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Letters to the Editor

Tom,

Thanks for including me in your mailing list. We met years ago through KOI USA as Kaleidescapes Art Works. You got me a spot in the Artists Corner. I have since started my own pond construction company with a partner, Mike Perret. Together we have over 50 years experience with Koi and pond construction. I love your magazine. I still do Koi Art, but Koi Pond construction in my passion. I look forward to coming issues, and would be available for an article if you so desire. Thanks again for the inclusion to your mailing list.

Sincerely, Dan Rutledge

Dear Tom and Cindy,

I just finished reading my first copy of your magazine (that was given to me) and immediately subscribed. Shame on me for not reading one sooner. I’d like the opportunity to write an article for one of your future publications. I work for Airmax Eco-Systems which focuses on one of the fastest growing segments of the pond business; Large Natural Pond and Lake Management...

I’m really looking forward to a long relationship with your magazine and to talking to you again at Pondapalooza in August.

Rick Weidman
Airmax Eco-Systems

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That’s right, we have a new name – *POND Trade Magazine*. Why, you are probably asking yourself. Simply put, the name *POND BIZ Magazine* was good, but too often it required some explaining. Our hope is that the name *POND Trade Magazine*, conveys our focus and direction immediately.

On the up side, deciding to change gave us a chance to reflect on our mission and role in this community. We took a look at the big picture and found that we could better express who we are and who we serve with a new name.

The word Trade was carefully selected, to reflect the craftsmanship and personal touch you, our readers, advertisers, and authors, bring to every project. Regardless of your specialty, we are still a small enough niche industry that the products we use were created by passionate craftsmen (no gender implied). The same is true for aquatic plant growers, and koi and goldfish breeders. There is no assembly line mentality here. We sometimes describe ourselves as the Garden Pond Industry, or the Koi and Water Garden Industry, but the word industry was just too impersonal for us in this case. The name just had to be Trade. I hope you like it as much as we do.

Speaking of the creation of new products, I was recently asked if there was a Product of the Year awarded by anyone. I said that I did not think so, but there certainly should be. So, here it is. *POND Trade Magazine* is now accepting nominations for the first Product of the Year for the Pond Trade. Manufacturers are invited to submit their new products, and nominations are open to everyone. Since this is our first year hosting this award, products initially released for sale in 2008 or 2009 may be submitted.

Enter by simply completing an entry form that can be found at pondtrademag.com/productoftheyear. You can fill it out Online or download a form and mail, fax, or e-mail it to us. Images must be emailed at a high resolution.

Email entries to product2009@pondtrademag.com, fax to 760/451-1692 or mail to PO Box 1985, Fallbrook, CA, 92088-1985. Entries must be postmarked or received no later than October 31, 2009. The winner will be announced in our March/April 2010 issue. There are a variety of categories that will receive awards, so check out the website for full details and contest rules.

As we make this transition to *POND Trade Magazine*, I must also say thank you to our great advertisers, without whom this magazine could not exist. The advertisers you see on these pages have made a genuine commitment supporting the trade as well as our magazine, and they deserve our patronage and our thanks. Please be sure to tell them, “I saw your ad in POND Trade Magazine.” It makes a big difference, really.

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by Shaun Kelly
United Aquatics (US and UK)

On my travels around US retailers over the last eight years, the question has never been far away, ‘How do you guys do it in Europe;’ followed closely by the cost of Gas! Around $8 bucks a gallon if you are still curious.

In this article, I will take you on a tour of UK Water Garden retailers to show you a variety of product displays, the products stocked and most importantly to meet the owners and managers. They will share their passion of water gardening. The intention is to inspire you and pass on tips and proven successes, to help you promote your business in these economically challenging times and to see how they will combat this worldwide downturn UK style.

I have chosen three different types of Water Garden retailers in part one of this two edition article, featuring Pet, Koi and Lawn & Garden outlets, or a mixture, to give an all round ‘inside’ view of ponds retailing here in the UK.

First Stop – Water World

We start our tour on the North West Coast of England on a dry April day. Water World can be found by taking the ferry across the Mersey River from Liverpool; then you come to the Wirral Peninsula, situated on a busy highway four miles from the General Motors automobile plant.

Water World was built in 1965 and is presently owned by the McGlashan family, Len and his two sons Lewis and Scott. They have 14 Full-time and 4 Part-time staff covering the four departments of Indoor Aquatics, Outdoor Water Gardening, Pet and the ever busy Cafe, which is franchised out to more experienced operators. The business is split 20% indoor pet, 30% Outdoor Pet and 50% Outdoor aquatics.

Fact: Liverpool was the European City of Culture in 2008, a great honor.
The store attracts customers from a 30-mile radius.

We are of course concentrating on the Outdoor Water gardening section headed by Lewis.

This section sits away from the main building and can be accessed without going through the main shop; this gives it identity and allows for bulky purchases to be moved easily to the parking lot.

Great care is used in attracting impulse sales by placing displays on end caps as everyone has to pass this point and the sales counter faces the smaller items of inventory allowing for better security.

Do you know the average amount spent per customer? If not find it out, the easiest and most reliable indicator to your business success or failure.

Think of your store like a supermarket, how many times have you come out with something you never went in for. Position and presentation equals impulse and sale.

Note the display of ‘hot’ products near the cash register. In this case a pond book. How many customers do you have that came in solely for a pond book? I guess not many, so any additional sales are directly increasing your bottom line.

The first thing that attracts you is the displays that invite you deeper into the store. Boxes on shelves do not appeal to the imagination of possible newcomers to water gardening. Here Lewis has a 20’ run of working features. Working water features give the sound of running water, customers definitely know they are in the Water Garden section.

Lewis comments, “We have sold more big ticket water features this year than ever before.”

This shows not everyone is suffering. If your competitors are moving out of this sector, then who sells to the homeowner expensive features?

All the pumps are kept behind this service counter to increase security but also to offer the customers a quality service. Ask yourself how you maximise sales from this important sector.
Water World concentrates on the backyard pond market, so I put Lewis under the spotlight on this.

Q. What is your biggest growth area?
A. Self-contained water features.

Q. What areas are declining?
A. Medium to large rigid ponds.

Q. What products are performing well at present?
A. Pre-packed liner.

Q. What is your best tip to pass on to other retailers to increase sales?
A. Displays sell

Q. What annoys you most about the industry?
A. Other retailers backstabbing

We leave Waterworld and head for the M62 motorway that goes from the West Coast to the East coast of England, more commonly known as an Interstate in the US, but not quite as long! It goes over the spine of the UK, the Pennines and is the highest motorway in the UK at 1,221’ above sea level. It was trumpeted as the motorway that would never close (due to bad weather). Funny - I remember sitting on it for six hours one evening. I had just collected 25 boxes of Tropical fish via Manchester Airport and the best chance of getting back was the M62, only to be turned around when they closed it. Borne lucky me!

Second stop- All In One Garden Center

Next stop is a Garden Center in Lancashire, but first we have to fight our way through Manchester, home of the soccer team the ‘Red Devils’ AKA Manchester United.

A mainline large Garden Center employing 40 people. The Pet & Aquatic Department is headed up by Mark Rowe a 17-year veteran of Pets & Aquatic retail.

The Garden Center generates $5 million plus in turnover per annum with the Pet & Aquatic contributing 10% of this. This percent is common from a well-run department in a busy garden centre in the UK.
The Pet & Aquatic Department attracts customers from a 10-mile radius and has 1 full-time staff along with Mark and 3 part-time staff to cover the busier days, usually the weekends.

Mark has just installed an impressive new tank system for fish sales; this has already had an effect on increasing fish sales. It is a confident center that keeps reinvesting in the quieter times, that sends a positive message out to their clients.

One thing that you always see in the department are well organised displays with clear signage. This is one of the things, no doubt, helping the center win GCA (Garden Centre Association) Pet Department of the Year recently. This is a national association of Garden Centers, so this is a highly sought after prize. (www.gca.org.uk)

The store racking system is kept low so customers can see around the department and be enticed to keep shopping. Well organised end caps add to impulse sales.

After I got the tour from Mark, I put him under the spotlight and got some answers.

Q. What worries you most about the next five years?
A. The box stores taking over more of the market.

Q. What are your best tips to pass to another retailer?
A. Keep it simple. Do not supply too many choices for any one product or item.

Q. What is your biggest growth area?
A. Reptiles

We head outside so I can be shown a plant retail system that has increased margins and sales. A customer friendly system, where the items can go through the main cash registers as they are all Bar coded. (UPC).

Then it’s over the ‘top’ to Yorkshire, England’s biggest county and (I am biased but) the best one, where proper Yorkshire puddings are made! You guessed it – I am from Yorkshire.

**Third Stop – QSS Aquarium & Koi Center**

We travel down to Bradford on the M62 and the scenery changes to rolling hills and stone buildings dating from the Victorian era. If you have seen *Last of the Summer Wine* on PBS this is close by.

Fact: The Bronte sisters Anne, Emily & Charlotte were born in Bradford.

Our retailer QSS Aquarium & Koi Center sits on the outskirts of downtown Bradford in a building built as a Police Station in 1890. It was acquired by the Shepherds 35 years ago.

Owner & founder Andrew Shepherd along with the Fishhouse Manager Steve share the Aquatic responsibilities and wife, Sandra, does the business side.

The shop is split into two areas – the Aquarium side, in the main building, and the Koi Center in a separate building adjoined at the rear.
We go into the Koi centre, and find ourselves transported to Japan by the stunning décor and holding ponds. Straightaway the area has an identity and clients feel like they are exactly in the right place. Ask your customers the same?

The main reason why we were drawn in at QSS is the cleanliness and how lights can be used in dark areas. Here all the front panels of the Aquariums are perspex and the shelves are backlit to really make the displays appealing – and to add an ‘aquarium’ angle to the tour.

Ever been around your competitors and seen dirty vats or tanks you can not see into, or worse, dead or diseased fish. That would certainly bring out negative comments? Not the case here; everything is spotless and well maintained. Take a look at your livestock retail systems after reading POND Trade Magazine. Are they how you would NOT like to find them - dirty and neglected or are they like you would like them - spotless and well cared for!

QSS Aquarium & Koi Center has an annual turnover of $500K+ and full-time staff of 2 with 3 part-timers on weekends. 90% of the customers travel from within 10 miles of the store. As Andrew comments you do not survive in the industry for 35 years without quality fish and good service, this is a built up area with many competitors within 10 miles.

I decide to quiz Andrew more deeply here on what is happening at QSS.

