Hands On
TIPS, TRENDS AND TACTICS FOR THE SAVVY RETAILER

FIRSTHAND ACCOUNT
ON YOUTUBE, CHARLESTON SHOP PULLS BACK THE CURTAIN

Throughout the videos, Manny serves as the calm, collected narrator and tour guide, chatting amiably with Clara and team members — even a visiting local grower — all while the visuals in the background (designers working on 900 graduation bouquets and 450 boutonnieres and prepping hundreds of Mother’s Day designs) tell the story of a shop in high production mode. The hard-to-miss message: We’re the professionals, and we love what we do.

For Manny, the videos were also about letting go. Inspired by the book “Rebel without a Crew” by screenwriter and director Robert Rodriguez, Manny made a commitment last year to create videos for YouTube (a free resource he wanted to make better use of).

“The first video we made was terrible,” he said. “We threw it out. But we learned from it: ‘Oh. We need a microphone.’ So we found a microphone for $40. For once in my life, I wasn’t saying, ‘It has to be better, it has to be better.’ It was more about having fun and trying something different.”

In the span of a few weeks, Manny and Arnault made nine videos. In addition to the Mother’s Day series, they created five wedding-focused videos to showcase the shop’s work at local venues. “We wanted people to see how professional we are, and how serious we are” about making these events special, Manny said. “Customers come in all the time and say, ‘When I retire I’d love to open a flower shop.’ I don’t think they realize how much work goes into it,” and the videos are a way to show just that, with good humor and lots of personality.

Final tips from Manny: Keep the videos short (he compares the five-minute wedding videos to “Gone with the Wind” in YouTube land — almost too long), enlist the help of an intern or college student (the technology is second nature to them and they’ll bring a youthful perspective) and give your staff a head’s up before filming.

“If you tell people a few days ahead of time, it really does make a difference,” he said. “They have time to do their hair, put on their make-up, practice what it is they want to say — they’ll all look especially great. The staff gets excited about it. They want to share the videos with family and friends. It can be a lot of fun for everyone.” 🎧
>> When Martha Stewart Weddings compiled a recent list of “must-follow” floral designers on Instagram, Jackie Reisenauer of Munster Rose in Minneapolis (@munsterrose) made the cut. No wonder. With the help of iPhones and a consistent background (usually white or black), Reisenauer and her team emphasize their design aesthetic and inject whimsy, including shots of Reisenauer’s newborn son and recent publications that have featured their work, artfully surrounded by flowers of course. Reisenauer’s work as a stylist for companies such as Madewell and Target give her an edge, but you can take a page from her playbook and think of each picture on your Instagram page as an extension of your brand, rather than a quick photo you snapped during an on-site setup: Clean up backgrounds, include a variety of perspectives (full designs and detail shots) and hashtag like crazy.

**BENCHMARK**

**MOTHER’S DAY MOMENTUM**

> In 2014, the average Mother’s Day transaction was $60, according to a post-holiday survey of SAF members. That’s a slight increase from last year. Florists take note: Results from at least one national group indicate there’s plenty of room for upselling this holiday — and more money that could be coming to your shop. Last year, the National Retail Federation reported that Americans spent an average of $162.94 on Mother’s Day, down slightly from the 2013 average of $168.94 (an all-time survey high). According to the 2014 SAF survey, cut flowers are still queen on Mother’s Day, representing, on average, about 80 percent of sales for florists.

**Average Mother’s Day Transactions**

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**Source:** SAF Post-Holiday Member Surveys, 2012-2014. Answers rounded to nearest whole number.