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Adapt, overcome and go live!

Oregon nurseries have become well versed in the art of adversity.

Out of sheer necessity, we have mastered the ability to adapt quickly to whatever may come at us.

Winter can be a very erratic time for nursery growers in Oregon. Weather patterns can go from zero to 60 in the blink of an eye. Just a few weeks ago, we went from mild temperatures and clear skies to high winds and several inches of rain. This in turn caused flooding and power outages throughout our area over the course of a few days.

In the days following the storm, you would have thought spring had arrived with an onset of clear, sunny weather.

We growers have learned to expect sudden changes. Many of us depend on somewhat decent weather in the colder months to be able to dig and harvest the year's crop. Sometimes, that means working double time for days or weeks at a time to get the job done while the rain holds off. Other times, it means retreating to the shop to catch up on much-needed maintenance and rest until the next break in weather arrives.

When COVID-19 threatened to shut us down in the spring, our growers had to re-evaluate their entire operations from seed to sale. Those growers that adapted and pressed on seemed to weather the storm quite well, with many operations having banner years.

The pandemic has necessitated many changes in the way we interact with each other. The idea of gathering thousands of people at an industry trade show used to be part of our regular routine, with some of us attending several national events each year. Trade shows and networking events are a big part of what we do as an industry, and many of our national and regional trade groups rely on these events to fuel their associations and build relationships among growers, suppliers, and buyers.

So how do we press forward with the inability to physically gather with our customers from across the country? We've got to either get better at using the tools we have, or get new tools for the toolbox. The new Nursery Guide LIVE enables us to do both.

The OAN's Nursery Guide has been a staple tool for our industry for many years. I've often heard it referred to as the "phone book" of plants — you can find what you need quickly.

The need for an online version of our phone book came, and Oregon nurseries adapted by creating **NurseryGuide.com**. It soon became the go-to place for all your plant sourcing needs, right in the palm of your hand.

Nursery Guide LIVE is the next logical step in that evolution.

Our growers produce some of the best quality product in the country, and Nursery Guide LIVE will bring them to the forefront. This game-changing platform will connect the B2B needs of both buyer and seller with a dynamic online sales platform designed to showcase thousands of plants, products and services to satisfy buyers needs for the upcoming spring season.

The platform also provides live video chat opportunities, similar to a Zoom chat, built into every booth, so multiple people can connect "face to face" with customers and friends.

I urge you to go to **www.NurseryGuideLIVE.com** right now to see videos highlighting the many features of the show. It's all designed so exhibitors and attendees can easily make personal connections, place orders and secure product for the season.

As we continue to adjust to our new way of operating, the OAN and its members will continue to adapt to meet the needs of our customers. I believe Nursery Guide LIVE will be a great tool to help us accomplish that. ☺



Kyle Fessler