

Inspiring Individuality

| Chris Beytes

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In our humble opinion, the annual IPM Essen trade show is the world's best one-stop source for plant packaging and display ideas and inspiration. What's our proof? Try 1,500-plus creative horticultural companies from 45 countries under one roof—flower and plant breeders, pot and packaging manufacturers, influential wholesale distributors such as the Dutch and German auctions, cash-and-carry outlets like the famous Waterdrinker from the Netherlands, national associations like Denmark's GASA—all doing their best to capture the attention and business of the 57,000 attendees.

Which is why *Green Profit* once again trekked to Germany and scoped out all 12 halls of the Messe Essen to bring you the coolest, trendiest, hippest ideas that you can steal, modify or otherwise use in your garden center. Skeptical that it's really the world's most inspiring horticulture show? Don't take our word for it. Book a flight. The 36th edition is January 23-26, 2018.



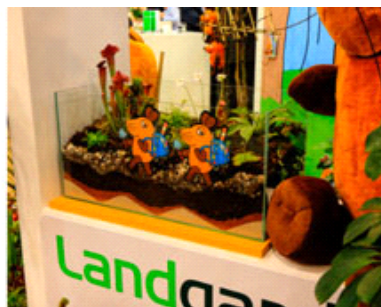
Detailed Labeling

A Dutch company called Growing Concepts offers this very nice Mason jar terrarium planted with moss and various tropicals, including small bromeliads, pitcher plants, even a coffee plant. The bail-style closure makes the terrarium virtually self-sustaining. The terrarium is nice, but we love the label, which shows great attention to detail, such as the line, "The only thing I need is a little love" and the "Bottled In" date. They retail online for about \$42. www.growingconcepts.nl

Galvanized Buckets as Succulent Pots

Succulents were ubiquitous at IPM, as were ways to package them. We picked this idea to share because the tiny bucket's finish, texture and style is on trend, and they should be easy for you to source.

PHOTO: galvanized buckets



Magnifier Tag

We're sharing this as a stellar example of out-of-the-box thinking. German flower auction Landgard has licensed the cartoon character "The Mouse" and has designed a line of kid-friendly products sporting The Mouse and his friends The Duck and The Elephant. One such product is a carnivorous plant terrarium, which comes with this ingenious "explorer magnifier" tag. It made us wonder what else a plant tag can do. www.landgard.de.

Combine Wall Art with Displays

When building displays, consider creating a wall of inspiration and informative POP, such as this Easter vignette, also by Landgard. Note the blackboard-style background—we saw lots of this.



Layering

My term for the use of more than one material and texture to dress up a plant. The carnations feature a ribbon, pretty tag and some fiber topdressing, while the foliage and orchids in the cream and blue pots are accented by twists of rustic rope-style ribbon. Finally, a simple tete-a-tete daffodil is taken to a whole new level with moss, a “handmade” tag with pearl-topped stake, and some felt decorations.



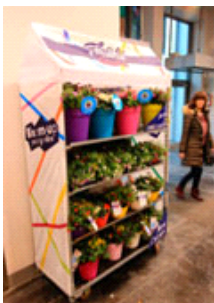
Herb Packaging on the Bench

German grower Blu (short for “blumen”) offers its retail customers this benchtop kit that lets consumers turn their 4 in. potted herb purchase into a gift with a sleeve, wooden tag and recipe booklet. You buy it for about \$45; Blu will refill it for free.



People and Lifestyle

Europeans are good at incorporating people and lifestyle into their POP and displays. A few examples: Beyond is a Dutch cut chrysanthemum grower that uses this attractive family history-oriented packaging only to market to the trade. Again note the blackboard-style color scheme. MoreLips is a Dutch wholesaler that has built its whole marketing campaign around people giving and receiving plants. Selecta One, meanwhile, used a pretty, smiling girl on a scooter to bring more life and style to their carnations.



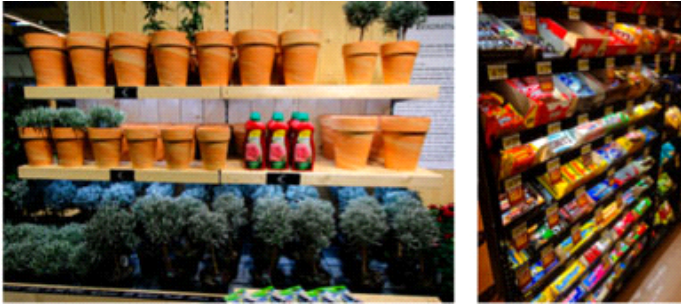
Trolley Tent

If you have to merchandise plants on racks, here’s a way to protect plants from wind and rain while providing a space for POP. Developed by two growers that market in partnership with each other, it’s sewn from lightweight tent material and held in place with magnet strips.



I Am Different

Danish rose breeder Roses Forever made sure we didn't miss their new introduction. "I am different" was prominent on the pedestal, and the label on each plant explained exactly how it is different. We like this idea because most new introductions get lost in the garden center, shoved on the table or rack with all the old varieties. We believe in spotlights, velvet ropes, limited, numbered editions and big "I am different" banners.



Blackboard Paint and Lights

Two ideas in one: First, use a splash of blackboard paint on the edge of a shelf or bench as a spot to write variety names and prices. Second, anywhere you've got shelves, consider putting LED lights underneath. The added illumination makes a world of difference to your display, and LED strings and strips are getting cheaper to buy and easier to install. As proof that lighting works, the candy display photo isn't from IPM, it's from a Jewel grocery store in Chicago. **GP**