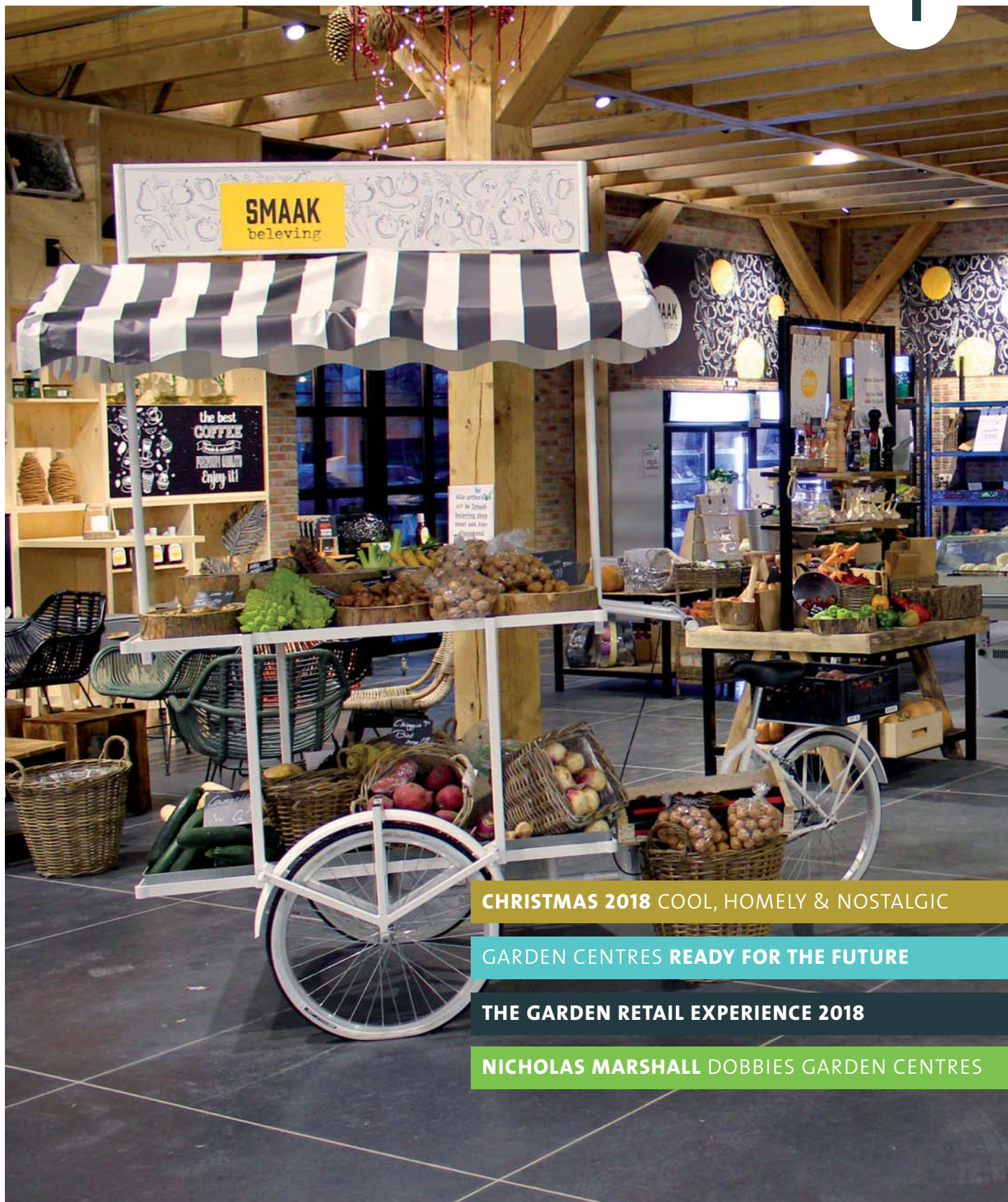


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e-mail: info@tpk-media.nl

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Tjeerd G.M. Posthumus

Editorial

Anita Meuleman (*editor in chief*), Ilse Broers,
Paul Geerts e-mail: redactie@tpk-media.nl

Contributors

Markt in Gruen, Santiago González (*Verde es Vida*), Trevor Pfeiffer (Garden Trade News)

Advertising sales

tel. 046-4818600, fax 046-4818601
sales@tpk-media.nl

Graphic design

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Translation

Translation Kings

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Garden centres on the rise

The green industry is doing well, there is plenty of attention for flowers and plants: green is hot. The European economy is also doing well; all Christmas shopping records have been broken. In short, garden centres are on the rise. But this is certainly not the time to sit back: many things are changing, rapidly and constantly.

We need to stay alert to keep finding and seizing opportunities. Being aware of what is happening inside and outside the industry, going shopping for a day, participating in events, and of course, visiting the trade fairs. The upcoming trade fairs respond to changing consumers. To appeal to them, trends are being developed that are focused on the industry and mostly launched through stimulating presentations.

In this edition of Garden Retailer, we focus on the most beautiful Christmas shows, the latest trends for the coming retail year, renovations and extensions of garden centres in Europe, and previews of the upcoming trade fairs. The green industry is clearly looking for a new retail method. A way to once again enchant and bind the customer. A beautiful offer may be effective in the short term, but be sure to also prepare a 'warm bath' for the customer to make them feel welcome and to keep them coming back to you.

For the upcoming Garden Retail Experience, on 7 and 8 February in Nieuwegein, the Netherlands, the central theme is From Stores to Stories. A theme that includes all about the transition the garden centre industry is currently experiencing. TREx offers tools for the development from a physical distribution space to a garden experience centre. With lots of inspiration, surprising ideas, and practical and original solutions.

This edition of TREx is distinguished by many new elements. For instance, we chose a new central location: De Beursfabriek in Nieuwegein. In addition, the new weekdays, Wednesday and Thursday, are much more suitable for the (inter)national retail visitors. Moreover, the event will have a totally different layout this year, with lots of store concepts. TREx18 is all about the customer: at the very entrance, you step into a entirely different world and meet the various types of garden centre customers.

I look forward to meeting you on 7 and 8 February in Nieuwegein, the Netherlands at TREx18!

Anita Meuleman

Garden Retailer, editor in chief

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Acquisition of Scotts Miracle-Gro

The trade activities of Scotts Miracle-Gro in Europe and Australia have been acquired by private investment company Exponent Private Equity LLP. The production and distribution of the brands and products of Scotts Miracle-Gro will remain in Europe and Australia. It concerns the following European brands: Fertiligène, KB, Naturen, Roundup, Substral, Osmocote, Weedol, Pathclear, EverGreen, Levington, and Miracle-Gro.

Best artificial Christmas tree



Edelman came out on top in the artificial Christmas tree test by AD newspaper and besteproduct.nl. The best artificial Christmas tree of 2017 is the Frasier by Black Box Trees. The jury report states: 'The most natural-looking Christmas tree in the test, and the panel's favourite by far. With its beautiful stem and lifelike branches that are properly distributed, the Frasier is more than worth its price tag. Absolutely fantastic.'

Ronald van Veen, CEO of Edelman, is very happy with the prize. 'Of course, we are very happy with this. Not just for us, but for our customers as well, who benefit from this with additional sales. In addition, three more of our Christmas trees won prizes in this test. A great score.'

Welcome to the Green Age!

At the Royal Flora Holland Trade Fair in Aalsmeer (NL), exhibitors came up with all sorts of flowers to create wonderful presentations. The number of visitors and trade atmosphere were very positive – the first of the three days drew a record number of 6,000 visitors.

Under the motto Welcome to the Green Age!, sustainability was the central theme. Of the seven hundred exhibitors, two hundred companies are MPS-GAP certified, and they formed the Green Walk across the exhibition floor. On the second day, the Greenovation Awards took place as an appreciation for sustainability initiatives in floriculture. The Best Concept winner was Pure Orchids from GreenBalanZ, which only uses natural protective agents and organic nutrients during breeding. The award for Best Article was for the Eco Flowerbag from Fresco Flowers, made of 100% recycled packaging material for flowers.

The festive presentation of the 'Dutch Tulip Award' for the best market introduction took place on the evening preceding the trade fair. In the Garden Plants category, Campanula Ambella Intense Purple from Telersvereniging Addenda was the winner. For indoor plants, *Philodendron* 'Little Hope' from VDE plant and C.J.H. Heijnen was the winner. The number one in cut flowers was the Liliu Roselily series, which has double flowers that are pollen-free and smell less strong. In the concepts category, the first prize went to Van der Velde Waterplanten for the children's concept Amazingworld, consisting of Veggie World (*edible plants*), Water World (*aquatic plants*), Desert World (*succulents*), and Swamp World (*carnivorous plants*).



Partnership options Green Trade Center



The Waterdrinker Green Trade Center (WGTC) opens on 18 February. In 'The grower's house', growers will have a physical 'showroom' with international reach. Growers and customers are brought closer together to achieve the much-discussed and desired 'chain shortening.'

The WGTC wants to become the place where you can find everything to tempt consumers to buy more flowers and plants. In addition, customers can go to the online buying platform of Water-

drinker 24/7, where the same wide range is available.

On Thursday 14 December, over 200 growers were present at Waterdrinker by invitation to hear first-hand what opportunities the grower's house can offer them. Except for shop-in-shops, there will be lots of space for novelties and special features in the WGTC. One week earlier, a group of 70 international breeders were present to see and hear what the WGTC has to offer them.

Growing vegetables in a restaurant

Smart LED growing trolleys with rocket, basil, and edible flowers. Emma in Eindhoven (NL) is a combination of a restaurant, bar, and pastry shop, and has three of these large mobile show-cases. And one employee who works on gardening every day. 'It looks cool and it is sustainable and local. It provides a certain appearance and experience for our guests', says Emma operator Joost Saris.

The vegetables and herbs used are grown in the restaurant. This means visitors can see the production, which closes the gap – albeit on a tiny scale – between the consumer and the produ-

cer. The restaurant has a small menu that is adapted to what is available.

The company Light4Food from Horst (NL) makes these LED Growing Trolleys, with a watering system, three vertical growing layers, and Philips LED modules for an optimal light level to grow vegetables and herbs.



Another five years for glyphosate

The European Commission has finally made a decision on the use of glyphosate. The controversial pesticide that has been the topic of debate for years may be used in Europe for another five years. Environmental organisations are deeply disappointed, but agricultural organisations are happy, as they now have time to develop an alternative.

The European member states decided this in majority in Brussels. The Netherlands voted for permitting the pesticide. During the vote, it appeared that some member states were no longer abstaining and had been persuaded to join the pro-side. These were Bulgaria, Germany, Poland, and Romania. Belgium, Greece, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, and Austria voted against it. Portugal abstained from voting. In an earlier vote, the majority was too small to constitute a qualified majority.

The decision in the appeal committee has put an end to years of discussion about permitting the pesticide. Initially, the European Committee wanted to allow it for fifteen years. Under pressure from the public and political discussion, this was shortened over time.

The European Committee had not set any additional conditions to the admission in the proposal, nor have additional provisions about phasing out the use of the pesticide been included.



Ikea line for cats and dogs

Just before World Animal Day, Ikea announced the launch of its pet line with the melodious name Lurvig, which means hairy in Swedish. The new line will be piloted in five countries: Canada and the US, Japan, France, and Portugal (*in the Algarve store*).

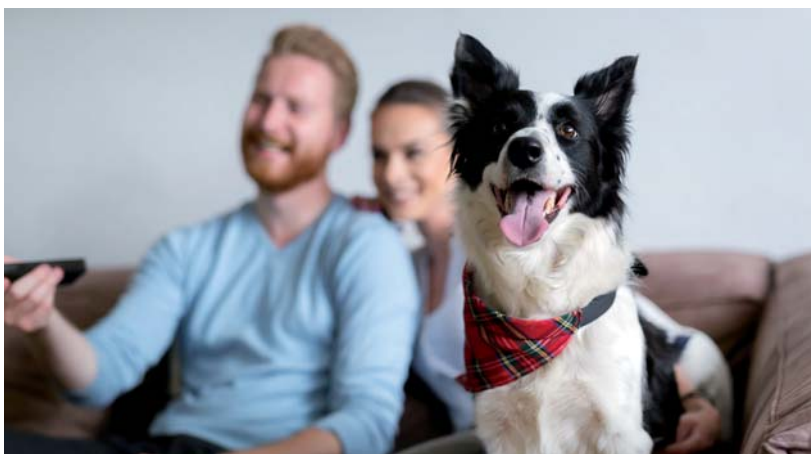
It includes dog cushions, cat beds, and baskets that match the Ikea furniture. For instance, there is a mini version of the Klippan sofa. Ikea is for the whole family, so that includes pets. They worked together with veterinarians for the development of the line. It will be an affordable collection with about thirty products with a true Ikea look. The line will become available in early 2018 in selected stores in five other countries. All products are already available on the French site www.ikea.com/fr. Use search term Lurvig to find them.

