

Season's Greetings!

FTD appreciates everything you do to inspire and delight your customers during the holidays and throughout the year. This season, hundreds of thousands of orders will be sent through the Mercury Network and our talented FTD Florists will handcraft each one to your customers' delight.

To make your holiday as successful as possible, we have packed this planning guide with best practices, tips and tools to help you drive more orders, boost your local business and market your shop for success.

We wish you a successful holiday season and thank you for your partnership.

We'll do everything we can to Take Your Business Further.™

GET SOCIAL!

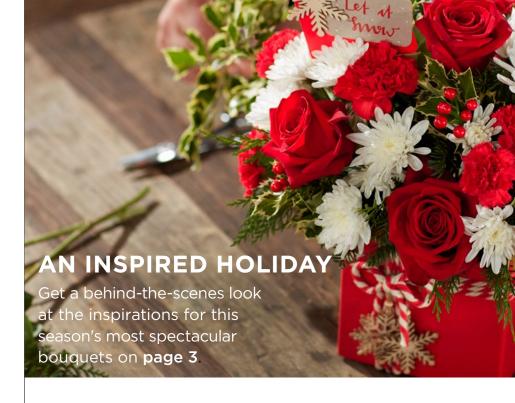
Get the latest FTD news, events, education and promotions at:

- f facebook.com/MercuryNetwork
- instagram.com/mercurynetwork
- YouTube.com/FTDMercuryNetwork
- blog.ftdi.com



EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR A BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS.

Be sure to visit www.FTDi.com/Christmas for additional information, including bouquet-specific design tips, substitution guidance and more.



CONTENTS

CHRISTMAS 2017 | PLANNING GUIDE

- 3 AN INSPIRED HOLIDAY
- 7 PROJECTED TOP 20 BEST SELLERS
- 9 CALENDARS
- 10 CHRISTMAS CHECKLIST
- 11 DRIVE LOCAL BUSINESS
- 11 KNOW YOUR CUSTOMERS
- 12 UTILIZE FTD TOOLS AND RESOURCES
- 13 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING
- **14** EMAIL MARKETING
- 15 GET ON A PATH TO MORE ORDERS
- 16 APPENDIX
 - 7 Best Practices for Success
 - 7 General Quality Tips
 - 8 Mercury Quick Tips



Deppennint lane

"Red and white peppermints are simple, yet classic. I don't care how old you are, they add that fun touch of whimsy and bring out smiles all season long!" - Andrea



MEET THE DESIGNER

A florist for more than 20 years, FTD Lead Floral Designer Andrea Ancel translates the hottest trends and flowers into beautiful bouquets for FTD Member Florists to offer in their own shops.



The FTD® Holiday Wishes™ Bouquet by Better Homes and Gardens®

Better Homes & Gardens.



SEASON'S GREETINGS

AN INSPIRED HOLIDAY

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas with green glitter, striped lettering and real candy canes.

The FTD® Season's Greetings™ Bouquet



Red and white blooms burst forth from this presentshaped vase featuring an inspirational message.

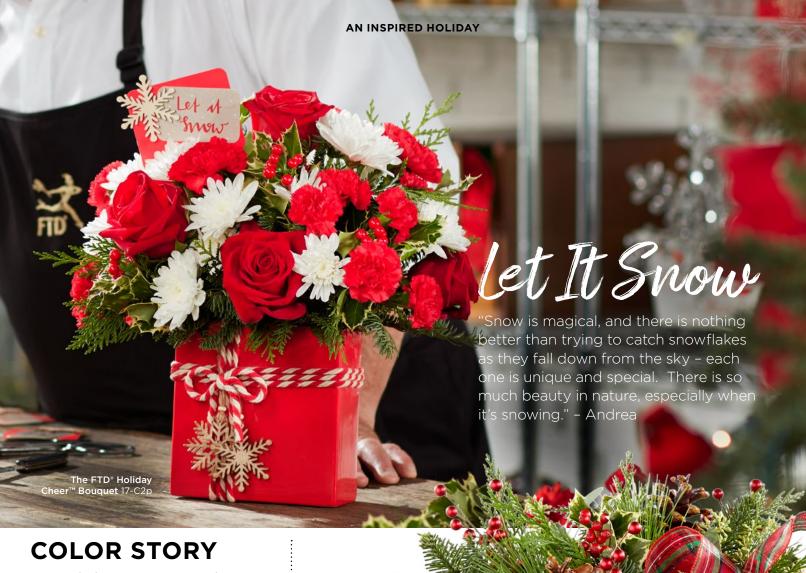
DaySpring® Jesus Is the Gift™ Bouquet by FTD® 17-C12p



