



Heidi Lindberg
wollaege@msu.edu



Melinda Knuth
mjkmath@ncsu.edu

Get the 4-1-1 on Social Media for Garden Retailers

Engaging and inspiring consumers through social media can build trust and loyalty and drive sales.

As garden centers approach peak sales season, those tending to their social media should know the 4:1:1 rule of thumb for types of posts on their pages. The benefits of this rule include better views and engagement. Consumers believe you are building a relationship with them which gains their trust and loyalty. Loyalty = \$\$.



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What does that mean?

- **4**:1:1: Four out of every six posts should be entertaining or educational
- 4:**1**:1: One of out every six should be a 'soft sell'
- 4:1:**1**: One of out every six should be a 'hard sell'

We found some great examples of all these types of posts at garden center retailers across America.

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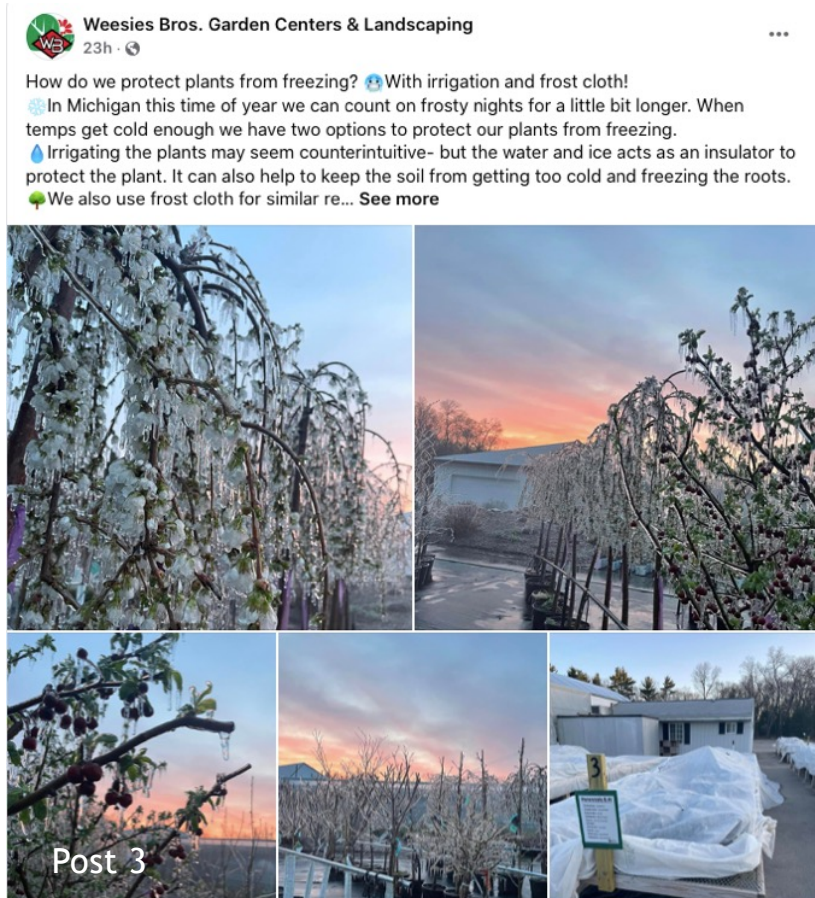
Entertaining or Educational

The most social media posts on your business' page should be either entertaining or educational for customers. This helps your consumers want to follow you and interested in your content. Let's look at some great examples:

Michigan recently had some (unwelcome) late season snow and the local garden retailers had some fun with it by creating some entertaining posts featuring cute puppies (Post 1) and even Sasquatch (Post 2). Personal antidote from Melinda: adorable animals on your posts do increase views. Try it!



Post 2



Post 3

Speaking of the weather, another garden retailer featured some behind-the-scenes posts on how the garden center prevents freezing damage with irrigation and frost cloth (Post 3). This informs customers about the strategies that professionals employ to make sure they get the best quality product.