Ten predictions about pets

On the occasion of World Animal Day, trendwatchers Lieke and Richard Lamb have dared to make a number of predictions about the future developments on the pet market. What can we expect in terms of novelties, changes, and trends surrounding our pets?

Ten predictions:

- Robotic pets
- New races and even new species through genetically modified pets
- Virtual and holographically projected pets
- Through online links, pets can play with each other remotely
- Talking to pets through artificial intelligence
- Personalised 3D-printed toys and feeding bowls for pets
- Pet foods increasingly ordered in subscription form
- Chips will become required by law for all pets
- Remotely (*work, study*) monitoring and feeding pets at home with apps and gadgets and having them play (*serious gaming*)
- Rise of radio and TV streams specifically for dogs, cats, and other pets to watch



Introduction of new label Aleia in Spain



In November, Aleia Roses introduced its new label 'Aleia' during the Royal FloraHolland Trade Fair in Aalsmeer, the Netherlands. On 30 November, the rose was also launched in Spain, at the Palacio Neptuno in Madrid.

CEO Luis Corella explained the steps the company has made, as well as the characteristic properties of this Rosa 'Red Naomi.' Aleia Roses is the only company in Spain that specialises in cultivating the Red Naomi variety.

Prima Duta Award 2017

Van der Leeden Mandwerk has been awarded by the Indonesian government with the Primaduta Award from the Mi-

nistry of Commerce for their excellent performance in importing rattan furniture and rattan products from Indone-

sia. Besides Van der Leeden, Dekker Hout Group also received a Primaduta Award.

Longstanding employees honoured

At its traditional anniversary celebrations, held on 24 November at the company headquarters in Rain Germany, Dehner honoured numerous employees for their many years of service.

A total of 100 anniversaries were celebrated together with Dehner ma-

agement and CEO Albert Weber. Eleven employees were honoured for their 40-year, and 89 employees for their 25-year, affiliation to the company. Dehner has a long tradition of celebrating anniversaries.

In 2017, Dehner celebrates its 70th anniversary. Since its founding in 1947, the company has grown to become the market leader with 5,500 employees and over 125 garden centres and e-shops in Germany and Austria.

In a German consumer survey, this year Dehner was again voted 'Trader of the Year.'



Innovative providers as drivers of growth

Online trade in Germany will continue to grow in the future. Online sales are expected to rise to 80.4 billion Euros by 2021. This is shown by the trend calculation of the trade experts of IFH Cologne in the new 'Online Trade Industry Report.'

The trade experts at IFH Cologne assume that in the coming years there will always be new impulses from innovative providers, both online and stationary. For the IFH Cologne, this was one of the basic assumptions for the calculation of the trend until 2021,

as was the growing importance of cross-channel.

The trend calculation is also based on the assumption that growth rates in online trading will decrease slightly in the coming years. However: even with an increased decline in growth rates and an overall decreasing momentum, online sales of 70.1 billion Euros are expected until 2021. On the other hand, if online trade develops more dynamically and growth rates remain at the high level of the years 2011 to 2016, the IFH calculation assumes online sales of as much as 97.5 billion Euros in 2021.

Spring bulbs for schools

With the Bulbs4Kids project from the iBulb foundation, garden specialist Bakker.com is donating 120,000 flower bulbs to schools in Germany and England. 100 German and 100 English primary school classes will receive a package containing 600 flower bulbs.

'We find it important that children learn about green and nature at a young age,' says Paul Geraeds, CEO of Bakker.com. 'With the Bulbs4Kids packages, pupils can plant flower bulbs, track the growth process, and admire the end result of their work in the spring.'

In collaboration with other parties, Bulbs4Kids also supplies flower bulb packages to Dutch and Canadian primary schools. In total, nearly one and a half million flower bulbs will be planted in school gardens. All packages were delivered to the relevant countries before the autumn break.



Hip green and sales increase in 2017



Photo: Anita Meuleman

The consumer is still very attached to greenery. And they are willing to pay for it. Garden centres had little to complain about in 2017. Five industry partners from the Netherlands and Belgium talk about 2017: Peter Paul Kleinbussink (*Intratuin*), Luc Eeckhoudt (*BTV, TC Vincent Dendermonde*), Jacky Michels (*Groenrijk*), Roy Noordhoek (*GRS Retail*), and Aad van der Lem (*ad-interim Ranzijn*).

What was 2017's highlight for the garden industry?

Peter Paul Kleinbussink: 'Sales are rising again, the crisis is over. And green is hot again; both indoor and outdoor plants. That is what distinguishes us from other retailers. It is no temporary hype. As far as Intratuin is concerned, the line we started three years ago, including the associated investments, are now starting to work: the webshop, switching to an omni-channel player, and streamlining the organisation and ICT systems.'

Jacky Michels: 'Together with the entrepreneurs, we were able to further develop the positioning of the GroenRijk formula. In early 2017, parts of the corporate identity will be renewed in all branches. The website is also new. We are also launching the green card, linked to a loyalty programme for the customer. It is great to see all sorts of collaboration initiatives being created. The willingness to step outside comfort zones is growing.'

Luc Eeckhoudt: 'I don't think there was one specific highlight for the garden industry. Various trends are visible, such as the rise of growing vegetables and herbs in one's own garden, but also the influence of social media. Everything is changing more quickly due to the Internet. Another trend surrounding swimming ponds and hybrid swimming pools is also up and coming.'

Aad van der Lem: 'In 2017, Ranzijn has laid the foundation for scaling up and improving performance. In a short time, the chain has grown from eight to fifteen locations and has inves-

ted greatly in renovations and reconstructions. That has put pressure on the organisation.'

Roy Noordhoek: '2017 exceeded expectations in terms of success. Most GRS garden centres grew much harder than the rest of the market compared to 2016. Many entrepreneurs make serious work of what they want to convey and are not afraid to invest anymore. And that pays off. The consumer knows how to find and appreciate the independent garden centres.'

How can the garden industry distinguish itself even better in 2018?

Luc Eeckhoudt: 'The DIY feeling runs in many Flemish people's blood. They want to consciously enjoy the weekend. We can stimulate this by creating an atmosphere the customer wants to bring home. It is all about experience, presentation, and of course, providing the right information.'

Aad van der Lem: 'Traditional garden industry products are being increasingly offered. The only way for us to survive is to distinguish ourselves in terms of quality. At Ranzijn, animal-related items generate a major part of the sales, which is why we will continue to focus on veterinary practices in our stores.'

Roy Noordhoek: 'Adapt your environment, display your local market professionally. Adapt the store image, communication, and range to this even more intensively. Plus, collaboration is important.'

Jacky Michels: 'We will need to succeed in the field of greenery. That is where our origins lie. Whether it concerns purchasing, knowledge, or insight into results, joining forces in greenery is crucial for the future.'

Peter Paul Kleinbussink: 'By assuming a clear position. What do you stand for as a company, what are you good at, and what do you excel in? Work with those things. You can do this in many areas: inspiration, advice, greenery, social corporate responsibility. It's different for everyone.'



Photo: DCM

La Piazza Leurs

Tuincentrum Leurs (NL) saw the official opening of La Piazza Leurs as well as the new Christmas show.

‘Our recent La Piazza Leurs expansion is a new catering concept we composed ourselves in terms of styling, interior, design, dishes, and appearance’, says an enthusiastic Peggy Leurs. The new catering location is situated at the centre of the Christmas show in the autumn, and at the garden furniture section with a large outdoor terrace in the spring.

La Piazza Leurs is based on the Italian cuisine. ‘We focus on all common Italian delicacies. Great as a breakfast, lunch, diner, or just a drink or snack: A new concept in the garden centre industry.’



Guided tour in new greenhouse Moerings



Aquatic plant nursery Moerings in Roosendaal (NL) showed visitors around the new 30,000 m² greenhouse during its open days. Plants in the greenhouse, with diffuse glass that lets through UV light, receive up to 95 percent daylight.

The diffuse glass distributes the light and causes it to penetrate deeper into the vegetation, allowing plants to grow more naturally, have stronger leaves, better budding, and maintain their colour for longer. The company produces millions of water plants every year. The new energy-efficient greenhouses have LED lighting and insulating screens. Next to the logo, the building now also displays the slogan of the remarkable founder: ‘In iedere hand een waterplant’ (*A water plant in every hand*).

Dümmen Orange takes over US wholesalers

Dümmen Orange acquires two plant wholesalers in the US and wants to significantly increase its customer reach.

On 7 November Dümmen Orange, the grower and producer of flowers and plants for professional horticulture, announced its acquisition of US plant wholesalers McHutchison and Vaughan's Horticulture. ‘The acquisition of McHutchison and Vaughan's Horticulture increases our customer

reach while facilitating the introduction of new products such as *Calla*, *Phalaenopsis* and our range of solutions for producers and their production’, said Dümmen Orange CEO, Biense Visser.

The plant cultivation activities of Dümmen Orange and the trading activities of McHutchison and Vaughan's Horticulture will continue to be managed and operated as independent business units.

Game-changing deal in Poland



A game-changing deal on the Polish retail market – EPP becomes the leading shopping centre landlord with 692.1 million euro acquisition. JSE listed Echo Polska Properties (EPP) announced at the 4th of December the acquisition of twelve major shopping centres and retail parks (*M1 portfolio*) in three tranches over the next three years. The acquisition from a consortium (*owned 25% by Redefine Properties*), forms part of a larger 28 property portfolio that has been acquired by the consortium. Upon completion of the transaction in mid-2020, EPP's portfolio will comprise at least 27 modern shopping centres comprising almost 1 million square metres GLA.

Innovative, lifestyle concept: Cat Cubes

Innovation is becoming a way of thinking at Beeztees. They show that with their innovative, lifestyle concept: Cat Cubes! The Beeztees Cat Cubes collection has a unique design and is the first elegant, modular system which appeals for both cats and owners around the world. It is designed to suit different needs and desires of your cat. The range of modules creates a great habitat for cats to eat, sleep and play in.

All modules are created with openings, so your cat can reach all connected modules. You can mix and match the design and different colours with your interior and change the configuration weekly for fun for your cat. The measurement of the Beeztees Cat Cubes is 49 x 29 x 32,6 cm.

WWW.BEEZTEES.COM



Elmia Garden 2017

On 4 and 5 October, the largest Scandinavian trade fair for garden centres took place once again in Jönköping, Sweden: Elmia Garden. The theme was The future of garden retailing. On the one hand, there was a focus on digitisation, but the human factor that is so characteristic of the sector also came to the

forefront. There was a record number of exhibitors this year. Elmia Garden also presented the garden trends for 2017: Green in the Garden, The Green Lab, and Vego Garden. The trends were visualised on the trade fair by Blomsterfrämjandet through the use of Swedish plants.



Photo's Anna Hållams



Germany is number 1

A report submitted by the EU Commission on the implementation of the Directive on the Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products certifies that Germany has acted in an exemplary manner.

Germany is in a good position in terms of sustainable crop protection. As the study presented by the European Commission confirms, measurable progress has been made in risk reduction. The study also rates training and certification programmes, such as the crop protection expertise certificate, as exemplary.

In addition, the study positively cites Germany's achievement of its 30 percent risk reduction target for the aquatic environment and non-target organisms in the period 1996-2006. According to the report, Germany achieves 93 percent in the inspection of technical equipment for the use of pesticides.

The report makes it clear that, in general, the Directive will be sufficiently transposed in all Member States. In many Member States there is still room for improvement in one or the other respect. For example, many Member States cannot provide measurable results on the achievement of their objectives, for example in the fields of water protection or public amenities. In some cases, integrated plant protection is still under-utilised by some EU member states.



A look ahead to Glee 2018

Still on a high following Glee 2017, the event's post-show report has helped shape much of the thinking for the short and long-term future of Glee. The research has highlighted Glee's ongoing value for the industry it represents.

The overall effect will be a refreshed, revitalised event, as Matthew Mein, Glee Event Director explains: 'Glee has been growing at a significant rate – for example we had over 200 new brands join us at the 2017 event - and that means we've outgrown our current home. Not only will the exhibition be able to better accom-

modate more exhibitors and visitors, but its refreshed layout will breathe new life into the show. This move is inspired by the way that retailers keep their store interesting for customers by constantly revising the layout. This way customers discover more, and ultimately spend more – something we know our exhibitors and visitors want to replicate during their time at Glee.'



