

Front Lines

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GrowIt! Moves to New Platform

Chris Beytes

We recently got word that Ball Horticultural Company is going to shift operations of its GrowIt! mobile app over to a Facebook Group, saying the app has “achieved its mission” of inspiring and educating the emerging Millennial market using the new technology of smartphones and social media. App users are being encouraged to join the Facebook group “The Plant Community,” which is administered by enthusiastic GrowIt! members.

Seth Reed, co-founder with Mason Day of the app way back in 2014, filled us in on some details about the move.

“When Ball Horticultural Company launched the GrowIt! mobile app, the industry was in a nervous state. It was the coming-of-age for the Millennial consumer—and they were viewed as a completely different type of buyer, disconnected from plants and gardening. The industry needed a way to inspire the Millennial generation and find a way to leverage technology to get this accomplished. It was this concern, matched by our struggles to figure out social media and our belief that smartphones were the enemy of the garden center, that pushed Ball to create the GrowIt! app.

“Now in 2020, consumer tech for plant lovers has evolved from being on the fringe to the hot new thing. Where once there were only a few plant apps, now there are dozens of great apps providing plant care and plant swapping to augmented reality landscaping and other plant communities. The Millennial buyers we were so nervous about have officially gotten into plants, and technology is supporting and strengthening their interests. The challenges that existed in 2014 that made GrowIt! important and meaningful no longer exist. It’s with that in mind that we believe GrowIt! has achieved its mission.”

Seth offered up some impressive numbers for GrowIt! during its journey as an app: more than 1 million members with nearly 45% in the Millennial age bracket; more than 25,000 cities across North America served with regional advice; and countless conversations on the app about everything from growing better tomatoes to sharing their love of houseplants.

“All of it aimed at inspiring the next generation of plant buyers, educating them and connecting them to local experienced gardeners.” **GP**