Proven Winners recently shared two great educational posts. One post talked about the differences between tropical, perennial, and shrub *Hibiscus* to help customers understand which plants might be right for their climate (Post 4). We have recently been enjoying the 'Top 10' plants for every region of the U.S. showing consumers what plants really thrive in their areas (Post 5). We are still educating though, so no price tags listed yet!

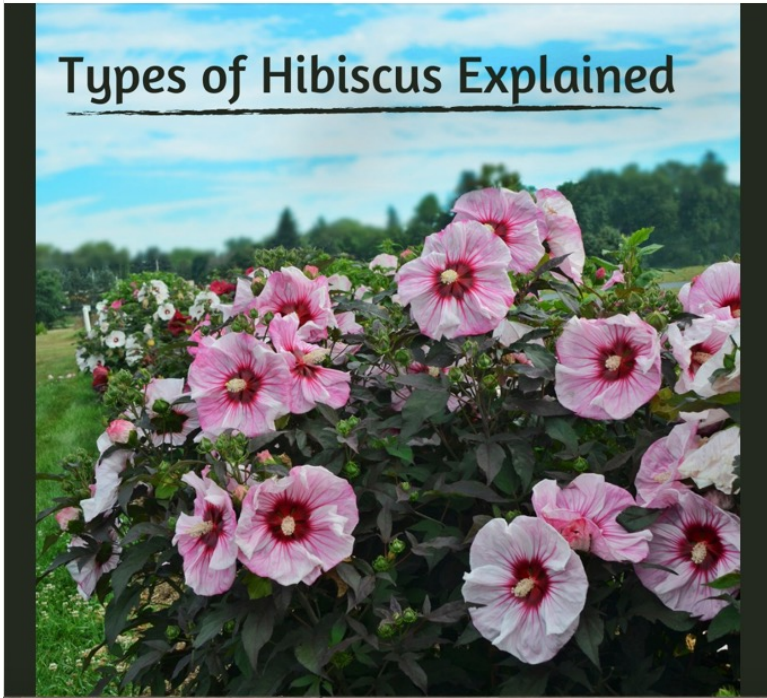
Post 4

PW Proven Winners 22h

What's in a name? When it comes to Hibiscus, quite a lot!

This common name covers several hundred species of tropical plants, hardy perennials and woody shrubs. Which type of hibiscus are you growing in your garden? This handy primer will help you spot the differences, identify which kind you have, and best of all, we have suggestions on how to best care for these beauties all season long! Click here to learn more, pwwin.rs/Hats-Hibiscus

Types of Hibiscus Explained



Post 5

PW Proven Winners April 11 at 10:25 AM

Do you live in the Northeastern part of the US or Canada, zones 4-5? We know that winter can be slow to leave your area in the spring so we're here to help with a list of our recommended annuals, perennials, and flowering shrubs. These plants will burst into color quickly so you can get the most out of the warmer months ahead, click here to view and download our recommended plant lists! pwwin.rs/nearest4-5



TOP 10

 for the Northeastern United States

PW PROVEN WINNERS The #1 Plant Brand

Here's one final post that fits in the 'Educational/Entertaining' category that will be sure to make you laugh out loud and has nothing to do with plants (Post 6):

Romence Gardens & Greenhouses April 14 at 4:59 PM

Post 6

I've never wanted to be in a gang more than this one.