Flowery patios in Cordoba



The first edition of the international Flower Festival FLORA was immediately a great success. As many as 344,000 visitors visited the mostly historical locations in the southern Spanish city of Cordoba between 20 and 29 October. The number of visitors exceeded the organisation's expectations.

The purpose of the festival is to give the city a boost and combine the famous flowery patios of Cordoba with contemporary floral art. The eight florists (*or florist teams*) were completely immersed in the flora and patio culture and showed a new vision of this cultural heritage through their designs. An international professional jury gave out three awards with cash prizes of 60,000, 40,000, and 20,000 euros, respectively. Substantial amounts that, according to the organisation, have never been awarded in the flower industry before.

The couple Natasha Lisitsa and Daniel Schultz from Waterlily Pond (VS) won the first prize with their Duende installation, Tomas de Bruyne (BE) took silver with Paradise: delirium and desire, and the third place went to Loose Leaf (Australia) with Free fall.

UK Bestsellers Christmas Products

GTN Bestsellers, the UK's weekly report of garden centre sales, has spent the Festive period analysing all the weekly EPOS data supplied by garden centres to create the Top 100 Christmas Products charts for the 2017 season and the Top 20 sold by volume from the last week of September through to Christmas Eve.

The UK Garden Centre Bestsellers Christmas Products Chart: first became the Suki Personalised Angel Ornament, second was Steenland Milk Chocolate Coins and the third place was for Suki Personalised Snowman/Snowgirl Ornament. 'It was a challenging Christmas', say UK garden centres, it would appear Christmas 2017 has been one of more small 'feel good' purchases, so we've all had to work harder to stand still turnover wise.'

James Ducker, Langlands Garden Centre: 'We did really well with artificial trees and garlands and lights. Suki Personalised Angels and Santas were top selling lines.'

Conna Powles, Haskins Garden Centres: 'Taking Christmas from October 1st, sales were +8%, having increased space in one of our centres and reviewed the weaker areas from last year. However, we felt that shoppers were buying earlier, having been influenced by Black Friday, as it tailed off in December.'

Neil Gow, Fresh @ Burcot: 'Fresh trees were our bestsellers – especially in the 5ft-7ft range in Noble, Nordmann and Fraser, plus Poinsettias. Christmas is getting more compressed. It kicks in later but also finishes that bit earlier other than the last minute stuff like fresh foods, foliage and plants. We were busier than we expected in those last five days, but it's difficult to say how much of that was: people coming out again after the worst of the weather; the additional effort we had put into 'fresh'; or the 'extra' week.'

Megatrends in horticulture



Future researchers at the German Zukunftsinstitut have identified twelve megatrends, out of which the trends of individualisation, health and urbanisation are the driving forces behind horticulture.

In Germany, these findings were translated and interpreted for the world of flora and fauna by the Association of German Florists (*FDF*). Long-forgotten trends are suddenly back in. In 2018, the recycling of products and unusual combinations will become an issue.

The following products and concepts for a consciously healthy diet can be successfully designed and promoted: the 'outdoor grill experience', the 'do-it-yourself thoughts', the 'one's own harvest feeling', 'family garden', 'garden living', 'urban gardening' or simply 'bee feeding'. Herbs or snack garden products are used to create segments that did not even exist a few years ago. Herbs in particular have been experiencing a veritable boom for some time.

Demand and consumer interest in cut flowers – often from regional and sustainable production – increased in 2017. In addition to the general desire for green areas, this is explained by, amongst other things, a changing domestic culture.

Domestic magazines propagate no longer promote minimal furnishing styles, but strong colours and high-quality fabrics and accessories, as well as a playful, romantic ambience, which is a perfect fit for cut flowers. The classic, round bouquet is out; the do-it-yourself look is in.

Individualised products are in high demand amongst consumers. According to the German Institute for Trade Research (*IFH*), 30 percent of consumers have already purchased an customised product.

What is interesting is that about half of all people are willing to pay extra for this customisation 'service'. In this respect, it is not surprising that more and more retailers are developing customised products.

New catering concept: Eating in the tasting garden



Intratuin Winschoten (NL) has been expanded by almost 1,000 m². The new extension on the side of the building offers room for Intratuin's new catering concept: Eating in the tasting garden. Fresh and biological dishes are served in the restaurant, prepared with the seasonal offer.

There are 150 seats in total. The space is light and fresh, with light oak and white furniture. Business Manager Auke Henk Doornbosch: 'The terrace in the greenhouse looks amazing; customers eat surrounded by greenery. We have a simple menu, and everything is made fresh on the spot.' The catering concept has been operational since last autumn.

The warm greenhouse and the warehouse were enlarged by Thermoflor and equipped with energy-efficient LED lighting. The catering concept Eating in the tasting garden will be implemented at Intratuin locations in Rosmalen and Koudekerke in the spring, and Intratuin Nederland is talking to other locations for implementation in late 2018.

Floriworld is happening

On 14 December, word came out that Floriworld, the experience centre of Dutch floriculture, is definitively happening. There is an expected annual growth of three percent in international tourism in the Netherlands until 2025. And the Keukenhof has grown to a whopping 1.4 million visitors. The increasing interest in the Netherlands and flowers are positive starting points for the realisation of Floriworld.

Initiators and developers, including Royal FloraHolland, Royal VolkerWessels, Dutch Experience Group, and Waterdrinker, have concluded fixed agreements in mid-December. Royal FloraHolland also points out the commitment of the entire floricultural sector. Floriworld wants to show hundreds of thousands of (inter)-national visitors annually what flowers

and plants can mean in their daily lives and stimulate the global demand for flowers and plants.

Construction will commence in late 2018 and the pre-opening is planned around the Trade Fair 2018 in Aalsmeer (NL).



Garden centres:

Garden centres are doing well. Entrepreneurs are investing and building, and new branches are opening their doors. Below are a number of beautiful projects and openings in recent and forthcoming months.

Text Ilse Broers, Markt in Grün

Fresh produce store Smaak at Intratuin Breda



Intratuin Breda (NL) has a new entrance, with a surface area of 1,000 m² and a height of ten metres. It features the completely new fresh produce store Smaak with local products: some vegetables and lots of fruit and nuts. And meat from a local farmer, who collects his cattle in France. The farmer and his wife are also active on the floor with tastings. There are employees who know all about fruit and vegetables, such as greengrocer Bert, who owned a local fruit and vegetable store for years. The flower shop opposite the coffee corner has a long counter where bouquets are created on the spot. Everything is focused on interacting with the customer.



ready for the future

Dehner builds new garden centre in Austria

On 19 September Dehner, Europe's largest garden centre group, opened its twelfth specialist shop at the site of the former OBI hardware store in the Neustadt Nord shopping centre in Wiener Neustadt.

Dehner had taken over the retail space in February of this year. The existing building was completely renovated and adapted to Dehner standards in just five months. In the new Dehner market, customers from the region can now expect a broad assortment of products for home, garden and pets on around 6,000 square metres of retail space.

In recent months the 3,000-square-metre greenhouse has been completely re-glazed. Above all, passionate amateur gardeners will be convinced by the selection of green and flowering plants for indoors and outdoors. A particular highlight is the florist's department. A large range of pro-

ducts are available from the pet department. The food selection includes biological, species-appropriate raw food.

A new garden centre is also being built on the site of the Konrath Home and Garden market in Neunkirchen (*Lower Austria*).

The construction of the new garden centre in Neunkirchen, which will have a retail floor area of around 3,000 square metres and an open space of approx. 1,000 square metres, has already begun. The reopening is planned for spring 2018.

The standard Dehner range of products will be available. The Konraths, who have

operated the site since 1975, will continue to offer part of their range into the future: The model garden complex with ideas for garden design, greenhouses and pond construction, as well as a garden equipment shop.

Dehner is also committed to the combination of stationary and online shopping in Wiener Neustadt and Neunkirchen: four digital consultation terminals in the various departments allow access to an expanded range in the online catalogue, which can be ordered directly from the e-shop. The 'Dehner Express' service delivers plants and accessories to customers' front doors at the desired date.



Large-scale first phase at Intratuin Duiven

The first phase of the large renovation at Intratuin Duiven, the Netherlands, has been completed. Almost 9,000 m² was added.



The water, outdoor clothing, and animal sections were doubled in size. Customers can walk for almost one kilometre through the 24,000 m² store. That is why there is now a second catering location,

as well as benches along the route and toilets in three places. Construction company Thermoflor completed the first phase in October 2017. The materials are tough, robust, and industrial: the walls

are covered with Douglas wood and the round information desk made of weathering steel is a real eye-catcher. The signing also catches the eye: canvases measuring four by five metres with fresh images.

New Billig Blomst garden centre in Denmark



The new Billig Blomst garden centre will be the ideal place for shopping. The venlo type garden centre will get a large entrance. Between the cold and the warm part of the garden centre will be a wide passage. In this large passage customers will find a flower shop, a café and a farm shop with local products. This farm shop is based on the trend that is now also seen in garden centres in England. Surface 4,800 m². Realisation 2017-2018.



Gardest, new player in Estonia

Garden centre Gardest is a new player in the Estonian green industry. A large centre with a very special formula. What stands out is the industrial atmosphere; black metal elements are used at the entrance, and the latest colour Solid Black, which will soon be launched, was chosen for the interior design. The entire new structure will house garden centre items and catering and food, with a butchery and bakery. Gardest will open in Tartu, Estonia's second largest city, in the spring of 2018.

Hellweg opens DIY and gardening centre in Kirchdorf

On 11 December, DIY and gardening centre chain Hellweg opened a DIY and gardening centre in Kirchdorf an der Krems, Austria. The new centre replaces the Micheldorf site.



Hellweg has stated that it has built a sustainable ecological building at the new location. For example, the entire ceiling and shelf lighting system is fitted with LED lights for climate protection and an improved energy footprint, with energy consumption reduced by about 40 percent. The building is heated efficiently through underfloor heating.

More than 30 employees look after the customers on site. On an area of around 6,000 square meters Hellweg offers a

range of modern products for building, renovation and designing in home, house and garden.

For winter garden and balcony ideas, the spacious garden market with its cold hall, with a floor area of approximately 1,500 square meters, offers a wide range of indoor and outdoor plants, high-quality garden accessories and garden furniture.

World Horti Centre: innovation and knowledge of green

World Horti Centre is a special project: the international knowledge and innovation centre for horticulture, where research, education and business come together. In Naaldwijk, Westland, The Netherlands.

Smiemans built the glass construction with a surface of 4,520 m². The glass roof is 12.30 meters high, this is high enough for two floors with shared facilities for ± 300 guests, such as an auditorium, meeting rooms, flexible workstations and a restaurant. Next to the glass building there is a school and greenhouses for research, which will also lead to innovation.



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You will also find us in February 2018 on the:
TREX THE GARDEN RETAIL EXPERIENCE

Start of construction of Bauhaus Venlo late 2017

The construction of Bauhaus in Venlo (NL) started in late 2017. It will be the third branch of the construction market with garden centre. The buildings consists of two connected halls with a passage from one hall to the other. Of the total shopping surface of 18,000 m², approximately 5,000 m² belongs to garden centre De Stadstuin. The construction centre is set to open in the second half of 2018. Bauhaus Venlo will soon employ approximately 130 people.



Design award for Wilsons Lifestyle Centre in Saskatoon (Canada)



The team of the British architecture firm HPW was appointed to masterplan and detail the interior for a brand new \$10 million garden and lifestyle centre in Saskatoon, Canada. The new centre has been built by Thermoflor on approximately eight acres of land close to Saskatoon, in Saskatchewan, Canada. The core offer is a large garden retail centre, with the added

attractions of an indoor go-kart raceway, zip wire, ropes course, animal grooming facility, café and hothouse as part of an overall 12,000 m² of internal space. Some high-quality boutique retailers have also taken concessions in the centre.

The building has excellent sustainable credentials. The hybrid real log and steel

structure provides a dramatic and fitting interior for this ground-breaking scheme.

Wilsons Lifestyle Centre has been opened in August 2017 to great acclaim, also winning the Engineering and Geoscience category of the Premier's Awards of Excellence in Design.

New restaurant for Groves in Great Britain

A new restaurant of 415 m² will be built next to the existing garden centre of Groves nurseries. It is commercially essential for a garden centre in England to have a restaurant. This restaurant in the coastal town of Bridport is a HighLight arched greenhouse that is 8.5 metres high at the ridge of the roof. The space is split up into a restaurant, a conservatory and an outdoor terrace. It has room for over 300 visitors. The restaurant is planned to open in Spring 2018.