Q. What is your biggest Growth Area?
A. Discus

Q. What area’s are declining?
A. General Tropicals and Japanese Koi.

Q. What would be your best tip to pass to another retailer to increase sales.
A. Concentrate on quality of livestock.

Q. What makes you most proud about your business.
A. Quality service 35 years.

Q. How are Online sales effecting your business.
A. Mainly big ticket hardware sales like pond pumps.

Q. What annoys you most about the industry.
A. Lack of knowledge

Here, like in the rest of the world, KHV is doing the industry no good, resulting in slowing sales and cautious Koi Keepers. Andrew accepts this, but has still invested heavily in a new roof. Do not allow your standards to drop, is the motto here.

That concludes Part One of Coast to Coast. In Part Two we continue on Eastward – next stop a Water Garden Center.

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**About the Author**

Shaun Kelly is a 20+ year veteran of the Aquatic Industry having performed roles in both the US and UK Pond markets for many years including residing in the US for nearly two years.

Currently Founder and President of both United Aquatics, LLC in the United States and United Aquatics, Ltd in the United Kingdom. Hence the United theme.

His companies Import & Export different Pond products between the two markets, offering the Pond Retailer something new and exciting.

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We have the pieces to help build the pond of your dreams.
Filters that are simple and easy to maintain are the best design no matter what kind of filter you are talking about. Whether it is a biological, mechanical or even a plant filter – it makes little difference when it comes to designing one – remember that the ultimate goal is simple and easy maintenance. Here I want to talk about all three filters wrapped up into one design that can also be a beautiful addition to the landscape.

by Jamie Beyer
Midwest Waterscapes

Both ponds can be seen here with an adjoining stream. The upper pool is the settling pond and plants will be added soon. This picture was taken only a couple of weeks after starting up the pond's water pump following a Midwest winter.
Filters that are simple and easy to maintain are the best design no matter what kind of filter you are talking about.

The basic design incorporates the main koi pond coupled with another pond that serves as a mechanical filter by settling out the solid particles. I will term this pond a “settling pond.” Within this pond lots of plants will be added. These plants and their associated roots will also serve as both the biological and phyto filter. The two-pond concept is not new, but is often overlooked as a filtration solution. The following discussion on how they are set-up and operated should help you in the design of future koi pond systems.

The koi pond can be almost any type of a simple and open design that incorporates a high flow rate through the pond of at least one pond volume per hour. This kind of flow assures that adequate circulation occurs in all parts of the koi pond. This maintains high levels of oxygen in the entire water column and it also serves as a sediment and waste “mover.”

Another aspect of the koi pond design should incorporate a depth of at least 4”. By having an adequate depth the koi develop normal swimming muscles by traversing the vertical layers of the pond, as well as the horizontal elements. Also, in this koi pond, at least one bottom drain could be installed. Drains are installed for primarily two reasons – as an intake for the water pump as well as a method of removing bottom sediment. This drain is not absolutely necessary for sediment removal due to the koi’s habit of keeping particles in suspension by their feeding behavior. Koi love to pick up bottom sediments looking for food and then spitting the non-food sediment back out thereby constantly stirring things up. These sediments are almost always in suspension inside the koi pond.

**Design of the settling basin is crucial to the efficient removal of the sediment.**

Now for the interesting part on how we remove the sediments. Instead of installing high maintenance mechanical and biological filters, I like to build the additional settling pond as the upper pond. It will flow into the main koi pond. This pool can be built as large as you want, but there is a limit on how small it should be. A pool of less than 1000-gal would be approaching the lower size limit of the settling pond.

The important principle that I want to convey is that you want to be focused on settling the sediment out in this pond.
Plants in this settling basin are another very important element in the design.

Let us use, for example, a 5000-gal koi pond and a 1000-gal settling pond. We would have a minimum pump output of 6000 GPH (remember - one pond volume/hour) from the koi pond. This flow would need to be greatly reduced through the settling pond for the solids to settle out. The rule of thumb is to set the flow so that its volume flows through the settling pond every 5 to 10 hours. Flows much higher than this will cause the water that contains the sediment to simply flow through the settling basin with very little sediment dropping out of suspension.

In order to accomplish the reduction in flow, most of the output in my example of a 6000 GPH water pump would need to be diverted to go around the 1000-gal settling basin. On the output piping from the koi pond, a Y-fitting is installed and a small part of the flow is allowed to go through the settling basin. The rest of the flow bypasses the settling pond and is injected into the stream that flows directly back into the koi pond. Of course, this is regulated with a ball valve and can be adjusted to differing conditions.

In the 1000-gal settling basin, the flow coming in would need to be reduced to less than 200 GPH or slower. That means the suspended sediment in the water that is diverted around the settling pond will make another trip around the system. It will eventually end up in the settling basin because the koi keep it stirred up in the koi pond. The settling basin can remove almost 100% of the sediment in the water that goes through it. Within a day or so, all the water in the system will go through the settling pond. Patience is a virtue with this slow rate of flow. However, it will all eventually end up in the settling basin.

Only small fish should be introduced to this settling pond.

Design of the settling basin is crucial to the efficient removal of the sediment. A sediment pit must be built into the settling pond for efficient removal of the muck. This pit would be located in the slowest water movement area of the pond. It could be in the center or at the far end from where the water is introduced into the pond. This pit needs to be 6” to 12” deeper than the rest of the pond and be from 1’ to 4’ square depending on the size of the settling pond. The best design uses a bottom drain located in the bottom of this pit. If a drain is not installed, then a wet/dry vacuum could be used to remove sediment. However, I prefer the bottom drain for easier removal.

It is very important to gently slope the bottom of the settling pond to the sediment pit. This slope should be approximately a 2/12 pitch. If it is much greater than this it is hard to walk in the pond when necessary.
It is relatively easy to retrofit an existing koi pond with a settling pond.

As stated earlier, the larger the settling pond, the faster we can pump water through it. These flow rates can be adjusted with the installed ball valve depending on how efficiently the sediment is dropping out.

Plants in this settling basin are another very important element in the design. Plants like water lilies, water hyacinths, water lettuce, submerged plants and The Grid filters (uses hardy plants with exposed roots, see POND Trade magazine Jan/Feb 09 issue) are excellent phyto filters. The plants help slow the water flow even more, so the sediment has more opportunity to drop out. By adding plants you have also created a beautiful water garden in addition to a koi pond. Plants provide a huge area for biological filtration to take place, especially plants where the roots are exposed. Placing plants directly in a koi pond is a gamble as to whether the koi will eat them while plants added to a settling pond will thrive.

Only small fish should be introduced to this settling pond. I have used Calico Shubunkins with high success without them keeping the sediment stirred. I do like to flush the sediment pit very frequently so that the fish do not have as much chance to disturb the sediment. How often you flush with the bottom drain, or the use of a wet/dry vacuum, will be a judgment call depending on sediment buildup. The flushing should continue until the water runs clear, which will only take a minute or two. Not much water is lost in this process.

...you have all three filters – phyto, mechanical, and biological.

A two-pond system design could present a problem with the lower koi pond overflowing when power is interrupted. How much water is lost will depend on the stream depth at the mouth of the stream between the ponds. The upper settling pond will continue to flow down the stream until the level equalizes to the depth at the mouth of the stream. If this depth is kept to a minimum then the amount of water lost is not a factor.

It is relatively easy to retrofit an existing koi pond with a settling pond. This settling pond does not have to be immediately adjacent to the koi pond but you do have to link the two ponds together with either a stream or piping. The idea is appealing because the added settling pond also serves as a beautiful addition to any landscape.

This two-pond system provides all the filtration that is necessary for a koi pond. With plants, which are a must for this to be successful, you have all three filters – phyto, mechanical, and biological. Maintenance is relatively easy. Periodically flushing the sediment pit by opening a bottom drain is a snap and the trimming of the plants is a very enjoyable experience. These are the only two maintenance items that will need regular attention. The idea is relatively easy to sell due to the beauty and ease of maintenance.

About the Author

Jamie Beyer brings a lot of knowledge and enthusiasm. Jamie is a Lifetime Master Gardener and is founder and immediate Past President of the Central Iowa Water Garden Association. Water gardening has been a passion of Jamie’s for over 45 years and, currently, he has three 10,000 gallon ponds and one 27,000 pond which contains many kinds of water plants and fish. He combines this experience with his Master’s Degree in Fish and Wildlife Biology to become uniquely qualified to be one of the Midwest’s foremost experts on the subject. His broad background of fisheries, dynamics of water, wildlife ecology, and horticulture gives him impressive credentials. Jamie frequently speaks and writes on all aspects of water features and water gardening to gardeners in the Midwest. In addition, he also has a consulting/installation business, called Midwest Waterscapes, which he works as a water garden, fountain and pond consultant/installer to people that want extra help. Jamie has considerable experience installing ponds, diagnosing water garden problems, teaching classes and helping do-it-yourselfers, do it right. Since the late 80’s, he has been involved with the design and installation of over 500 water gardens and features.

Jamie and co-author Veronica Fowler, wrote the Ortho Book “All About Garden Pools and Fountains.” Over a half million copies of the book has been sold in the six years since its publication.
InMotion Aquatics is your trade source for serious koi related products. Our offerings include products from Evolution Aqua, JPD, New Vision Productions, MDM Sequence, Matala, PerformancePro Pumps, as well as wholesale distribution of imported Japanese Koi. Our business model extends beyond simple supply to include marketing support, advertising, technical support, design, and referral services.

For a copy of our catalog, or to learn more, call us toll free at 888-920-1944 or email us at Info@InMotionAquatics.com.
Unlike most specimens of the plant kingdom, pests or diseases seldom afflict water lilies. Water gardeners have it easy compared to gardeners who grow roses, veggies, or lawns. Plus, most water lily troubles are superficial and do little permanent harm. Often they may be prevented and controlled with a watchful eye and careful maintenance.

Here are the most common, from big to small. Some may not be a problem at water garden businesses, but might affect your customers. Remember that the key to keep pests from becoming problematic is to regularly monitor the condition of all your aquatics. Then before anything can become a concern, you can nip it in the bud.

**Terrestrial Animals**

Dogs don’t eat water lilies. However canines cause problems when they go for a dip, blissfully overturning pots. While some dogs can be trained to stay out of the pond, breeds like Labradors have an innate love for water. In those cases some owners solve the problem by giving their lab its own kiddie pool. A harsher solution is the Fido Shock, which delivers a small electrical charge through a wire fence.

