

Tricks

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Rockin' the CLE

Jennifer Polanz

In July, I was a co-bus captain for the Cultivate'18 Retail Tour up near the Cleveland area, right in my backyard (almost literally—every stop was 20 minutes from my house). We visited the three Bremec Garden Center locations, all very different in that the flagship store is situated on 27 acres in Chesterland, while Bremec on the Heights is a small, urban store in Cleveland Heights, and Bremec of Concord is located in a growing, affluent, suburban spot. Here are just a few ideas from some of the stops we made.



Rolling the Dice

Summer can be a difficult time to drive traffic, particularly in the heat and humidity. Bremec tries to bring in customers to gamble on a discount—once they're finished with shopping, customers spin the wheel near the register for a chance at 20%, 30%, 40% or even 50% off their full purchase (some exclusions apply). If someone spins a 50% off, it's a big deal and worthy of a Facebook post. The promotion happens at all three locations.

The Personal Shopper Treatment

The Chesterland location is large and challenged with some grade issues that make it a bit of a journey to reach the back hoophouses stocked with perennials, shrubs and other offerings. Bremec has overcome this with its customer service and an investment in golf carts. A salesperson will ask if a customer would like to see more plants in the hoophouses via a golf cart ride. The salesperson helps the customer, loads up the cart and brings them back to the register for door-to-door service.



Show & Tell

The Chesterland location has a beautifully landscaped display area complete with fire pit, water feature and an outdoor kitchen with pergola to show off just what the landscape design-build firm can do. The landscape is mature, allowing customers to get an idea of what their investment will get them. They added a second display area this year, too.



Mixing it Up

What struck me in visiting all three locations is the attention to the product mix at each store. It's very clear the people buying and stocking the stores know their customers well. Even the visual merchandising was different, creating an exclusive feel at each store. At Concord, the store had a spa-like feel and the mix skewed more toward apparel, jewelry, gifts and décor. **GP**