 31st 1-1:45PM
Fall Vegetable Gardens

SEPTEMBER POP UP Classes
SEPT 1st 11am **Fall Lawn**
SAT, SEPT 8th 11AM
Growing Fruit Trees
SUN, SEPT 9th 11:30AM
Berries & Grapes

OCT 20th Details [here](#)
Fairy Garden Contest

Email us! feedback@nhg.com

Like us on Facebook [here](#).

Follow me on [Pinterest](#)

Join our FREE Email Mailing List

Your Ultimate Urban Garden Center!
North Haven Gardens - 7700 Northaven Rd. - 214-363-5316 Jobs About Us Warranty Plan www.nhg.com

less costly advertising and are read by a local (and often loyal) customer base. These local papers may also have ability to target specific zip codes. NHG can



sometimes get a special deal for advertising because they are a regular customer. These niche market papers may also give a business the ability to “be more cheeky” or develop ad that pushes the envelope, gets more “looks,” or becomes collection-worthy. Once, NHG planted a bra which was photographed for advertisements in a

niche paper. The photograph sold at an auction of ad artwork, bought by Susan G. Komen (breast cancer research) board member.

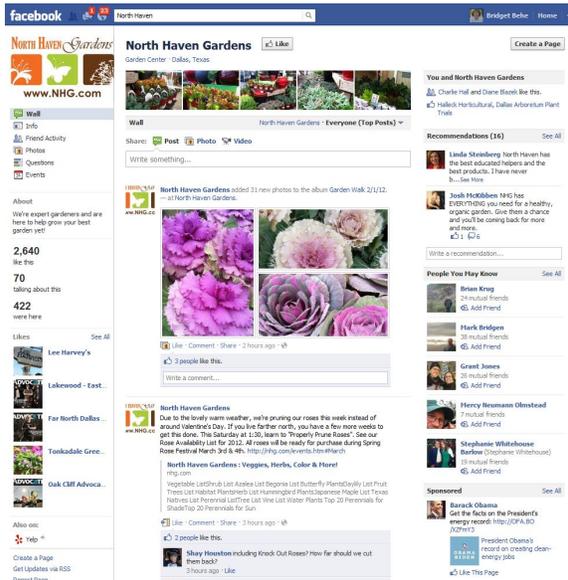
Social Media Strategy

Leslie Finical Halleck says, “We’re all busy. We want things easy.” NHG strives to be a one-stop to make the shopping and buying processes easier. To remain highly visible and profitable, garden centers, nurseries and florists need to change their business models to be more connected and relevant to customers. One of the stand-alone retailer’s greatest strengths is the ability to have a one-on-one relationship with customers. The use of social media gives the small business an opportunity to capture their share of the market. NHG believes that what’s good for the independent garden center community is good for everybody. They strive to build a culture of people visiting independent garden centers/florists/nurseries.

The most essential first step to becoming effective with social media is to develop a web presence (website). Even if a company is successful today, they should not be comfortable with that position – others will come along. From the website to social media, it is essential to keep a similar “look and feel” across media, from the website, e-mails, newsletters, ads, etc. Repeating elements of look and message will reinforce the image to customers. That way, customers will know what to expect and the consistency will help reinforce the brand name and image.

NHG strives to make advertising content interesting and engaging (e.g. on the urban hipster checklist.) They use a resource such as ConstantContact® for e-mail blasts; customize their emails to look like their website. Repetition and consistence makes all the impressions cohesive. It is the content that generates attention because users share content beyond what they’re seeing on the page. NHG feels they have to get people’s attention because they’re bombarded with choices. They’ve opted to formulate their identity and message (an independent garden center/nursery/florist) and then they “walk the walk.”

North Haven has one person fully dedicated to marketing and advertising and another part-time person. They work together as a team and exchange idea. They believe they have found creative thinkers who are good with aesthetics. The message and the image have to be on target, but a bit on the edge to capture attention and encourage customers to visit the store.



NHG does all of their advertisement and social media production in-house. Leslie has blogged for NHG since 2006 and posts on that blog once or twice per week during the slower times with posts a few times per week during busier periods.

NHG started using Facebook in 2007, which began a friend page. They work with the Facebook page at least twice a day (an hour or two a day) and post even on weekends. They limit the number of plant questions they answer on Facebook (and they get a lot). Their real goal with Facebook is to encourage friends to come into the store. Just because the person follows

your blog or is a Facebook friend, doesn't mean they'll visit the store. Leslie says they have to be keen to know when to cut the flow of information off; realizing when the topic has run its course. Most of the Facebook activity is to invite people into store, and NHG often has a special topic on Facebook (related to a special product or event) at least a few times each week.

For florists, NHG sees great opportunity through the use of Social Media. Leslie suggests posting or highlighting a flower a day. She suggested, "People get bouquets, but have no idea what flowers are in the bouquet. Florists could name and add the meaning to some flowers used in bouquets that week." All independent retailers should strive to have a relationship with customers. She also adds, "Customers could post bouquet



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Should my plant be yellow, or is it chlorotic? Maybe you need a Chlorosis Corrector!

What does it mean when we tell you that your plant is chlorotic? It means they are suffering from a micronutrient deficiency called chlorosis. Symptoms may range from a mild yellowing of the leaf tissue between the veins to severe yellowing. This can lead to the death of leaves, lack of vigor, and possibly death of the entire plant. Chlorosis often occurs in soils that are alkaline and heavy clay, like we have here in North Texas, especially during times of extreme heat.



An example of a chlorotic leaf. Unsure if your plants are chlorotic? Bring a sample of your plant to NHG Monday-Friday!

Chlorosis is typically caused when leaves do not have enough nutrients to synthesize all the chlorophyll they need. It can be brought about by a combination of factors including:

June 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Photo Albums

- ▶ Backyard Chickens
- ▶ NHG Market Garden
- ▶ NHG House Plants Garden

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and ask what flowers are in it.” It creates a conversation and makes social media an interactive, personal relationship, which is also a lot of fun.

Nikki Rosen talked about NHG use of Pinterest. She said while it might not result in as many sales as Facebook, it's still a wonderful piece for inspiration. It is harder to track because "followers" on Pinterest can remain anonymous, but it's still a wonderful piece for inspiration. She adds a few pins each week, especially when they get something new in the store, such as new containers or new bulbs. She posts on FB then links to our Pinterest board in the comments.

