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Chances are still excellent that you're reading these words right now on lignocellulosic fibrous material made by chemically or mechanically separating cellulose fibers from wood, fiber crops or waste product that's been processed, pressed and dried into a flexible sheet. (Thanks Wikipedia!)

In short, you're holding the cold, dead corpse of what was a nondescript tree at some point. It was probably planted and grown specifically for the purpose of making paper somewhere in Georgia or maybe Washington State. No treasured California Giant Redwoods or thousand-year-old Baobabs were harmed in the writing of this column.

Many super-genius experts predicted a few years ago that you would not be reading a dead-tree magazine in 2013. If video killed the radio star, digital would certainly kill print, they proclaimed. People would reject this clunky, outdated format for the sexier (and cheaper) version they could get on the Internet.

Well, to quote another super-genius, Mr. Lee Corso: "Not so fast, my friend."

Our research shows that nearly 90 percent of you still highly value getting a print magazine. Only about 10 percent of you don't want us to send you one. Most of those folks aren't environmental nuts or anything...they just prefer reading the magazine on their computer or tablet.

On the other end of the spectrum, 10 percent of you are the "luddites" who say you never visit our website or open an email from us. You want to kick back (usually in the comfort of the maintenance facility crapper) and read us in old skool style. That's cool too.

(Side note: I consider finding copies of my magazine in a stall at a golf course maintenance facility a major sign of success. How weird is that?)

The other 80 percent of y'all want everything we can give you to one extent or another. That's why we've invested so much time, effort and money to give you cool, non-dead-tree options like our digital edition, website, e-newsletters and our mobile app.

Many folks who've always loved the printed edition cite the ability to carry it around and read it whenever as a major benefit. That's a big advantage, too, for the GCI mobile app. You can read it on your iPad or even your phone, access past issues, email a story to a friend or even post something directly to Facebook or Twitter from the app. It's pretty awesome.

Well, awesome isn't good enough for us.

Next month, we're launching Version 2 of the GCI mobile app. We really need a fancier name than "Version 2" because it's not just a little upgrade with a few new bells and whistles. It's a whole new dimension in publishing. I kid you not.

The new app will, essentially, bring the "flat" pages of the magazine to life. We'll be able to animate stories. We can incorporate video or sound seamlessly to a story. We can make a mole cricket march across the page or give you 15 pictures of a course renovation project where only one would fit before. The content can link to anything, including live social-media feeds or blogs about the topic.

Even the ads will come to life. We're working right now with our industry partners to

recreate their ads with movement, sound and even geolocation. That's a fancy way of saying that if you see an ad for a product you're interested in, you can touch one hotspot on the page and instantly see a map pinpointing local distributors who carry that product.

I think it will, as Timothy Leary famously said, blow your mind.

What blows my mind is that we did it ourselves. Our little company – which also produces incredible publications in the lawn care, nursery, greenhouse and garden center markets – created this new app by ourselves. And we're building apps and other digital goodies for some leading companies, too. More on that soon. I love my team.

Here's the bottom line: If you have an iPhone, a Droid or an iPad and you haven't already downloaded our app, go do it right now. We'll be sending you a little post-Christmas present that I think you'll really like. Happy Holidays to all... GCI



Pat Jones

Editorial director and publisher

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GIE Media, Inc.

4020 Kinross Lakes Pkwy, 2nd floor

Richfield, OH 44286

Phone: 800-456-0707

Fax: 330-659-0823

EDITORIAL

Pat Jones

Publisher/Editorial director

pjones@gie.net

Mike Zawacki

Editor

mzawacki@gie.net

Kyle Brown

Associate Editor

kbrown@gie.net

Bruce Williams

Senior contributing editor

SALES

Russell Warner

National account manager

330-523-5385

Martha Corfman

Manager, books

330-523-5366

Maria Miller

Conferences manager

330-523-5373

Ted Schuld

Account manager

216-236-5937

Jodi Shipley

Marketing coordinator

330-523-5368

Bonnie Velikonya

Classified sales

330-523-5322

GRAPHICS / PRODUCTION

Andrea Vagas, Creative director

Helen Duerr, Production director

Heidi Clevinger, Production coordinator

CORPORATE STAFF

Richard Foster Chairman

Chris Foster President and CEO

Dan Moreland Executive Vice President

James R. Keefe Executive Vice President

Marco Urbanic Director, Integrated Data Systems

Andrea Vagas Director, Creative

Helen Duerr Director, Production

Melody Berendt Director, Circulation

Maria Miller Manager, Conferences

Kelly Orzech Director, Accounting

Irene Sweeney Manager, Corporate Communications

Kevin Gilbride Business manager, GIE Ventures

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