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## **Floriexpo 2022: North America's largest B2B floral event**

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Floriexpo, previously known as the International Floriculture Expo, is a B2B floral industry event that brings together professionals in the industry to network, expand their horizons, learn about floriculture and what's new in the industry.

Whether it's wholesalers, suppliers, distributors or those handling floral accessories such as containers and design — Floriexpo unites businesses across all categories in floriculture.

One of the missions at New Bloom Solutions is to help the flower industry to Innovate, Connect and Bloom — this can be accomplished by highlighting and supporting new innovations and start-ups in the industry within all sectors.

The Floriexpo 2022 in Miami is the largest B2B floral event in North America. This event allows discovery of the latest innovations in the floral industry and this year was no different.



The first innovation was [BioFink LLC](#). I spoke to Barbara Fink, the president of BioFink LLC, about her 100 percent natural pots for all types of plants. Made of palm-free fiber, they're 100 percent sustainable. When producing the heart of palm, 90% of production is waste. BioFink LLC uses this waste and transforms them into pots.

Additionally, these pots are excellent for many plants and flowers, including orchids. This is because roots can grow into the walls of the pot, and the pots retain humidity and provide nutrients for the plant. Since the pots are 100% biodegradable, there's no waste or negative environmental impact. When plants are ready to be put into the ground, there's no need to remove them from their pots. They can be buried in the pots directly in the ground, which turn into plant food within two months. They also come in six different sizes, and more are in development.

The idea emerged from those within the heart of the palm production process. The

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manufacturer's father worked in the heart of palm production throughout his life and saw the waste it produced first-hand. Thus, he worked with universities and researchers in Brazil to design this product. BioFink LLC has been selling these pots for five-six years but is just expanding to the North American market. According to Fink, Floriexpo has been a great experience, has put her in touch with many contacts, and she looks forward to attending the expo next year.



It was also great to speak to Michael Gaffney, the CEO of the American School of Flower Design, about his newest product, [Flower Crazy](#). Gaffney's brilliant idea came to him when he was at the kitchen table, contemplating the worst problems in the floral industry, i.e., cubes and cylinder containers. While everyone wants and uses them, flowers frequently fall out of them, and florists and designers have to use tape to fix this. In addition to extra effort and wasted labor, this created a lot of waste. Gaffney knows the importance of lowering margins to make profits and sustain businesses, so he set out to improve this flawed design.

He collaborated with a friend who was an engineer and created containers with beveled tops and angles, "like a reverse frog." Because of this, flowers can be arranged at any length, and the container top holds them perfectly in place. In addition to the product "working like a dream," it has been highly successful, with Gaffney selling them at Floriexpo and QVC. Whether built into the arrangement price or sold individually, these containers are game-changing.

According to Gaffney, 87% of people polled said that if flowers lasted longer and they knew how to design arrangements, they would buy more flowers. Flower Crazy does just this by turning everyday customers into designers and giving them the tools to make their flowers look good. Additionally, Gaffney includes educational videos on flower arranging with "Flower Crazy" that is displayed by floral departments or help the consumer to use the product.



Kaitlin and Maria Cauchon are a mother and daughter team who are owners of Photo Florals, LLC. Maria Cauchon is the creator of FrameStix, a plastic frame that houses uploaded pictures, business cards, gift cards, and more. This versatile product allows retail florists to upsell creations and boost profits.

The idea stemmed from Maria Cauchon's co-worker and friend being hospitalized for a long period of time. To send him well wishes, she took photos of all his co-workers and created an arrangement out of them.

This was before smartphones were readily available, and the gift "brightened his world." The product has been ten years in the making and launched at Floriexpo 2022. Their experience at Floriexpo was wonderful, and they got a lot of interest from retail florists, supermarkets, and even growers.



I had the pleasure of speaking to John Benzick, President of GoGo Flower. The idea for the company came to Benzick at the grocery store when he bought his normal supplies and wanted to impulse buy a bouquet for his wife.

He realized he didn't have any water and wasn't going home immediately, and would have to buy a separate vase and arrange for water. That's when he decided to meet this challenge head-on and came up with the perfect solution: a pouch pre-filled with water and flower food sold at grocery stores. In addition to being convenient for customers, the Flower Water TO GO would also be convenient for staff, who wouldn't have to deal with the water issues being caused.

Benzick presented the idea to ten florists within three days, and seven out of ten florists assured him it was a much-needed solution that would benefit both customers and salespeople. Today, GoGo Flower is working with a number of florists and markets, including Kowalski's.

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