# Image: Contract of the second seco



WHEN YOUR CLIENTS WANT TO CANCEL A SERVICE pg. 28

HOW TO GET YOUR SHOP CLEAN AND ORDERLY pg.48

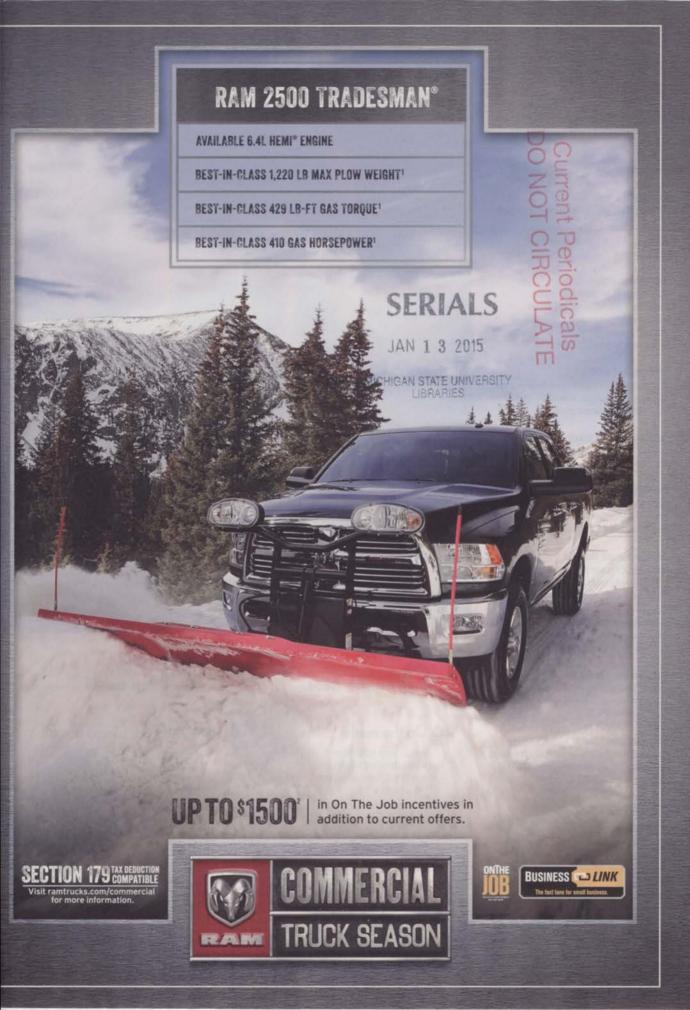
> A LOOK BACK AT NEW PRODUCTS FROM GIE+EXPO pg.74

# the EASIEST

Why you should always be prepared to hand over the keys to your business.



1 Based on 250/2500 pickups when properly equipped. 2 Includes \$500 On The Job Upfit Bonus Cash Allowance on 2014 and 2015 Ram Commercial vehicles (Ram 1500 Tradesman model only). Must take delivery by US/15. See dealer for On The Job incentive details and eligibility requirements. Ram, HEMI, Tradesman, BusinessLink & Design, and On The Job & Design are registered trademarks of Chrysler Group LLC.



#### Departments

- 6 Online Contents
- 8 Editor's Insight
- 10 Insider
- 16 Columns 76 Classifieds
- 81 Ad Index
- 82 Tips from the Top:

Jeremy Hittle, president: Hittle Landscaping

#### Features

#### 22 Mix and match

Bob Walsh diversified R.S. Walsh Landscaping's services and crosstrained employees during the difficult economic times to serve a full spectrum of landscaping needs.

#### 34 The easiest exit

The plan to sell or pass your business on to future generations should be part of your current business strategy.

#### 56 Testing out the track

When it comes to UTVs, these companies have what you're looking for.

#### 60 Revit up

With engine companies improving their products, it's time to take a look and decide what's best for your equipment.

#### 64 Save yourself the trip

Mapping software eliminates exhausting trips from property to property to measure a site.

#### 68 A far-flowing impact

Rain gardens are coming into demand for their environmental benefits.

#### 72 Expand your horizon

Here's what you need to know about adding a biostimulant program to your service portfolio.

#### 74 Sensory overload

Find out about some of the new products and equipment you may have missed at this year's GIE+EXPO.

