

# MGA 2008 Winter Conference

Monday, January 7–Wednesday January 9 | Marriott Inner Harbor | Baltimore, MD

EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS  
FORWARD THINKING  
COMPELLING RESULTS

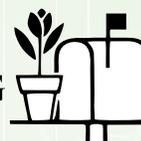
"I don't think it's a coincidence that since I've begun attending MGA conferences, our sales have skyrocketed. I arrived with little knowledge of marketing or gardening, and after applying the marketing tips and methods I've learned, we've been experiencing record-breaking sales numbers!"

— Susan

"There is an obvious benefit and value of the conferences themselves. Beyond that, in our own experience, MGA does a remarkable job of encouraging and welcoming the first time attendee."

— Jim

MAILORDER  
GARDENING  
ASSOCIATION



*Representing Exceptional Companies  
That Offer Superior Products*

[www.mailordergardening.com](http://www.mailordergardening.com)



**THE Premiere Event for Direct Gardening Marketers and Service Providers**

Conference Attendees come from large and small companies who sell everything from greenhouses, to bulbs, seeds, fruits, onions, flowers, potatoes, hardgoods and much more.

# MGA 2008 Winter Conference

Monday, January 7–Wednesday January 9 | Marriott Inner Harbor | Baltimore, MD

**MGA offers you the complete package—expert speakers, solutions you can take home and implement and the opportunity to sit with other companies like yourself and share ideas and opinions.**

**All owners and management of MGA member companies will quickly see the many benefits of attending an MGA program. Look over the following program schedule and share it with your fellow company associates.**

Baltimore Photos Courtesy of <http://www.baltimore.org>



**Representing Exceptional Companies  
That Offer Superior Products**

*"The conference exclusively for Direct Marketers and Suppliers in the Mail Order Gardening Industry"*

**CUTTING EDGE STRATEGIES | OUT OF THE BOX BRAINSTORMING | INNOVATIVE ECOMMERCE PRESENTATIONS**

## MONDAY, JANUARY 7

10:00–12:00 N

### "ASK THE EXPERTS" CONSULTATIONS

The "Ask The Experts" Program will take place again at the 2008 MGA Winter Conference in Baltimore.

This program provides an opportunity for MGA Catalog members to meet with MGA Allied members for a **no-fee private consultation** during the Winter Conference.

Our Allied members see this as a win-win situation for all involved. Catalog/ecommerce Members are able to get help from a fellow member on an issue they find challenging to their business, and

Allied Members have the potential opportunity to gain some new clients.

**Here is how the program will work:**

- Each of our participating Allied companies has been assigned a block of time and a private meeting room.
- Each Allied company has 4–25 minute time slots.
- Any interested Catalog members **must contact the Allied member directly** in order to reserve their 25 minute appointment.
- The Allied member is responsible for reconfirming your appointment.

**Reserve Now—the early bird catches the worm!**

**REPEAT PROGRAM**

2:00–5:30 PM

### Registration/Networking Room Open

Refreshments sponsored by Zed Marketing Group, Platinum Sponsor

2:00–5:00 PM

### MGA Board of Directors Meeting

6:00–7:30 PM

### "Welcome Back" Social

Say hello to your fellow members and meet some new company contacts, too. Light hors d'oeuvres and two complimentary cocktails will be available to each attendee.