MacKenzie & Cruickshank in Scotland

In Forres, Scotland the garden centre MacKenzie & Cruickshank was extended. The extension comprises two structures, one being a 665 m² large, open-sided canopy which serves as an extension to the outdoor sales, the other being a 400 m² curved glasshouse (*HighLight* type), where most of the outdoor plants will be sold.

Rebuild of Squire's Garden Centre near London

Squire's Garden Centre is completely rebuilding its existing garden centre in Woking, near London. With a curved and a Venlo greenhouse, almost 1,700 m² of additional covered sales space will be created.

The garden plants are covered by the new venlo greenhouse. In the curved greenhouse of the type *HighLight* additional sales space will be realised for various product groups.

The metamorphosis will be completed with a spacious new entrance. The existing building will get a large light dome.



Farm shop and atmosphere at Bellandris Weingärtner



Bellandris Weingärtner Verden, a large garden centre from an existing German formula, has an innovative element in the form of its further development of traditional construction. A warm appear-



ance was key to this. Especially striking is the outdoor boutique with farm shop. The entrance was fully redesigned with a luxurious appearance, an atmospheric pergola, and a black teaser cabinet to



highlight certain products. The successful formula focuses on a very wide audience. The focus is on greenery, but decoration and experience are also very important in the store image.

Huge shopping complex Floralux in Ham, Belgium

Garden centre 't Serreke in Ham is clearing space for a huge 15,500 m² shopping complex. Almost three times the current shopping area.

The greenhouses are being extended from 1,200 to 4,000 m², and the new parking lot will have 550 spaces. The ambitious project, which involves an investment of twelve million euros, also creates thirty additional jobs. It will be an experience store for the entire family. With care for the environment; for instance, there will be investments in solar panels and charging stations for electric cars and bikes. The complex will open in late March.

The first Floralux branch in Dadizele welcomes about two million customers from Belgium and Northern France annually. This garden giant owes its success to the great diversity and expertise in flowers and plants and also developed into an important player in the field of decoration. The two families will join forces in the project.



New routing at Villa Verde Pizancon

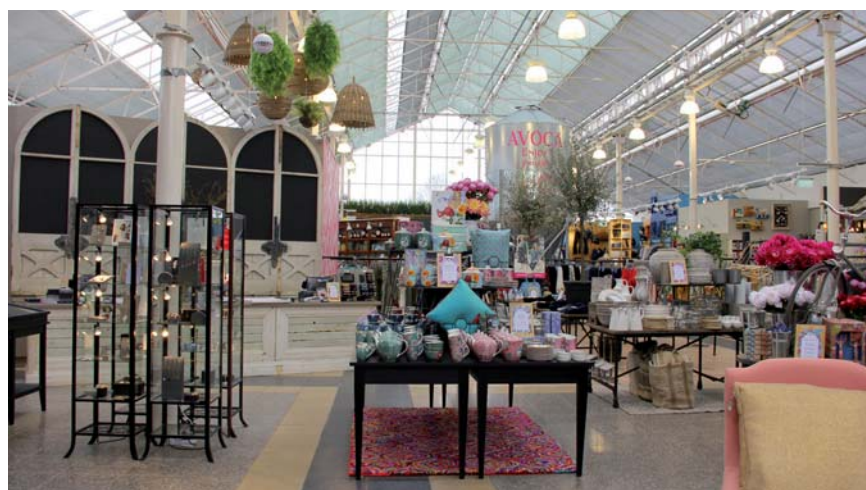


Villa Verde Pizancon has opened in France, and next year, many more branches of France's biggest formula will be built. The 7,000 m² store features routing that is new to France and was successfully tested in the pilot store in

Brieve. The entry in the cold greenhouse, which generates more traffic in the entire store, will also be applied in the stores that are yet to be built. The originally technical store layout has evolved into a layout based on customer needs.

Avoca shopping centre in Ireland

In Dublin, Ireland was a traditional garden centre transformed into an inspirational shopping environment, the well-known Avoca. The construction was realised in 2003 and turned into one of the 100 most inspirational stores in the world. The roof was replaced into a more solid environment with a much better insulation. The constructions of Smiemans are very flexible and can easily be adjusted to meet the latest technical needs.



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IGCA CONGRESS 2017 CANADA

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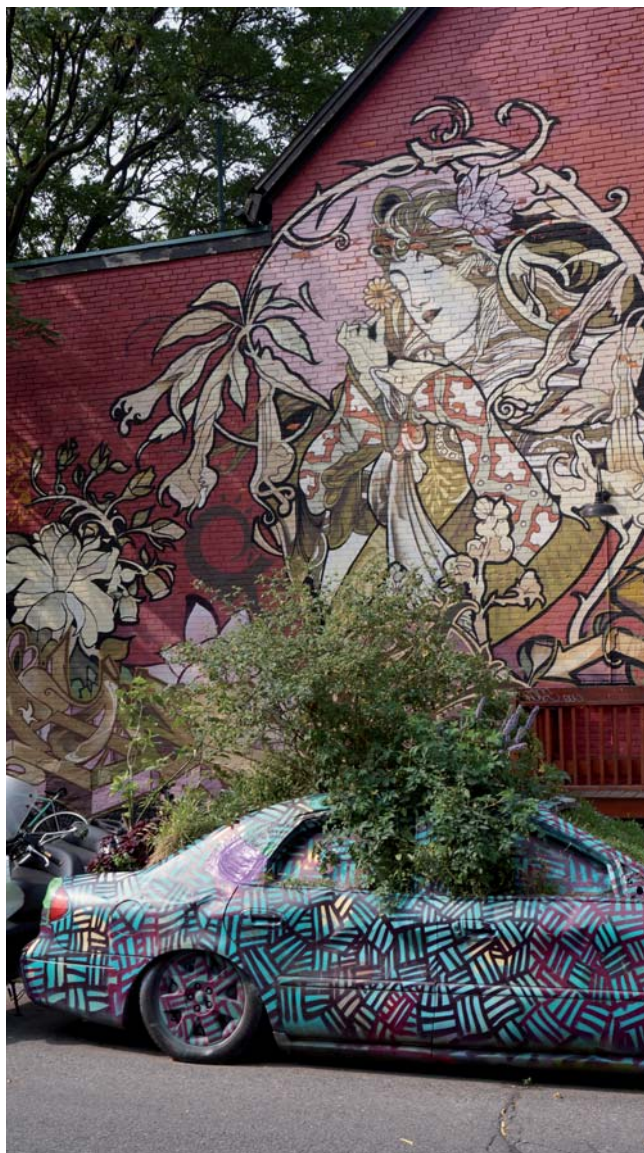


This year's IGCA congress was in Canada in Niagara Falls, Ontario. 230 industry partners from 21 countries all over the world flew to Toronto to visit garden centres and network under the 'mist' of the Niagara Falls. Garden Retailer spoke with several Dutch participants about Canada versus the Netherlands.

Text Anita Meuleman

Photo's Corina van der Heiden, Frank van der Heide

The congress programme consisted of business sessions and visits to garden centres, nurseries, and some typical Canadian tourist highlights. 'The added value is in exchanging knowledge and experiences and networking. I was particularly surprised by the openness toward each other', says Edwin Meijer from Garden Connect. Meier participated in the interactive tour with younger participants. 'Two themes were discussed every day: marketing, catering, business succession, personnel policy, and webshops. You would hear about all experiences with these topics from five countries.'



Service-oriented

'The atmosphere was great, and people were very open, even regarding turnover and costs', says garden centre entrepreneur Peter Stox, who was also in an active bus. 'The problems are universal: e-commerce, difficulties with recruitment, high wage costs, the gross margin under pressure; these are the issues worldwide. Spain, New Zealand, Denmark – you face the same problems everywhere.' He particularly liked Connon Nurseries: a company that tailors to both horticulturists and consumers with customers in a radius of almost 1,000 km.

'The Canadian entrepreneur is not only focused on the garden centre', Laurens Doesborgh from De Haan Group explains. 'That often only entails a third of the total turnover; the rest comes from wholesale, nursery, and landscaping. The true retail idea is much more developed in the Netherlands. But the service model before and after purchase is much more extensive here. There are still major opportunities for us in that area.'

'When it comes to service, loyalty cards, and big data, Canada is miles ahead of Europe', says Corina van der Heiden

from growers association Addenda. 'In Canada, a garden centre is still truly green, and many other product groups are secondary. Greenery is pre-eminently an emotional product. What is your product's added value for the consumer? Is it wellness, happiness: tell me the story!'

'They sell solutions rather than products. A pot-plant combination for every season, delivered to your home: that is true convenience for the new consumer. Even plant tables offering the 'maintenance-free' garden are well thought-out.' Van der Heiden mentions Terra Greenhouses



as the most appealing garden centre. 'Presented clearly and full of passion.'


Three parking spaces

Sheridan Nurseries was often mentioned as a special garden centre. 'The way garden centre Sheridan Nurseries had set up logistics was fascinating', says Frank van der Heide from Tuinbranche Nederland. 'They also had a customer design service – not a potting desk, no design. They created 150 large pots per day at 200 euros each there, and they would all be sold by the end of the day. An amazing company.'

'Sheridan realises over six million euros of turnover on a surface of 0.3 hectares. And they have three parking spaces. Three –

seriously! Everything is aimed at getting the customer in and out as quickly as possible. The average transaction is close to 100 euros. Impressive', says Meijer.

Doesborgh also thinks Sheridan is interesting. 'One of the employees has worked there for 40 years, knows every customer, and knows what they bought last time. The service level is so high there that on busy days, they hire two traffic escorts who ensure that everything runs smoothly at checkout, the cart can be sent outside, and the car can be retrieved in the meantime. Within minutes, the customer has paid, their car is packed, and they drive off. Alternatively, everything can be delivered to your home.

'Our surface area is so minimal that we have to sell every product within two weeks. Everything you see here pretty much moves on within twenty hours', he was told. 'That flexibility, with a completely fresh and new range every two weeks, is only possible on such a small surface area. If you are also in the right place, you achieve a great turnover.' 

IGCA congress 2018

The IGCA congress 2018 will be held in Prague, Czech Republic from 16 to 21 September 2018. Registration is now open.

More information: www.igca2018.cz



John Zaplatynsky
GardenWorks,
Mandeville (Canada)
President of IGCA 2015-2017

Focus beyond just making a sale

Retailers, especially garden centre retailers, are an optimistic group. This is a perfect time to look ahead to a New Year and a Spring business season that is not far ahead. How do we meet the challenges and opportunities for success in the New Year? On the world stage, the IGCA hosted its annual Congress and tour in Southwestern Canada last September. The delegates from Europe, North America, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and China shared the time to see the leading garden centres in the area and to participate in discussions on trends observed and opportunities that lie ahead.

The key lessons learned were many. Continued investment in exciting, bright and open facilities merchandised in an excellent and colourful manner are important to stay ahead of the large format retailers that are continuing to challenge our sector and improve their operations. The successful garden centres continue to focus beyond just making a sale when building on the whole shopping experience by offering educational opportunities and special events. In-store restaurants and coffee shops complement this experience.

Within the next two years, the millennials will become the largest demographic group and are making and will make an even stronger impact on the retail world. They gravitate to retailers that have a purpose, do not necessarily trust established brands and love experiences. Their homes, if they can afford one, are smaller with less space for plants, indoors and outdoors. They are interested in how plants are produced – are they organic and were they produced in a sustainable manner? Their initial gardening efforts are often focused around growing herbs and vegetables, usually in containers. They are comfortable with technology and frequently come to the garden centre, having researched their purchases thoroughly. Do our staff have the same or higher level of knowledge?

Most garden centres now use sophisticated point-of-sale systems that capture data on the

flow of inventory and what products are purchased. Will we take the time to track and analyze this information to ensure we have the right products available from the best suppliers? Will we follow up on products purchased and use the data to connect with the purchasers to offer additional products and services? Another side of technology will be to examine how automation can meet the challenge of labour shortage in the retail sector. How can technology be used not only to speed up the checkout, but provide information and advice during the sales process?

The growth of on-line selling has been slow in the garden centre sector, but I believe a larger impact lies just ahead. The grocery retailers are learning how to handle the ordering and shipment of fresh produce and those lessons will soon be applied to the sale of plants, the core of our business. We will need to work with our suppliers, understand the logistics and try to be ahead of or even with our competitors. Some buying groups and industry associations are experimenting with on-line selling and are having success – watch what they are doing. I do not have the answers, but I am sure there are tech-savvy garden centre managers who will figure out how to do this.

