

## **Authenticity - An Effective Social Media Marketing Strategy**

### **From seed to bouquet - the power of social media**

Flowers. They brighten your day, show you care or rescue you from the dog house. Whatever the reason, fresh flowers are big business in Kapiti right now.

No one knows this better than Alison Watts from Bee & Bloom Florist and Flower Garden in Paraparumu Beach. After a two-year hiatus, her home-based floristry business is growing from strength to strength with community support and an improved online presence. Her daily Instagram and Facebook posts have been instrumental in her success.

“This season, selling bouquets at my garden gate has really taken off; the power of social media means that word gets around fast. I just love being able to supply affordable flowers to the local community; meeting people face to face is much more personal,” says Alison.

Originally from South Manchester in the UK, Alison came to New Zealand in 2007, where she started designing window displays for Kirkcaldie and Stains. However, because of her love affair with nature, Alison soon found her way to floristry art, studying privately with Master Florist Megan Parker.

Not surprisingly, growing up in a small, picturesque town in England, she has early memories of her Gran, a skilled floral arranger with a beautiful dried flower collection. In fact, the honesty pods in the Bee & Bloom logo are a tribute to her.

“My Gran loved freesia, so I love to grow them along with anemone, tulips and all the summer favourites like cosmos, dahlia and zinnia.”

### **Planning seasons ahead**

For Alison, life maintaining a seasonal picking garden is never dull; no two weeks are the same. It's a constant balancing act, and having a continuous supply of blooms is challenging. So learning what grows well in sandy soils with coastal winds has been essential - that, and planning.

Constantly working a season ahead, Alison selects flowers and develops her garden beds to maintain customer demand. As a local grower, there are no trips to the flower market for Bee & Bloom - everything is home-grown. “I'm often asked if I buy my flowers in, but I don't; I nurture every stem right here from seed - just ask Bella, my floofy side-kick.”

### **Customers love Bee & Bloom's eco-floristry philosophy**

Building a successful eco-floristry business from her passion has been a dream come true for Alison. A two-week course with Rebel Business School in Kapiti gave her the head start she

needed. “In the beginning, I had to make lots of decisions fast - I didn’t even have a business name, but it was a lot of fun creating things my way.”

As an eco-florist, all her flowers are grown without nasty sprays, using biological methods to manage pests and support pollinators like bees and beneficial insects.

“We have never, and will never, use chemicals on our flowers. Everything we use is 100% compostable, and there’s no plastic. We use paper and twine to wrap our bouquets, recycled glass jars to hold water, and never use toxic floral foam as it breaks down into micro-plastics, which is bad for the environment.”

Alison’s passion, quality and eco-floristry ethos obviously resonate with customers because her garden gate flower stand, aptly named joy jars, and fresh bouquets are always in hot demand. And if you are lucky enough to get a fresh bunch from Bee & Bloom, you will see why.

### **What’s next for Bee & Bloom?**

“Regularly connecting with my online community, I am blown away by the messages and comments asking about what to do and where to start. A few years back, I discovered a love of teaching. I found it satisfying to break down the techniques and see people gain a sense of accomplishment with their finished bouquets. So, I want to run more workshops and one-on-one tutorials teaching people to grow or arrange flowers.”

Bee & Bloom has grown into a thriving business that allows Alison to share her passion with her local community. You can experience it for yourself with her latest blog and community flower grow-along launched recently. And if her journey inspires you, her best piece of advice is, “If you want to go into business, research, test your ideas, ask questions, talk to people doing what you do and don’t be afraid to go for it.”

<https://www.beeandbloom.co.nz>

<https://www.facebook.com/beeandbloomnz>

<https://www.instagram.com/bee.and.bloom.nz>

**Written by Maree Gately | [www.spreadtheword.nz](http://www.spreadtheword.nz)**

**© 2025 All rights reserved**