Sponsored by Organic Gardening, Diamond Sponsor

OUR EXPERTS	AREA OF EXPERTISE
<b>10:00 AM–12:00 N</b>	
<b>Roberta Simpson-Dolbeare, Brookside Marketing</b> <i>brooksid@adams.net</i>	Advertising, PR, Marketing
<b>Val Gosset, Evergreen Marketing</b> <i>val@EvergreenMarketingCo.com</i>	Marketing, Advertising, Media Planning, E-newsletters
<b>Bill Licata, LCH Direct</b> <i>wlicata@lchdirect.com</i>	Catalog Design, Marketing, Circulation, Testing, Analysis
<b>Jim Zuckerman, Zed Marketing Group</b> <i>jim@zedmarketinggroup.com</i>	New Customer Acquisition—Insert Media, Market Strategy, List Rental
<b>Carol Worthington-Levy, LENSER</b> <i>carol.worthington-levy@lenser.com</i>	Print Catalog and Website Critiques
<b>1:00–3:00 PM</b>	
<b>Ken Lane, Hathaway &amp; Lane</b> <i>klane@hathawayandlane.com</i>	Sales & Inventory Forecasting in a Multi-Channel World
<b>Lilliane LeBel, The Millard Group</b> <i>llebel@millard.com</i>	Consumer Research
<b>Geoff Wolf, LENSER</b> <i>Geoff.wolf@lenser.com</i>	Get a Quick Review of your Multi-Channel Contact Strategy in Today's Paradigm. Will review your multi-channel contact strategy and mailing schedule.
<b>Michael Heeney</b> <i>Michael@groware.com</i>	Business Software for Garden Catalogers, Wholesalers and Retailers
<b>Wendy Weijdema, Elburg Botanic Media</b> <i>wweijdema@elburgbotanicmedia.com</i>	Creating an Image, Design and Concept to Attract Your Target Groups
<b>3:15–5:15 PM</b>	
<b>Todd Kinzle, Wiland Direct</b> <i>tkinzle@wilanddirect.com</i>	The Power of Cooperative Databases

## TUESDAY, JANUARY 8

7:30 AM–5:00 PM

### Registration Room Open

Refreshments sponsored by Zed Marketing Group, Diamond Sponsor

7:30–8:45 AM

### Continental Breakfast & Green Thumb Awards

Sponsored by Gardening How-To, Platinum Sponsor

The Winners of the MGA 2008 Green Thumb Awards will be announced and recognized for their achievement. A company representative from each winning company should be present to receive their award.



**MGA 2008 Winter Conference**

8:45–10:00 AM

**STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSIONS**

To continue the MGA Strategic Planning Efforts, we want to continue to review our existing programs and move forward with new planning initiatives.

The meeting room will be divided into 5 table areas. Members will select the topic they are interested in participating in. There will be a facilitator to moderate the roundtable discussion.

Your goal is to brainstorm and review existing MGA programs in the following areas:

- MGA Website
- Public Relations Campaign
- Member Benefits
- Survey Research
- Freight & Shipping Issues

Your input is crucial to the success of this effort. At 9:30, a spokesperson from each table will give a five minute summary on their thoughts and suggestions with the entire membership. These comments will then be reviewed and discussed by the committees and the board at a later date.

10:10–11:00 AM

**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS—Round 1**

Bring your burning questions to this roundtable program. There are 9 different topics, each at a different table. Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in 2 different topic discussions. Each discussion is 45-50 minutes in length.

At each table, an industry expert will briefly introduce the session topic and then the table participants will shape the session content based on their own specific needs and questions.

- **“No Match” Social Security Numbers**
- **Making the Most of Your HotSpots: Harder working front and back covers and “red carpets”**—Carol Worthington-Levy, LENSER
- **Merge Perge—Importance of List Hygiene/Better Use of Database**—Michele Salman and Geoff Wolf, LENSER
- **Imagination—The Impact of Photography/Using Digital vs. 35mm**—Richard Smit, Photostudio Visions, BV
- **Tips & Tricks on Motivating Seasonal Employees, Using Sales Incentive Programs**—Michael Allen, Dutch Gardens
- **Promoting Products & Product Line Improvements**—Rick Pontz, Lawn & Garden Performance Group
- **Importance of Public Relations**—Howard Kaplan, Mantis/Little Wonder
- **Leveraging Web 2.0 to Reach New Consumers**—Steven Plous, Direct Message Lab
- **Social Computing--Online Marketing**—Judith Roberts, estrategyfirst

11:00–12:00 N

**Round #2**

Repeat topics from Round 1.