COLOR STORY

Red and white take center stage in this collection with support from crisp greens.





Natural elements surround traditional holiday colors, with pops of icy winter colors making an appearance.





WARM WISHES

Christmas greens, holly and seeded eucalyptus will fill anyone with the holiday spirit.

The FTD® Holiday Homecomings™ Basket 17-C14d

Shimmering Holidays

"All dressed up with someplace special to go. Let's embrace the shimmer and shine to make the season as festive and memorable as it should be!" - Andrea



DECK THE HALLS

This joyful little tree adds an extra-special touch to the holiday table.

The FTD® Make It Merry™ Tree 17-C13d

COLOR STORY

Bright, shiny elements make this collection the perfect decor for the most festive of parties.





The FTD® Season's Greetings™ Bouquet 17-C5p



The FTD® Holiday Cheer™ Bouquet



The FTD® Celebrate the Season™ Centerpiece



The FTD® Holiday Classics™ Centerpiece by Better Homes & Gardens® B15-4924p

PROJECTED TOP 20 BEST SELLERS

To help you plan for the anticipated demand of holiday orders, here are the projected top 20 FTD.com best-selling bouquets for Christmas. Please use this resource to guide your fresh flower and container purchases.



The FTD® Holiday Traditions™ Bouquet 17-C4p



The FTD® Holiday Wishes™ Bouquet By Better Homes & Gardens® 17-C6p



CLICK TO EXPLORE

View the Christmas 2017 Projected Best Seller Recipes and Substitution Guidance.



The FTD® Red Poinsettia Basket



The FTD® Holiday Delights™ Bouquet 17-C8p



DaySpring® God's Gift of Love™ Centerpiece by FTD* 17-C11p



The FTD® Holiday Celebrations® Bouquet 17-C1p

Visit the Product Recipe Catalog at FTDi.com/Quality to quickly find details about FTD arrangements. Searchable by product name or item number, it is your one-stop resource for all FTD codified and FTD Floral Selections Guide items.



The FTD® Holiday Happenings™ Bouquet



The FTD® Holiday Elegance™ Bouquet



The FTD® I'll Jingle To That™ Bouquet by Hallmark



Dayspring® Jesus Is The Gift™ Bouquet by FTD* 17-C12p



The FTD® Festive Holiday™ Bouquet by Vera Wang 17-C10p



The FTD® Make It Merry™ Tree 17-C13d

PROJECTED ГОР 20 **BEST SELLERS**

To help you plan for the anticipated demand of holiday orders, here are the projected top 20 FTD.com best-selling bouquets for Christmas. Please use this resource to guide your fresh flower and container purchases.



CLICK TO EXPLORE

View the Christmas 2017 Projected Best Seller Recipes and Substitution Guidance.



The FTD® Frosted Findings™ **Bouquet** B23p



The FTD® Celebration of the Season™ Centerpiece B10-4368p



The FTD® Winter Walk™ **Bouquet B26p**



The FTD® Holiday Homecomings™ Basket 17-C14d

Visit the Product Recipe Catalog at FTDi.com/Quality to quickly find details about FTD arrangements. Searchable by product name or item number, it is your one-stop resource for all FTD codified and FTD Floral Selections Guide items.

NOVEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Begin displaying your FTD Thanksgiving (US) merchandising materials	2 Send a Thanksgiving direct mailer to your customers	3 Call FTD Flower Exchange to order your Christmas flowers at 800.767.4000	4
5 Daylight Saving Time ends	6 Plan your Christmas delivery processes with well-organized delivery routes and zones	7 Deadline for January Directory advertising changes Free holiday webinar. Register at www.FTDi.com/FTDUniversity.	8 Start your Thanksgiving social media campaign	9	10 Start your Small Business Saturday marketing campaign (visit SmallBusinessSaturday.com to download FREE materials)	11 Veterans Day Remembrance Day (Canada)
12	13	January Directory Codification deadline for Valentine's Day, Spring and Summer FTD Marketplace containers, call 800.767.4000 to order	Review Christmas sales from previous years and plan bouquet assortment	16	17	18
19	20 Stock cooler with centerpieces and bouquets for late Thanksgiving orders	21 Time to update your website for Christmas – call FTD Florists Online at 800.576.6271	22 Start making bows, greening containers, pre-building packing materials/boxes and filling water tubes for Christmas	23 Thanksgiving Day (US)	24. Black Friday Mark down all Thanksgiving and Fall inventory	25 Small Business Saturday Start including Christmas stuffers in statements and with each delivery
26	27 Create an online only promotion for Cyber Monday	28	29	30 Send a Christmas direct mailer to your customers		

DECEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					Hire extra holiday labor (designers, drivers, etc.)	2
3	Call FTD Flower Exchange to order your Christmas flowers at 800.767.4000	5 Visit YouTube.com/FTDMercuryNetwork and learn how to build the FTD Make It Merry Tree	6	Visit YouTube.com/FTDMercuryNetwork for FREE webinars and two-minute how-to videos to help with training	8 Hold a holiday prep staff meeting	9
10	Start Christmas email and social media marketing campaigns	12 Hanukkah begins Poinsettia Day	Check your flower supply. Running low? Visit FTDFlowerExchange.com for last-minute flower deals.	14	Call FTD Flower Exchange to order your Valentine's Day flowers at 800.767.4000.	16
17	18 Check your flower supply. Running low? Visit FTDFlowerExchange.com for last-minute flower deals.	19	20	21 Winter solstice	22	23 Stock cooler with ready- to-go arrangements for last-minute shoppers
Christmas Eve 31 New Year's Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day Kwanzaa Clean shop and re-merchandise shelves.	Close out Christmas inventory with an end-of-season sale	28	Replace in-store merchandising materials with Valentine's Day	30 Rest

CHRISTMAS Checklist

FTD TOOLS

	Ensure you are well positioned for FTD.com orders by reviewing your FTD Florist Scorecard at www.FTDi.com/Quality.
	Visit YouTube.com/FTDMercuryNetwork for FREE business-building two-minute how-to videos and webinars.
	Let FTD know how many orders you can fill this Christmas by accessing your Holiday Order Capacity Tool in Florist Link. Additional information is available at Floristwiki.FTDi.com.
	Review your delivery coverage area with your FTD Directory representative at 800.788.9000.
	Take a moment to review your internal processes for accepting/rejecting an order and sending a delivery confirmation at FTDi.com/Quality.
	Train your staff on the importance of sending a Delivery Confirmation. Visit www.FTDi.com/MercuryTechnology for more details.
	Make sure your employees know how to suspend the FTD Mercury system at www.FTDi.com/MercuryTechnology/Suspend.htm to stop receiving orders that you are unable to fill.
ΤE	CHNOLOGY
	Scrub your email database and add new customers to your list in preparation for a marketing campaign
	Optimize your website with Christmas products and promotions. If you have questions, call your FTD Florists Online team at 800.576.6721.
	Equip your drivers with as many delivery aids as possible, including maps, mobile phones and the FTD Mercury Delivery app. To get started, call FTD Technology Sales at 800.767.3222.
PR	ODUCTS
	Review your results from last Christmas and determine which programs or initiatives were successful and should be repeated.
	FTD® Marketplace™ is your one-stop shop for containers and shop supplies. Call 800.767.4000 today to learn about offers and promotions.
	Order your fresh flowers from FTD Flower Exchange by calling 800.767.4000 today.
	Develop a backup plan in case you need more delivery vehicles, drivers or supplies; go to www.FTDi.com/PDP for resources.

