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## Ray Greenstreet's Plans for 2018

*Chris Beytes*

Ray Greenstreet is a great subject for my informal “what are you planning for 2018?” question. Based in Maryland, Ray is a grower, a retailer (three locations), a landscaper and now a green wall installer.

“Green walls,” he said. “We’re looking at both residential and commercial. That’s a direction we’re pushing really hard in.” Ray has been in the green wall business for a couple of years and it’s growing rapidly, he says.

On the retail side, he said he’s excited to see that Millennials are getting into foliage plants and added that he’s seen evidence of that in his stores.

When it comes to customer service, he’s realized that, especially in their Washington market, customers have limited time to garden, and to shop for the garden, so he’s making sure that employees think about what else customers need to go with their primary purchase—fertilizer, soil amendments and the like—so they’re successful and don’t have to make another trip to the store.

Ray is reaching those customers more and more through social media, and will be doing more promotion and advertising on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, but with even more emphasis on Google, where, “We’re posting pictures like crazy, right off our cell phones,” he says.

Why Google for photos? Because that’s the search engine most people use, he replied.

Overall, says Ray, “I think it’s going to be a really good year. We saw footsteps increase in all our stores in November and December ... we’re hoping to see that trend continue into the spring.” **GP**