The electrical fence can also deter raccoons, who regularly knock over aquatic plant containers. Keep pots away from the pond edges since the raccoons won’t go into deeper water. These critters are very persistent and outwit most devices designed to scare them away. The most effective deterrents are the Fido Shock and the Scarecrow, a sprinkler activated by motion sensor. Move the Scarecrow periodically to increase effectiveness. It also helps to place two at right angles. If deterrents don’t work, check with your animal control departments. Often they’ll provide traps then remove the captured animal. To bait the trap use the unlikely, but extremely successful, delicacy – Twinkies.

**Aquatic Fauna**

Turtles will eat anything slower than they are and that includes water lilies. Symptoms are lily pads that appear to have been cut with a knife or scissors. The best solution is to relocate the turtle to a more appropriate pond.

Some koi will snack on lilies and root around in pots while others don’t. Until someone figures out why this happens, take precautions to reduce koi damage. Cover the soil in containers with gravel and then with stones – bigger than the largest koi’s mouth. (Some ponders say lava rock is uncomfortable in a koi’s mouth and they’ll avoid it.) Place lilies very close to the surface (3-6”). This prevents koi from grazing in the pot and also gives new leaves a chance to grow.
Butterfly koi usually make better water garden pondmates, as do goldfish and koi raised from babies. Whatever you do, don’t add a single pot of plants into a pond that has been sterile of vegetation. The new diversion will soon become lily salad. Another strategy to protect water lilies is to buy or make a cage around the plants. As a last resort, create an adjacent but separate pond area for the lilies.

Ramshorn and Japanese Trapdoor snails don’t usually harm aquatics since they feed on decaying plant material. However Pond and Apple Snails do feast upon lily pads and other fresh vegetation. A technique to get rid of snails without altering your water chemistry is to place a lettuce leaf or zucchini slice in the pond. Leave it overnight, then remove it and destroy the snails it has attracted. Repeat as needed. Adding snail-eating fish, like the Clown Loach, is another biological control. Potassium permanganate and other specialized chemicals can be used but the biological controls work best in backyard ponds.

**Natural or Chemical Treatments**

Be cautious of all pesticides and always use the least harmful treatment first. If mechanical control (aka squishing by hand) doesn’t work, then try the appropriate insecticidal soaps, sprays, or dusts. These rely upon natural bacteria that target specific organisms, diatomaceous earth, or other natural derivatives. Unlike pesticides, they are usually not harmful to other insects and pond inhabitants. (Unfortunately those based on pyrethrum and rotenone are toxic to frogs and fish.) Numerous environmentally friendly treatments are now available, such as Blade Runner, Herbal Aphid Spray, Dipel, and several Insecticidal Soaps.

If biological controls are unsuccessful and you must resort to a pesticide, follow some simple precautions. Check what the label says about use with fish, pets, and other wildlife. Many products may be safe on terrestrial plants but should never be used in or around the pond. Whenever possible, remove the plant and treat it outside of the pond. After it has been treated, rinse it off and return it to the water garden. Some chemicals might require water changes after treatment if applied in the pond.

Most pesticides and biological controls are best applied at the end of the day. There is less breeze to blow spray to surrounding areas or plants; there is less chance the spray will burn or damage the plant; there is less opportunity for UV to degrade the effective ingredients; and absorption of the active ingredients into the plant’s system is usually higher.

**Insects**

**Aphids**

The key to controlling aphids is to keep them from ever becoming a problem. As soon as you notice the little buggers, squash them by hand. They usually appear on new growth or older yellowing leaves and may start reproducing in terrestrial plants near the ponds. Although many books recommend washing aphids off leaves so the fish can eat them, this only works for light infestations. You can overflow the pond, spraying hard to flood them out. Repeat every day or two until aphids are under control.

Light oil sprays will suffocate the aphids and are not harmful to fish or plants. Sprays should be repeated every 10 days to be most effective. Mix two parts vegetable oil to eight parts water and a dash of dishwashing detergent. Treat in the evening and rinse off the oil the next morning. A Volck oil spray (5 Tbsp to 1 gal water) also works. Spraying trees and vegetation around the pond as soon as any aphids are detected is the quickest way to prevent an infestation in the pond.

There are many kinds of aphids, in several different colors. They’re usually less than 1/8 inch long.
Other environmentally safe controls are available. Diatomaceous earth is a microscopic abrasive that kills the aphids. It can be dusted on the leaves or mixed with water and sprayed. Again, flush the pond of extra residue so it doesn’t harm other pond inhabitants. Blade Runner, Aphid-X, and Herbal Aphid Spray are all made from natural ingredients. A weak solution (1.5%) of insecticidal soap left on for less than an hour also works well.

A very low-tech aphid control strategy is to drown the aphids. This can be done by submerging the plants overnight or by putting some newspaper on top of the leaves and leaving it there for several hours.

**Midges**

Leaf mining midges chew wavy lines in the lily pads. These very small larvae can be handpicked, the leaves can be removed, or the water can be treated with Mosquito Dunks (which contain Bt).

**China Mark Moth**

This small nondescript brown moth is the water lily’s major pest and is also called the *Sandwich Man*. It is nocturnal and lays eggs on the underside of floating leaves. After hatching, the larva cuts leaf pieces to make protective sandwiches. They affect water lilies, although the larva also burrows into any floating leaves or debris. They have a two week cycle, so keep a close check for them throughout the growing season.

The mechanical control method, better known as squishing, works well to control an initial outbreak – fish just love the worms. *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), a natural bacteria, can be used as a spray. Once ingested, it kills the larva but won’t hurt people, pets, or fish. It is the active ingredient in Dipel, Insecticidal Soaps, and Thuricide. As with many sprays, it is best applied at the end of the day (see sidebar). If there is a severe infestation, the best remedy is to remove all affected foliage close to the crown of the plant and destroy it.
An Ounce of Prevention Provides a Big ROI*

• Before adding any new plants to your pond, closely examine them for signs of pests, especially if you’ve had infestations from a particular grower. Look at both sides of the leaves and in the crevices where stems and leaves overlap. Remove anything suspicious. You can also soak the plant to kill unwanted pests and parasites. Plants can be soaked in a potassium permanganate solution (4-6 Tbsp in 12-13 gal water) for 1-2 hours.

• Regularly fertilize plants and divide them when overcrowded. Since insects and diseases attack sickly and stressed plants, thriving plants usually do not have pests.

• Trim off all old and damaged foliage from lilies and marginals. This weaker growth is often where insects thrive. Removing dying leaves eliminates their food source, helps rejuvenate the plant, and reduces material that falls on the bottom to decay. A carefully trimmed lily displays beautifully and sells quickly, plus it’s usually disease and pest-free.

• When adding water to your ponds, be sure to spray all the plant foliage, especially if it hasn’t rained lately. This cleans the plants plus washes off pests before they can become a problem.

(Okay you should know what ROI means but just in case – Return on Investment)
Diseases

Many years ago several varieties of hardy lilies were susceptible to crown rot, a fungal disease. The leaves on affected plants would curl and turn yellow, and buds would rot below the surface. The plant would soon die since the rhizome had rotten away, leaving a stinky mess. Treatment was to thoroughly soak the tuber in a fungicide. However, since the disease is highly contagious the best option was to remove the plant and completely destroy it. Luckily the incidence of this and other fungal diseases has decreased as less susceptible hybrids have been developed.

Paula Biles was diagnosed at an early age with CPO (chronic plant obsession) and after graduate school the condition became severe. The constant compulsion to have growing leaves and muddy hands led to an obvious treatment – water gardening.

Her therapy involved a steady dose of teaching and writing about water gardens and aquatics. Rehabilitation was slow at first, but before long she was lecturing, her articles and photographs were published, plus she was speaking before local and national groups – the perfect remedy for this affliction.

The last components of her successful treatment were to establish a local pond club, work as managing editor of Pondkeeper Magazine (now POND Trade Magazine), and serve as executive director of the International Waterlily & Water Gardening Society (IWGS), then travel to the Amazon and Thailand.

Paula is married and lives in Bradenton, Florida, where thanks to water gardening, her disease is now in remission.

On a more formal note, Paula belongs to the Garden Writers Association and has been a regular columnist for numerous hobbyist and trade Ponds & Gardens, Nursery Retailer, and Garden Center. Her articles and photographs have appeared countless times in water garden magazines, newspapers, books, and online.

Paula can be reached at: pods@AboutTheLotus.com or through K & P Projects’ website: www.AboutTheLotus.com
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The lazy days of summer are here. Your pondkeepers have worked hard throughout the spring to get their ponds in great shape to enjoy all summer long. Now is a good time to talk with your customers about what is happening in their pond. Are they experiencing a lot of algae growth, are the fish multiplying at unusual rates, or are the plants becoming overgrown? Take this opportunity to respond to their concerns and get them back to enjoying their pond as soon as possible.

Summer Ponds

Oxygen levels in pond water must also be closely monitored since the warm water conditions mean the water is not able to hold as much oxygen. Running water such as waterfalls, streams, and fountains ensures maximum aeration. Leave all water features running day and night. Oxygen is at a premium at night because plants are competing with fish for the limited oxygen supply. Plants photosynthesize during the day but respire at night and can cause an oxygen deficit by morning unless extra aeration is supplied. Removing oxygen-greedy, troublesome algae also will help ensure proper oxygen levels are maintained.

Algae Growth

The warm summer weather is the perfect condition for algae growth. If your pondkeepers have a pond in direct sunlight, this is even truer for them. Advise customers to remove string algae with a blast of high pressure from the hose and/or using their hands – the best tools for this job. Remove as much string algae as you can. Then, remind customers that there are algae control remedies available to treat green water and string algae, and be sure to stock some options for them.

For heavy algae blooms, suggest a UV clarifier. Suspended, microscopic single-cell algae are so tiny that they pass through even the finest filter. To combat this potential problem, recommend adding a UV clarifier which uses ultraviolet light
to destroy the reproductive ability of algae. The dead algae then clump together in particles large enough to be removed by the mechanical filter.

**Pond Fish**

Explain to your pondkeepers that in the summer, when pond water temperatures are above 50°F, feeding high-quality digestible foods will promote growth, vitality, and color enhancement. Fish, like most animals, require a nutritionally-balanced diet in order to grow and be in their best possible condition. Their bodies require the correct amounts (and quality) of proteins, carbohydrates, fats, minerals, and vitamins. Proteins are used for tissue formation and, because they cannot be stored in the body, young fish need to obtain large quantities on a regular basis.