CLICK TO EXPLORE
For more tools and resources for a successful Christmas, visit www.FTDi.com/Christmas.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Update your social media tools regularly to keep consumers engaged with your shop. Ask all customers to "Like" or follow you and tell them how to do so on your statements, all print marketing materials, emails and on vour website.

STORE SIGNAGE

Hanging banners, street signage or even a simple sidewalk sign can easily help increase foot traffic.

EMAIL PROMOS

Email campaigns are simple and can easily be tracked. Make sure to ask every customer who places an order for their email address and send emails regularly.

ONLINE ADS

Online advertising is typically inexpensive and is a great complement to other advertising mediums. The Internet's vast reach allows you to connect with a large number of consumers.

PRINT ADS

Print advertising tends to target a specific audience, which means your ad is more likely to reach those who are interested in your shop.

DIRECT MAIL

Direct mail pieces have a longer shelf life than other mediums. With the U.S. Post Office's Every Door Direct Mail program, you can pick and choose who receives your mailings based on location, average household income and more.

*SAFnow.org. Nearly Half of Florists Report Uptick in December Holiday Sales. January 19, 2017.

KNOW YOUR CUSTOMERS

According to the 2016 Generations of Flowers Study, nearly three-quarters of consumers have a high appreciation of flowers.



65% of consumers feel special when receiving flowers as a gift.



70% believe the sight and smell of flowers can improve mood.



64% believe fragrance is important.



60% feel flowers have a special meaning unlike any other gift.

BUYING BY GENERATION

Purchasing preferences of Generation X (ages 40-51), Generation Y (ages 22-39) and Baby Boomers (ages 52-70)*:

GEN X

Most likely to purchase their flowers from a florist.

GEN Y

Most likely to buy on impulse.

BABY BOOMERS

Reported appreciating flowers more than the other age groups.



CLICK TO EXPLORE

Visit www.FTDi.com/Christmas for FREE social media and local marketing materials.

^{*}American Floral Endowment. 2016 Generations of Flowers Study.



LOCAL MARKETING

Market your shop early and often leading up to the holidays. Be sure to check out all the time-saving resources FTD provides - from social media images to custom direct mail pieces - to help you promote your shop and grow your business.



CLICK TO EXPLORE

Find all of our Local Marketing resources at www.FTDi.com/LocalMarketing.

YOUTUBE

Take a load off and watch FREE business-building webinars or how-to videos on our YouTube channel. These valuable education programs are great for refreshing your skills or training employees. Access them now at YouTube.com/FTDMercuryNetwork. Be sure to subscribe so vou'll never miss a new video!

FTD FLORISTS ONLINE

FTD Florists Online makes creating a website easier than ever before with a dedicated support staff to help you create and update your site (or you can maintain it yourself). You'll also have access to resources to help drive traffic to your site, such as online directories and email marketing tools and services. Contact FTD Florists Online at 800.576.6721 or floristsonline@FTDi.com for additional information.

FTD FLOWER EXCHANGE

The world's finest, freshest blooms are shipped direct to you from premium growers through the FTD Flower Exchange. You'll also have access to the Stem Count Calculator, a tool to help you determine how many flowers you need to purchase for FTD codified exclusives based on the number of bouquets you anticipate selling. Book early to secure the best pricing and availability! Contact your FTD Flower Exchange Representative at 800.767.4000 or visit FTDFlowerExchange.com today.