12:00–1:30 PM

**MGA Past President Luncheon with First Time Attendee**

This is a perfect opportunity for new attendees to meet our association leaders as well as other members attending an MGA convention for the first time. Our goal is to make you feel welcome and provide you with the opportunity to get the most from your MGA experience!

12:00–1:30 PM

**Members—Lunch on Your Own.**

1:30–2:30 PM

**PRESENTATION—“Rich Internet Application, Widgets and Desktop Applications”**

The number of tools available to marketers to create a compelling experience for users on their site and outside their site, is rapidly expanding. In this presentation, **Steve Plous**, President of Direct Message Lab, will investigate the use of Rich Internet Applications, Widgets and Desktop Applications to create a memorable experience on your site and to also maintain and build a customer relationship once the user has left your site. We will review several sets of real world examples and users will walk away with a set of tactical options to immediately make a difference in their revenue.



**Steven Plous** is the Founder and CEO of Direct Message Lab, the leading provider of direct-to-desktop communications. Direct Message Lab enables organizations to communicate to their customers in a highly visual, personalized way through desktop applications, widgets, social networks, start pages and more. Direct Message is based in New York and its clients include several Fortune 500s and many leading online organizations.

2:35–3:45 PM

**PRESENTATION—“How Many Ways Can You Screw in a Light Bulb? Selling Your Products in New and Proven Ways”**

You’re selling through your catalog and/or website. Perhaps you’ve tried a few other things but they haven’t set your business on fire. What media haven’t you tried yet? Which one did you try, but were disappointed with the results?



8-time DMA Echo winner **Carol Worthington-Levy** will share with you, when direct mail can be really effective, when a space ad can shine and how to make your emails more effective than ever...while working alongside of your catalog and website to give you that extra sales power.

Carol has developed samples that speak directly to our industry, so you’re sure to take home ideas to try in your business.

Carol is a strategic thinker who works both hands-on and directing her LENSER creative team

to infuse quality and psychographic intelligence into the design, copywriting and photography for every project, with an emphasis on outstanding measurable performance.

3:45–4:00 PM

**Short Break**

4:00–5:30 PM

**PRESENTATION—“Social Computing: Online Marketing in a Connected World”**

MySpace, Blogs, Customer Forums, Product Reviews, User Generated Content, YouTube, Second Life... The list grows longer every day. From stories in the Wall Street Journal to the Today Show, we can’t escape the startling effect of “social computing” on everyday lives. Should you leap on this bandwagon? Is this really your next great marketing opportunity? In this practical, example-filled session, you will learn how, when and where to harness the power of connectedness to drive customer loyalty, increase sales and empower your customer relationships. Specifically, you will learn:

- The characteristics of popular social networking sites and social computing activities
- Emerging marketer and consumer social networking trends
- The nuances of relationship building and why social marketing rules are different
- How to decide if it’s right for you
- Concrete tactics for getting started and building momentum
- How to avoid missteps and learn from others’ failures



**Judith Roberts** is the President of estrategyfirst, a boutique consulting firm specializing in eCommerce merchandising, marketing and channel integration. A pioneer in the eCommerce industry, Judith has spearheaded countless successful eCommerce deployments

and has over 15 years of high profile marketing and merchandising experience. Known for her incisive insights and “roll up her sleeves” approach, she and her firm help clients increase sales, strengthen online branding and make the most of multi-channel marketing and merchandising opportunities.

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Group

Hathaway & Lane  
Mantis

7:00–10:00 PM

**RECEPTION & DINNER**

A relaxing evening with great food and an opportunity to network with members and new colleagues.

*Sponsored by Horticulture Magazine and Quad/Graphics, both Diamond Level Sponsors.*

10:00 PM–12:30 AM

**After Hours in the White Cap Tavern in the Marriott Inner Harbor**

Still have some energy??? All members are welcome to join everyone in the White Cap Tavern located on the lobby level of the hotel. One complimentary drink per person.