28

#### FORMULAS FOR SUCCESS

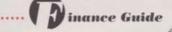
#### Make lemonade

Dealing with clients' service cutbacks and 'making good' after a mistake can actually grow a stronger relationship.

#### **DECEMBER 2014**

A GIE MEDIA PUBLICATION VOLUME 35, NUMBER 12

## Lawn&Landscape



#### 40 Do the math

34

Weigh your options well when deciding whether to pay in full, finance or rent.

#### 44 So many doors to open

Manufacturers can offer a number of different financing packages to help you buy that next piece of equipment.



### Shop Guide .....

#### 48 Who's the (shop) boss?

How you manage your service operation directly impacts your bottom line.

#### ▶ 52 Squeaky clean

An unkempt garage can signal company-wide disorganization, and make daily tasks difficult to complete.

LAWN & LANDSCAPE (ISSN tode/sp2X) is published monthly. Copyright zong GIE Media, Inc. SBit Canal Rd, Valley View, OH, 4425. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted by any means without written premission from the publication rate. Sp3 to Cone year subscription rates. Spo in the United States, Sp3 in Canada and Sp8 in other foreign countries. One year foreign armal rate: Sp38, Two year subscription rates. Sp30 in the United States, Sp3 in Canada and Sp8 in other foreign countries. One year foreign armal rate: Sp18, Two year subscription rates. Sp30 in the United States, Sp3 in Canada and Sp8 in other foreign countries. One year foreign armal rate: Sp18, Two year subscription rates. Sp30 in Canada and Sp8 in other foreign countries. One year subscription rate. Sp30 in Canada and Sp8 in other foreign countries. One year subscription rate. Sp30. Two year subscription rate. Sp30 in Canada and Sp8 in other foreign countries. One year subscription rate. Sp30 in Canada and Sp8 in other foreign countries. One year Sp30 in Canada and Sp8 in Ca



POWER OR FUEL SAVINGS — that was your choice. Until now. Say hello to the all-new Command PRO<sub>2</sub> EFI 824. With best-in-class' torque and horsepower it's ready to take on any terrain. And with the <sup>\$600</sup>/year" you save on fuel, it's the most fuel-efficient engine we've ever made. Man, it's good to be king.



KohlerEngines.com/824

\*Class defined as vertical-shaft, commercial 800cc to 875cc gasoline engines, \*\*Compared to a comparable KOHLER carbureted engine under comparable loads and duty cycles. Based on 600 hours of annual operation.

#### **ONLINE CONTENTS**

Check out what's new online from LAWN & LANDSCAPE.



### **TWEETS AND TREATS**

e thought it'd be a great idea to recognize those in the industry who serve as great examples when it comes to promoting the industry on social media. So, we created the Lawn & Landscape Social Media Awards sponsored by STIHL. The L&L team invaded the STIHL booth at the GIE+EXPO to present the winners Jason Cupp (@ jasoncupp), Lakeridge Contractors (@Lakeridgecon) and ValleyCrest's Alan Harris (@hzoMatters) with plaques. STIHL also gave away an iPad and chainsaw to two lucky winners. Search #expotweetup on Twitter to get a recap of all the fun. We'll see you there next year!

#### ONLINE ONLY

#### Happy trees, happy homeowners

While it may seem that any tree could be planted in any location, it really takes much thought and consideration to make sure that the right trees are planted in the right areas in order to cultivate the most attractive and healthiest landscape possible. **bit.ly/treeshappy** 



#### Sell yourself

Christopher Noon was meeting with a consulting client when he asked the client, "What is your company's value proposition?" The client, who had a very successful business, was stumped. In this article, Noon helps company owners verbalize what they do well and what they bring to the industry. bit.ly/noonvalue

### Traffic Jam

Here are the top five most viewed stories on our website from October through early November.