Encourage your pondkeepers to feed fish high-quality food, particularly in the summer. Fish should be fed as much as they will consume in five minutes several times a day. Fish eat what they need to survive in various conditions, and as the water temperature rises to 77°F and higher, fish will consume less food in a given time.

Remember, fish in hot water temperatures may not show an interest in food. When fish feed in extreme summer heat, their movement also uses more oxygen, which is problematic if there isn’t a sufficient supply in the water. Advise customers to feed in the early morning, at the coolest time of the day.

Keep an eye on fish health as well. Spawning activities in the pond may have taken their toll on females and if they are suffering, suggest your pondkeepers conduct a water test. Stock a product that tests for pH and the presence of ammonia, nitrite, nitrate, and KH in the water.

Raised pollutant levels are generally caused by overcrowding the fish, overfeeding, or under-filtrating the pond. Each leads to the imbalance between the number of fish and the amount of filter bacteria, which decompose fish waste.

Once identified, these pollutant problems are relatively easy to overcome. A partial water change will immediately dilute the problem, giving you time to identify the cause. Remind your pondkeepers to treat the water with a product that makes tap water safe for fish by removing harmful chlorine and chloramines. Also, make sure their filtration system is up to the task. If it is not properly sized for their pond volume and/or number of fish, recommend a larger filter, pump, or both.

**Aquatic Plant Care**

Aquatic plants provide important shade, which reduces algae growth, and provides added natural filtration, which helps...
clean the water and keep oxygen at healthy levels. Plants are very important to an overall healthy pond. To keep them looking their best, recommend that pondkeepers tend them regularly by removing dead blossoms, leaves, and stems to keep the pond free of debris and decay.

Additionally, remind your customers that their aquatic plants need extra care to promote growth and beauty. Suggest, and stock, a fertilizer product that is in tablet form and planted directly in the pot next to the plants’ roots. This will minimize the plants’ release of chemicals and nutrients that would ultimately encourage algae growth.

Another area of care you’ll want to discuss with your customers is pest and disease control. Several pests and diseases afflict aquatic plants, but unlike elsewhere in the garden, these cannot be sprayed with chemicals since most will harm or kill the fish.

Water gardeners need a decent understanding of pests and disease lifecycles in order to attack them effectively. Simply using one or more of the following techniques can control many pests:

- Spray infected plants with clean water from the hose, knocking insects into the water where they can be consumed by the fish.
- Remove pests such as water lily beetles from the plant by hand.
- Remove infested foliage to make way for new growth. Diseases such as water lily leaf spot and crown rot must be dealt with by extracting the damaged foliage.

Help your pondkeepers to care for their pond throughout the summer by stocking products that will help make their work effortless. Remember to be prepared with summer pond care literature and knowledge to keep your pondkeepers coming to you for all of their fish, plant and water care.
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If you like Kumonryu...you will love Kikokuryu. Kikokuryu is in essence a Kumonryu that is metallic. This fish poses many challenges to those who dare breed them. You can boost sales with this fish because no two will be alike and they are seldom seen in the marketplace in any quantities. More on that later.

The ever-changing nature of a Kumonryu is exciting in itself. Adding more to the mix of genetics by including a metallic sheen increases the difficulty of production many, many more times.

You can boost sales with this fish because no two will be alike.

There are many types of Kikokuryu from the standard white/black metallic look that originated from crossing Kumonryu with platinum. This fish (Pic A) is a very unique fish with a scale pattern down its back. We differentiate this fish from a Gin Matsuba Doitsu because of the underlying black color that shows in the head. The sheen and dark, dark black of this fish make it truly spectacular.
Another good example of this is pictured here in a butterfly fin type. (Pic A-1) With this fish no color other than black and white are showing, however as with these ever changing varieties, to the surprise of the hobbyist who kept this fish, it developed into a beautiful Kin Kikokuryu the very next year! (Pic B)

The ever-changing nature of a Kumonryu is exciting in itself.

**Adding to the Base Colors of a Kikokuryu**

We have mixed in colors to promote deep shades of yellow, orange or even red. When all of these colors come together we call this a Kin Kikokuryu or Beni Kikokuryu. This variant can produce some very spectacular looks from a subtle yellow such as this (Pic C) or a very rare lemon/lime green look as seen in (Pic D). More often a brilliant shade of orange such as these (Pic E, F and G). (Note: Kin means Gold and Beni is Red)
What to Look for in Small Fish

Small fish are exciting because in general they have not developed all of the black color yet. Fish under two years of age will continue to change. The best advice is to look for a nice red, yellow or orange pattern on the fish, as that changes the least. The black will do what it likes (when it likes).

(Pict I) shows a bunch of Kikokuryu we were culling at less than 2”, you can see that the metallic sheen has not developed yet. Can you pick the best ones out?

What to Look for in Big Fish

As with Showa, the black tends to be a bit more stable as the fish matures. They will still change, but as with all Kikokuryu, look for a great pattern and think about the water temperature and hardness when judging the quality of the fish. If it was just pulled from a warm mud pond, it probably is not going to look its best.

Water Quality

Water quality plays a very large part in determining what these fish will look like. Just like the black of a standard Kumonryu, Kikokuryu have an underlying black that shows itself best in hard water and cooler waters. Fall through spring is the best time to see the ebony black that makes these fish shine. A great way to help this is to be sure your alkalinity of your pond/holding systems is high (180 ppm or greater). Some of the simplest ways to do this is to keep a bag of oyster shells in your filter where it can dissolve as needed.

Be sure to have a couple larger fish on display

It’s hard to believe that out of a trio of fish produced, all these variants can emerge in the same pond. It’s hard to tell what these fish will do. Only time, growth and proper water quality will determine the outcome. Remember this fish is ever changing and you will always look forward to the next season and a whole new look.
What’s a Great Fish Look Like?

Well that depends on who you ask. I have a few personal favorites that we have produced over the years. The first fish [Pic K] has a strong, steel looking under-color with an over-pattern of some of the strongest red I have ever seen. Currently, this fish is around 12” and I’m excited to see what the outcome will be in the next few years. [Pic L] is a Beni Kikokuryu that has the desired thick deep black with an interesting orange pattern…I love this fish as well.

How Big Do They Get?

Contrary to popular belief the Kikokuryu we produce can get very, very large, one of our females is currently over 32”.

What to Expect to Consistently Get in the Market Place

Kikokuryu are a fairly new variety. I expect more people will try their hand at these because of the excitement (and disappointments) of the outcomes. Most of what is available on the market currently, at a wholesale level, is the small size fish with a solid pattern – as the outcome of this breeding yields a lot of this [Pic J].
Here are a few other fish that either have not reached their prime, have past their prime…. Or are of a lower quality, only time will tell. (Pics M, N, O)

**Retail Business**

New and exciting varieties are the lifeblood of a retail business. Give your customers a fish they have not seen before and they will buy. Be sure to have a couple larger fish on display to show a potential buyer how they change. With this variety, your customers will return to your shop over and over for a show and tell of what the fish looks like now. What’s better than an excited happy customer? Not much.

Variety is the spice of life!

Joe Pawlak is the founder of Blackwater Creek Koi Farms Inc., a group of three farms located throughout Florida. He has experience raising over 30 varieties of koi on an annual basis. Butterfly koi production is a passion for Joe. “If it’s a challenge, I really want to do it. Family, Business, and Koi are a combination I truly love.”

Reach him at [www.koisale.com](http://www.koisale.com) or [Koiretailer.com](http://Koiretailer.com)

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**About the Author**

Joe multitasking - he is talking on his cell phone, while seining a mud pond
Attention
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Do you ‘Tweet?’ Have you been getting ‘FB’ friend requests? Have you felt like everyone is in ‘MySpace?’ Are you ‘LinkedIn?’ Twitter, Facebook, Plaxo, MySpace, and LinkedIn are a few of the many Web sites that have opened new doors and opportunities to everyone from teenagers looking to express themselves, to middle-aged adults reconnecting to old friends, professionals looking to network, and just about everyone in between; they have also opened new doors for many businesses – small and large – to market and advertise their businesses.

Social Media Marketing (SMM) is a process of using various social sites dedicated to connecting users and utilizing them as a platform to market a company, promote sales, increase exposure, and/or generate traffic to a Web site. It has become one of the most important elements in the continued promotion of a business by other users.

It has become one of the most important elements in the continued promotion of a business by other users.

Take for example Facebook. In 2008, it generated over $300 million in revenue and had over 200 million active users. Needless to say, when a phenomenon like this takes place, businesses often scramble to figure out how they can benefit from it. So you see ‘Fan Pages’ for everyone from Presidential hopefuls (Facebook/Social Media played a large role in the election of our current President), to celebrities, and companies like Starbucks and Jeep. When you open up your home page (personal command central) you see what groups and fan pages your friends have joined and you get the option to join in on the fun. When you go to your ‘Wall’ (where all your information and comments are posted), you will see banner ads on the side bar, most of which, are targeted to you based on your information and networks. While these ads are great ways to get the word out, some companies take it even further.

For instance, say my friend Chris updates his status with, ‘Chris is wishing it was 5:00! Thinking of pulling a Costanza and sleeping under my desk!’ So, you help him out by sending him a cup of java via the Dunkin’ Donuts application (games and tools to create more interaction). Now of course, he’s not really getting a cup of coffee from you, but he did get a message that put DD coffee in his thoughts. Then he feels the urge to send his friends a chocolate glazed donut, and all those people send their friends an Iced Latte Lite, and so on…

The key to Social Media Marketing success, however, lies primarily in the name itself – SOCIAL. For all of these sites, you need to build a network of people to communicate with. While so many companies and business owners are investing large amounts of money and resources, they cannot continue to expand their message if users don’t proliferate it.

The question is then, how does a small business owner with limited time and resources effectively take advantage of Social Media Marketing as a way of achieving marketing, sales, and branding initiatives?

The key to Social Media Marketing success, however, lies primarily in the name itself – SOCIAL.

The great aspect of SMM is that often it is free. Being a member of these sites often requires little more than registering on them. The greatest investment is really TIME. If you want to invest further, you are often able to create banner ads, which can then have specific criteria for the audience it reaches. If you choose to manage and execute your SMM plan on your own, here are some of the pitfalls to avoid:

1. Create a Plan

Don’t just jump in because someone told you, ‘you HAVE to have a Facebook page,’ or, ‘you HAVE to start Tweeting on Twitter!’ Make sure that you have clearly defined goals and they are consistent with your marketing and branding initiatives.
Any good marketing initiative should be considered initiating a conversation.