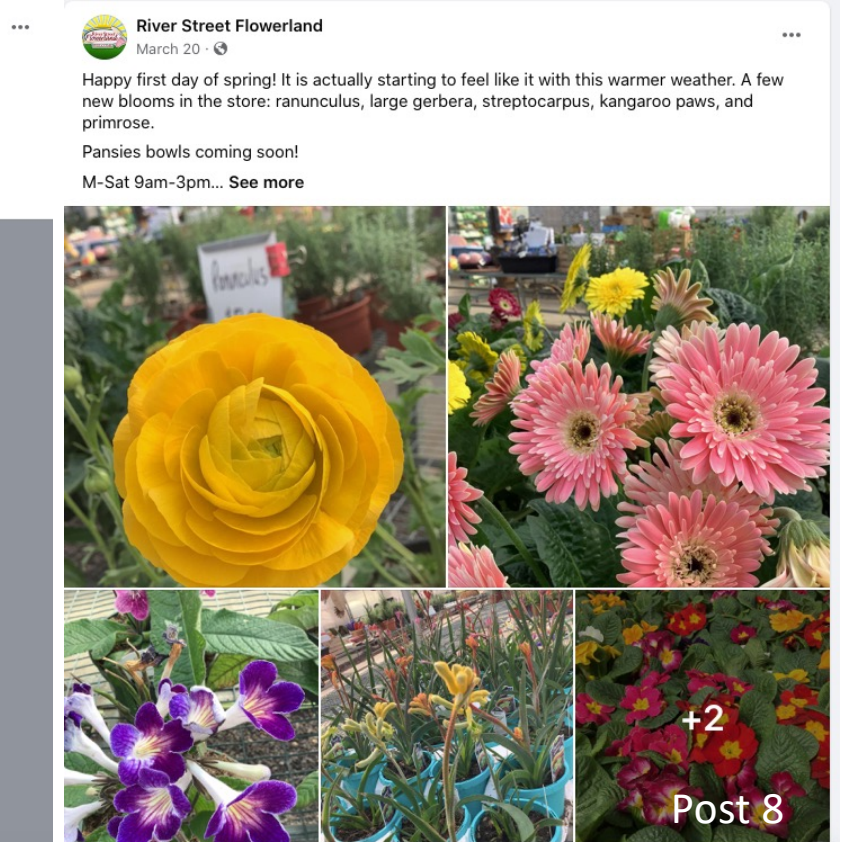
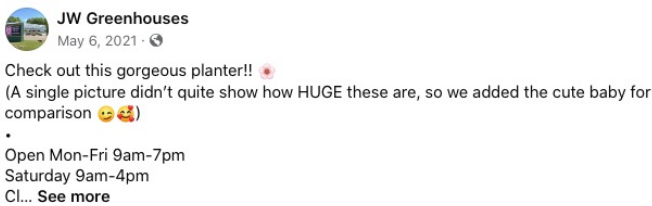
The Slow Roasted Italian April 11 at 9:00 PM

Soft Sell

One out of every six posts in social media marketing should be 'soft sell' posts. These posts are social media posts that are not directly selling product to customers but feature their attributes such as those that talk about beauty, fragrance, or feature new or favorite varieties.

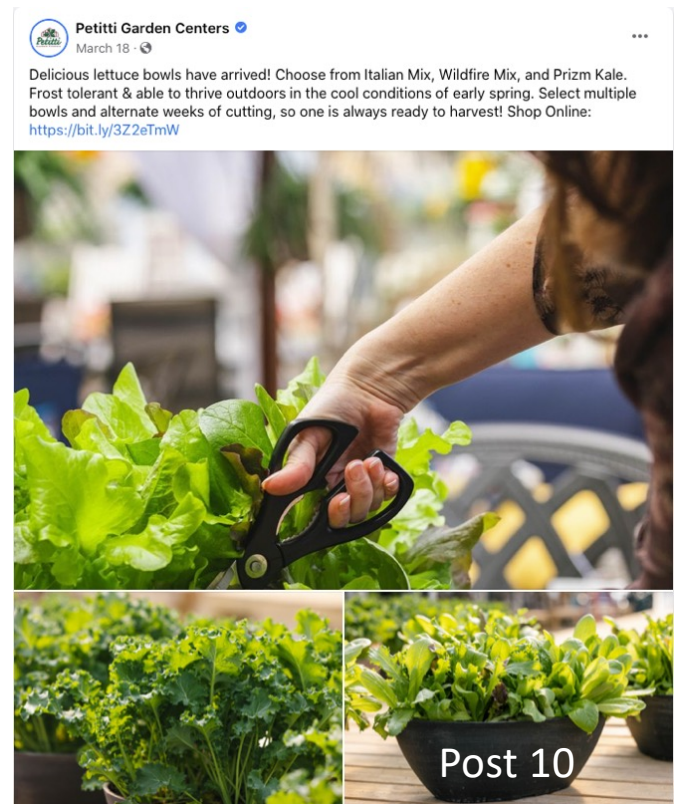
This Michigan retailer showcased how large their combo planters were by featuring an adorable toddler (Post 7). Notice the retailer also lists the times they are open that week. A great way to catch attention and remind consumers where and when to buy. Encourage people to come in or view your website!

