

Trade Show Wrap-Up: Going All-In

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There were lots of new products at this year's Arett Sales Open House designed to excite, inspire and intrigue customers in multiple departments throughout the garden center. Here are just a few morsels from the show floor for 2013.



Bloem

Bloem, a new company to the market, also has a self-watering plastic container design. The line features a wide range, from bright to muted colors in multiple sizes and styles. What really sells this line is the lifestyle marketing and point-of-purchase material. Each product is individually labeled and includes a QR code for more. The company is finishing up its racking systems and they will be available for retailers soon. This line is made in the United States.

Sloggers

Did you know this company started out in 1948 creating plastic covers for women's shoes? Current owner David Hoyt, and son of the founder, took the company in a new direction and created the Sloggers product line. This year, Sloggers ventures into more contemporary territory with fun zebra and leopard prints, as well as other designs. I can attest, too, they're very comfortable, as I wore them the whole second day of trade show walking and traveling. The shoes come in full sizes and there are inserts for half sizes that work well.

Vertex

This company had all kinds of cool garden gadgets, but the one that won 1st place for best new product at the Arett Show was the Garden Rocker Rolling Seat. It reduces knee and back strain and has a height-adjustable swivel seat. The Minneapolis-based company also had a great garden bag that could have lots of uses indoors and outdoors, as well as an outdoor utility sink that could be used for a potting bench. Another product that garnered lots of mentions at the show is the Sno-Dozer on wheels, which was an easy-to-use snow shovel that could be used at the garden center just as easily as it could be merchandised.



The Pond Boss

This company had a cool kit that lets customers turn any container into a fountain. The kit includes a filter box, 70-gph pump and three nozzles.

The display is relatively small so it can fit on a small footprint and would be great right next to the pottery.

Novelty Manufacturing

The wall-hanging pots on display at the Novelty booth were a cool way to get in on the vertical gardening trend without a large investment. They come in 8.5-in. or 5.5-in. wall pots with the water-minder self-watering feature. It comes as a 20-unit display with colors terra and black for the 5.5-in. pots and brown and black for the 8.5-in. pots. All come with screws for mounting.

Creative Letter Art

This is a new company from Ethan Reiss, who previously worked for New England Pottery. He's taken years of his own photography and created a unique business opportunity with it. His photography creates letters and combined they can spell out customized names, words and phrases in a variety of themes. Retailers can stock all the letters of multiple themes and frames to allow customers to create their own or there are prepackaged words like LOVE, PEACE and more. It's a cool idea that can set a retailer's gift section apart with customizable options.



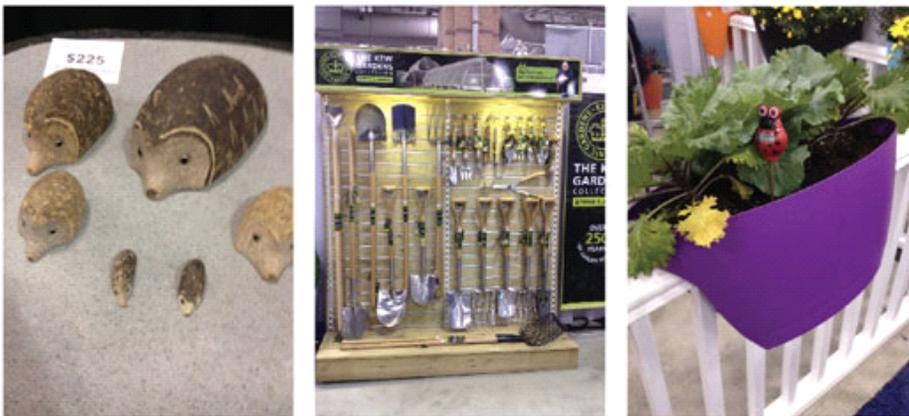
Henri Studio

Great news for this longtime industry favorite. Three partners purchased the assets to Henri Studio and Brass Baron after they closed last November for a spring re-opening. Two of the partners are from other parts of the green industry, which means they understand how the garden center business works. They have new products to ship for spring 2013, including some small to mid-sized lighted water features and fountains. All the products are made at the 70,000 sq. ft. production facility located outside of Chicago.

Compo Clay

Headquartered in Alameda, California, this company had some unique statuary, but what really stood out is the living wall planters that looked more like art than anything else. The product includes a 12 in. x 8 in. wooden panel and two planters that secure to the panel. There are multiple

styles and shapes to make indoor gardening more of an art form.



Stone Age Creations

Owls have been in for, well, forever it seems. Stone Age Creations has some new critters this year, including turtles, penguins and these little hedgehogs. I personally think the hedgehogs are incredibly cute, but alas, the turtles and the owls were the big sellers at the show this year.

Spear & Jackson

The Kew Gardens Collection is a new line of hand tools from the UK backed by Greg Redwood, the head of great glasshouses and horticultural training at the Kew Gardens. It's focused on independent garden centers in the U.S. and has a mid-level price for quality products. Handles are made from European Ash and the tool heads are made of stainless steel. The line features a wide range of hand tools—some with extra reach handles, that all feature a 10-year guarantee. The wooden display unit is free with \$3,000 worth of product or at cost for a lower order. The parent company, Neill Tools, is 250 years old.

Greenbo

This is a snazzy deck planter that was originally designed for urban spaces and balconies. It fits snugly on either a 4- or 6-in. railing and has a modern shape that grips to beveled edges (which home manufacturers have been leaning toward with deck railings for the past decade). The containers feature removable drip trays and have a longer bottom section that prevents it from tipping over. All the rage in Europe is to mix and match container and drip tray colors for a two-toned look. **GP**