You should also develop methods of tracking the success of whatever efforts you put into it.

2. It’s not a Panacea

Yeah, it may look good, market your business, and seem like it provides decent results, but there is no substitute for the real thing – your Web site. Realize that your Web site still must be your biggest and most effective element of your Internet presence. No matter how you engage in SMM, users will (and should) go to your Web site. If they see current and regular information from a knowledgeable professional and then go to the dated, amateur, futile Web site of your business, it will leave them feeling uncertain of who you really are and whether you are a trust-worthy professional.

3. Don’t be a Braggart

This is one of the most common mistakes small business owners make. For most users, these applications are a way to connect with friends and family or take a break from their hectic or stressful lives. They often will consider someone who is spending most of their time talking about their latest and greatest professional acts as boasting and your page then becomes nothing more than (as my friend Steve affectionately calls it) a Vanity Page.

4. Actually BE Social

This often coincides with bragging. When you are running a Vanity Page, you often get so caught up in talking about yourself; you don’t engage your ‘friends.’ Respond to their posts with genuine interest, comment on their pictures, send them ‘gifts’ with applications, and let them know that the relationship is not one-sided. Any good marketing initiative should be considered initiating a conversation – contributing information, which will engage the reader and create a call-to-action. That action may be further dialogue with your company creating a relationship, conveying your message to their connections and friends, or (hopefully) creating a sale of goods or services. At the very least, it should create a positive impression that will be memorable.

5. Don’t Rape your Friends

One of the most appalling acts a user can do is view their friend’s friends and then send them all ‘Friend Requests’ when you actually have no idea who they are. This action is equivalent to stealing information, or scraping a mailing list. Not only will this often annoy the person that you send the request to, it could very well irritate your friend causing them to engage in the ‘de-friending’ process.

6. Personal is Personal – Business is Business

If you want to run a page dedicated to your business, then do that. If you want a personal page, then do that. Try very hard to keep them separate. For example, in all of these platforms I have a personal page and a page dedicated to my business. My personal pages have status updates and information specific to me personally and I use the media as a way to stay in touch with friends and family – most of which could really care less about the specifics of my work and would rather not be inundated with mundane information about it which has no relevance to them. However, if they become a friend on my business pages, then I know that they have an interest in what is going on in that arena of my life.

7. The World is Watching

Remember, anything and everything you post now has the potential to reach every person connected to a computer. Whether it is an email, a Blog entry, or a post/status update on one of your pages, once it is out there you can not take it back and you have no control over who it reaches ultimately. It is important to be thoughtful and plan what you write because these posts can otherwise determine your Brand Identity in a way that you never intended.

8. Pictures are Worth a Thousand Words!

The same applies to the pictures you post on these sites as the words you type. Don’t make your personal page your business vanity page by adding only, or mostly, pictures of the work you do. On the other hand, do not put inappropriate pictures there either – you never know where they will end up and the message they will ultimately send about you.

9. Show your Professionalism

SMM is a great way to build your professional reputation and demonstrate your knowledge in the industry – and you can do without being vain and arrogant. Provide information that people will find helpful and useful without directly promoting yourself. Add links to articles and data that users can refer to and find beneficial in their lives. Avoid frequently adding your link to your posts, as this will over time be seen as another form of SPAM.
10. Invest your Time

All of these initiatives require time. Do not jump in hastily and think that you can post a comment once or twice a week and that will be sufficient. Again, they key is actually being social. Like any relationship that is going to be successful, it entails daily effort and commands a respect for the process and the medium, which you are using.

Caution

The greatest caution I offer to most of those who inquire about the benefits of Social Media Marketing is that if they do not have the time to properly plan and execute a marketing plan in their current circumstances, then they should be very hesitant to launch a SMM strategy without first spending some time to see how they function on a personal level and whether they have the time to devote to making endeavor successful.

Ultimately, the ever-growing and changing Internet is a cost-effective way to market your business and full of opportunity; but, you can’t know where you are going to end up if you don’t first have a plan that you were willing to invest time and resources in.

About the Author

Pam Greiner founded The Green Pen five years ago as the result of a passion for gardening and the environment. Focused on providing online, and off, marketing solutions, our active client list includes several contractors, retailers, and distributors across the country. Our advice is regularly sought by many other contractors and businesses in the Green Industry, as well as other industries. Our services have included developing a variety of marketing materials for our clients including brochures, newsletters, as well as logo design, branding initiatives, and Web design & development. Additionally, we help our clients develop cost-effective marketing and e-marketing plans.

Pam can be reached at pam@thegreenpen.com or 215-313-0183.
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How-to
Disappearing Fountain Installation

by Anita Nelson
Nelson Water Garden and Nursery

Disappearing Fountain is a great way to add the sound and movement of water to your garden. Water is pumped from a hidden reservoir buried in the ground through the fountain piece and then seemingly disappears into the ground.

Using a pre-molded Reservoir, (our NWG unit is shown – installation may vary depending on the reservoir you use; check the manufactures instructions), installing a Disappearing Fountain is easier than ever. Disappearing Fountains are safe for young children because there is no open water. They provide water to pets and wildlife. Birds often visit Disappearing Fountains for a drink of water; and the millstone fountain makes a great birdbath.

Disappearing Fountains can be created from nearly anything. Traditional choices are decorative pots, statues, fountains or waterfalls. We even created a Disappearing Fountain from a trashcan just to prove our point.

**Pot or Piece Choices**

Granite and Basalt pieces will last forever. Mexican Urns are unglazed, come in earth tones, and have a 1-5 year life expectancy. Glazed Pots and Cast Stone Statuary come in numerous sizes and shapes, in a wide range of colors and have a 20+ year life expectancy.

**Installation Directions:**

1. Dig your hole about 14” deep, (or the depth recommended by the basin manufacturer you choose) and fill the bottom with 1” of sand. Note - Before you start digging check for buried utilities, cables, and sprinkler systems.

2. Place the reservoir in the excavation and level.

Chico Ibarra (left) and Peter Nelson install the reservoir.
Choose the Right Reservoir

Although you may be tempted to opt for a smaller reservoir due to space, labor and cost considerations there are some good reasons to go with a larger reservoir.

1. The larger the reservoir the greater volume of water it can hold and the less often you need to re-fill it.

2. Tall pieces 4’ or higher need a bigger box, water droplets have farther to fall and thus tend to splash out of the reservoir boundaries.

3. Larger reservoirs give you the opportunity to add additional pieces to your fountain display.

4. Larger reservoirs allow for a greater water flow creating more water “music.”

3. Backfill soil around the box packing in firmly.

5. Place the cinder blocks in the box; one in each corner and one bridging the adjoining pieces of grating (including the trap door).

6. Place 2-3 cinder blocks (depending on the piece) in the middle. For light pieces place the grating on top of the cinder blocks. Heavy pieces require several cinder blocks and must sit directly on the blocks with the grate cut away to go around the piece.

4. Cut a 1 ½’ x 2’ piece from the corner of one of the grates. This becomes the trapdoor for pump maintenance.
7. Place the mesh over the grating; cut a hole in the mesh for the tubing.

8. Connect the tubing to the piece (leave a fairly long piece of tubing exiting the fountain).

9. Pots that hold a large volume of water will need a check valve or stand pipe connected to the tubing inside the piece to prevent the water from flowing out when the pump is turned off.

10. Place the pump inside the box. We recommend using a Cal Screen on the intake of the pump to protect the intake of the pump.

11. Thread the tubing through the cracks of the grating and slowly lower the piece into place.

Once in place, level the pot using shims.

Instillation Tip
We’ve learned this the hard way; always connect the tubing to the piece and then to the pump not the other way around. We also recommend installing a valve on all pumps to control the flow of water coming out of the piece to match your expectations.
12. Connect the tubing to the pump and clamp.

13. Put the decorative topping around the piece on top of the grating and mesh.

14. Turn on pump and enjoy.

About the Author

Anita Nolan Nelson, Horticulturist
Anita Nelson has always loved plants, as a child she was fascinated by all the colors, shapes and forms of plants and still is to this day. Although she has done all the accomplishments listed below, Anita is proudest of the fact she has a garden and is still learning and still making mistakes.


Earned B.S. cum laude in Horticulture from University of Maryland in 1978.

Founding Member of International Water Lily Society.


Has frequently appeared on The New Garden Television Show nationwide on PBS.

Teaches courses and workshops at Mercer Arboretum and Houston Arboretum.

Speaks frequently to Botanic Gardens, Garden Clubs, and Professional Groups.


Contributing Editor for Water Gardening Magazine & Pondkeeper Magazine.

In 1996 was the Winner of the “Reel American Award” for outstanding Journalism on Environmentally Friendly Lawn Care and Landscaping.

Anita lives with her husband Rolf and their four children in Pattison Texas.

Care of Your Disappearing Fountain

The reservoir must be kept filled with water and can be accomplished in several ways:

1. Fill the fountain as needed with a garden hose.

2. Site the fountain near an irrigation head, so the sprinkler keeps the reservoir filled.

   Nelson’s does not recommend using automatic fill devices because they frequently "stick" and don’t shut off.

The fountain piece will need to be scrubbed occasionally to remove algae and scale. Fountec (safe for birds and pets) can be used to control algae growth but must be added every week. Use Protec to minimize hard water stains (especially on dark fountains or fountains close to windows) on a monthly basis. Note: Some folks prefer the natural patina of algae on the pieces, in which case no scrubbing, or Fountec, is necessary.
What’s with the new name?

The short answer is, POND Trade best describes our mission and focus. We hope you will like the change.

(The long answer is on page 7.)

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Discovering a Better Call To Action

by Peter Prestipino
Editor-in-Chief, Website Magazine

Web professionals must always be concerned with achieving multiple objectives – that will never change. Drawing people towards a website and keeping them coming back are often what dominates the headlines, but driving consumers through a website and down the conversion funnel is where many should be spending their time instead. Effective calls to actions are of paramount importance in this process, so let’s look at how to discover and develop “better” calls to action.

A call to action is defined as any device, which visitors can respond to, in order to complete your selling process.

A call to action is defined as any device, which visitors can respond to, in order to complete your selling process. In a perfect marketing world, calls to action would be so perfectly crafted that users have no choice but to do exactly what you tell them. The problem is most never reach that marketing nirvana. They remain mired in tradition “buy now,” “add to cart” or are not specific enough (“click here to order”) to motivate a user to do anything out of the ordinary. When consumers are provided with information, they’re able to make better buying decisions. So, why not give them the information they need to make better buying decisions, and buying from you … right now!

