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**Instant gratification**

**This past fall I was able to take time away from my nursery and visit a few of our new retail customers.**

It's always great to get out and see how the retail sector of our industry is doing.

One of the things that kept coming up was an emerging trend of "just in time" orders. In the past, complete spring orders could be booked in the prior summer or fall and then minor adjustments would happen as the spring season emerged. The trend now is to book the foundation of an order early and wait to see what else is needed as the season gets closer.

I thank Amazon, or I should say I blame them; the internet behemoth has taught us that just about anything is a click away.

With the readily available technology in our pockets, we have brought that instantaneous experience to our industry. Customers can call, text or email with a question and a grower can have an answer, an availability, and a picture to them in minutes.

A few fellow growers have told me their spring sales are now 60-70 percent pre-booked and the rest are done during the season for just-in-time orders. This is in contrast to the 90 percent or more that they indicated would be pre-booked just 20 years ago. I personally have experienced the same change in buyer habits.

The gradual shift to more "just in time" orders completely makes sense from a buyer's point of view. They want the plant material when it is at the peak of readiness and their customers are in the stores ready to buy.

One of the platforms that brings a wide array of growers and buyers together is the *OAN Nursery Guide*. It has been the most comprehensive wholesale buyer's guide in the industry for years. We have seen it evolve from a yearly printed book of listings to adding an up-to-date and up-to-the-minute website. Almost 400 growers are represented, and over 700 companies total. It's a place for growers, suppliers, and buyers to connect.

**NurseryGuide.com** was developed by us and for us. The OAN has done a wonderful job setting up this marketplace but we only get out of it what we put in. The staff at the OAN are willing and able to help set up or update your listings at any time. You can add new plants, add photos of your nursery, connect your current availability to your online profile, and much more.

For buyers, *Nursery Guide* is an invaluable resource for sourcing those hard-to-find plants or finding availability for the just-in-time plant orders in the spring. It is also a go-to resource for looking for services and supplies.

As members we have the benefit of this great and easy-to-use platform. One of the great features is the ability to update listings at any time throughout the year. This is wonderful through the spring season to get your plants out there to customers when they are peaking and looking great. And buyers have a go-to resource during the hectic spring when the weather turns nice and customers are in the stores and more plant material is needed.

Spring is right around the corner, or already here by some accounts, so put

**NurseryGuide.com** on top of your go-to list for finding those just-in-time plants, or get your listings updated today to reflect the readiness and quality of our Oregon Grown plants. ☺



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OAN PRESIDENT

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