

## Use gift cards to increase sales!

Electronic gift cards are the new “plastic”—a great way to increase your shop’s revenue and encourage new customers to visit your shop.

It’s easy to add electronic gift cards to your shop’s marketing program. If you are upgrading to Dove POS™ 4.0 (with the gift card module) or use RTI 12, the ability to sell gift cards is built into your POS system. These gift cards are redeemable for all products and services at your shop. They can be loaded with any amount and work just like a credit or debit card. They come in eye-catching designs (at right); you can also customize them with your logo and shop information.

Here are just a few ideas that have worked for other florists:

- With the holidays around the corner, suggest to your current customers that they purchase gift cards for holiday parties and events as door prizes.
- Donate gift cards to local charity events—another easy way to introduce your shop to new customers.
- Make gift cards part of a frequent buyer program. For example, you could reward each customer who spends \$500 on products and services with a \$25 gift card.
- Use gift cards as credit for store returns.
- Contact local home builders and real estate agents in your area about including your gift cards in their “Welcome to Your New Home” baskets.
- “It’s very easy to drop a gift card in the mail as part of a thank you note to a very good customer,” says Chris Drummond of **Plaza Flowers in Philadelphia, PA**. “We have also been able to use gift cards when perhaps we disappoint a customer and we need to send an apology. Customers love getting those gift cards, and it brings them back to the store to visit you one more time.”
- “We have had gift cards for about three months,” says Caitlin Keeler of **Rosexpressions in Chicago, IL**. “They are easier and make a more up-to-date impression than the paper certificates we used to have to print out. I think they have become a necessity, something that all stores should have!”

### New Dove POS™ 4.0 can help with gift cards and more.

Dove POS™ 4.0 launches this fall, with new features to help you streamline work flow and productivity, improve customer satisfaction, and increase sales. Be among the first shops to have Dove POS 4.0 in place for the holiday season! New benefits include:

- **New standing order features:** Reduce staff time by avoiding re-keyed orders.
- **Care and handling instructions:** Improve customer satisfaction and reduce phone complaints and questions with care instructions included right on the ticket.
- **Funeral acknowledgements:** Customers’ orders will now include sender information for easier recognition by funeral directors and recipients.
- **Source codes:** Track customers’ regions and the source of referrals.
- **Location shortcut codes:** Save key address information for faster order entries with fewer errors.
- **Address verification:** Avoid delivery mistakes and reduce the number of callbacks with verification at the time of the order.
- **Gift cards** (sold as a separate module): Increase sales and attract new customers through a gift card program.

For more information on Dove POS™ 4.0 and gift cards, please contact Dove POS Support at 866.444.3683.

For more information on RTI and gift cards, please contact RTI Technical Support at 800.621.8324.



# myteleflora news

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## Hands-on profits

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### Gearing up for exciting holiday promotions.

Rich, crisp floral colors mark the autumn season and remind us that the holidays are right around the corner. I’m optimistic that our upcoming promotions will follow the same hugely successful path as Diamonds & Roses and our landmark America’s Favorite Mom did earlier this year.

By now, you’ve received your holiday marketing kit that supports the exciting events ahead. For Thanksgiving, if you’ve ever dreamed of stepping back in time, our Colonial Williamsburg contest might make that a reality. Our special sweepstakes offers both you and your customers a chance to win a trip to this historic city, with airfare, lodging, meals and lots of extras included in the enticing grand-prize package.

This promotion, along with three exquisite bouquets, is a great way to create a buzz among your customers!

Our Christmas lineup features seven super offerings and more chances to win prizes. Capitalizing on the popularity of one of America’s best-selling and most widely loved artists, the Thomas Kinkadee Childhood Home keepsake bouquet and the Home for the Holidays sweepstakes looks set to be another big hit.

The new movie “Thomas Kinkadee’s Christmas Cottage” comes out on DVD on November 11, a great attention-getter for this artist and his work. In the sweepstakes, three lucky consumers will receive grand prizes of a trip for two to Monterey,

California, and lunch with the artist.

That’s a powerful incentive to buy the Childhood Home bouquet, which is modeled after Kinkadee’s nostalgic, heart-warming painting “Christmas Cottage.” The hand-painted country cottage, surrounded by roses and greens, evokes the cozy warmth of a festive family gathering and is based on the cottage from the movie. The cottage window is illuminated by a soft light and flickering fire. Five florists (selected at random) will receive a box of Thomas Kinkadee cottages signed by the artist – another excellent marketing tool.

Additionally, if you enter the Lucky Silver Pinecone florist drawing, you’ll be eligible to win a free Teleflora membership for one year or a set of 2009 calendars imprinted with your shop’s name. With the Colonial Williamsburg and Thomas Kinkadee programs, supported by co-op and national advertising, we aim to generate awareness of Teleflora’s exclusive products and contests, drive traffic into your shops and boost sales for the season.