#### Toro to acquire BOSS

The \$227 million-deal is expected to close in early 2015. bit.ly/bosstoro



#### Scotts acquires structural pest control company

This is Scotts' first purchase of a home pest control business. **bit.ly/scottspest** 



#### Terracare Associates acquires VMC Landscape

Terracare jumps into one of the fastest-growing markets for landscaping in the country. bit.ly/terravmc



#### New Jersey landscapers killed Two men were caught in a trench when it gave way. bit.ly/njkilled



#### EAB may have spread to different tree

The invasive pest appears to be attacking more than ash trees. **bit.ly/eabspread** 



#### The place to be

And speaking of GIE+EXPO, if you weren't able to make it, or unable to attend every educational session and visit every booth, we've got you covered. Turn to page n for coverage from the event. We also took plenty of photos, which you can find on our Facebook page by visiting **bit.ly/lawnface**. Just click on "albums" and find the two albums titled Thursday at GIE+EXPO and Friday at GIE+EXPO. THE POWER TO MAKE THINGS GROW

## YOU CHOOSE PRODUCTS BECAUSE THEY WORK.

### SO DO WE.



At Koch Agronomic Services, we're in the business of making things grow. So we're investing in smarter, more efficient plant nutrient solutions designed to exceed customer expectations. Like high-efficiency technologies and fertilizers that help increase efficiency and profitability. Everything we do is with you, the customer, in mind. Because if we can help you grow, we all grow.

For a more in-depth look at these growing solutions, visit www.KASTurf.com.

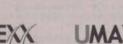






Duration





SPREAD IT OFFORGET IT







KOCH AGRONOMIC SERVICES. LLC

DURATION GROUP, the DURATION login, WYDREXXM, the HYDREXX logy, NTAMMAS, the RTAMIN logo, NIEDOFDEMAS, the NITROFORM logo, NUTRALENERS, the NUTRALENE logo, POLYONES, the POLYON logo, SPREAD IT & FORGET 1760, the SPREAD & URXET IT logo, XXUMP, the XXU logo, IFLEXXX<sup>+1</sup>, the UFLEX logo, UMAXXX logo, and the UMAXX logo are framemark of Mach Agromenic Services, LLC. The Kach logo is a trademark of Rach Indicative, Inc. G2014 Kach Agromenic Services, LLC.

#### EDITOR'S INSIGHT

What do you think? Email me at cbowen@gie.net.

#### Why Todd Pugh gave up \$115,000 and you should, too

ast month, I got the chance to spend a day with Todd Pugh and his team at Enviroscapes in the bucolic town of Louisville, Ohio. He'd invited me down to speak at his annual Growing Day, when he brings everyone in to the main office and offers some professional development, networking and delicious barbecue.

As I sat in the barn with the nearly 200 employees who had come in from multiple branches, I marveled at the dedication Todd has to make sure his employees understood where the company is today and where it's going in the future.

The day's speakers ranged from the tactical - the company that manages Enviroscapes' 401(k) plans discussed personal finances, and how to budget on a seasonal salary - to the high-level - former CEO of Husqvarna Dave Zerfoss and his wife, Barb, covered how to set long-term goals and work toward them.

Hanging above everyone were giant photographs of employees that listed where they started with the company and where they are now. Faces of men and women who came in as laborers or crew leaders and now work as account managers and foremen smiled down.

Todd started like many contractors: He lived in his parent's basement and would



buy any kind of truck he could get at an auction for \$2,000. Now he's got a network of branches with shiny new Ford Super Duties sitting outside. (Presumably, he no longer lives in his parents' basement; I didn't ask.) Enviroscapes has 190 employees and this year did just north of \$14 million in revenue. The one day cost it about \$115,000 in payroll and lost revenue, not counting the barbecue and coffee.

But the message Todd sent was clear: In the next few years, he wants to boost that \$14 million by 30 percent, and everyone wearing bright yellow safety vests is a part of that. They're vital to the current success of the com-

Some of Enviroscapes' 190 employees gather at the company's daylong development day.

pany, and there is opportunity and growth for them personally and professionally if they stay.

