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IGC Show Announces Full Program for Continuing Education @ IGC
Five All-New Tracks Include ‘Grab & Go Containers,’ ‘Using Online Commerce to Drive Store Traffic,’ ‘Store Renovations’ & More – Plus Free Education Sampler Tuesday

CHICAGO – IGC Show officials just released the full details of this summer’s **Continuing Education @ IGC**, the world’s largest dedicated garden center education event, at www.IGCshow.com. Five brand new tracks will dive deep into **Grab & Go container profits, online commerce that drives store traffic, store renovations, TV and radio publicity tricks, and sales strategies that work with today’s consumer.**

In addition, all IGC Show attendees are invited to **Tuesday’s Free Sampler of Continuing Education @ IGC prior to Dr. Charlie Hall’s keynote, 9 - 10:30 a.m. in Navy Pier’s Aon Grand Ballroom.** During this sampler session, open to everyone free of charge, **Judy Sharpton** will take a broad look at the renovation process, in all of its ups and downs, fits and starts.

Detailed descriptions of all of the sessions in the following Continuing Education @ IGC tracks are available now at www.IGCshow.com/Education

Early bird savings on Continuing Education @ IGC “All-Access” Passes and the IGC Show Store Tour are available now, for a limited time.

Track 1:

“How To Profit Year-Round with Grab & Go Containers” with Sharon Hadden

Grab & Go container gardens offer the opportunity to add an incremental, high-margin department that encourages increased customer traffic, higher spending and greater customer

(more)

satisfaction for your garden center. Sharon Hadden, who heads up the Container Garden Department at Allisonville Garden & Home in Fishers, IN, is ready to show you how. She has transformed the garden center's Grab & Go offering into a highly successful business model, increasing ready-made container sales by 30 percent to \$117,000 last year and boosting efficiency by reducing staff hours in half.

Prior to relocating to the United States from the United Kingdom four years ago, Hadden owned and operated a growing company that sold at wholesale and to the consumer public, and studied botanical art at the prestigious Chelsea Physic Garden in London. She is featured regularly on the local Fox TV affiliate's morning show, and in each issue of IGC Magazine as the publication's Grab & Go Correspondent.

Track 2:

“Using Online Commerce to Build Store Foot Traffic & Sales” with John Kinsella

You've heard the call to start your online store for years: “You must sell online to stay alive!” Maybe you've attempted it, but haven't been happy with the results, or maybe you've shelved it for as long as you could. Your garden center needs online commerce to remain relevant, especially to the younger generations like Millennials - who, by a large majority, research online before heading to stores to shop in person. Do you know what “Omni-Channel” retailing is all about? You really need to. Now is the time to make your online presence a strong driver to your brick-and-mortar independent garden center.

John Kinsella is an advisor to retailers in designing and implementing differentiated customer experiences, brand creation and development, and online retail management. In his former position as Managing Director of Terrain, he was responsible for all aspects of the brand strategy development, launch and growth of Urban Outfitters' garden lifestyle brand.

Track 3:

“Store Renovations as a Sign of Industry Development” with Judy Sharpton

A strong economy, a robust housing market and ongoing interest in fresh food and local offerings have combined to revitalize our independent garden center sector. And now we see that Millennials want to nurture houseplants. To capitalize on the demand, many independent garden centers are undertaking store renovations. During her track, Sharpton will take you behind the scenes at five garden centers that are in various stages of the store renovation process, with important input from the owners and staff. You'll learn why now is the time to upgrade, and how to see it through, from the initial planning process to completion.

Judy Sharpton, Owner of Growing Places Marketing, specializes in on-site consultations on store design, renovation, branding, and product selection and placement exclusively for IGC retailers in the United States and Canada. Her impactful industry insights are featured in every issue of IGC Magazine.

Track 4:

“Local TV & Radio Tips, Tricks & Tools for Publicity that Will Drive Increased Traffic to Your Store” with Jeff Crilley

Your local media outlets are a true gold mine for your garden center business - *if you know how*

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to play their game. Do you know the “rules?” And what’s the best part of winning? It won’t cost you a dime for tons of coverage. What will this publicity get you? Brand awareness for your garden center, more foot traffic and sales, for starters. Would you like to become that go-to expert on gardening each time there’s a weather extreme, and get tons of publicity from it? Each attendee will receive a copy of Jeff Crilley’s book, *Free Publicity: A TV Reporter Shares the Secrets of Getting Covered on the News*.

Former TV news reporter Jeff Crilley used his 25 years in the business to start the country's first all-journalist PR firm, Real News PR, one of the fastest growing of its kind that represents companies and individuals from coast to coast. During his career, he worked for news stations in cities in the North, Midwest and South, and has appeared on hundreds of national TV news channels and programs, including CNN, CNN Headline News, Fox News, The Discovery Channel, Good Morning America and CBS' The Early Show. He received dozens of national and regional awards, including an Emmy, National Headliners Award, Edward R. Murrow Award and Thurgood Marshall Award.

Track 5:

“Sales Boot Camp for Your Garden Center’s Bottom Line” with Phil Wrzesinski

The economy is healthy and consumers are spending again - it’s time to tighten up your sales playbook. This intensive boot camp tuned in to today’s savvy customer is the perfect place to start. Phil Wrzesinski is a third-generation independent retailer with 24 years of experience, including his successful tenure heading up his family business, Toy House and Baby Too, named among the 25 best independent stores in America by George Whalin in his book *Retail Superstars*.

Phil Wrzesinski teaches retailers around the world the skills necessary to compete in today’s competitive retail climate. He draws upon the sales processes he used that led his small-market store to consistently out-perform industry metrics and become one of the top-volume independent toy stores in the country.

IGC Show’s trade show, three morning keynotes and Tuesday’s party and concert with The Marshall Tucker Band are free - if you register today at www.IGCShow.com

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