A recent Canadian survey of CEO's done by The Globe and Mail newspaper reported that 77 per cent those surveyed said Canadian retailers might survive because of a history of excellent customer service, but that today's consumers are demanding more. They expect excellent experiences which involve minimal time and effort, that always meet expectations and demonstrate authenticity and integrity.

The next IGCA Congress will be held in the beautiful city of Prague, in the Czech Republic. The industry in the Czech Republic is young but is innovative and cooperative. I am sure if you attend, you will find many new ideas and solutions to business issues as well as the opportunity to share and learn from your peers from around the world. I look forward to seeing you then.

THE GARDEN RETAIL EXPERIENCE 2018

Welcome to Garden Centre TREx



The fine-tuning of the upcoming The Garden Retail Experience 2018 is in full swing. And this edition of TREx is distinguished by many new elements. To begin it has a new central location: De Beursfabriek in Nieuwegein, and on different weekdays that better suit the (*international*) retail visitors. At the very entrance, you step into a completely different world and meet the various types of garden centre customers. That customer is what TREx18 is all about. Moreover, the event will have a completely different layout this year, with a lot of concrete store concepts.

Text Anita Meuleman

'Retail is determined by three factors', Tjeerd Posthumus, organiser of TREx and publisher of *Garden Retailer*, explains. 'First, the consumer, who is almighty and can shop 24/7 all over the world. It is very important to know the consumer well. Furthermore, technology is changing the way in which people shop. We want to show how technology can be used to seduce and unburden the consumer, and meet the wishes and needs of the customer in the process. Finally, a change is happening in physical retail: From stores to stories.'

From stores to stories

The main theme of TREx18 is 'From stores to stories.' The garden centre industry is in the middle of a transition from a physical distribution space to a garden experience centre: TREx offers a grip on

The consumer is central at TREx





All presentations are tailored to relevant customer groups

this, as well as inspiration, ideas, and practical and original solutions. TREx shares the latest developments in garden retail in the field of consumer trends, technology, visual merchandising, inspiration, styling and sales concepts, and the latest products.

The event location will be converted into Garden Centre TREx. 'TREx18 will have a more concrete structure', says Posthumus. 'We are going to set up the Garden Retail Experience as a concept garden centre with a focus on the visitor. They are emerged in a spring experience as soon as they enter. Then, they become acquainted with the many types of consumers that play a role and keep returning throughout TREx.

'We looked at the segmentation of consumers in the Nieuwegein region and

which consumers we want to appeal to and how we can connect to this with presentations. This serves to concretely apply all knowledge, knowhow and ideas we have and want to convey to a garden centre case we represent ourselves. This also makes it clear to our visitors why we make certain choices and how you can do things. TREx also has a completely different layout this year: when determining the routing, we mainly looked at creating many surprising sightlines, many hot-spots, and avoiding 'main roads'.

The TREx18 creative team converts themes and ideas into inspiring and commercial cases and takes care of the styling of Garden Centre TREx with innovative presentations and the new collections and retail trends. Chantal Riedeman is the creative director of TREx this year.

WHAT IS TREx?

The Garden Retail Experience (TREx) is not a trade fair, but a unique annual information and inspiration event for international retail. And the upcoming seventh edition promises to be another intriguing and content-filled international event.

The customer and the sale of garden items are central. In the large garden centre concept store, exhibitors show how you can effectively sell products and retail concepts with experience and concrete presentations.

In two days' time, visitors are fully informed and inspired with the latest insights and ideas in the field of retail trends and concepts, consumer behaviour, and the sale of living green, garden and decorative items.

There is an extensive total programme with lectures – including Jos Burgers (One fan per day) and Richard de Hoop (Top teams are future makers), TREx talks, master classes, workshops, demos, sales and presentation techniques, and expert tours by industry experts. Every visitor can compile their own day programme based on their personal preference and interest.





Greening of the cityscape and urban gardening play an important role at TREx

VISIT TREx 2018!

TREx is only accessible to visitors who have registered in advance. Retailers have free admission, suppliers pay 195 euros p.p.

It is a full-day programme: entry from 9.00 AM, starting at 10.00 AM until 6.00 PM, Thursday until 5.00 PM – during the last hour, everyone is welcome at the networking drink on the networking square.

The event takes place on Wednesday 7 and Thursday 8 February 2018 at the Beurs-fabriek in Nieuwegein (NL).

Register now on the website: WWW.TR-EX.EU

‘Physical stores remain really important!’, says Riedeman. ‘What online can never offer is great personal contact, really good personal advice, and stimulating the senses; and that is ultimately the essence of experiencing something. People have an increasing need for social connection. At TREx, we will provide very practice-oriented presentations, including who they are intended for and why they are set up this way: Cosiness, huffer-proof, good price-quality.’

‘We want to offer the garden centres the base of the iceberg. Fortunately, they are doing many things right and are making money, but we still see a lot of potential to make that market even stronger and more fun for customers, and make it more successful for garden centres. And we mainly want to show what opportunities still exist. Fortunately, there are many.’

‘You see that Praxis and Hornbach and the online players who are also gunning for the green market, are much further in

terms of measuring. These are serious points of attention: really knowing and understanding your customer, and knowing the size of your catchment area. It is almost vital. If you do not know who you are serving, you are in the dark. Invest in getting to know your customer and your own identity: that distinguishes you from your competition. And that is why we are making it into such an important theme this year.’

1,000+ metres of store area

Founding partner De Haan Group is also constructing the store layout this year. A true piece of art that is put up in a couple of days with 1,000+ metres of store area and an impressive number of presentation tables. De Haan Group is also presenting a new catering concept for garden centres.

‘We have two new spearheads’, says Laurens Doesborgh from De Haan Group. ‘As a new core activity, we at De Haan Group will also include the restaurants in gar-

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Main theme of TREx18

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Invest in getting to know your customer



The convenience consumer, too, must feel at home in the garden centre

den centres – three designs have already been realised in garden centres. At TREx, together with TPK Media, we will also set up a bar/restaurant section. The catering section then transfers into a looser section with standing tables and such; the networking square.’

‘As a second novelty, we are bringing a matte black rack material: Solid Black. Garden centres are looking for a tougher look, and this new matte black base colour, often combined with a lighter wood for a beautiful contrast, meets this need. We will use this new base material for large sections at TREx, so that visitors immediately see the effect and can experience the appearance.’

Arena

This year, for garden centre employees, there is a new square with an Arena where an interesting programme with


training and workshops surrounding visual merchandising, applying consumer trends, increasing customer experience in the store, and dealing with the consumer of tomorrow will constantly take place. There will be flower arrangement and pot-plant combination demos.

At the Groeifactor square, you will be able to take interactive tests regarding motives, talents, and ergonomics – how do you properly lift a bag of potting soil? You can speed date with a coach or take a career or fitness test. A quick scan generates a personal profile within minutes.

Founding Partner Tuinbranche Nederland is closely involved with TREx. Frank van der Heide talks about the Future Garden Retail workgroup. ‘Together with suppliers, retailers, and external parties, all experts, we have thought about how the consumer of 2022 will shop in our indus-

try and what business models we need for that.’ The relevant knowledge sharing and highlights can be found at TREx.

Frank van der Heide from Tuinbranche Nederland also mentions that there is more and more contact with international colleagues through the IGCA. ‘Many garden centre entrepreneurs visit TREx from Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Japan, Australia, Ireland, England, France, Germany, Denmark to see how we innovate in the Netherlands.’

In short: TREx 18 is a must for garden retail professionals to stay aware of what is happening in green retail now and in the future. It takes place on Wednesday 7 and Thursday 8 February 2018 at the Beursfabriek in Nieuwegein (NL). 

Register now on the website:
WWW.TR-EX.EU

Trade fairs are doubling down



Maison&Objet

Spring is around the corner. And so, as usual, the new year begins with a number of trade fairs: Maison&Objet Paris, IPM Essen, Christmasworld and Ambiente Frankfurt. Garden Retailer looks ahead.

Text Paul Geerts, Anita Meuleman

Maison&Objet: 19-23 January

Twice a year, Maison&Objet Paris is the international meeting point for professionals in the home decoration industry, with over 3,000 exhibitors and 85,000 trade visitors, more than 50% of whom are internationals.

Designer of the year for the upcoming 2018 edition is the talented Danish designer Cecilie Manz. A subtle game of grey shades and brighter colours create the warm atmosphere that form the central thread of her work. In January 2018, it is agency Nelly Rodi's turn to design the Inspirations Space and the Bookshop-Café. The theme is Showroom.

Six influential people from the design industry nominated six upcoming Italian talents – Federica Biasi, Antonio Facco, Marco Lavit Nicora, Kensaku Oshiro, Federico Peri, and Guglielmo Polletti – for the Rising Talent Awards Italy.

The digital platform MOM started in September 2016 and collects the latest novelties from brands, manufacturers, craft professionals, and designers.

IPM Essen: 23-26 January

The old halls of the stock exchange in Essen are being demolished, and new ones will be used for the first time. According to CEO Oliver Kuhrt from Messe Essen, a 'state of the art' exchange building will be completed in late 2019. During the upcoming 36th edition of IPM Essen, the new glass foyer (2,000 m²) will already be put into use. This new entrance is directly connected to the nearby metro station.

Despite its new look, IPM Essen has not changed in the sense that it will provide insight into all new developments and trends in the field of plants, garden, floristics, and technology. Hortivation is an integral part of IPM Essen for the first time this year. For the main retail trends, visitors can go to hall 13,

on innovation and inspiration



IPM Essen



Christmasworld

where green stylist Romeo Sommers will display a number of sales concepts for garden centres. The theme is Family Garden.

The partner country is Denmark and the motto is Let's Go Green – Together!. About a hundred Danish exhibitors will present, among other things, a number of new potted plant types under the name Floradania (*hall 14 and Grugahalle foyer*).

In hall 1A, you can see the 'Neuheitenschaufenster' with innovative plants in different categories. During the opening ceremony, the winners, selected by a professional jury, will be revealed. With 1,577 exhibitors from 45 countries, IPM 2017 was a success. The fair attracted 57,000 visitors from about a hundred countries. The organisation is expecting even more visitors this year.

Christmasworld: 26-30 January

The emphasis may be on Christmas, but Christmasworld has offered a significantly broader range for years, including collections for spring, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Halloween, and

Easter. A range like that, with different products for each season, also requires inspiration on the shop floor.

Under the name Loft, the designers from 2Design (*via Mobile between hall 9 and 11*) sketch how retailers can seduce the consumer with atmospheric presentations on the shop floor or challenging display windows. The foundation is urban and contemporary. In a relatively peaceful decor, black and white dominate with festive red accents.

In the trend show in the foyer of hall 11, the main trends for Christmas 2018 have been lined up by German style agency bora.herke.palmisano. Also in the foyer, visitors can enjoy an extensive programme of lectures and workshops. Examples from practice form the starting points for the workshops. During the different lectures, which will be simultaneously translated into English, themes that touch on current events will come up. The programme is different every day.

The exclusive business programme Premium, aimed at decision-makers in the green and interior industries, will return after its success in 2017. On 26 January, Steven van Belleghem



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Floradecora

will talk about the third phase of digitisation, the influence of extensive automation, and artificial intelligence. On 30 January, the theme is Store Design and Retail, with Dominik Brokelmann, CEO of Brodos group, as the speaker. In 2017, Christmasworld drew more than 43,000 visitors from 110 countries. There are 1,040 exhibitors this year.

Floradecora: 26-30 January

Last year, with Floradecora, Messe Frankfurt clearly reached out to growers, flower wholesalers, importers, and exporters. The first edition with almost 70 exhibitors from six countries attracted almost 11,000 visitors. This year, Floradecora is part of Christmasworld again. The organisation is responding to consumers' need for maintenance-friendly and sustainable products. The demand for fresh flowers and plants is growing: for at home or as a gift. Floradecora offers a wide range of flowers and plants: all types can be ordered directly and for the entire year.

Ambiente: 9-13 February

Ambiente in Frankfurt, the biggest trade fair for consumer products, has been growing in recent years. In the 2018 edition, over 4,200 exhibitors will provide insight into current trends surrounding Dining, Giving, and Living. There is also an extensive programme of lectures and guided tours. Ambiente 2017




Ambiente

had 141,000 visitors, of which more than 50% came from outside Germany (>150 countries).

The Netherlands is the guest country this year. On 12 February (*Partner Country Day*), the presentations of the Dutch companies will be in the spotlights. In Galleria 1, there will be an exhibition about the unconventional ideas of Dutch design by designer Robert Bronwasser.

Ambiente Academy offers daily lectures and presentations with themes like Increasing sales for retailers. Speakers include Thomas Wege, Tosin A. David, and Frank Rehme, retail and e-commerce experts.

