

THE USE OF A SLIDE SHOW PROGRAM TO PROMOTE SALES¹

by Gregory B. Frank

The presentation of a slide show to clients and prospective clients can and will promote the Green Industry and your company sales.

In beginning a slide show program, the main ingredient is to show the name and or logo of your company to the prospective clients. This keeps them aware of you and visually engraves on their minds your name and logo.

A general program to follow is to go through the four seasons of the year. Begin your series of slides with the winter season to show how ice and snow can raise havoc with trees and shrubs in landscaping. Then turn it around and show ways of prevention by rodding, cabling, pruning and fertilization to strengthen plant material. This gives the presenter avenues to expand on such as storm loss or insurance evaluations and appraisals. You can also capitalize on slides showing the winter beauty of trees and shrubs; the bark coloration, the berries and the growth habit along with the promotion of wildlife to the landscape. Winter beauty of plants will sell planting of colorful material in spring.

In spring, flowering trees and shrubs are the main ingredient and topic on many people's minds. Following that knowledge and complementing your program with many early spring flowering trees get the clientele thinking and yearning for spring. Along with the beauty of spring comes the lawn, tree and shrub clean-up. Slides showing aerifying, power raking, pruning and fertilization and spring planting will inform your prospects of the many services done in the springtime season. Showing your audience the SIZZLE instead of the steak will in turn give you the call back after your presentation.

Then comes summer, a slow time for the tree and landscape industry. However, showing slides of a patio installation or conventional summer duties may enhance your clientele to think of you then and not just of their vacations. Watering by

hydrofertilization along with the many plant insects that have accrued on trees and shrubs gives the professional spray programs in summer. Integrated Pest Management can put bucks in your pocket by applying soap water to plant material, tree injection and installation of insect traps by showing your clients pictures of this. But most important is to show them watering and mulching to get plants through the hot, dry season.

Finally, you have the fall season. Slides of tree and shrub fall colors are most important. Adding interest into the fall season enhances the landscape immensely along with plant material sales in fall. Tree and shrub fertilization should reach its peak at this time with the proper promotion. Your planting and lawn work is best done now rather than in the hot, dry season of summer. Showing slides of jobs started and completed amplifies your sales pitch.

By going through the four seasons of your business you divulge to the patrons the many services you offer and times they are best accomplished, along with presenting an interesting program.

Preparing the above presentation is a simple but time-consuming project. The thing in your favor is that it is an inexpensive form of communication. The only objects needed are a camera and slides. There are expensive 35 mm cameras and inexpensive instamatic, pocket-size cameras. The first slide show program I was introduced to was done solely by an instamatic camera that showed the work well and was accepted very well by the audience.

After you have selected the camera of your choice, the next step is proper slide selection. Using people and pets in your slides to show scale gives size along with something the client can identify with along with adding character to the slide presentation.

After accumulating a slide catalog, you can then

¹Presented at the annual conference of the International Society of Arboriculture at Boyne Falls, Michigan in August 1981.

emphasize in your programs specific categories such as tree preservation, landscape service and plant protection services.

Finally and one of the easiest tasks is finding people to talk to. The list is never ending. There are Garden Clubs, Neighborhood Groups, Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs and the YMCA. By just listening to your clients you can find many places to talk. Showing your capabilities to the public will in turn produce sales for you and your company.

After your presentation, obtaining the names, addresses and telephone numbers of your au-

dience is beneficial. Donate a plant, fertilizer or a free consultation as a prize to the Club. You can have the audience write their names on the back of your business cards, place the cards in a hat or box and draw the name of the winner. Keeping the cards gives you people to see or call.

Finally, these programs promote sales for your business but they also promote the green industry for us all now and in the future.

*Ted Collins Associates, Ltd.
Victor, New York*

ABSTRACTS

Dickinson, Sancho and C.E. Whitcomb. 1981. **Why nurserymen should consider fall transplanting.** *Am. Nurseryman* 153(10): 11, 64-67.

Several research findings suggest fall transplanting may have advantages over spring transplanting. First, plants become established before the spring flush of growth. Second, wholesalers and retailers can spread the demand for plant material and related items over a longer period. Other advantages are more efficient use of nursery space and employees' time and a steadier cash flow. After one growing season (seven months for spring-planted material and 11 months for fall-planted material), Japanese black pines planted in fall had more new roots, old roots, total roots, top weight, stem caliper and height than those planted in spring. Bur oak increased total roots, top weight, caliper and height when planted in fall. A similar response was observed with sawtooth oak, Pfitzer's juniper and cluster pine. There was no difference between development of new roots, old roots, total roots, top weight, stem caliper or plant height of the Chinese pistache. All plants of all species survived fall planting except the dwarf Burford holly.

Chapman, Douglas. 1981. **Ground covers adorn surfaces in shady, low maintenance areas.** *Weeds, Trees & Turf* 20(6): 27-28.

Ground covers are a real alternative for turf in sun or shade to reduce maintenance. Many shade-loving ground covers grow especially well around trees while not competing heavily with the tree or shrub for moisture and nutrients. Further, these ground covers don't require mowing, thus mower damage to trees is eliminated. A few of the outstanding shade-tolerant ground covers include Lily-of-the-Valley, English ivy, Plantain lily, Japanese spruce, primrose, and periwinkle. All of the aforementioned ground covers thrive in semi or full shade and prefer moist, rich fertile soil. They are outstanding as companion plants to reduce maintenance while improving the micro climate, thus helping many trees thrive.