Whether or not you spend the next few months dealing with snow, winter is a great time to slow down and focus on the development of yourself, your team and your company. You don't have to shut everything down for a whole day, but take some amount of time to sit back and think about where you're headed. Then - and this is the most important part - you have to share that vision with your employees and let them know what they can do to help you get there. Show them the opportunity and they'll help you grow. - Chuck Bowen

Sie

## Lawn&Landsca

#### EDITORIAL

CHUCK BOWEN EDITOR AND ASSOCIATE PUBLICIER cbowen@gie.net BRIAN HORN MANAGING EDITOR bhorn@gie.net KATHE TUTTLE ASSOCIATE FORTOR Ktuttle@gie.net KATE SPIRGEN DIGITAL CONTENT MANAGER kspirgen@gie.net MARTY GRUNDER HARTY GRUNDER, MC. mgrunder@giemedia.com JIM HUSTON ) R. HUSTON ENTERPRES jhuston@glemedia.com BROOKE BATES CONTRIBUTING EDITOR LINDSEY GETZ CONTRIBUTING EDITOR KRISTEN HAMPSHIRE CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

#### CREATIVE

JUSTIN ARMBURGER (RAPHE DESIGNER iarmburger@gie.nef

Leading business media for landscape contractors. 5811 Canal Rd, Valley View, OH, 44125 Phone: 800-456-0707 Editorial Fax: 216-651-0830 Subscriptions & Classifieds: 800-456-0707

> **ADVERTISING/PRODUCTION INQUIRIES** JODI SHIPLEY jshipley@gie.net

SALES

#### PAT JONES PUBLICHT piones@gie.net DAVID SZY NATIONAL SALES MANAG

SOCIATE PLILLISHER dszy@gie.net DAN HEBERLEIN ACCOUNT MARACER dheberlein@gle.net TRACI MUELLER ACCOUNT MANAGEII tmueller@gie.net TED SCHULD ACCOUNT MANAGEII tschuld@gie.net Account MANAGER rwarner@gie.net RUSS WARNER BONNIE VELIKONYA CLASSIFIED ADVERTSING SALES bvelikonya@gie.net

#### CORPORATE

RICHARD FOSTER CHAILMAN CHRIS FOSTER PRESIDENT AND CED DAN MORELAND EXECUTIVE MICE PRESIDENT JAMES R. KEEFE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT MARCO URBANIC INTEGRATED DATA SYSTEMS HELEN DUERR / BOOUCTON DWEETCH LINDSEY RETZHOLD AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR MARIA MILLER CONFERENCE MANAGED KELLY ORZECH ADDUMTING DIRECTOR IRENE SWEENEY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER KEVIN GILBRIDE HURSARSS MANAGER, GE VENTURES

LAWN & LANDSCAPE MARKET INSIGHT COUNCIL BILL ARMAN, The Harvest Group, Cota de Caza, Calif.; ANDREW BLANCHFORD, Blanchlord Landscape Contractors, Bozeman, Mont.; XURT BLAND, Bland Landscaping, Apex, N.C.; TOM DELANEY, PLANET, Ulburn, Ga: BENTOM FORET, Chackbay Nursery & Landscaping/Foet Land and Thee, Thibodaux, Li; JOHN (GISON, Swengle Lawn & Thee Care, Denver; BOB CROVER, Pacific Landscape Management, Hillsborn, Ore, MARTY ORUNDER, Crunder Landscapin and Marty Grunder Inc., Mamisburg, Ohio; SHANNON MATHAWAY, Green Heron Landscaping, Cary, N.C.; JIM HUSTON, J.R. Huston Enterprises, Englewood, Colo; BRAD JOHNSON, Lawn America of Tulica, Tulas, Olda; JESUS "CHUP" MEDRAND, Cocal Landscape, Denver; TAYLOR MILLIKEH, Ellie Landscape Company, Hendersonnille, Tenz, CHURS & MATT NOON, Noon Landscape, Massa, RICHARD RESTUCCIA, Valley, Circ. Shan Diego; PHL SARROS, Sarros Landscaping, Cary, Circ.; JIM HUSTON, J.R. Huston, Massa; RICHARD RESTUCCIA, Valley, Circ.; Son, Diego; PHL SARROS, Sarros Landscaping, Cary, Circ.; JIM HUSTON, J.R. Huston, Phase, Benter, CHURS & MATT NOON, Noon Landscape, HANDAR RESTUCCIA, Valley, Circ.; Son, Diego; PHL SARROS, Sarros Landscaping, Cary, Circ.; JIM HUSTON, J.R. Huston, Massa; RICHARD RESTUCCIA, Valley, Circ.; Son, Diego; PHL SARROS, Sarros Landscaping, Cary, Circ.; JIM HUSTON, J.R. Huston, Massa; RICHARD RESTUCCIA, Valley, Circ.; Son, Diego; PHL SARROS, Sarros Landscaping, Cary, Circ.; JIM HUSTON, J.R. Huston, Massa; RICHARD RESTUCCIA, Valley, Circ.; Son, Diego; PHL SARROS, Sarros Landscaping, Cary, Circ.; Son, Diego; PHL SARROS, Sarros Landscaping, Cary, Circ.; JIM HUSTON, J.R. Huston, Massa; RICHARD RESTUCCIA, Valley, Circ.; Son, Diego; PHL SARROS, Sarros Landscaping, Cary, Circ.; Son, Diego; PHL SARROS, Sarros Landscaping, Cary, Circ.; Son, Diego; PHL SARROS, Sarros Landscaping, Cary, Circ.; Sarros Landscaping, Cary, Cir SCHILL, Schill Grounds Manag nent, North Ridgeville, Ohio