Making the holidays even happier is a cornerstone of our business. Our top-notch lineups represent terrific opportunities to do just that. ☛

Shawn Weidmann  
is President of Teleflora.



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**Struggling with state budget cuts**

Other florists may be challenged by revenue shortfalls, but in the case of **A New Leaf in Providence, RI**, the loss was quite sudden and dramatic. A New Leaf operates as a nonprofit. It's a flower and garden shop, but it also has another raison d'être: it serves a charitable purpose in hiring and training adults with psychiatric disabilities. To fulfill that mission, A New Leaf relies on an annual grant from the state of Rhode Island. This summer, however, the state cut its grant to the shop for 2009 in half, to \$57,500. "You just can't swallow this kind of cut quickly," says Christina Brown, board co-chair for A New Leaf. The shop is searching for other sources of funding, but the going is rough. Other charities across the nation are facing similar crises as many states slash philanthropic funds. (Photo by Rick Friedman, courtesy of the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*.)



**Forty years young**

**Lansing Floral in Lansing, IL** celebrated its 40th anniversary this summer, and Teleflora's Stew Fishman (at left in the photo) was on hand to present a congratulatory plaque to Jim Mayerak, who currently owns the shop along with brothers Sherman and Allen. Their dad Steve Mayerak bought the shop in 1968 and ran it successfully until two years ago,

when he turned it over to his sons, who continue to service the Lansing and surrounding areas.



**Third time's the charm**

For the third time this summer, a prestigious floral-industry association presented its highest award to Rich Salvaggio, Teleflora's Vice-President of Publications and Industry Relations. In August the **Southern Retail Florist Association** recognized Rich with the Harold Mills Distinguished Service Award, established by the board of directors to honor an individual within the floral industry who has distinguished themselves by untiring service to the industry and in particular to Southern Retail. Michael Gaddie AIFD, President of SRFA (at right in the photo), presented the award. In July, Rich was made a Fellow of AIFD and received an Achievement Award from the Texas State Florists' Association.



**A presidential gathering**

A gathering at this year's **Arkansas Florists Association** convention in August included three past presidents and one current president—presidents, that is, of the **Oklahoma State Florist Association!** Also on hand were Teleflora's marketing counselor Suzi Lawrence and chairman Tom Butler (at far left and right in the photo, respectively), ready to congratulate Renaye Johnston of **Stems, Inc. in Tulsa, OK**

(in green) on winning a Blackberry during Teleflora's America's Favorite Mom promotion. Seen from left to right are Suzi, Pat Wheeler and David Thompson, both of **Granada Floral in Oklahoma City**, Renaye, Marta Land of **House of Flowers in Shawnee, OK**, and Tom. David is currently president of the **Ozark Florist Association**.



**Business help for military service personnel**

At a time when America needs its military more than ever, some of those called upon to serve are florists, or members of florist families that rely on their participation and support. Leaving a business behind is a tough sacrifice to make—though it's only one among many for service personnel. Maybe you or a florist you know has been affected by that particular challenge. Now assistance is available, for veterans and for active duty military personnel and their spouses, from TeamFloral, a consulting service that helps florists become fully profitable. TeamFloral is offering a free profitability and marketing analysis (valued at \$995) to all military personnel and their spouses who own a flower shop and who served on active duty from 2003 to the present. TeamFloral founder Dan McManus, whose father served as a naval officer for 33 years, says, "I believe we have a duty to help our service personnel pursue the American Dream they are fighting to protect. The area we can help most is by providing increased profitability to help offset the costs of an absent owner who is away serving our country." It is common for a new member of TeamFloral to realize more than \$50,000 in additional profits the first year (membership is open to shops with more than \$500,000 in annual sales). "We want to help veterans and those on active duty who own flower shops to remain financially secure while they are gone," says Dan. For more information, contact TeamFloral at 800-342-2251 or visit [www.teamfloral.com](http://www.teamfloral.com).

# Florists and flower growers get a chance to learn from each other, thanks to Stems&Bunches.

How often do retail florists get a chance to talk with flower growers, and vice versa? Not often enough! So, when a bunch of growers came to visit Teleflora in Oklahoma City, the folks at Stems&Bunches saw an opportunity.

The growers were on hand to kick off the holiday standing-order season, meeting with inside sales and customer service teams for Stems&Bunches (Teleflora's on-line service that facilitates farm-direct purchasing for member florists). Area florists were also invited to meet the visiting growers. They were able to get firsthand information about some of the flower farms that supply products available through the Stems&Bunches website, and even to view a good variety of those products. The visit also gave the growers a chance to talk with Teleflora members to learn about their flower needs and buying habits.

