

Flowers for the Generations

By Sharon Mikulinski

Life's celebrations usually include flowers, and this tradition continues with the younger generations. However, how each generation views their shopping experiences, how they select flowers and how they educate themselves varies greatly.

Baby Boomers

Born between 1946 and 1964 (ages 57 to 75 in 2021), baby boomers have expendable income, generally prefer to shop in person and have high expectations about customer service. They are not likely to be influenced by social media; instead, they typically purchase based on a brand's popularity, and they tend to be loyal to that brand after having a good experience with the product.

Customer service is key, so make sure you have personnel available to offer tips and advice and to help these consumers make selections. Instruct them how to properly care for their flowers when they get them home, and provide flower-food sachets and flower care instructions with each sale.

Gen X / Baby Busters

Born between 1965 and 1980 (ages 41 to 56 in 2021), Gen Xers will purchase typically only after doing a lot of research. Clear, honest explanations about how a product is used go a long way, and quality products and services will spark brand loyalty.

Customer service is important to this group, too, but convenience and ease of shopping/purchasing are more important. Providing flower-food sachets and printed flower care instructions—or having instructions printed on floral packaging—works great with this group.

In addition, offer DIY-project

products in your store, and promote them on social media. You can also reiterate proper care and handling practices on social media.

Gen Y / Millennials

Born between 1981 and 1996 (ages 25 to 40 in 2021), millennials lead lives dominated by web devices. They demand integrated experiences that are fluid between in-store shopping (which has become a social event) and online purchasing. This group is heavily influenced by social media, and the way to catch and hold their attention is to be present and constantly engaging on these platforms.

2012 (ages 9 to 24 in 2021), this generation has never known a world without the internet. They have infinite information at their fingertips, which has created a price-check-savvy culture among these young consumers. Gen Z also views shopping at traditional stores as social outings, and they most often shop with friends.

To sell to this group, you must be tech savvy, and offering discounts and incentives, as well as seamless shopping, will create repeat customers.

This group knows the least about caring for cut flowers, but they are interested to learn. One-on-one instruction is best,

unit). Use clean, good-quality water, and do not use water that has been treated with a water softener because the salt levels can be damaging to flowers.

3. Remove any foliage from flower stems that would fall below the flower-food solution in storage and display containers and in arrangements.

4. Recut stem ends, removing approximately 1 inch of stem, using clean and sanitized clippers or a knife (unless you use FloraLife® Express). Dip the freshly cut flower stem ends into FloraLife® Quick Dip, to jump-start hydration and ensure free-flowing stems.

5. Immediately after recutting the flower stem ends, place the flowers into the previously prepared containers.

6. Allow the flowers to remain in the flower-food solution for a minimum of two hours so they can adequately rehydrate. Place the flowers in an area with good air circulation.

7. Avoid getting water on any blooms; this can cause *Botrytis* (a gray-mold fungus) to develop.

8. Check flower-food solution levels in storage/display containers daily, and add more fresh solution, as needed.

9. Avoid displaying cut flowers near extreme heat or cold, drafts, or ripening fruits or vegetables.

10. When rotating flowers, always remember FIFO (first in, first out). ■

Want to learn more?

To get more information about cut-flower care and handling, from the flower care experts, visit floralife.com.

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Millennials know very little about how to care for cut flowers, and the best way to educate them, believe it or not, is in person—but with a tech-savvy flair. Provide flower-food sachets for them to take home and social media support that they can search for online.

How-to design tutorials, as well as education about the health and wellness benefits of flowers and plants, speak to this generation. Telling the stories of where and how your flowers are grown, as well as the growers' environmental impact, creates interest and brand loyalty.

Gen Z / Post-millennials

Born between 1997 and

but if that's not possible, provide flower-food sachets and flower care instructions with every purchase, with lots of social media support for when they get their flowers home.

Best Practices

Regardless of generation, the best flowers start with best practices. Here are our top 10.

1. Start with clean flower storage/display containers, sanitized with a floral cleaner such as FloraLife® D.C.D.® Cleaner.

2. Fill flower storage/display containers with cool water mixed with flower-food solution according to the manufacturer's directions (or use a properly calibrated flower-food dosing