#### THE FIRST STEP OF THE LONG HAUL.

THE 2014 CHEVY SILVERADO HD WAS AWARDED "HIGHEST-RANKED LARGE HEAVY-DUTY PICKUP IN INITIAL QUALITY."

1

INTRODUCING THE NEW 2015 SILVERADO HD FROM THE FAMILY OF THE MOST DEPENDABLE, LONGEST-LASTING FULL-SIZE PICKUPS ON THE ROAD\*\*

FIND NEW ROADS

\*The Chevrolet Silverado HD received the lowest number of problems per 100 vehicles among large heavy-duty pickups in the proprietary J.D. Power 2014 Initial Quality Study.<sup>5M</sup> Study based on responses from 86.118 new-vehicle owners, measuring 239 models and measures opinions after 90 days of ownership. Proprietary study results are based on experiences and perceptions of owners surveyed in February-May 2014. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com. \*Dependability based on longevity: 1987-April 2013 Full-Size Pickup registrations. ©2014 General Motors. All rights reserved. Chevrolet "Chevrolet emblem" Chevy™ Silverado

CHEVROLET



For more news, visit www.lawnandlandscape.com



An ALCC panel lays out the top trends and challenges facing landscape contractors. By Chuck Bowen

DENVER – While the event took place in Colorado, the trends and challenges discussed at The Associated Landscape Contractors of Colorado CEO Exchange are shared by landscapers across the country. The event happened in November and those who attended discussed the greatest challenges, trends and opportunities facing the industry in the Rocky Mountain State.

The discussion was moderated by ALCC president and CEO of Terracare Associates Dean Murphy. The panel consisted of **Jim McCutcheon**, president and CEO of High Grove Partners in Atlanta, and president of PLANET's board of directors; **John Alderman**, president and CEO of DBC Irrigation Supply, **Mike Leman**, president and CEO of Singing Hills Landscape; **Zachary Johnson**, president and CEO of Green Ink Designs, and a professor in the Landscape Design and Contracting program at Colorado State University. Read on to see what they're dealing with out west and how you can learn from them.

1. Regulations and contractors. All panelists complained of the ever-increasing burden of government regulation, especially the current debate about the EPA's expansion of the Clean Water Act.

McCutcheon called on audience members to get more involved with their state associations and PLANET's lobbying efforts.

2. The industry's negative perception. Johnson said he encounters parents of prospective students who don't understand the career prospects for a landscaper.

"The perception of the industry is that all we do is push dirt and mow lawns, and while we do those things, that's not the extent of what we do. ... The challenge is convincing parents of the opportunities that exist for their children in the landscape industry," he said.

3. The dilemma of licensure. There was

L&L ON THE ROAD

much discussion of the problem of lowballers, and little agreement on how to define what, exactly, a low-baller is. The landscape industry's low barriers to entry are a boon and a burden. Johnson suggested licensure as a possible answer.

Alderman, from DBC Supply, said the distributor's Texas operations report irrigation licenses have helped contractors compete against low-ballers, but aren't a silver bullet.

4. Water. Colorado has been hit hard by drought in the past few years, and contractors have had to adapt. Alderman said the most important technology a contractor can use comes from the irrigation world, especially smart controllers.