SET UP YOUR SITE FOR **SUCCESS**

Updating your website can help increase your holiday orders. We suggest the following strategies.



List your best-selling items on your homepage so customers can find them quickly.



Verify that your delivery information is accurate and up-to-date.



Post custom products on your website to showcase your artistry.



Update your online pricing to match what your store charges for Christmas orders.



Consider increasing your FTD Local Search online advertising spend so that your website is promoted in the sponsored links in all search engines.



Ensure your business listings in online directories are accurate using FTD eBiz Marketing (inaccurate listings can negatively impact search results for your business).

Search is the number one driver of traffic to content sites, beating social media by more than 300 percent.

(Source: Outbrain)



Contact FTD Florists Online at 800.576, 6721 or floristsonline@FTDi.com for additional information.

.ET'S GET

Social media is an incredibly effective and low-cost way to promote your business. Update your social media pages regularly prior to Christmas to keep your customers engaged and coming back for more!



CLICK TO EXPLORE

Check out our collection of sample social media posts and images at www.FTDi.com/Christmas.



FACEBOOK

Post photos of your Christmas preparations and tag your customers on Facebook. The added benefit of doing this is that when you tag someone, the post also appears on their wall, allowing their friends to see the photo too, increasing engagement. You will only be able to tag people you are connected to. For a small fee to Facebook, you can promote your holiday posts to increase your reach.



TWITTER

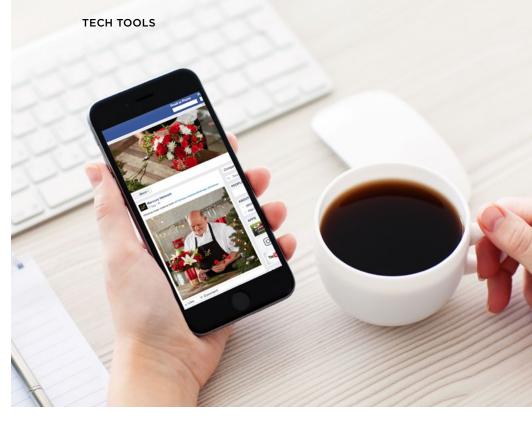
Don't overlook the best realtime tool in social media this Christmas. Sending tweets out to your followers is a great way to keep everyone updated on what is happening in your shop. Twitter is a great tool for connecting with people online and offline.

CONNECT WITH US

Access news, events, education and promotions when you connect with us on social media

Facebook: facebook.com/MercuryNetwork Instagram: instagram.com/mercurynetwork YouTube: YouTube.com/FTDMercuryNetwork

Florist blog: blog.ftdi.com





PINTEREST

Pinterest is a virtual mood board of thematic collections. Use it during the holidays to create themed "boards" to engage your customers and entice them to purchase from your shop. Create a variety of boards with floral and non-floral-related items and link your posts back to your website so that consumers can purchase right from the link. Include boards with gift suggestions, home décor, table settings and more.



INSTAGRAM

Instagram is the smartphone photographer's app of choice. For florists, it's easy to stop designing for a moment, snap a photo with your smartphone and then post it immediately. Instagram's unique editing features can also help you tweak photos before uploading them. You could even try your hand at an Instagram Story, a video or photo that disappears from your feed after 24 hours.

DO'S AND DONT'S FOR SOCIAL MEDIA



Create a calendar of posts and tweets in advance of the holiday

Ask questions (e.g., "What is your favorite Christmas flower?")

Share pictures and videos (tell a story about your business)

Spend at least 30 minutes a day on social media (read, learn, listen, post)



Do not tell your customers to just "Like" or follow you; tell them how and give them a reason to do so (for example, "Like us at facebook. comFlowerShopName to see sneak peeks of our new designs and hear about sales first!")