The growers traveled from Colombia, Ecuador, and California, while the fresh-flower products on hand for viewing came from all of those places and also from Holland. The visit was so successful that plans are afoot to make it an annual event. ☘



*Top photo: Kent Miller from Passion Growers talks about his flower farm and its products with staff from Ann's Secret Garden in Bethany, OK. Bottom photo: Among the Stems&Bunches grower partners and staff members on hand were, from left to right, Kent Miller (Passion Growers), Jason Elliott (S&B), Ben Creighton (S&B), Michelle Williams (S&B), Don Klusendorf (Farmers' West), Mellissa McFarland (S&B), Jen White (S&B), Natalia Messier (Tierra Colombia), Pietro Martini (S&B), FJ Trzuskowski (S&B), Marcela Caycedo (Tierra Colombia), Gerald Minniefield (S&B), Lina Restrepo (Tierra Ecuador), Coby Walters (S&B), and Donetta Ruffner (S&B).*

## You can help your customers celebrate Christmas—all around the world.

Christmas is a worldwide holiday. That's why the upcoming holiday season is the perfect time to remind customers that, as a member of the Teleflora network, you can help them send flowers almost anywhere in the world, all year long—usually with next-day delivery.

Post signage to this effect, and mention "Next business-day delivery, worldwide!" in your advertising and on your website. You may well be surprised to find out how many of your customers have friends and relatives abroad. International sending is one more service that sets your shop apart. Promoting this service makes even more sense considering that international orders typically have higher price points.

Sending international orders the Teleflora way is easy and comes with an assurance of quality. Teleflora's international sending staff can offer expert advice on local customs and product availability. The Dove Network makes international sending simpler than ever, but you can also call, fax, or e-mail international orders. Instructions on all of these options can be found in the International Working Pages, in the back of the Resource Guide that comes with your Teleflora Member Directory.

Flowers are the universal language, they say. It's nice that we have a way of sending messages in that language across international borders with ease and assurance. ☘



Tom Butler AAF is Chairman of Teleflora.

More updates from Tom can be found at [MyTeleflora.com](http://MyTeleflora.com).

## Get creative with the containers for upcoming Teleflora bouquets!



**Teleflora's Pick of the Patch Bouquet (08H100)**

- A pumpkin is an autumn icon that works for more than one holiday. Add a silly jack-o'-lantern face for Halloween, or use it plain and simple on your Thanksgiving table.
- Make this a real trick-or-treat gift: fill the pumpkin with candy treats, festively wrap it with decorative papers, and give it as a corporate gift to your favorite business.
- You can even use the container as a planter! Fill the generous opening with green trailing ivy or perky blooming plants for the ultimate long-lasting autumn centerpiece.



**Teleflora's Williamsburg Golden Pitcher Bouquet (08T300)**

- The pitcher is lovely as a vessel for casual drop in bouquets, but it's also a functional piece of tableware with exceptional keepsake value.
- Fill it with all one type of flower, like gerbera daisies, for an upscale look.
- It's the perfect height for garden flowers like roses, mums and late summer flowers.



**Teleflora Autumn Iridescence Bouquet (08T100)**

- This is a classic low centerpiece bowl that looks smart filled with flowers for a centerpiece or piled high with faux fruit or grapes.
- The container can easily be used for Christmas centerpieces, accented with copper and natural accessories and evergreens.
- Add a wood base or stand to the container to create an entirely different look.



**Teleflora's Amber Glow Bouquet (08T200)**

- Use this vase for sending flowers to men. The rich brown and orange hues of the vase create a solid base for the presentation of strong flowers like pincushion protea and tropical ginger.
- Create a hand-tied bouquet of permanent botanicals, and explain to customers that it does double-duty: the bouquet easily lifts out and enables the customer to use the vase for fresh flowers, then switch back when the fresh flowers are gone.
- For a great party effect, drop a clear submersible LED light inside the vase, then add water and flowers and watch the party glow! (The lights are available at your local wholesaler.)

## Checked your mailbox lately? Big news is on the way!

Teleflora's Member Directory and Resource Guide for November/December/January (NDJ) is due to ship in mid-October, shortly after you receive this issue of MyTeleflora News. You'll want to open your Resource Guide right away! It will include announcements of new keepsakes for Mother's Day and Father's Day 2009, along with two very exciting new promotions for those holidays that are sure to be a big hit with your customers! 🐞



## "Networking? That's how I built my business!" — and kept it growing.

Low-cost business networking has done wonders for Karin Crawford at **God's Garden's Treasures in Tempe, AZ**. Two years ago, Karin's five-year-old business, specializing in weddings, had already acquired enough momentum to make the leap from startup design studio to retail florist proper. Even in today's slow economy, it has continued to grow every year.