McCutcheon said water management services make the most economic sense of all "sustainable" services a contractor can offer. And Johnson, who also runs his own landscape company, said companies are going to have to retool to deal with a world with very little – or maybe even no – water for their landscapes. And Murphy, whose company operates also operates in California, said he's been adding more and more crews to remove turf from clients' yards.

**5. Health care.** While the true impact of the Affordable Care Act on many small businesses remains to be seen, most landscapers are worried about it.

McCutcheon, who employs 220 people and has always offered some sort of insurance, said under the new regulations, his employees will have worse health care and his company could lose as much as \$300,000.

Visit lawnandlandscape.com and search "Looking West" for more on the event.

#### L&L INSIDER

For more news, visit www.lawnandlandscape.com



## Headed in the right direction

Contractors were optimistic about a profitable 2014 and attendence grew by more than 10 percent at this year's GIE+EXPO. **Compiled by the Lawn & Landscape staff** 

here were educational sessions, networking opportunities and tons of new products, but some of the best news to come out of the 2014 GIE+EXPO was the continued optimism from contractors. The feeling from speaking with contractors was that homeowners and property managers are continuing to spend more on landscaping.

Below are a few quotes from contractors about how their businesses are doing, challenges they are facing and what they think about GIE+EXPO.

Randy Brooks, owner of Brooks Lawn Care in Cottonwood, Tenn., said his maintenance-only company is growing, and he will have to hire his first employees next year. As far as the show, he was impressed with the same things a lot of contractors like. "The exposure to all the different tools and

equipment – It's quite amazing," he said.

Jason Buehring, nursery manager at Greenscape in Holly Springs, N.C., said his company was trying to drop customers the company was losing money on. But first, they gave them the option of higher prices, and the customers took it.

Nick Harvey, turf and shrub care division manager at Capstone Landscape Management in Greenville S.C., had a similar issue, but his company was actually dropping a whole maintenance division."We don't need to be doing this for free," Harvey said.

Ivan Giraldo, president of CleanScape in Austin, Texas, said he has been coming to the Green Industry Conference and GIE+EXPO for years. One of his favorite events is Breakfast With Champions when contractors have breakfast in groups of five to 10 people, normally non-competitors, and can discuss problems they are having. "

The sharing of ideas in a small group of many business owners of what they've tried and what worked and what didn't work – I always go back with ideas."

For information on some of the products displayed at GIE+EXPO, turn to page 74.

#### **OTHER NOTES:**

More than 19,000 people from around the world represented an 11 percent increase in registration over last year.

The show's footprint of more than 1.3 million square feet – the size of 27 football fields – was the largest it's ever been with close to 500 exhibitors (130 new ones) and a few outdoor UTV test tracks.

Total indoor square footage has grown by 20,000 feet and will be even bigger next year, according to Outdoor Power Equipment Institute President and CEO Kris Kiser. "We're going to have to break into the north hall next year," he said.

**TIME TO LEARN.** Celebrating its 25th anniversary, the Green Industry Conference featured more than 50 education sessions and workshops. New this year were sessions marked for collaborative learning that involved peer learning.

LOUDER BARK. Responsible lawn care initiative TurfMutt has reached more than 38 million people, and OPEI has plans to take it further in the coming months.

OPEI has entered into a partnership with Scholastic Education to grow the characterbased brand and reach more students, teachers and families.

The new program will feature a full lineup of newly illustrated environmental superhero characters like Green Ranger, Professor Botany and Big Rooty.

Kiser also mentioned that OPEI will be looking at taking TurfMutt to television next winter.

**NEW IDENTITY.** PLANET CEO Sabeena Hickman shared the new focus of the organization. "We want more clarity," she said, adding the new brand could involve a name change.

Moving forward, PLANET will be more focused on advocacy, education and changing the perception of the industry. "We want to resonate more," Hickman said.

#### L&L INSIDER

For more news, visit www.lawnandlandscape.com



Charlie Cerini, left, Kevin Cerini and Bill Segale of Segale & Cerini Landscape Contractors in San Francisco. The company has been in business for 35 years.

### The future's in good hands

A landscaper's mind is incredible. They are able to see things the average person is sightless to. Today more people become distracted by the world 2 feet in front of them and give no attention to the beauty of what is beyond. Landscapers are constantly looking yonder with a reverence for the greenery surrounding them.