Another west Michigan retailer featured favorite plants and what was blooming in their greenhouse on the first day of spring (Post 8).



Posts that feature plants that have been in demand such as this one (Post 9) about their new Carolina Reaper peppers was sure to get a reaction from those on social media. This post caught my attention, but you can count me out as one to purchase this pepper this spring!

Some social media posts will cross the line and maybe be both informative and a soft sell. This post about lettuce bowls (Post 10) suggests that you buy more than one, so you always have fresh lettuce for your dinner table.



Hard sell

One out of every six posts on your social media account should be the true 'hard sell.' This is what we would consider a true, traditional selling post. These posts feature sales (buy one get one free, 10% off), Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) or urgency (Come and get them quick! We have low stock!), loyalty programs or a special. These posts will be the most straight forward in communicating products that customers can come in and buy or buy directly from your social media by linking your website.

Here is a great example of a social media post that falls in the category, 'hard sell' as it shows \$5 off every hanging basket during a weekend sale (Post 11).



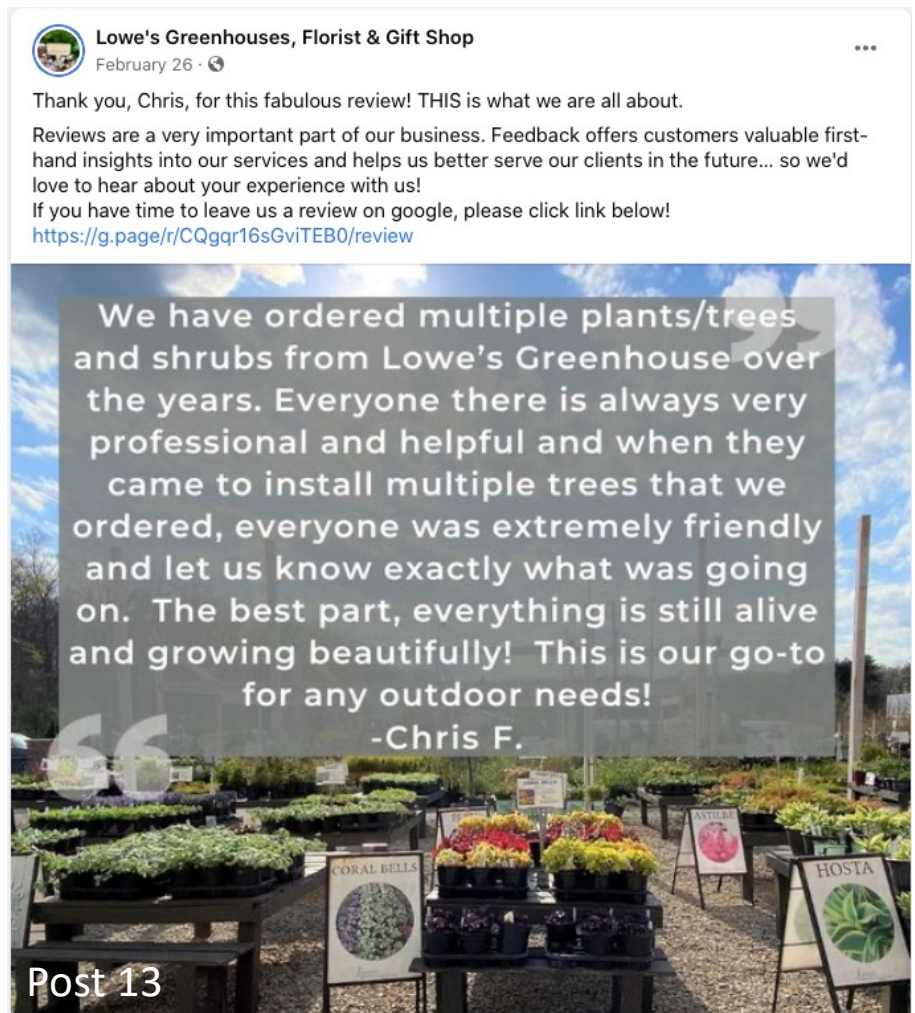


Post 12 advertises a buy one get one 50% off sale and even features a dog to show the size of the houseplants.

No matter the content on your social media pages, the goal is creating engagement with your audience and building a positive experience for consumers. You want consumers to be excited to do business with you. Ultimately, the goal with any social media marketing program is for users to generate content for you.

How? Customers are so excited about your products, memes, business that they reshare posts or make their own posts about their experience with your business. Having a 'selfie' station is a great start to getting people to post that they are at