Her secret? "People do business with people they know," says Karin. "I have clients who are raving fans and who continue to send business my way all the time. But it all started by joining groups that offer networking opportunities."

When Karin was just starting out as a florist, she took advantage of SCORE, a nonprofit association associated with the Small Business Administration that offers mentoring to entrepreneurs. The SCORE counselors advised her to join the chamber of commerce and other groups. "At one point I was in seven groups! Now I'm regularly attending meetings at three different groups and participate in two or three others when I can."

It helps that Karin is a people person. But you don't have to be a social butterfly to make this strategy succeed. The groups that have done the most for Karin's business are small and friendly. Networking is understood to be part of the purpose; at a meeting, members typically have an opportunity to give a little commercial for their business. "People hear that, and even if they don't need flowers at that moment, now they have you in mind,"

says Karin. "One of the things I want is for people to think of me whenever they think flowers."

In deciding what groups to join, an important consideration is to look at whether that group has the demographic profile that matches your target clientele. A good example for Karin is eWomen ([www.eWomenNetwork.com](http://www.eWomenNetwork.com)). Participants are women (who make up the majority of flower buyers, after all) who tend to have at least some disposable income (events sponsored by eWomen typically cost something like \$40 each). "This is a great demographic for us, and I'm actually looking for other florists to join," says Karin. "Get to know your clients, especially people in sales like realtors or insurance brokers," Karin suggests, "and ask them, 'What networking groups are you in? Can I come along?' I bet that would be a resounding positive response."

Karin is also a member of BNI, a well-established business networking organization ([www.BNI.com](http://www.BNI.com)) with local chapters that are limited to one representative from any given profession. Many chapters, she reports, are lacking a florist member and would be happy to have one.

"I don't find many florists networking," Karin comments. "I'm not sure why that is. I get multiple orders every week thanks to my networking." Networking works especially well for florists, she argues, because "one of the things we bring to the table is service, the personal touch." Who better to make your bridal bouquet than someone you know and trust? 🐞

*Karin Crawford's networking groups include the Arizona Wedding and Event Network, where she has made mutually profitable acquaintance with people like Jamie Tindall, owner of Rendezvous Event Planning, and Fran Weintraub, principal at Encore Creative, an event rental company. Karin is on the right.*



# Students sharpen their skills with silks and business

## Decorating Today's Home with Permanent Botanicals

"Easy, rock-solid mechanics" were the focus of this hands-on design class, taught by style guru Matt Wood AIFD of Alameda, CA, author of *The Seasonal Home*, a book which shows the possibilities of permanent flowers. The class covered a wide range of information, however, from building a client file to specific design techniques, including fast ways to create spectacular looks with small amounts of material.

Not every design made or demonstrated was a giant masterpiece; some were petite

collections of material, designed to sell at affordable price points. Participants learned the many different grades of silk flowers and how to use each most effectively. Here are a few tricks the class loved:

- Instead of using tons of sheet moss to cover the foam of a permanent design, just moss the edge and spray the surface of the foam with spray glue. Use the "crumbs" of the moss or flakes to cover the surface of the foam and still allow stems to be placed in it.
- Adding a touch of dried material to silk flowers

adds an instant botanical authenticity to a design. The class favorites? Angel vine, nito vine, bird's nests—and of course branches!

- Narrow-necked vases pose interesting problems for designers of permanent botanical designs. Matt showed the class how to use vases with very narrow openings (less than 2 inches in diameter) by inserting birch branches, then gluing stems in place. 🐦



*Taught by Matt Wood (above), "Decorating Today's Home with Permanent Botanicals" covered design techniques and ideas from small hand-tied bouquets to armature designs that achieve high impact with few materials. A few branches in the hand-tied bouquets add that instant touch of botanical authenticity.*



# management at the Teleflora Education Center.

## Business Smarts Summit: Operating a Successful Retail Flower Shop

Relatively new in the Education Center curriculum, this class immediately became one of the most popular. Sold out once again this year, the class was attended by retailers from 16 states. Taught by Paul Goodman CPA, Tim Farrell AIFD, PFCI, AAF, and Marie Ackerman AIFD, PFCI, AAF, it covered a broad range of management topics from finances to employee management and everything in

between. In addition to presentations by the team of instructors, class participants break into small groups and brainstorm ideas on how to solve the daily challenges of being a retail florist. A real favorite of the class is the section called "Stop the Holiday Madness," which helps florists plan for a successful holiday. 🐦



*Round-table discussions are a popular and productive aspect of the Business Smarts Summit; florists from all over get a chance to compare notes and stimulate new ideas. That's in addition to stimulating presentations by Paul Goodman (top left), Tim Farrell (using a bridal bouquet to demonstrate why labor factors are usually higher for wedding work than for daily bench work), and Marie Ackerman (at far left in the happy group photo!).*