The brain of a landscaper is able to store the names of thousands of species of plants and can differentiate the slightest variation in growth patterns to be able to recall the exact name. Unlike nurses or doctors, landscapers don't have the ability to ask a plant "Do you feel all right?" It takes years of experience to be able to understand what is wrong.

I work with my father, helping with every task and taking in everything my father and his partner tell me. The information they possess cannot be learned from a college course or read in a book. It is knowledge gained by years of experience.

Almost 40 years ago my father and his business partner started the San Franciscobased company, Segale & Cerini Landscape Contractors. For the past 35 years, their business preserved a strong client base which kept the business very successful. They have installed and maintained some of the most exquisite gardens in the bay area. However in the recent years, droughts and an increase of the cost of living have caused people to cut back on their landscape spending.

"Times are changing. They aren't like they

used to be." Those are the phrases that have been pounded in my head for the last five years. Even so, I refuse to believe nothing can be done to change our companies' situations.

For the past few months, I've been reading this exact magazine to see what other companies are doing to avert the current economical decline, as well as devoting time to research other successful business models. My search has lead me to create specific goals that I believe will change the future of not only Segale & Cerini, but will raise the bar for the industry.

Every month I read Lawn & Landscape and I always seem to find articles about the success stories of landscapers. I think it would be useful to encourage all landscapers, no matter their level of success, that they shouldn't take their skills for granted and to never be afraid to learn more. Landscaping is by no means a simple career. It is a complex combination of many different talents. We are hard working, creative, risk taking, deep thinkers, who have a passion for creating art with both living and non-living objects.

With all of that said, there is one thing we should never stop being, and that is students. There is so much to learn no matter your experience level and while I am scared to death about starting the real world, knowing that I have magazines like this, the internet, and knowledgeable peers gives me the confidence that everything will be just fine. – Kevin Cerini

#### ASK THE EXPERTS



**Q:** I subcontracted all my plow accounts last year, and I did the salting and shoveling. I was not going to offer it this year, but I keep getting phone calls. So, I need to know if I have the right truck and what is a decent plow to get started with. I live in Washington State, so we don't get a lot of snow, if any. What do you think?

A: When looking at investing in equipment for running a snowplowing operation, you must first decide how long it will take to recoup your investment. In this case, the initial investment would have been around \$10,000. However, the contractor only has four customers that he services once for plowing and four times for salting. Given this amount of volume, we calculated a return on investment of well over 10 years. In my professional opinion, if he

#### HAVE A QUESTION FOR THE EXPERTS? Send it to llexperts@gie.net

is not interested in growing the snow business, it would not be wise to make the initial investment. I told him to continue subbing out the work or decide to go for it and sell more work for next year. Then we could talk again about the investment. I would only recommend the investment if and when the return on investment could be recouped in three years or less.

Rich Arlington, Landscape Industry Certified, PLANET Trailblazer Rich Arlington & Associates

ASK THE EXPERTS is presented in partnership with PLANET's Trailblazers On Call program. Trailblazers are industry leaders who volunteer their time and expertise to give back to the industry.

### Leaders with gratitude

I know I already thanked you for the wonderful (Leadership) award, but I just wanted to tell you again how happy I was to receive it. After getting the award, so many people came up to me at the show congratulating me on it. I didn't know that many people knew about it. It was truly an honor.

- Michael Kravitsky IV, Grasshopper Lawns

I want to thank you for the honor you and the other editors of Lawn & Landscape magazine bestowed on me this fall. I have been humbled to be in the league with all the green industry legends who have been chosen for this prestigious award in the past. This Leadership Award, along with the Educator of the Year award from PLANET in 2003, are the highlights of my career.

**Turn Mosquitoe\$** 

**Recurring Revenues!** 

- Martha Hill, Hinds Community College

Below are letters editor Chuck Bowen received about L&L's 2014 Leadership Awards Ceremony, which took place during the GIE+EXPO. You can read the winners' profiles in our October issue.