So how does a Web professional accomplish that? The calls to action that consumers encounter online should couple an imperative verb with an implied benefit. For example, “buy now” contains no reference to the benefit consumers will receive by doing so, and neither does “add to cart.” A better call to action alternative might be one of the following:

The question to ask when looking at your existing calls to action include:

- whether the call to action is present at all;
- if it is placed within the active window;
- whether text calls are used along with image calls

There are some basic ways to review the effectiveness of the calls to action currently deployed on your website. While there is no substitute for testing different variations of landing pages and the specific calls to action for your own offers, taking even a cursory look could reveal where improvements are possible.

Here are a few different items to test with your calls to action:

- Test the wording of both the button image and the text link, and ask what or where the implied benefit works best – in the image or the text?
  - Also test the combination of words and phrasing (verbs and benefits) to determine what works best for your specific business niche.
- If not using an image, or not using text, test the addition of one of these elements and measure the response.
  - Also test the size, shape and font of the images and text.
- Analyze how placement of the call to action and the actual prominence of the call to action affects conversion rate.
  - While above the fold is better for the life insurance industry, perhaps it’s not for home and garden websites. The only way to know for sure is to test out various combinations.

About the Author:

Peter Prestipino is the Editor-in-Chief of Website Magazine, a print publication offering practical advice on how to achieve Web success through SEO, SEM, web design and development. See his web site at www.websitemagazine.com
by Leo Babauta
zenhabits.net

Now, let me first say that if you are a night owl, and that works for you, I think that’s great. There’s no reason to change, especially if you’re happy with it. But for me, switching from being a night owl to an early riser (and yes, it is possible) has been a godsend. It has helped me in so many ways that I’d never go back. Here are just a few:

1. Greet the Day

I love being able to get up, and greet a wonderful new day. I suggest creating a morning ritual that includes saying thanks for your blessings. I’m inspired by the Dalai Lama, who said, “Everyday, think as you wake up, ‘today I am fortunate to have woken up, I am alive, I have a precious human life, I am not going to waste it. I am going to use all my energies to develop myself, to expand my heart out to others, to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all beings, I am going to have kind thoughts towards others, I am not going to get angry or think badly about others, I am going to benefit others as much as I can.’ ”

The early morning hours are so peaceful, so quiet.

2. Amazing start

I used to start my day by jumping out of bed, late as usual, and rushing to get myself and the kids ready, and rushing to drop them to school and come in to work late. I would walk into work, looking rumpled and barely awake, grumpy and behind everyone else. Not a great start to your day. Now, I have a renewing morning ritual, I’ve gotten so much done before 8 a.m., my kids are early and so am I, and by the time everyone else gets in to work, I’ve already gotten a head start. There is no better way to start off your day than to wake early, in my experience.

3. Quietude

No kids yelling, no babies crying, no soccer balls, no cars, no television noise. The early morning hours are so peaceful, so quiet. It’s my favorite time of day. I truly enjoy that time of peace, that time to myself, when I can think, when I can read, when I can breathe.

4. Sunrise

People who wake late miss one of the greatest feats of nature, repeated in full stereovision each and every day — the rise of the sun. I love how the day slowly gets brighter, when the midnight blue turns to lighter blue, when the brilliant colors start to seep into the sky, when nature is painted in incredible colors. I like doing my early morning run during this time, and I look up at the sky as I run and say to the world, “What a glorious day!” Really. I really do that. Corny, I know.

5. Breakfast

Rise early and you actually have time for breakfast. I’m told it’s one of the most important meals of the day. Without breakfast, your body is running on fumes until you are so hungry at lunchtime that you eat whatever unhealthy thing you can find. The fattier and sugarier, the betterier. But eat breakfast, and you are sated until later. Plus, eating breakfast while reading my book and drinking my coffee in the quiet of the morning is eminently more enjoyable than scarfing something down on the way to work, or at your desk.

6. Exercise

There are other times to exercise besides the early morning, of course, but I’ve found that while exercising right after work is also very enjoyable, it’s also liable to be canceled because of other things that come up. Morning exercise is virtually never canceled.

7. Productivity. Mornings

For me at least, mornings are the most productive time of day. I like to do some writing in the morning, when there are no distractions, before I check my email or blog stats. I get so
much more done by starting on my work in the morning. Then, when evening rolls around, I have no work that I need to do, and I can spend it with family.

8. Goal time

Got goals? Well, you should. And there’s no better time to review them and plan for them and do your goal tasks than first thing. You should have one goal that you want to accomplish this week. And every morning, you should decide what one thing you can do today to move yourself further towards that goal. And then, if possible, do that first thing in the morning.

9. Commute

No one likes rush-hour traffic, except for Big Oil. Commute early, and the traffic is much lighter, and you get to work faster, and thus save yourself more time. Or better yet, commute by bike. (Or even better yet, work from home.)

10. Appointments

It’s much easier to make those early appointments on time if you get up early. Showing up late for those appointments is a bad signal to the person you’re meeting. Showing up early will impress them. Plus, you get time to prepare.

How to Become an Early Riser

• Don’t make drastic changes
  Start slowly, by waking just 15 to 30 minutes earlier than usual. Get used to this for a few days. Then cut back another 15 minutes. Do this gradually until you get to your goal time.

• Allow yourself to sleep earlier
  You might be used to staying up late, perhaps watching TV or surfing the Internet. But if you continue this habit, while trying to get up earlier, sooner or later one is going to give. And if it is the early rising that gives, then you will crash and sleep late and have to start over. I suggest going to bed earlier, even if you don’t think you’ll sleep, and read while in bed. If you’re really tired, you just might fall asleep much sooner than you think.

• Put your alarm clock far from your bed
  If it’s right next to your bed, you’ll shut it off or hit snooze. Never hit snooze. If it’s far from your bed, you have to get up out of bed to shut it off. By then, you’re up. Now you just have to stay up.

• Go out of the bedroom as soon as you shut off the alarm.
  Don’t allow yourself to rationalize going back to bed. Just force yourself to go out of the room. My habit is to stumble into the bathroom and go pee. By the time I’ve done that, and flushed the toilet and washed my hands and looked at my ugly mug in the mirror, I’m awake enough to face the day.

• Do not rationalize
  If you allow your brain to talk you out of getting up early, you’ll never do it. Don’t make getting back in bed an option.

It’s much easier to make those early appointments on time if you get up early.

• Have a good reason
  Set something to do early in the morning that’s important. This reason will motivate you to get up. I like to write in the morning, so that’s my reason. Also, when I’m done with that, I like to read all of your comments!

• Make waking up early a reward.
  Yes, it might seem at first that you’re forcing yourself to do something hard, but if you make it pleasurable, soon you will look forward to waking up early. A good reward is to make a hot cup of coffee or tea and read a book. Other rewards might be a tasty treat for breakfast (smoothies! yum!) or watching the sunrise, or meditating. Find something that’s pleasurable for you, and allow yourself to do it as part of your morning routine.

• Take advantage of all that extra time.
  Don’t wake up an hour or two early just to read your blogs, unless that’s a major goal of yours. Don’t wake up early and waste that extra time. Get a jump-start on your day! I like to use that time to get a head start on preparing my kids’ lunches, on planning for the rest of the day (when I set my MITs), on exercising or meditating, and on reading. By the time 6:30 rolls around, I’ve done more than many people do the entire day. ☀️

About the Author

Leo Babauta is married with six kids, he lives on Guam, he is a writer and a runner and a vegetarian, and the owner of Zen Habits. He also is the author of a new best-selling book, “The Power of Less: The Fine Art of Limiting Yourself to the Essentials ... in Work and in Life.” If you want Zen Habits’ philosophy in a handy little volume, please buy the book.

Zen Habits is one of the Top 100 blogs on the Internet, and covers: achieving goals, productivity, being organized, GTD, motivation, eliminating debt, saving, getting a flat stomach, eating healthy, simplifying, living frugal, parenting, happiness, and successfully implementing good habits.

See his web site at www.zenhabits.net
Recently, Aquascapes, Inc. and Ewing Irrigation teamed up to install a combination of a rainwater harvesting system and a pondless waterfall feature in front of five of Ewing’s Irrigation stores, and created a sales and training event as part of the deal.

When anyone drives by the Ewing store in Torrance, California, they are hard pressed not to notice the dramatic new pondless waterfall cascading over boulders right out front.

The system is a combination of two products – the RainXchange™ rain water harvesting system and a pondless waterfall. Clinton Elms, of Ewing Irrigation sees these installations to be a great way to promote the line of rainwater harvest products from Aquascape, Inc. to their customers as well as the dozens of other companies in the industrial complexes their stores are located. The Torrance store, for example, is situated on a very busy street in a very busy industrial complex, with a large number of businesses that could benefit from capturing and re-using the rain water that currently pores down storm drains from their massive warehouse roofs.

The Ewing building has a large flat roof that could yield many gallons of water annually.

- One inch of rainfall on a 2,000 square foot residential roof generates 1,250 gallons of water that can be reused.
- That same roof in a region receiving 30” of annual rainfall generates 41,000 gallons of reusable water.

In parched California, that is nothing to be taken lightly. They decided to install a 500 gallon capacity system because that would be of sufficient size to capture most of the water from any given rain, and large enough to hold enough water to

by Tom Graham

Photos by Clinton Elms, Ewing Irrigation
have an impact on their water use for irrigating the landscaping in front of their site. There were also significant space limitations, with only a narrow sloped striped of the property available.

To determine what size system would be the best fit for the Torrance site, they used the RainXchange Specifications Calculator on the Aquascape web site. This tells the contractor what can be expected for rainfall in their region, and how much water can be harvested based on roof size. It also factors in the planting category and area to be irrigated, and reports back a recommended kit size for the project.

After a class in the morning, attendees got to work installing the system after lunch. They installed the reservoir in a long ditch like basin, which, being on a slope was quite challenging. Once the basin was dug and the bottom carefully leveled, they brought in the Aquablocks™ and put them in place to be sure the fit was correct. Then a sheet of geotextile underlayment and a sheet of liner was dropped into place, and the Aquablocks™ were put in place. This was followed by a horizontal collection tank called a Centipede™. Vertically from this unit rises the unit called a Snorkel™ which serves as the surface access point of the reservoir. Under one of the downspouts from the roof they placed the downspout filter unit, and ran the line from that to the reservoir.