Daily Fashion Accessories Shows present the main trends through makeshift fashion shows. Of course, these match the four Ambiente trends that were formulated by the bora.herke.palmisano agency: Modest Regenerations, Colourful Intensions, Oppulent Narrations, and Technological Emotions. The main features can be seen in the Trend Show in Galleria 1.

Under the name The Next, forty young entrepreneurs show the most important megatrends: What is the influence of urbanisation, globalisation, and individualisation on lifestyle (*see the zones in hall 11.1, 11.0, 9.2*). 

EFSA AUTUMN AND WINTER TRENDS 2018

Four new colour and style trends



The latest autumn and winter trends from EFSA, European Floral and Lifestyle Product Suppliers Association, show four different customer styles: from bohemian to natural and from lush to modern.

Text Ilse Broers

With these trends, EFSA wants to provide a starting point for entrepreneurs to appeal to customers with the right atmosphere, colours, and materials. And to reach new target groups. These trends are based on the renowned trend agency Nelly Rodi Paris, which collaborates with international brands for large campaigns. The launch will take place at IPM, the green trade fair in Essen.

EFSA members use these trends for inspiration to develop new collections for specific target groups. Ulrike Ziegler, manager EFSA: 'Consumers who love nature, a modern atmosphere, or a lush atmosphere cannot be drawn in with the same presentations and products.'

Delicate Desire

For lovers of modern design & pure lines

Delicate Desire is an innovative theme with pure lines; sleek and modern, but delicate.

Indoor and outdoor become one – thanks to the large windows and lots of light. It represents a modern architectural house, open to nature and the outdoors, with a comfortable interior design and artistic styling.

The powdery pastel shades have a pearly shine; with colours like pinkish grey, medium blue, and dark grey. In addition to these light winter colours, there are smooth materials, sandblasted, with forest materials like wood and stone.

The motifs include geometric shapes, but also flowers and snowflakes. Large branches like catkins and annual honesty are favourites here, in addition to late winter flowers like snowdrops, crocuses, and hyacinths. Velvety, powdery, and transparent materials and fabrics go well with these. And sheepskins, whether real or fake.



Lovely Lodge

For the adventurous lovers of classic

Lovely Lodge reflects the atmosphere of Indian Summer, the exuberantly colourful autumn nature. With a light, charming country house in retro style, with natural materials and an authentic country atmosphere. The target group is classic, but on the adventurous side. We see colours like pink, platinum, metallic green and red-blue grey, and accents like dark blue and orange. The colours of fallen leaves and fruit. Handmade wreaths are also part of this theme, as well as materials like dried flowers, feathers, and pine cones. And, of course, natural fabrics like cotton and wool.

Leaf and branch motifs are popular, and may be etched, embroidered, or metallised. We also see pumpkin motifs with faces or decorated with stones. There are also animal motifs: dachshunds and hunting dogs, and the robin as the mascot. One colour is used for the flowers; monochrome flowers like dahlias, yellow chrysanthemums, and tulips. Handmade paper or silk flowers are also used.



Urban Unity

For city dwellers who love nature and vintage

Urban Unity combines nature with an urban landscape. The modern target group loves nature in the city; an aesthete with a predilection for vintage and antiques. With colours like green gold, dark green, and khaki, and brown and grey tones. This includes furniture made of high-quality wood like oak and walnut, with still-visible knots. Also featured are saddle-stitched leather and glass with a patinated finish. We see bronze objects and stylised massive animals such as rabbits for the garden or balcony. The textile features water colours that blend together. Glass and wood are combined with engraved graphic laser prints and floral motifs that flow together in the textile.


This mysterious atmosphere is a great fit for plants like the cactus and aromatic herbs. The mascot, houses for birds, bees and insects, depicts the city dwellers' involvement with nature in the city.



Curious Collage

For classic bohemians and fashion lovers

Curious Collage is a trendy theme, rich, luxurious and club-like; a refined lounge or hotel lobby with an oriental touch. For fashion lovers and bourgeoisie art lovers who live in high-rise apartments and urban buildings. We see many theatrical, beautiful flowers like the orchid and lily, amaryllis and cyclamen, dahlia and roses. Flowers of one or two species are combined. This goes well with textures and brass for pots, and exotic wood like mahogany, rosewood, and ebony. Animal skins are also used frequently. Dark green and dark blue are added to the basic colours red, orange, and violet, with brown and light violet as accent colours.

Crystal and hand-blown glass beautifully blend together with marble, satin, and gemstone colours. We see a bit of art deco and a touch of the 1930s, together with the rich oriental style. This pairs well with stylised flowers, palm leaves, and banana leaves on a dark background and with lots of sparkling satin. And stylised Golden Age bouquets. The talisman and main motif is the wild feline; the tiger, panther, and jaguar, but insects as well. 

THE BEEZTEES WAY:

A very unique and fun pet department



‘Our ambition is to be the most innovative partner for garden centres in Europe regarding the pet category. We do so by conducting our own shopper studies and developing unique, innovative trade concepts based on the insights we have learned’ Maikel Dekkers, marketing manager at Beeztees, explains how the ‘Beeztees shop’ is the solution for an inspiring pet department.

‘Within retail we have seen a shift when it comes to shopping: online is growing as a sales channel for many years now. There’s no difference in the pet industry. The function of the physical store will shift more towards experience. Customers are looking for pleasure, trying new products and above all: a place where they love to shop. Especially when it comes to a highly emotional category as the pet segment.

Physical stores will therefore be valuable locations where consumers engage with retailers and brands. The experience they have and the emotion it evokes are therefore crucial. To support garden centres in offering an inspiring shopper trip within the pet department, we have developed unique trade concepts that contribute to the shopper experience and stimulate impulse buying.’



Trade concepts

'Shopper studies tell us that 88% of purchases for pets are made by women and that 79% of purchases in accessories are unplanned. Based on these insights we have developed trade concepts that both stimulate impulse buying and give a unique and fun experience.

Our 'world of snacks', a trade concept for dog snacks, is an example of this: it is all about evoking the feeling of fresh dog snacks from a real butcher. The effects: consumers will not buy two, but three snacks at a time resulting in an increase in sales of 50% and more. Besides that, the appearance of the total pet department is taken to the next level.'

Lifestyle for your pet

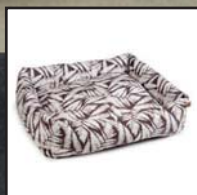
In addition, lifestyle products for pets were presented separately more often in the past, but are an essential part of the pet department. For our lifestyle brand, Designed by Lotte, we have developed a shop-in-shop concept for lifestyle products. The goal of Designed by Lotte is to create beautiful and timeless products which your pet loves, but also fit into your interior. Presented as a total concept, to create a powerful lifestyle experience.

A total pet department

'The pet department is not all about snacks and lifestyle. Together with consumers we defined eight 'everyday moments' together with your pet, which are the basis for our category vision

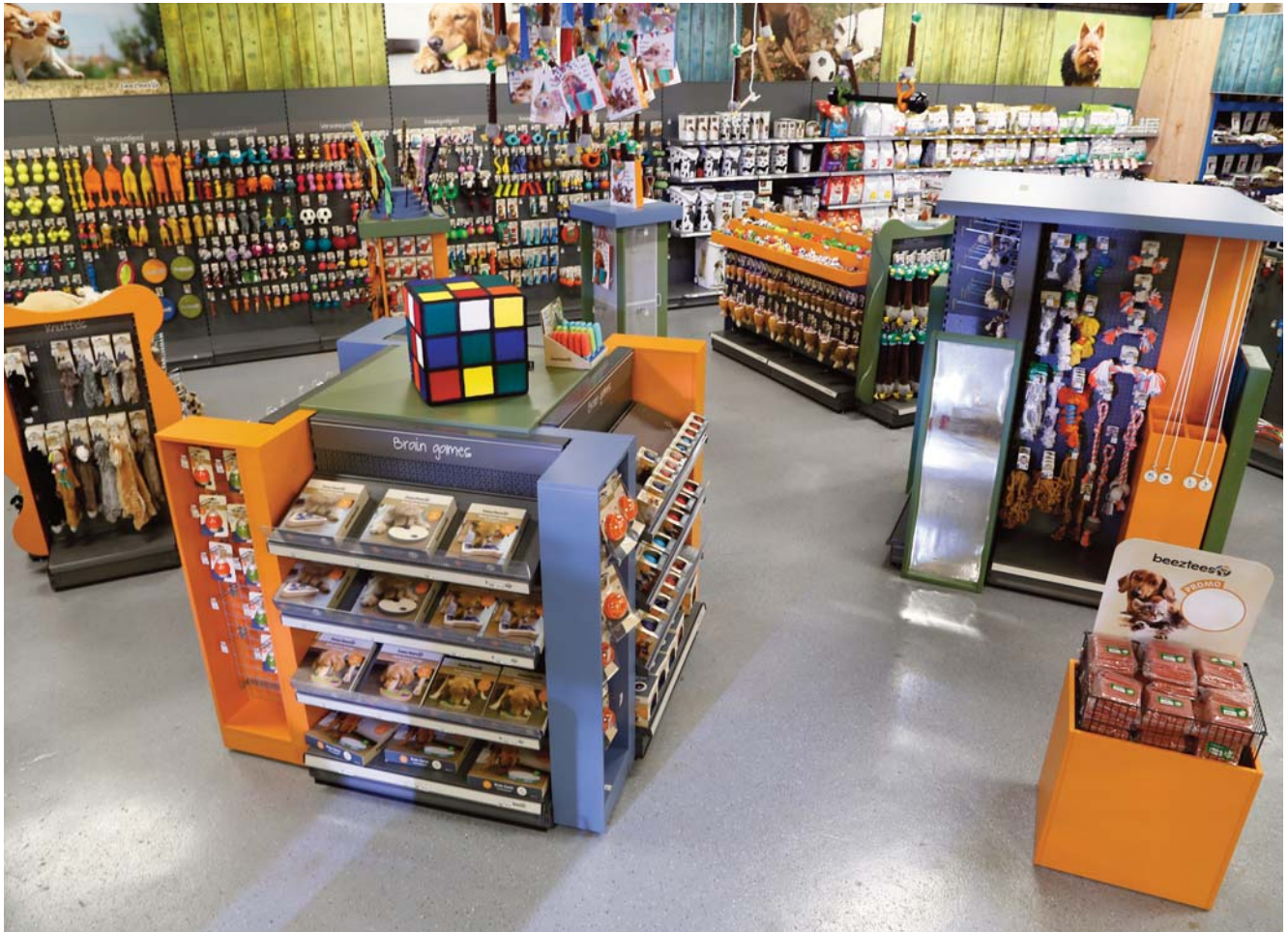
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and the Beeztees shop. Besides snacking, these moments are for example playing, sleeping and caring. For each one of these moments we developed a trade concept, which connects to the emotions of this moment. Like a real bedroom, the 'world of sleeping' which evokes the feeling of hanging out together with your dog. In addition, consumers can try out the dog cushions on a real bed to experience the quality and feeling of the product.'

'All together, we have integrated our 'trade worlds' into a complete pet department for garden centres, together with our hardware partner De Haan Group. Based on the size of the department, the shop can be adjusted into various sizes based on modularity. Therefore it is an easy and 'ready to go' solution for adding an inspiring pet department.'

Full service

'For over 40 years we have been intensively involved in (re)styling and drawing store fittings. We advise on the the layout and routing in your department and you will receive our professional advice. By implementing category management, we can give you a good and well explained advise about the best pos-

sible store lay out as well as the best location for the different shelves and products. This results in a maximum output for the pet department.'

'It doesn't stop after this. We work together based on a 'dealership' construction, which includes unique promotions and theme presentations to stimulate impulse buying and the experience for the shopper. But also periodic analysis of sales and giving you a head start on new product introductions. We go for a true win-win scenario, based on a long term partnership.' 



A desire for something



Vivid heritage

Four striking, trend-setting worlds form the core of the coming festive season. They offer many perspectives for individual development and interpretation – cosmopolitan, extravagant, sober, and unconventional. The four Christmasworld Trends 2018/19 show inspiring possibilities for festive decorations: Vivid heritage, Eclectic gathering, Balanced sobriety, Splendid history.

Vivid heritage

Traditional, lively, vital

The heart of this style is formed by folkloristic patterns and motifs, rich in tradition. The handmade products demonstrate



Splendid history

craftsmanship. The modern design and graphic elements create a contemporary but natural appearance. The colours are bright and vivid, including mustard, petrol, and red.

