

‘Connecting factor that works on a healthy future for the entire tree nursery industry’

GrootGroenPlus: more than just a tree nursery trade fair

Tree nursery trade fair GrootGroenPlus grew into a strategic player in the industry. It is a broad trade fair with a full assortment and an international image, that also focuses on partnerships and projects that help partners in the industry to become healthy, strong, and future-proof.

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Joining as a partner of trade magazine Boom in Business is only fitting in the development from trade fair organiser to strategic connecting factor. We interviewed Corianne Oudijk, member of the board of GrootGroenPlus, and asked her about the motivations and plans of the trade fair platform. Oudijk: “A few years ago, GrootGroenPlus was mainly known as the tree nursery trade fair in Zundert. Nowadays, that image has expanded. GrootGroenPlus represents many tree nurseries in the Netherlands and Belgium, and has an international image. Growers in the Netherlands and Belgium often have to deal with similar challenges, such as finding the right staff, mechanical weed control, water management, professional training, and logistics.”

It does not happen automatically

“GrootGroenPlus has become increasingly more important as a connector, and that is something we want to strengthen”, says Oudijk. “That is why we partnered up with publisher NWST. Creating a connection between different regions, countries, and companies does not always just happen automatically. Everyone is busy; especially in the past few years, people were busy with keeping their own businesses afloat. That is why GrootGroenPlus rises up to the challenge to connect, to bring everyone to a higher level, especially in the more challenging areas.”

Changing market

“The market has changed, and it will continue to change,” says Oudijk. “That is why partnerships have become increasingly more important. A great example is our partnership

with online trade platform Varb. Many partners - including us - are very enthusiastic about that. Our partnership with trade magazine Boom in Business does also fit that strategy. We see it as a wide platform with a strong digital presence, but also an offline presence, in the shape of a paper magazine that people in the industry like to have. We can give our input for great articles that offer added value to the readers, and it provides us with an additional platform to present the relationship trade fair to the full spectrum of the industry.”

“Another great example is the Nationale Boomfeestdag (national tree holiday). It may not be a big commercial project, but it has a wide impact. This day helps us to invest in how important children find green, since they are the future of our industry.”

Look in the eye

Last year, both participants and visitors were eager to participate in another physical event, to be able to see each other again. Oudijk: “Of course, the fact that the trade fair could only be held digitally in 2020 played an important role. In 2021, the many visitors, especially from foreign countries, surprised us. They came from 33 different countries, including Russia and Italy. At that time, the corona situation was

relatively stable, and we had taken measures to keep everything as safe as possible. The corona period made us realise how important we all feel about being able to look each other in the eye, and to see and feel the living product. However, we also managed to get a deeper appreciation of the value of digital. We feel that they to strengthen each other. It’s and-and.”

Tours for trade fair visitors

At GrootGroenPlus, people know that cooperation and learning from each other is important to the entire industry. Oudijk emphasises that it is important to involve everyone: “All parties matter to us, and we want to cherish them. That is why we offer international journalists and breeders’ organisations packages during the trade fair, which allows them to do their job

best, without having to deal with all kinds of conditions, and to get in touch with relevant partners easily. We take care of accommodations for international groups, but of course also tours to interesting companies. Whatever the person booking the trip needs, will be the main focus.”

Trade fair theme: ‘Grounded’

Like every year, the 2022 edition of the trade fair also has a theme. This year, it is ‘Grounded’. Oudijk explains the theme: “Vital soil is essential in the industry, because that is what you use to grow the products. You can think about the possibilities and challenges of the different types of soil, such as clay, peat, and sand, which dealers from different regions have to deal with. That is also interesting for the visitors:

Corianne Oudijk

Corianne Oudijk has been a member of the board of GrootGroenPlus for five years and is currently Treasurer and responsible for PR. Since the board does not want to be a gentlemen’s club, and it does want to develop a wider vision, Oudijk and her experience in the tree nursery industry of Boskoop is of added value in many ways. She is originally from retail; she used to work at the flower auction and at Garden Retail Services. Ten years ago she entered the business of her husband Arend Oudijk. There, she is mainly responsible for the commercial aspects in the business, but she also takes care of many other things. “My focus is wider than just the nursery. And my work for the board of GrootGroenPlus allows me to widen my vision even further. After all, GrootGroenPlus has also developed into something much wider than just ‘Zundert’. That is why the board represents many different areas of expertise, regions, and visions. To sum it up in a few words: tree nursery, consulting, suppliers, growing trees on clay soil, sand, and peat, multiple regions in the Netherlands and Belgium.”

they can find out why some plants are often found on peat soil, and others on clay or sandy soil. Improving the vitality of the soil is also an important theme. For example from a technical perspective, such as measuring values or applying usable techniques to work on difficult soil.”

Trade fair that connects people

Oudijk is very optimistic about the coming season: “This year, we hope to be able to create another great trade fair, an event to physically meet each other, where the green product plays a central role. Currently, the corona situation creates a lot of uncertainty, but we will keep an eye on that development. In any case, we will focus our efforts on connecting the people in the industry, and to help strengthen each others vision when it comes to common challenges.”



Journalisten kunnen een ‘interne persreis’ maken.