your business and about their experience. The holy grail for any social media marketing it being able re-share these posts providing testimonials about your business (Post 13). This is free marketing and promotion for your business by your customers! This is what you should strive for - then repost for engagement with your followers so they can see the satisfaction and positive feedback.



e-GRO Alert

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CONTRIBUTORS

Dr. Nora Catlin
Floriculture Specialist
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Suffolk County
nora.catlin@cornell.edu

Dr. Chris Currey
Assistant Professor of Floriculture
Iowa State University
ccurrey@iastate.edu

Dr. Ryan Dickson
Greenhouse Horticulture and
Controlled-Environment Agriculture
University of Arkansas
rvand@uark.edu

Thomas Ford
Commercial Horticulture Educator
Penn State Extension
taf7@psu.edu

Dan Gilrein
Entomology Specialist
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Suffolk County
dog1@cornell.edu

Dr. Chieri Kubota
Controlled Environments Agriculture
The Ohio State University
kubota.10@osu.edu

Heidi Lindberg
Floriculture Extension Educator
Michigan State University
wolleage@anr.msu.edu

Dr. Roberto Lopez
Floriculture Extension & Research
Michigan State University
rglopez@msu.edu

Dr. Neil Mattson
Greenhouse Research & Extension
Cornell University
neil.mattson@cornell.edu

Dr. W. Garrett Owen
Sustainable Greenhouse & Nursery
Systems Extension & Research
The Ohio State University
owen.367@osu.edu

Dr. Rosa E. Raudales
Greenhouse Extension Specialist
University of Connecticut
rosa.raudales@uconn.edu

Dr. Alicia Rihn
Agricultural & Resource Economics
University of Tennessee-Knoxville
arihn@utk.edu

Dr. Debalina Saha
Horticulture Weed Science
Michigan State University
sahadeb2@msu.edu

Dr. Beth Scheckelhoff
Extension Educator - Greenhouse Systems
The Ohio State University
scheckelhoff.11@osu.edu

Dr. Ariana Torres-Bravo
Horticulture / Ag. Economics
Purdue University
torres2@purdue.edu

Dr. Brian Whipker
Floriculture Extension & Research
NC State University
bwhipker@ncsu.edu

Dr. Jean Williams-Woodward
Ornamental Extension Plant Pathologist
University of Georgia
jwoodwar@uga.edu

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