Mexico, Brazil, Scandinavia, Romania, Russia, Poland - influences from very diverse cultures blend together here. The artistic details include floral motifs like blossom, interlaced leaves, tendrils, ethnic and graphic designs, and geometric motifs – often created using traditional techniques such as engraving, etching, painting, appliqueing, and embroidery.

Splendid history

Extensive, luxurious, lush

Luxury and elegance are expressed in an unconventional way. Designs are decorative, often include historical allusions, and have an unmistakable contemporary approach. Dark, saturated colours are combined with aquamarine and warm gold.

The ambiance reminds of bygone glory. Refined textiles, lace, precious and semi-precious stones, pearls, marble, metallic surfaces, and dark woods – the materials are exclusive and expensive.

new and special



Eclectic gathering

sive. Palm leaves, large feathers, and exotic leaves and landscapes are used with royal and historical features to create extravagant motifs.

Eclectic gathering

Versatile, dynamic, striking

This extravagant look combines apparent contradictions. Contrast is the concept. Very diverse design elements come together here: romantic and sporty, delicate and intense, every day and spectacular. All this in surprising collage effects in pink, lemon, tangerine, azure blue combined with rosé, black, and gold.

Creating something new through combinations and contrast: collage forms the starting point for this extravagant trend. Materials, textures and patterns appear in surprising contexts. Sparkling, vibrant, reflective, and shiny materials such as crystal, foil, pearl, and mirrored glass are combined with playful details, exaggerated shapes, and patterns. The imaginative motifs vary from delicate blossoms and butterflies to exciting spray-colour effects and fluorescent neon elements.




Balanced sobriety

Balanced sobriety

Harmonious, simple, perfect

This style shows purist designs inspired by Japanese aesthetics and achieves its appeal through a consistently applied calm and harmonious appearance. This essence is expressed with minimal means. The colour palette is modest, with subtle natural tones – from pure white to rose gold, a shiny but cool grey, deep burgundy, and black.

The appeal is in the harmony, the perfection, and the consistent use of a limited number of carefully selected materials. Light-coloured woods, matte brass, and shiny black surfaces dominate the image.

Processed wood, natural paper, artistically woven and braided structures, knots, and folded and fan shapes create a very aesthetic impression. The effective contrast of matte and shiny surfaces – often combined with an unexpected tactile or scent impact, such as the use of fragrant woods – is also used. 

TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS COLOURS AND

Christmas in 2018: Cool,



Kaemingk

The Christmas shows have barely ended and we are already looking towards next year. The showrooms of the suppliers opened in early December; what can we expect from Christmas in 2018?

Text Ilse Broers, Paul Geerts, Anita Meuleman

Photo's Fred Roest (Edelman)

The new Christmas collections continue to build on homeliness, nature, and green. With an emphasis on social gathering, on the stories about tradition, dreams, and craft, and on cool outdoor activities. The colours are mostly subtle: natural, green, brown, and blue with a contemporary appearance. And this year, there is a focus on nostalgia - with warm, classic colours such as green, red, and gold.

Special moments

Kaemingk chose the following central theme for the new Christmas collection: Creating Wonderful moments. 'Each theme, a total of eight, is linked to the special moments around Christmas', says Esther Faulhaber. For instance, the trend theme More than Green is all about the healthy Christmas dinner. Spending time together and eating with friends and family is popular. Therefore,

this theme includes beautifully set and decorated tables and a beautifully designed kitchen with matching over dishes, plates, and other items from Kitchen Goods.

The outdoor Christmas and winter feeling is fully covered by the Winter Event theme, in which people look for the most beautiful Christmas tree in nature. The cool presentation with a zinc pick-up

NATURAL SHADES SET THE TONE

homely, and nostalgic



Kaemingk

truck – which is also available for customers – is striking. Furthermore, there is a barn built in a wintery atmosphere with pallet benches that feature royal hides and soft cushions, a rugged wooden table, deer heads and antlers on the wall, and a decorated, snowy Christmas tree.

One of the classic themes is Waiting for Santa. Upon entering the showroom, we see Santa's home: complete with stacks of gifts, mailbags with Christmas cards, and a large red chair by the fire-place. The theme features many products in red-white-green, including new Christmas characters, specially designed for Kaemingk. Funny and recognisable Christmas figures are seen in various decoration puppets, pendants, and even lighting.

Warm atmosphere

Kaemingk brings a remarkable innovation in lighting: a large part of the Lumineo base lighting features a timer function and the steady lighting also features a dimmer – without any price increase. Also new are the Diamond Lights: Christmas lighting with extra-large LED bulbs in diamond shape for a luxurious and warm atmosphere.

New packaging has been developed for the entire Lumineo lighting line, which means the shelves in the store look modestly coloured and clear: green packaging for Tree lights. Blue for the Special Lights in and around the house and a burgundy packaging for Objects. A gold-coloured stripe on the packaging also indicates that the product can only be used indoors.

The trees are presented very clearly in three segments: Classic, Natural, and Premium, available as both green and snowy versions. 'Classic stands for trees with an excellent price/quality ratio. The Naturals are, as the name suggests, very true to nature. The Premium tree is an extra full quality tree, with even more natural-looking twigs and needles. All in all, it is a wide collection that covers all segments', Faulhaber explains.

Following the garden furniture, Kaemingk is now also working hard on a collection of indoor furniture, which perfectly match the eight themes. For instance, there are (*rocking*) chairs, benches, and stools upholstered with beautiful fabrics and rugged-looking tables and closets made of wood and metal.



Edelman

The Christmas pets collection is a new product line with convenient and useful products for pets, as well as a gift line - so that there is a gift under the tree for Tarzan or Tiger, too. Think of toys and balls shaped like a reindeer, Santa, or glitter mice, but also festive collars, Santa hats(!), and Christmas sweaters.

Natural and glitter

In Edelman's Christmas show, various showcases have been designed around the spacious central hall. Especially striking are the showcases focused on interaction with the customer, such as the

coffee truck with benches, and theme rooms designed with wooden or coloured forest houses, sweet gazebos with richly set tables, and a man-sized Santa here and there. Also fun is the large igloo with real ski lift, featuring a miniature Christmas world inside.

We see glitter and glamour, in addition to the botanical Christmas, lots of warm LED lighting, and practical home applications. Also new is the Noëlle collection: a LED-rich and varied theme with luxurious and large Christmas ornaments, featuring lots of fresh red. The

two classic Christmas themes will remain prominent in 2018. We see lots of red, gold, and glitter there, supplemented with green and decorative items. Entirely different is the blue theme 'A sky full of stars', based on the universe. With ornaments like the moon and stars, and a room that features curtains and Christmas stars. Blue is supplemented with gold and dark shades.

Very important is the botanical theme; everything involving greenery does very well. The grey pastels combined with white will return this year. There are



Edelman (above), Lemax



many new items in lighting. Warm LED lights clearly set the tone here. The fibre trees with blinking and bright lights – the crazier the better – are always a major hit, and also very popular for decorating showcases.

The more expensive Christmas trees that look natural are clearly on the rise, with and without lighting, and with naturally structured branches, sometimes with pinecones. This more expensive categories, together with the classics – also with a natural look - are doing very well.

In addition to these two Christmas themes, there is a modern and a country theme. The smallest theme is Autumn, which is intended mostly for the intermediate season; the transition from the hot late summer to the cold and dark season. With many warm autumn shades like orange and yellow, brown and green, and forest creatures such as owls and squirrels, also in the tree.

Nostalgia

A large dose of nostalgia. According to Arie Vuijk from Lemax, that is what most people feel with Christmas. It ex-

plains why a theme like caddington does well year after year. It embodies the atmosphere of times long past, including Tudor style half-timbered houses. An extension of this is Victorian Park, a theme that references nineteenth-century England. During Christmasworld in Frankfurt, Lemax will present various new accessories.

New animations will also be added to Santa's Wonderland, a theme that references the pure Christmas feeling. A successful newcomer is Sugar N Spice. According to Vuijk, this somewhat



Imhof & Stevens



sweet theme does well with women and children. The theme will receive a solid boost that includes new animations, table pieces, and accessories, with and without lighting. With over three hundred new items, Lemax is going big. To optimise the experience, the sound of the animations has also been improved. Not just the recordings, but the speakers have been improved as well, which results in a fuller sound. And rightly so, Vuijk says. 'For 100 to 150 euros, the customer should expect good quality sound.'

Entertainment

The importance of the product group has increased considerably in recent years. Vuijk has noticed that more and more garden centres are doubling down on miniatures. 'We sell the entertainment that the garden centres need the most, which cannot be missing from Christmas shows. If you remove it, things will be dull.' He understands that increasing interest from garden centres. 'For an entire generation, this product group is now connected to Christmas. You can't tell a good story with a 1,000 euro order. Therefore, garden centres are increasingly or-

dering complete containers. This is a win-win situation. The garden centres are an important sales channel for Lemax. 'We barely sell anything via the Internet. We really depend on our displays.'

Imhof & Stevens is staying away from flashy colours and pastels this year. Instead, the company will focus on traditional Christmas colours and natural shades. They are featured on the popular skulls, but also on the polyresin accessories. The collection of wooden boxes launched in early 2017 will have a sequel in the form of, among other things, more



Boltze



étagères and lanterns. A logical step, says René Stevens, who was surprised by the collection's success. 'The orders just kept coming.'

Authentic materials

Boltze distinguishes between different trend themes this year: Natural Winter, Oh Dear, Christmas House, and Frozen Greens. The Christmas related themes are Christmas Blush, Christmas Shadows, and Christmas Traditions. Wilbert van Ommen has high expectations for Frozen Greens, in which various shades of green are combined with gold. Oh

Dear matches hygge, a trend that has blown over from Denmark and is all about making the home as cosy as possible. The typically Scandinavian Christmas atmosphere is inextricably linked to it. But the largest theme is still Natural Winter, with authentic materials and natural shades that can easily serve as a base.

Boltze gives each theme its own twist. '70 percent of the collection consists of our own designs now,' says Van Ommen. 'With prints that return everywhere, we create a fully unique atmosphere.' This

year, the appearance is mostly warm with gold and green, supplemented by accent colours such as petrol and mar-sala red. 'The colours complement each other well.' Boltze is also launching a number of new product groups, including lighting. According to Van Ommen, it will do well year-round, but the collection of floor and ceiling lamps can also be easily integrated into the various Christmas themes. Under its own label, Boltze is launching an exclusive collection of baubles and a fragrance line with eight different scents. 



GREEN SECTOR TRENDS 2018

New solutions for a changing time



Text Anita Meuleman **Photo's** Bloemenbureau Holland

Flowers Punk Rebooted:
Heliconia caribaea, Rosa
'Ivanhoe', Vriesea, Vanda
'Dark Chocolate', Anthurium,
Zantedeschia 'Schwarzwaelder',
Dahlia, Paeonia,

Plants Punk Rebooted:
Sansevieria, Cotoneaster,
Alocasia, Calathea, Cactaceae,
Aloë vera, European fan palm
(Chamaerops)

Briefly summarising the 2018 zeitgeist is not feasible for a time that is so heavily in motion. Moreover, trends move in a continuous process in an already existing line or as a reaction to it. In 2017, we started looking for new reference frameworks under the motto Radical Reframe. Old structures have lost their strength. Now we are slowly – through Error & Trial – looking for new solutions.

STYLE TRENDS

Punk Rebooted

Shifting values are at odds with the sense of freedom. It incites rebellion and protest. Black

is given a dominant role as well as rough, perforated, structural, industrial materials with sharp shapes and rough surfaces. Red is used as a protest colour. Beige and green dampen the contrasts.

Interior spaces are cool and rebellious with a rugged industrial look. The products are composed, which creates new combinations and products. Recycling, reuse, and new unconventional applications for materials and products with sharp edges, sharp points, rough surfaces, and a story that needs to be told. Flowers and plants go along with this and are often applied in unorthodox ways.

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Re-assemble

Society is a colourful collage, and this diversity is reflected by creative design and product presentations; lots of variety in a patchwork of elements and composite shapes.

Stacked forms, layered and like a patchwork with different surface divisions that often have various functions and recycled materials: casual and uncomplicated. Random and extreme shapes and surprising combinations of materials. Unusual colour and plant combinations and new solutions (*suspended bouquets*). Think of high-contrast, light bouquets that are clearly made of various parts.