Due to the limited space available the size was limited to a 500 gallon capacity system. In Phoenix they installed a 3,000 gallon system. With the limited rainfall in Southern California, it was clear they were going to still need to supplement with city water to handle the total irrigation demand. This meant some additional plumbing and hardware. A water level sensor went into the Snorkel that senses when the water level drops below one week’s worth of irrigation
A Levelor brand controller activates a valve and city water is added to the tank. It is never filled to capacity however, in order to leave open capacity for any new rain water. A pump to power the pondless waterfall was also installed in the snorkel, as well as return lines to the waterfall. Another line is connected from the reservoir to a booster pump to pressurize the drip irrigation system.

Once the Aquablocks were all placed and aligned, the liner was folded over the blocks to enclose the space. Rocks and dirt were carefully placed between the liner and the sidewall to fill in the gap. Then they filled in over the reservoir to finish this part of the project. The team also built an attractive waterfall from natural boulders and a waterfall spilling back into the reservoir to complete the look.

With public sentiment strongly supporting green ideas these days, products that can save and re-use precious resources are a hot commodity. “It’s not really about saving money”, says Richard Gutierrez, Manager of the Torrance Store. “It’s about being responsible for our impact on the planet. It is a statement about our company and our people.” Richard hopes others in their business district will get on board. Since installing the new system, they have received numerous comments about the system, and in the short time it has been installed, a number of local contractors have been by to get more information on how to spec it and cost it out. In Southern California, like much of the rest of the country these days, saving water is becoming a high priority, and these two companies are ready to provide a solution.
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**New Pondmaster Compact Pressurized Filter System from Danner Manufacturing**

Islandia, New York, Danner Manufacturing, a leading supplier of pond pumps, filters, and accessories announces the introduction of its new Pondmaster® Compact Pressurized Filter System (CPF).

According Bill Minnick, company president, with the introduction of “our new line of compact pressurized filters, we will have completed our full range of filter offerings. These new models have been engineered to accommodate small ponds or patio containers and can be installed in both new and existing water displays. Best of all, especially in these difficult times, the CPF filters are priced to overcome consumer reluctance to consider adding a water feature to their home.”

With the exception of Series 100, all CPF filters come with or without a UV clarifier allowing the consumer the option of installing a more effective filtering system. Available in a total of 5 models to accommodate pumps up to 1,800GPH, these rugged, reliable filters are sure to be a significant addition to retailers and installers looking for an economical system to help promote water feature sales this season.

The Pondmaster CPF filters, as well as all other Pondmaster products, are available through local Lawn & Garden distributors.

Contact Danner Manufacturing (631.234.5261) or go to www.dannermfg.com for complete details.

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**Distressed Pots Water Fountain**

Alpine debuts The Distressed Pots Water Fountain with Halogen and LED lights. This fountain is an ideal blend of contemporary design and old-world sculpture. With its rustic charm, this fountain will be the center of attention in any home or garden. Alpine offers a wide selection of fountains, statuary, bird baths, lights, pumps and more.

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**Aquascape, Inc., Introduces Flexible Aquatic Planters**

Aquascape recently introduced flexible Aquatic Planters in three convenient sizes. The planters are constructed of fine porous material that allows water in but keeps soil from entering into the pond. The flexibility of the planters makes them a perfect fit for tight spaces.

Aquascape’s new Aquatic Planters will not break or crack like plastic planters and can be molded to fit in spaces where their plastic counterparts cannot. The planters are available in 2-pack units and come in small (6”x6”), medium (8”x6”), and large (12”x8”). Aquatic Planters are ideal for all pond plants.

For more information about the flexible Aquatic Planters and other Aquascape products log on to: www.aquascapeinc.com or call 866-877-6637 (US) or 866-766-3426 (CAN).

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**EasyPro is pleased to introduce the Eco-Series Waterfall Filter**

This innovative product is a great addition to EasyPro’s existing line of waterfall filters. Eco-Series products are geared towards home owners and Do-it-Yourselfers making it an excellent retail line. All Eco- Series products are roto-molded for strength and durability.

Eco-Series waterfall filter boxes are the easiest to install filter on the market for several reasons. First, the inlet bulkhead fittings are already installed for you; second, the filters come with media already in them; third, and best of all, is the patented liner attachment system. The liner attaches to the filter using a quick, easy, bolt and silicone free Spliner Bar. The liner can be attached in seconds without bolts, silicone or cutting.

The filters are available in four sizes: Prelude – 13” waterfall, filters up to 1000 gallons; Sonata - 18” waterfall, filters up to 1800 gallons; Melody – 17” waterfall, filters up to 3000 gallons; and the Symphony – 34” waterfall, filters up to 6000 gallons.

**Importing Genuine Hozelock Cyprio**

United Aquatics LLC in partnership with sister Company United Aquatics Ltd in the UK are importing genuine Hozelock Cyprio spares that are available for the US market. More information on Quartz Sleeves, UV Bulbs units and parts are available at www.Unitedaquatics.com.

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The Eco-Series line is an excellent choice for retailers, pond stores, Internet companies and others selling to DIY customers. The products are good quality, easy to install and made in the USA.

For more information or a free catalog call us at 800-448-3873 or visit us on the web at www.EasyProPondProducts.com!
Winston Company, Inc. is pleased to announce our most recent award from the NACD (National Association of Container Distributors). Winston was among only three companies to receive the highest Gold Award for excellence in packaging and presentation. This is the second packaging award the newly re-designed CrystalClear product line has received. Winston also took 1st for Best Packaging Campaign at the National Advertising Council awards ceremony in 2008.

Gold Awards
- Depth Body - Cosmetics & Personal Care
- CrystalClear Water Gardening - Winston Company
- First Juice - Food & Beverage

Silver Awards
- Cape Cod Chowder - Food & Beverage
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Bronze Awards
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At Winston Company we are dedicated to giving you the highest quality product and packaging in the industry. We are very proud that our efforts are being rewarded.

Thank you,
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Winston Company, Inc.
800-331-9099 Cell: 918-605-5944 • jspillars@winstoncompany.com

New Product Spotlights – Little Giant Landscape Products

1. Complete Disappearing Water Feature Kit
   Unique new kit contains all components needed to set the imagination free. The 36” dis-appearing water basin can be buried or used with fountains to create a disappearing affect for custom water features. The flexible design is rugged, holding up to 2,000 pounds, and allows for trouble-free maintenance and easy access to the included 1,000 gph pump. Also included is 25’ of non-kink tubing to allow for more flexible installation options.

2. Non-Kink Tubing
   Black non-kink tubing is safer for fish and other aquatic life and becomes virtually invisible when installed below the water’s surface. The premium, black material of Little Giant’s tubing inhibits algae growth while the kink-free design makes it flexible and easy to position. Available in 25’ lengths with interior diameters from ¾” to 1½”, this strong, durable tubing won’t collapse from back pressure or reasonable weight from cover materials.

3. Complete Pond Kits
   All new, complete pond kits are the perfect answer for busy consumers who want to enhance their outdoor living space with minimal fuss. Each kit contains the liner, underlayment, tubing, pump and filter for building a basic pond or water feature holding up to 800 or 1200-gal. All components necessary are conveniently packaged so that consumers can purchase with confidence.

4 and 5. Water Feature Flex Pump Series
   The Little Giant brand of Water Feature Pumps are offered to exact specifications for optimum efficiency and extended life. Each pump is constructed out of stainless steel and durable thermoplastic and will operate in both submerged and out-of-pond applications. With six different sizes, these robust pumps can meet the rigorous demands of the most impressive water features. Installed in conjunction with a skimmer and a biological waterfall filter, these pumps are the ideal accessory for a complete, ecologically balanced water feature system.

   Featuring a 5-year warranty, these submersible pumps are ideal for powering water features and pond filtration systems with flows from 1,000 to 8,700-gal per hour. They are rated for continuous duty and the clog-resistant design is capable of passing solid materials. The energy efficient, stainless steel canned motor consume only 106 to 730 watts and assists in cooling and extending the life of the pump.

For additional information, contact Franklin Electric Water Transfer Systems at 405-947-2511, or visit the company’s website at www.littlegiantpondworks.com. 

Note: additional press releases can be found on their web site or POND Trade Magazine web site www.pondtrademag.com.

NACD Award

Winston Company, Inc. is pleased to announce our most recent award from the NACD (National Association of Container Distributors). Winston was among only three companies to receive the highest Gold Award for excellence in packaging and presentation. This is the second packaging award the newly re-designed CrystalClear product line has received. Winston also took 1st for Best Packaging Campaign at the National Advertising Council awards ceremony in 2008.

Gold Awards
- Depth Body - Cosmetics & Personal Care
- CrystalClear Water Gardening - Winston Company
- First Juice - Food & Beverage

Silver Awards
- Cape Cod Chowder - Food & Beverage
- Hillyard - General Industrial

Bronze Awards
- Blade Body Wash - Apollo Health & Beauty
- Bona Mop - Bona USA

At Winston Company we are dedicated to giving you the highest quality product and packaging in the industry. We are very proud that our efforts are being rewarded.

Thank you,
Jeff Spillars, National Sales Manager
Winston Company, Inc.
800-331-9099 Cell: 918-605-5944 • jspillars@winstoncompany.com
Aquascape, Inc., Announces New Water Gardening Retail Center
Opened April 18, 2009

St. Charles, IL – Aquascape, Inc., the innovative leader of water features in North America and inventor of the low-maintenance ecosystem pond is pleased to announce the opening of the Aquascape Water Gardening Store on April 18th, located at “Aqualand,” Aquascape’s corporate headquarters in St. Charles, Illinois.

“The store provides a critical research and development opportunity for Aquascape,” states Gary Wittstock, store manager and father of Greg Wittstock, founder and CEO of Aquascape, Inc. “Aquascape’s construction division provides field R&D for our contractor-grade products. Now we can better identify consumers’ needs at the retail level and this will help us to offer top-quality water feature products for the retail market.”

The Aquascape Water Gardening Store provides interactive water feature displays to help customers envision and plan water features in their own landscapes. Pondless® Waterfalls, ecosystem ponds, fountainscapes, and rainwater harvesting systems are on display both indoors and out. The store carries everything necessary to install and maintain a beautiful water feature.

Aquatic plants and live fish are available for purchase in addition to pond supplies and water gardening books.

