



Homewood Nursery & Garden Center, Raleigh, NC

Timing is everything when it comes to Homewood’s newsletter. The four-page piece, mailed three times a year, helps kick off the retailer’s big seasons - spring, fall and the holidays. It arrives at customers’ mailboxes about a week before the major sale for the season. “It helps drive customers in,” says Tina Mast, Communications Director. The other purpose of the publication is to educate customers. Department managers write informational articles focused on plants or products for sale at the time. For example, to promote tropicals and houseplants, the greenhouse manager wrote about plants removing toxins from indoor air. To save money, printing is kept to one color. “It’s a cost issue,” Mast says. “I try to pick a seasonal color.”



The Garden Kingdom Garden Center & Landscaping, Glen Carbon, IL

The Garden Kingdom forms personal connections with customers through its newsletter, e-mailed monthly. As soon as readers open the file, they see their name in the greeting. “It gives us a link to them,” says Jean Noll, Manager. To sign up for the newsletter, customers fill out a form at the store, creating a personal profile, including birthdays and anniversaries, that can be updated online. Readers are also encouraged to send their questions or suggestions. “A lot of times, if they have a gardening question or want to know if something is at our store, they’ll e-mail us,” Noll says. The garden center keeps the newsletter “short and sweet” to appeal to shoppers with busy lifestyles.