MARKETING TIPS

- 1 Only send email to customers who have personally opted in to receive your emails; do not send an email to someone who has not as that is considered spam.
- **2** Include past online purchasers in your email marketing campaigns to remind them to purchase from you again.
- **3** Contact FTD Florists Online support for assistance in obtaining email addresses for customers who have purchased from your website in the past.
- **4** Use a professional email marketing service, such as Constant Contact®, not a personal account.
- **5** Always include a simple, one-click "unsubscribe" link in every email you send.
- **6** Use your prime real estate wisely. The "From" and "Subject" lines are the most important real estate; make your "From" line your store name or one that is identifiable with your shop.
- **7** Entice your customers to open your emails by telling a little bit about what they could find inside (e.g., "How to Pick the Perfect Christmas Centerpiece").
- **8** To be most effective, 80 percent of your emails should be customerfocused content, such as tips and trends, and 20 percent should promote your store, products, sales, etc.
- **9** It is best to send shorter emails more frequently (about once a week) to increase their effectiveness.



EMAIL

Marketing

Email marketing is by far the most effective way of directly impacting your bottom line and growing your business. While you should be sending out emails to customers year-round, it is essential to boost business for the holidays. Email has a media return on investment of 122 percent - more than four times higher than other marketing formats, including social media, direct mail and paid search.

(Source: eMarketer, 2016)

STRATEGIC USES TO **GROW BUSINESS**

- → Share specials or sales.
- → Introduce new products or services.
- Remind customers of upcoming holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, etc.
- Promote an event in your shop (end-of-season sale, holiday open houses, education classes, etc.).

*Exact Target



To boost customer satisfaction, FTD is focusing on landing the right order with the right florist at the right time to create a successful delivery. To achieve this, FTD's Path to Orders reviews five critical components before sending an order to a florist.

The following five Path to Orders components and actions can help improve customer satisfaction and increase your opportunity for FTD.com orders:

1 KEEP YOUR MERCURY SYSTEM ON AND ACCEPTING ORDERS

- FTD only sends orders to Mercury systems that are live and online.
- Suspended systems are not eligible for future orders.

2 PURCHASE HOLIDAY AND EVERYDAY **CODIFIED CONTAINERS**

 Try a combo pack of containers if you don't want to commit to a full case of one item. Call FTD Marketplace at 800-767-4000.

3 REVIEW AND MANAGE YOUR DELIVERY AREA AND CUT-OFF TIMES WITH FTD.COM

· You can review your cities and ZIP codes with your FTD National Marketing Consultant at 800.788.9000.

4 FILL AND DELIVER EVERY ORDER WITH EXCELLENT QUALITY

• Meet customer and recipient expectations by filling orders to recipe, following proper care and handling procedures and being familiar with the FTD Substitution Policy.

5 LIMIT QUESTIONS ABOUT SUBSTITUTION AND ADDITIONAL FUNDS OR REJECTING ORDERS YOU AGREED TO FILL WHEN YOU PURCHASED THE CODIFIED PRODUCT

As a professional, you know what constitutes a proper substitution and the FTD Substitution Policy can guide your decisions. It is also important that you commit to filling all sizes of codified bouquets. If you are out of a codified container you should contact FTD.com at distributiongroup@ftdi.com or send a GEN message to 90-0075AA to temporarily uncodify from receiving those orders.

CLICK TO EXPLORE

The FTD Florist Scorecard was designed to provide insight into your fulfillment performance and allow you to monitor your quality, refusal and customer satisfaction ratings. To access your scorecard, click here.



BEST PRACTICES FOR SUCCESS

The following best practices can help you set up your shop for success this holiday season.