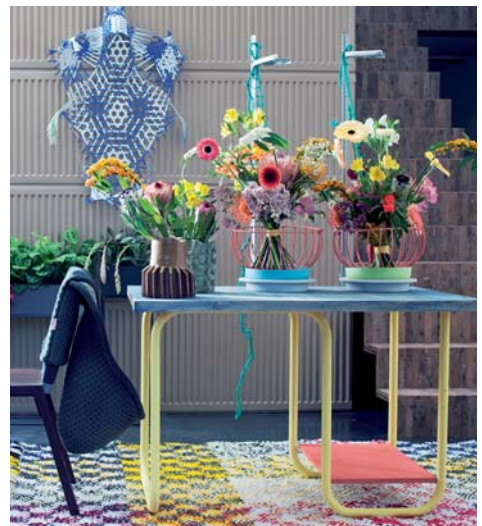
The colour palette is varied; bright colours next to pastels and greys. And a lot of (*living*) green.

Flowers Re-assemble:

Dahlia, Nerine, Ilex verticillata, Lilium, Colchicum, Callicarpa bodinieri, Craspedia globosa, Hedychium spicatum, Aechmea, Anthuriu, Allium, Protea, Delphinium

Plants Re-assemble:

Cyclamen, Viola cornuta, Coconut palm, Cactaceae, Soleirolia soleirolii, Crassula marginalis, Euphorbia, Begonia maculata, Punica granatum, Tillandsia, Fittonia



You're INVITED!

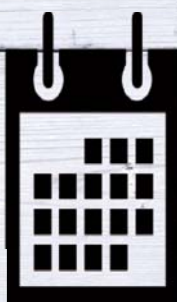
SPRING FAIR 2018

THURSDAY 1 FEBRUARY

07:00 - 20:00

FRIDAY 2 FEBRUARY

07:00 - 20:00



MONDAY 5 FEBRUARY

07:00 - 20:00

TUESDAY 6 FEBRUARY

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Romance 3.0

The economy is picking up again, prosperity is growing. And we are in a digital bubble: surrounded by people with like-minded opinions. Our own environment and world under a magnifying glass.

Powerful design, voluptuous shapes, intense, saturated colours, rich and often processed materials, decorations inspired by animal skins and flora: full bouquets, flower, plant, and leaf shapes. Luxuriously furnished indoor and outdoor spaces.

Indoor: warm colours (*purple is back*), gold and copper used in combination with rough and refined patterns. Flowers and plants used abundantly and decoratively everywhere, with decorative background patterns competing with pronounced flower shapes, large plants, both flowering and green, and both exotic and domestic.



Flowers Romance 3.0:

Medinilla magnifica, Vanda, Lilium, Hydrangea, Serruria orida, Tulipa, Chrysanthemum, Rosa, Nerine, Anemona coronaria, Euphorbia fulgens, Amaranthus, Helichrysum, ornamental cabbage, artichoke flower

Plants Romance 3.0:

Buxus, Calluna, Gaultheria, Tillandsia, Calathea, elkhorn fern, Begonia foliosa

NICHOLAS MARSHALL

The pied piper of Melville

Within months of his arrival at Dobbies Garden Centres earlier this year Nicholas Marshall has gathered around him a team of people he has worked with for years. So much so that attending a Dobbies gathering is almost like a Wyevale Old Boys event. No wonder Nicholas appears to be having so much fun at Dobbies. 'My model hasn't changed, I've just been practising a number of times.'

Text Trevor Pfeiffer

What makes working with Nicholas Marshall so attractive? Why did so many experienced garden centre people drop everything and head across the border? 'The theme here before I arrived was a poundshop', says Nicholas Marshall. 'Actually it was worse than that, they had some things that cynical retailers sell. 'What we had was 65% not very good, then 25% of OK and then a modest 10% of good and what we've done is swing it around so actually the 50% is in the middle with 25% really good and 25% of the cheaper variety. It's not that huge a thing on the spectrum, it's just moving it around, so we are still selling Yankee candles, but they are on the good not the better or the best.'

'One of the first things I did when I walked into Dobbies was to go into a sale. Everyone thought I was screwy. What I knew was we had to get rid of a huge amount of tat in stock. Today we are selling more than we did last year with £9m less stock, that is now in cash, in the bank. Not only that, I've now got thousands of square feet in the warehouses, at £25 per sq. foot available to turn into concessions.'

'My three-year plan, the same as I instigated at Wyevale, is a third of EBITDA should come from restaurants, a third from concessions and a third from the garden centre which means you've weather proofed the business. Before I get out of bed in the morning I've made the concession income and even if the weather is not very good people still go into the restaurant and then you've got the garden centre business where you make hay when the sun shines.'

'I want people to come in just one way'

A trade mark of Nicholas' garden centre retailing over the years has been entrances that come directly into the planteria. That is also a key part of his Dobbies plan: 'We're going to put a poly tunnel between the restaurant and the side of the planteria to create an entrance from the biggest part of the car park here at Melville on the A7. If you don't know where your custo-

mers walk you don't know where to put anything and Dobbies never thought about where people walk so here they come in from everywhere and I want them to come in just one way.'

If it doesn't say it, it's not British

'All our ambient food products will be about local. Every centre is now on notice to find local food producers. We are also mixing in food award winners. It's all the things you cannot buy in a supermarket. We're going to be saying to our customers - it's all British, so next time you go to a restaurant ask them, is this British, if it isn't come to Dobbies instead.'

'We'll be adding an internal children's soft play area that is self-contained to keep the noise within. We learned years ago you have to double glaze otherwise all the grannies are switching off their hearing aids.'

Catering and customer flow may excite Nicholas, but his heart and passion is plants. Out in the planteria he engages directly with customers: 'I'm very keen



that garden centres should be all about plants first of all, so were going to change the entrance and I want people to come in through the plants. I'm very keen to buy from local nurseries. I've told growers from Scotland they've got to step up to the plate, they have a good opportunity with Brexit. There was a time when to buy British was what you did.'

Asked if there was a danger in the instant gratification retailing of plants getting out of hand and that putting people off gardening Nicholas replied: 'No, there is no danger in instant gardening, it is where it is, but we can encourage people to do things. I think on-line we will do more. Click and collect will be huge, people still want to have the experience of coming to the store, use the restaurant and combine it.'

Autumn event

'At Dobbies, autumn had almost disappeared, they got into Christmas in July. We had an autumn event this year in all our garden centres and we were packed. All our restaurants were full, at night, and

people were out in the planterias. That was the first time Dobbies had ever had an event in the autumn and it was a huge success. It was a bigger event than the Dobbies Christmas Event.'


Christmas 2017 will be a step change for Dobbies he explained: 'Dobbies will be running grottos in all 34 stores this Christmas where children will follow the magic hare to Santa and make an oath to the angels of love, joy, hope and peace. 'It's a huge part of Christmas, it's about children!'

With all that clarity and experience no wonder people felt safe in moving. 'I asked the marketing team to dig out all the analytics that had gone on and it said we'd lost all our AB customers and that people were no longer doing plants. I said so that's where we are starting and that's where we are taking it back, of course we were on the same side all wanting to go in the same direction.'

Behind all of this sits Dobbies new owners Midlothian Capital and Chairman Andrew Bracey. They clearly have aspira-

tions and pockets deep enough to fund the transfer market and will be starting to see a return on their investment this autumn. No wonder there are mentions from Nicholas of another garden centre 'in the pipeline'.

How long will it be before even more Wye-vale staff are working for Nicholas at Dobbies? After a morning spent with 'horticultural greatness' it's clear he is watching every move that Terra Firma and the existing Wye-vale management team make. Will we see the Scots launch a raid on Syon Park in the new year? 'I love the offices at Syon Park,' said Nicholas with fond memories, 'they look out over the plant area and it's a grade 1 listed building! That sounds like home from home for a man who 'escaped' from buying Homebase only to be his own gamekeeper for a year prior to the invitation from Dobbies.

Pied piper, plant enthusiast, retail doyen. Whichever label you chose for Nicholas, the UK Garden Centre industry is certainly more colourful with Nicholas back on the scene. 

It's Christmas here

The best Christmas shows are found at garden centres! This slogan serves to generate even more publicity for the beautiful Christmas shows that can be found in garden centres throughout the Netherlands. And they are hard to surpass; with magical scenes and richly laid tables, it was a feast for the eyes again.

Text Ilse Broers, Trevor Pfeiffer

Photo's right page
The winner
in the large category,
Intratuin Duiven

The winner
in the medium category,
Groencentrum Witmarsum
(second half)

The Best Christmas Show in the Netherlands is a national competition in which nearly 50 garden centres participated. Large chains such as Intratuin, GroenRijk, Life & Garden, and Coppelmanns, but also cool smaller players from Groningen to Maastricht. The shows were judged by a professional jury, who saw lots of beautiful things on their journey through the country. We will share a number of strong and striking examples from that great Christmas practice with you.

What better suits a garden centre than green? Green is part of Christmas, and we see this in beautiful presentations with large indoor plants, cacti, and of course, Christmas green. Some entrances to Christmas shows were also fully decorated with greenery. Other major themes include gold, pastel, and candy; with donuts and cakes as decorations. And the English pub, as seen last year at Christmasworld in Frankfurt, was often used.

The shows offer a very varied picture in terms of design, execution, but also in things like the entrances. We saw a grand spectacle at garden centre Osdorp in Amsterdam, complete with red carpet, and a spectacular entrance at Intratuin Halsteren, where the white world began even before you enter.

A clever idea: offering additional service for artificial Christmas trees. Selecting a tree, ordering it, and picking it up at the cash register; how great is that? A service the jury found in multiple places. Lighting is a product group that is on the rise. The jury saw many smart and practical solutions, such as filled wire baskets with lights burning on top. A closer look and feel before you buy is always pleasant.

The second catering location, often halfway through the Christmas show, is gradually gaining ground. A fun example is the food festival at Intratuin Duiven, but with a typically Dutch theme, including rolls, coffee, and fries. A pleasant (*and healthy*) development: pieces of fruit are offered at various locations. A pretty good snack next to all those sausage rolls.

Impossible to miss were the picture moments: in a carriage, in front of a gnome village, or hugging a man-sized polar bear; anything was possible. Of course, these would be linked to Facebook promotions; the fastest way to increase your reach.

There was great entertainment for children. Merry-go-rounds, trains, igloos full of cushions as a children's cinema, and entire miniature





The winner in the small category, Coppelmans Nuenen

Christmas villages with bridges and ponds. Except maybe the Lemax that was too high up, or the warning signs that were everywhere. Do not touch! Even the jury have trouble with that from time to time. And we see so many grandparents out with their grandchildren on these festive days! It seems to be becoming an entirely new target group.

Best Christmas Show competition

In the Best Christmas Show in the Netherlands competition, three main prizes were awarded, in the small (*up to 5,000 m²*), medium (*5,000 – 10,000 m²*), and large (*larger than 10,000 m²*) categories. This was based on the total shopping area (*not the size of the Christmas show*).

The winner in the small category was Coppelmans Nuenen. The jury: 'This garden centre is impossible to ignore. It breathes an amazing atmosphere and the Christmas theme has been developed excellently. Structurally, the

atmospheric rooms have been done so well and varied.'

The winner in the medium category was Groencentrum Witmarsum. And undeniably so, the jury say. 'They have guts, they have style, and they are creative and innovative. They dare to exhibit their own interpretation of Christmas. This store is not afraid to pick one theme. This results in a balanced store with a very high wow-factor.'

The winner in the large category was Intratuin Duiven. The jury were amazed when they walked into the light hall here. 'An entire hall filled with trees and mood lighting. The miniature Christmas world, the largest in Europe, had wishing wells for the Red Cross in multiple places. And the escalator up is worth the prize in itself; it is a portal into another world, full of fantasy and magical figures. Absolutely fantastic.'

More photos at bestekerstshow.nl 

Photo's right page

Santa Paws, visits to see Father Christmas in his grotto for pets and their owners, continued grow as a concept in 2017 with more centres adding it to their Christmas event list. One centre even reported a gold fish being taken to see Santa!

Castle Gardens in Sherborne Dorset won the Garden Centre Christmas competition for the third year running. Their excellent display take customers on a journey around the small centre that takes over half an hour to complete enhancing their capacity to spend money.

Bents in Warrington, between Manchester and Liverpool, were the Destination Centre winner in the Garden Centre Association competition. This year they added a Winter Food Market in true Bavarian style in their covered open skies planteria.

Stunning Children's movie theme displays caught the eye at Whitehall Lacock. High quality theatrical displays that created a very popular extra attraction. Linked with professional Christmas merchandising all around the centre, Christmas was a big hit at Whitehall.

Personalised Christmas products were once again at the top of the GTN Bestsellers Christmas Chart every week from the end of September right through to Christmas Eve. These personalised Santa's Little Helper books ended the season as the No 5 Christmas Bestseller overall.

UK CHRISTMAS REVIEW IN A NUTSHELL



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