

ZENGENIUS
SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS



ABOUT JOE

JOE BAER

Joe Baer is the Co-Founder, CEO and Creative Director of ZenGenius, Inc. His career encompasses over twenty years of experience working with many of the top retail brands in the world, and his passion, drive and enthusiasm for all things visual lead him to motivate and energize audiences at his presentations around the world.

Baer has given presentations on visual merchandising to the American Nursery & Landscaping Association, Ohio Hospital Gift Shop Association, and many more. Baer has also been featured on the cover of Today's Garden Center magazine for an on-site, interactive garden center associate training workshop which resulted in nearly an 80% increase in sales of plant pottery.

Each year, Baer is a lead presenter at The International Retail Design Conference, where he raises awareness about the importance of visual merchandising through his signature interactive workshop, The Iron Merchant. Visual merchandising, thought of as the secret ingredient for retail stores, is brought into the spotlight through his engaging presentations, interactions and workshops.

In addition to Baer's highly regarded presentations and workshops, he has also had the pleasure of serving as a judge for VMSD's International Visual Merchandising Competition for the past seven years.

Baer recently completed his first and long awaited book, *The Art of Visual Merchandising: Short North*, where he explores the art of boutique merchandising and creating meaningful in-store experiences in Columbus' premier arts district, The Short North.

Baer began his career as a Visual Manager for Lazarus in Cincinnati, Ohio. By 1990 Baer left Ohio and headed to the warm southwest, landing in Arizona and becoming a Regional Visual Manager for Macy's/The Broadway Stores Inc. In 1996 Baer returned to Ohio to expand his career and develop his own

entrepreneurial goals. While with the renowned retail design firm, Chute Gerdeman, Baer realized his goals to own and operate his own creative company, and in 1999 Baer started ZenGenius Visual Merchants, later to become ZenGenius, Inc.

ZenGenius was born with a vision to bring the knowledge of Visual Merchandising to the world, keep the art of Visual Merchandising vibrant and provide a unique type of creative support to retailers and businesses around the world. Now entering its seventeenth year, ZenGenius has developed into a collective of visual artists and designers that tackle all types of creative and retail projects, as well as training seminars, speaking engagements and more.

CLIENTS

AmericanHort (Formerly OFA)
American Nursery & Landscape Association
Ann Taylor
Bath & Body Works
C&A Mexico
Chico's
Chute Gerdeman
Columbus College of Art & Design
Columbus Gift Mart
HMSHost
House of Blues
International Retail Design Conference
IZOD-China
Miami University
Northwest Nursery Buyer's Association
Ohio Hospital Gift Association
Organization of Spirit Industry Providers
PVH
Tiffany & Co.
Value City Furniture
Victoria's Secret
VMSD Magazine



SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT

IRON MERCHANT

INTERNATIONAL RETAIL DESIGN CONFERENCE



Each year at the International Retail Design Conference, Joe Baer inspires, educates and brings awareness to the importance of visual merchandising through his one-of-a-kind Iron Merchant challenge. Baer inspires more than fifty participants and hundreds of onlookers to create extraordinary displays out of ordinary, and sometimes odd, materials. After arming the teams with basic materials and a tool box full of goodies (including breath mints!), the participants are challenged to create over-the-top display vignettes in only one hour. Teams are also challenged to incorporate a secret ingredient, which is revealed during the competition.

Baer, known for his innate ability to energize and inspire audiences, has led the Iron Merchant challenge for ten years now, and has influenced thousands.



“Easily the most interactive and educational conference session yet!”

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT

TODAY'S GARDEN CENTER

A HANDS-ON SPEAKING AND TRAINING EVENT



As part of Today's Garden Center's 10% project, aimed at helping garden centers find ways to increase plant sales by 10%, Joe Baer was recruited to turn one garden center's run-of-the-mill displays into plant selling machines. Baer was not only hands-on during this process, but he also taught garden center retailers the basics of good, and practical, visual merchandising at a garden center makeover seminar. After arming them with the necessary education and tools, Baer challenged their newly acquired skills in a real-world garden center setting. With Baer's help, this ultimately landed one garden center retailer a nearly 80% increase in pottery sales over the previous year. WOW!

“Joe really helped us understand that good merchandising requires creativity, not deep pockets.”



SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT

VISUAL MERCHANDISING

NORTHWEST NURSERY BUYER'S ASSOCIATION



It isn't every day that you can leave an audience inspired, energized, full of ideas and excited to return to work. Joe Baer, motivational educator, taught the audience of the Northwest Nursery Buyer's Association's annual seminar how to leverage visual merchandising as a tool to increase sales, create customer and employee excitement and elevate the perceived value of the brand, as well as the merchandise.

In typical Joe fashion, he not only informed the participants about visual merchandising and how it relates to retail sales, he also entertained them and left them with an experience that they won't soon forget. Creating a customer experience is not just for the retail sales floor.

“An extraordinary day of learning that left our employees excited and full of ideas.”





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