- 1 Hire additional drivers and make sure your delivery vehicles are in good working order.
- **2** Get pay-as-you-go cell phones for delivery drivers so you can always keep in touch without increasing your cell phone costs.
- **3** Set up an assembly line to put together the top-selling arrangements the day or two before your busiest delivery day.
- **4** Save time by making arrangements in FTD's Christmas codified containers to offer for sale to walk-ins.
- **5** Have a plan and assign a contact person to handle customer service issues.
- **6** Give your computer a "tune-up" to ensure it is running accurately to minimize disruptions: make sure your ink cartridges are full and your invoice and receipt papers are in stock and easily accessible.

GENERAL QUALITY TIPS

Planning and preparing are crucial to a successful holiday season. The following tips can help increase productivity and customer satisfaction levels for both the holidays and every day. Bouquetspecific design tips for each projected best seller can be found on pages 4-8.

PURCHASE SMART

When possible, purchase your flowers in the correct stem lengths to maximize profit margins.

- **ORDER EARLY** Order product to match the timing of your production schedule and the proper stem counts to match your recipes.
- **KEEP HYDRATED** Keep flowers properly hydrated (including floral preservative) to create a better customer experience upon receipt and provide for the proper fullness in each design.
- **CARE AND HANDLING** 4 To prevent ethylene buildup, remove any dead or dying petals
- and leaves and do not submerge foliage below the water line. **SOAK FLORAL FOAM** 6
- Properly soak your floral foam. As a reminder, when soaking your foam, you should gently place it in a large enough water reservoir to allow room for the foam to fill with water at its own pace. The foam should never be forced underwater. This will cause air pockets to become trapped in the foam.
- 6 **SCALE FOR SUCCESS** Keep scale and dimensions in mind when building each design. This is key to your customers' perception and satisfaction.
- **USE RIBBON CAREFULLY** Ribbon is an accessory and should only be used when called for in the recipe, and then only in the manner in which it is described.
- **PACKAGING** Determine packaging per item prior to holiday to ensure safe delivery.
- **CHECK WATER** Check water daily on all of your premade arrangements prior to delivery.
- **DESIGN ONE BY ONE** When a SKU is offered in Standard, Deluxe, Premium and Exquisite sizes, concentrate on one recipe at a time to help ensure proper stem counts in each design.

MERCURY QUICK TIPS

DELIVERY CONFIRMATIONS

FTD offers a variety of technology tools to make it quick and easy to submit a delivery confirmation. Visit FTDi.com/Quality/Delivery/Tools.htm to learn more.

How-to guide FTDi.com/Quality/Delivery/Mercury.htm

Best practices Send a DCON with the delivery

> time after the order is successfully delivered by 7 p.m. (local time). As a sender, let your customer know the order was successfully delivered. If the order is from FTD.com. please keep in mind the customer automatically receives an email letting them know their order was delivered when you send a delivery

confirmation.

What to avoid Avoid sending a DCON message

> before the order is actually delivered or stating that delivery

was attempted.

REJECTING AN ORDER

Unable to fill an order? Reject it within two hours. For DRP guidelines, visit FTDi.com/Quality/DRP.

Best practices If you are unable to fill an

> order, reject it within two hours. Rejecting an order right away allows us to find another

florist who can fill it.

What to avoid Avoid sending an ASK if you

> are unable to fill the order. Reject the order within two

hours instead.

ASK MESSAGE

Need order-related information? Send an ASK message.

Best practices Send ASK messages to request

> address or recipient information specific to order, to notify FTD. com about a delivery problem or notify FTD.com or a major substitution issue with the order.

What to avoid Do not send an ASK message to

request a CANCEL message be sent on an order or to notify FTD. com that you cannot fill an order.

Reject the order instead.

REDUCING ZIP CODES

If you need to reduce your delivery area during the holidays, temporarily reduce your ZIP coverage.

Best practices Communicate with FTD.com

by sending a GEN message to 90-0075AA or email distributiongroup@FTDi.com

Do not use a GEN message to What to avoid

communicate any information specific to an order. Use an ASK, Reject or correct message type for the order. If you reject an order due to product unavailability, note

it in the Reject.