A replication of a home’s façade has been constructed inside the store to demonstrate Aquascape’s new RainXchange™ System, which is a rainwater harvesting system paired with a decorative water feature. Permeable pavers, a pergola, fountainscapes, and an ecosystem pond finish this unique “outdoor living” display.

In addition to consumers and water gardening hobbyists, pond installers are welcome to bring their clients to view the water feature displays in the outdoor “AquaGardens” to help with design and inspiration. A design center is located in the store making it convenient to design a water feature and then purchase the necessary products without having to make an extra trip or wait for product to ship.

For more information about Aquascape products and programs, log on to www.aquascapeinc.com.

New PAF TidalWave Series Pumps

Catch the Wave……
Atlantic Water Gardens;
Mantua, Ohio is pleased to introduce a new series of pumps to our TidalWave line – the new PAF TidalWave Series Pumps.

Available in 4 models, the PAF Series Pumps range from 2800 to 5950 gph. The PAF Series of pumps are dependable and lightweight and, have stainless steel and composite construction with dual silicon carbide mechanical seals. The pumps are designed with a screened pump intake, a vortex impeller and a thermal overload protection. All PAF TidalWave Series Pumps are backed with a 2-year warranty.

For further information please contact…..
Brandon Dwyer, National Sales Manager
Atlantic Water Gardens
Phone: 1-877-80-PONDS (7-6637) x 204
brandon@atlanticwatergardens.com
www.atlanticwatergardens.com

Mini Egg-Lites® are the newest addition to the Cal Pump EggLite® family. Featuring powerful, compact LED lights the size of a quarter, these intense beauties are capable of lighting your pond, statuary, potted plants or landscaping. A complete Mini EggLite® set includes two mini lights and a low voltage transformer that will power up to 12 lights.

With your choice of red, green, blue or white lights, you can create beautiful visual effects on landscapes, waterscapes or hardscapes. The 16” pliable cords allow you to use the lights in a variety of positions. You can even wrap them around favorite plants or fountains to transform your feature into a nighttime paradise. Additional lights are available in sets of two and come with a 10’ low voltage, power cord extension with a 3-way outlet that connects lights to the transformer.

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Magazine
New Liquid Bacteria from the Makers of GreenClean

BioSafe Systems LLC, the makers of GreenClean Granular Algaecide, have released a new addition to their line of products for the retail pond market, GreenClean Xtreme Liquid Bacteria.

Packed with micronutrients and biostimulant, GreenClean Xtreme Liquid Bacteria is a one-of-a-kind beneficial bacteria mix that quickly balances and enhances water features. A powerful, concentrated liquid, GreenClean Xtreme Liquid Bacteria is composed of over 60 strains of organic degrading beneficial bacteria that work together to achieve results quickly and effectively. GreenClean Xtreme Liquid Bacteria will begin consuming and reversing any water factor that is unbalanced to produce a healthy ecosystem.

Promote water clarity and healthy aquatic life with GreenClean Xtreme Liquid Bacteria. GreenClean Xtreme Liquid Bacteria naturally reduces cloudy water by attacking out-of-control problems caused by fish waste, decaying organic debris, or nutrient overloads or turbidity. GreenClean Xtreme Liquid Bacteria eliminates toxic ammonia and nitrate levels destroying the cause of unpleasant odors while creating a more hospitable environment for fish and aquatic plants.

GreenClean Xtreme Liquid Bacteria is available in 16 oz, 32 oz, and 1-gal sizes.

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(888) 273-3088 toll-free
(860) 290-8802 fax
www.biosafesystems.com

Torpedo Pumps

The perfect pumps that were specifically engineered from the ground up for water features have just gotten BETTER! Torpedo pumps are high-flow, low-profile pumps that are lightweight, water cooled and energy efficient. The unique flow-through water jacketing system is oil-less, allows for submersible or out-of-water applications, and can operate in both fresh and salt water environments.

The re-engineered primary seal features carbon and ceramic construction that minimizes lock up and water penetration. The all new lip seal provides a secondary layer of protection against water penetration and burn out.

Whether needed for new installations or retrofits, these versatile pumps are durable and easy to install and use. NOW, they power your water features even BETTER than before!

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SplashDance
RingDance

Cal Pump’s SplashDance patented technology is designed to bring stunning combinations of visual motion and soothing aquatic sound to your water displays. Variable electronic control of pump outputs allows you to create exciting fountains and features that “dance” in tune to music, ambient sound or pre-programmed sequences.

The newest addition to the SplashDance family is a low voltage version for smaller containers called the RingDance. This portable kit includes a low voltage control box featuring auto and manual “dance” modes. The kit also includes a 250 gph low voltage pump, filter basket, riser and Ring Jet Fountain. Complete kit sets up in minutes and can be used with a decorative container both indoors or out.

The low voltage controller can also be used with decorative fountain heads (not included), instead of the Ring Jet Fountain, to create unique displays for most any feature.

Franklin Electric Water Transfer Systems/CAL Pump
301 N. MacArthur
Oklahoma City, OK. 73132-6616
800.225.1339 • 661.257.7330
www.calpump.com

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Winning a Bronze Medal for The Lotus Puts Authors in Good Position

Winners of the first annual Living Now Book Awards were announced on Earth Day 2009. The Lotus: Know It and Grow It, by Paula Biles and Kelly Billing won the bronze medal in the gardening/landscaping category. This beautiful book captivates, inspires, and educates about all things lotus. In short, it exemplifies the Living Now Awards, which celebrate the innovation and creativity of newly published books that enhance the quality of our lives, from cooking to fitness to gardening.

This volume, published by the International Waterlily & Water Gardening Society, fills a void of available lotus information. It covers almost everything about Nelumbo (cultivation, landscape uses, cultural traditions, a gardener’s guide, and more) and is packed with over 110 color photographs. The book is written to give a complete portrait of this fascinating plant and provide ideas to inspire the novice or experienced lotus grower. It appeals to both lotus aficionados as well as people who simply appreciate the plant’s beauty or cultural traditions. (It is also the perfect silent salesman for any retail business that sells lotus.)

The awards were presented by Jenkins Group of Traverse City, Michigan, where they’ve been involved in book packaging, marketing and distribution since 1988. “The Living Now Book Awards recognize books that help readers help themselves, to learn about enriching their lives in wholesome, Earth-friendly ways,” said Jenkins Group Awards Director Jim Barnes.

Billing and Biles founded K&P Projects as the sales outlet for The Lotus, with a portion of all sales helping support the IWGS. To purchase single or bulk copies, email pods@AboutTheLotus.com, or call 941-758-2926, or visit www.AboutTheLotus.com.


Upcoming Events

July 16 – 18th IWGS Main Symposium
Extended July 19 – 20th
IWGS 25th Anniversary - event held simultaneously with Aquascape’s Pondemonium as they celebrate their 10 year Anniversary
Pheasant Run Hotel, St. Charles, IL • www.iwgs.org
Speakers: Gary Wittstock, Clay Allgood and more
Tours: Ball Horticulture Gardens, Shedd Aquarium (behind the scenes), Chicago Botanic Gardens, Aquascapes, Inc., Area Water Gardening Store, and a Pond Tour

Aug. 15 – 20
New York International Gift Fair
New York, NY • www.nyigf.com

August 23 – 26
Pondapalooza
Following the Farwest Show - The Oregon Association of Nurseries Show. Sheraton Portland Airport Portland, OR
www.gardenpondpromotions.com

September 15 – 17
SuperZoo 2009
The National Show for Pet Retailers™
Mandalay Bay Las Vegas
800-999-7295 • info@SuperZoo.org • www.wwpia.org

September 18 – 22
American Society of Landscape Architects
McCormick Place Lakeside Center, Chicago, IL
www.asla.org

Sept. 23 – 24
Garden Market Expo
Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV
800-748-6214 • www.gardenmarketexpo.com

October 2 – 4
Backer’s 43rd Annual Pet Industry
Christmas Trade Show & Educational Conference
Donald E. Stephens Convention Center
Rosemont (Chicago), Ill.
www.hhbacker.com

October 2 – 4
Koi America 2009
Held at Carroll County Agriculture Center in Westminster, Maryland with Koi, Goldfish, Vendors, and Speakers.
www.makc.com

October 22 – 24
Info Tanza ’09
An Educational & Information event hosted by IPPCA • See ad on page 58. Atlanta, GA • www.infotanza.com

November 16 – 18
Pool|Spa|Patio Expo
Mandalay Bay Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV
www.poolspapatio.com

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A re you having a banner year? Have you thought about using banners? Do you have a special event, sale, or announcement coming up? You may need a banner. A relatively quick and inexpensive way to promote your business.

Vinyl banners are a great way to communicate with a large audience. However, a poorly designed banner may fail to deliver its intended message. Here are some tips to help you avoid common design pitfalls and make your personalized banners as effective as possible.

1) Decide on Your Message
   It’s important to have a clear understanding of what message you want to convey before you start designing your custom banner. Keep in mind what goals you want to accomplish with your banner. For example, if you are advertising a sale with a promotional banner, be sure to include when the sale is ending and a strong call to action.

2) Plan Your Location
   The location you choose to hang your customized banner greatly influences how easily its message will reach your target audience. If you intend to hang your customized banners somewhere that people pass by quickly, the message must be clear and succinct or it will be ignored. An optimal length for a message that will be read quickly is 5 to 8 words. If your banner is going to be hung in a place where people can view it for an extended period of time (like a corporate event) you can include more information. Avoid putting more than 15 words on your custom banner to keep your message clear and easy to understand.

3) Choose Your Color Scheme
   A custom vinyl sign with a well chosen color scheme will stand out from the crowd and make a lasting impression. Visibility is key with any form of signage, so be sure to use colors that stand out from each other. According to the Outdoor Advertising Association of America, the most visible color combinations are black on yellow, black on white, yellow on black, and white on blue. Using bright colors will attract attention to your custom banner, but remember that excessive use can distract from your message.

4) Use the Right Fonts and Graphics
   It’s important for your banner to have fonts and graphics that compliment each other and the overall message of your sign. Using two different fonts can help highlight different information on your customized banner, but more than two can be distracting. When adding graphics, keep in mind that often times less is more. If you upload a custom image to your sign, make sure the graphic is high quality to ensure a clear image when printed on a large personalized banner.

This information was found at www.buildasign.com/CustomBanners/making-effective-banners

Another set of great tips on their site is –
Hanging & Maintaining Your Banner

Do you have any specials – have a banner announce it and bring people into your store.

Are you new to the neighborhood? I had no idea this business was here till I saw their sign and I drive by this building almost every day.
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