*Sponsored by Gardening How-To, Platinum Sponsor*

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9**

7:30–8:30 AM

**COFFEE & JUICE BAR**

8:00 AM–12:00 N

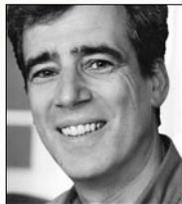
**NETWORKING ROOM OPEN**

*Refreshments sponsored by Zed Marketing Group, Platinum Sponsor.*

8:30–9:20 AM

**PRESENTATION—“Rural Surcharges, Consolidators, Rate Increases—What’s a Shipper To Do In Order to Exist 20 Years From Now??”**

MGA Members are caught between a rock and a hard place when it comes to the cost of outbound freight. It truly will take some creative thinking on our part to stabilize costs or maybe even bring them down. MGA companies probably need to take an introspective look at the long-term health of doing business as a mail order company. 20 or 30 years ago, we did not have these shipping concerns and the amount of competition at the retail level that we have today.



**Ken Lane**, Hathaway & Lane, will review the results of the recent outbound freight survey that was conducted among the MGA membership. With 40 % of the membership responding, we now have a very good picture of the volume and type of shipping methods MGA

members use. Over the past few weeks, MGA has been in communication with UPS, DHL and others to see what type of discount program (if any) could be offered to MGA member companies.

Please join us in this candid discussion as we discuss shipping alternatives and strategies for finding affordable shipping options for MGA members.

9:30–10:30 AM

**PRESENTATION—“Gardening Trends Discovered from the MGA Fall Online Customer Survey”**

Earlier this year, the MGA Board of Directors contracted with Decision Direct Research, a division of The Millard Group, to conduct an online survey of its members’ customers to determine trends in the gardening industry. This customer survey provides significant insight into customers’ involvement with gardening and how they shop for gardening products.

In addition, each company who participated will receive a final report that enables them to compare their customers’ results to the aggregated data from all of the participating MGA members.



**Lilliane LeBel**, Vice President of Decision Direct Research, will present the findings of that research, along with an interpretation of what these results mean to the MGA members.

Lilliane has been with Millard

Group’s Decision Direct Research division since 1997, working with direct marketers in all areas including multi-channel retailing and publishing to determine how research can help them better understand their customers and thereby increase their sales.

Her experience includes business-to-consumer and business-to-business marketing, new business development, creative services, the development and implementation of strategic plans and marketing plans, and corporate communications.

10:30–12:30 PM

**BRUNCH & PRESENTATION—“Where Have All the Gardeners Gone? Maintaining Relevance With Tomorrow’s Consumer”**

*Brunch sponsored by Marketshare Publications, Platinum Level Sponsor*

Young homeowners have different views than their parents about gardening, and it is impacting different sectors of the Lawn and Garden industry. In this discussion, **Kip Creel**, Standpoint Marketing, shares researched trends of this growing demographic and how L & G businesses can grow profits by understanding and reacting to these trends.



**Kip Creel** is the President of StandPoint Marketing, an Atlanta-based marketing research firm with expertise in the home and garden industries. Kip is an alumnus of the University of Florida, and holds a BA in Organizational Behavior and Statistics (1988) and an MBA in Marketing (1993).

StandPoint is recognized as one of the nation’s foremost authorities on the home and garden industries, which includes outdoor living, landscaping, horticulture, home décor, home improvement, kitchen and bath, and new home construction.

Kip is a member of the American Nursery and Landscape Association and Southern Nursery Association.

**MGA is a Resource for Education**

**YOU SHOULD ATTEND MGA CONVENTIONS IF YOU ARE INVOLVED IN...**

- Corporate Management
- Database Management
- Creative Design
- Merchandising
- Planning & Analysis
- Circulation
- Marketing Strategy
- Catalogs
- Information Technology
- Retailing
- Customer Service
- And much more

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