Thank you so much for the honor of receiving a leadership award. The event was exceptional and I have been talking about it almost non-stop to people in the industry. I think it was so great to see so many past winners come back for the event. I appreciate all your help over the years and know water is more interesting since you and Lawn & Landscape have been so involved. Thank you for the pen too. It will sit proudly on my desk as a reminder of the night as well as a reminder of the work ahead of us. – Richard Restuccia, ValleyCrest

Man, what a wonderful event you put on for the Leadership Awards. I can't thank you enough. – Gary Mallory, Heads Up Landscaping

#### HELP! LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONALS

We are actively seeking dealers to sell, install and service our innovative outdoor misting systems that effectively control mosquitoes and other annoying insects.

## 1-866-485-7255

Learn more at www.mistaway.com/goodbiz 🐇

## PROPANE ONEFUEL MANY ADVANTAGES.

X

#### DOING MORE WITH PROPANE

The Closed Loop EFI system continuously monitors and adjusts for ever-changing ambient conditions. Whether the barometric pressure is low or high, the temperature is 32° F or 102° F, at sea level or mile high, the EFI system senses those conditions and adjusts the fuel delivery to maximize fuel efficiency and performance in real time.





S-SERIE

10 01





BEFORE RUNINING PROPANE WITHOUT EFI, WE WERE SAVING ABOUT 25 PERCENT, JUST ON THE COST OF FUEL ... NOW, WE HAVE THE EXIMARK UNITS WITH THE KOHLER EFI ENGINES, AND WE HAVE GONE FROM NEEDING TWO TANKS (OF FUEL) A DAY, TO JUST NEEDING ONE TANK EACH DAY.

DAVE BARR Regional Branch Manager Mainscape, Inc., Jacksonville, North Carolina



#### PROPANE FEATURES:

- Powered by Kohler<sup>®</sup> EFI engines.
- Cutting widths range from 48" to 72."
- Models include:
   52", 60" or 72"
   Lazer Z<sup>®</sup> S-Series rider
  - 52" or 60" Turf Tracer® X-Series walk-behind
  - 48" Turf Tracer S-Series walk-behind





#### WHY EFI PROPANE?

Combining the clean burning benefits and economics of propane with Kohler's Closed Loop EFI system yields the most fuel-efficient, cost-effective and environmentally friendly engine option available today.

The reduced fuel consumption of the EFI system in combination with the lower cost of propane can dramatically reduce operating expenses versus typical gasoline-powered mowers.

Propane energy also yields serious cost-savings over time because of reduced maintenance needs and improved fuel stability.

Cost-benefits can be maximized by converting entire fleets of equipment, walk-behinds, zero-turn riders and even trucks, to use propane. The additional propane usage gives the contractor greater negotiating power with his propane supplier to get the best price.

The additional up-front investment in propane equipment many times can be paid for within a single season, especially when combined with PERC national incentive and state incentives.

Cost alone is a valid reason for switching, but propane is also a great choice for jobs that demand lower environmental impact, because EFI propane systems produce far fewer greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions than gasoline-powered equipment.

#### PROPANE CONVERSION

Converting engines that were originally designed to run on gasoline over to using propane typically results in the reduction of engine horsepower and durability. Engines designed and built by the engine manufacturers to use propane from the start not only produce the power as rated by the engine manufacturer, but would also normally have a higher level of fuel efficiency, reliability, and overall life as compared to *converted* engines.

Exmark propane mowers are engineered to use propane from the start and will typically exhibit a higher level of performance and reliability than propane conversion units.

#### CONVERSION FAQS

#### What about the long-term price of propane?

Compare the business cycles of gasoline and propane prices. Gasoline is the *most* expensive in the summer when propane is the *least* expensive. When is the busiest season for most landscape professionals? Get it?

#### How will a conversion affect my warranty?

The Original Equipment Manufacturer or the Original Engine Manufacturer warranties may not cover repairs resulting from failures that may have been due to the propane conversion (or due to the fuel itself).

#### WHY EXMARK?

For over 30 years, Exmark has built the finest commercial-grade equipment in the world. Continually raising the bar on comfort and ergonomics, technological innovations, fuel efficiency, environmental friendliness, and new product offerings, it's a labor of love aimed at helping you realize a more profitable, rewarding business.

Visit one of our 1,500+ servicing dealers today to experience why Exmark mowers are purchased two-to-one over the next bestselling brand by landscape professionals. Check out exmark.com to learn more about the many benefits of propane energy and incentives in each state.







MARTY GRUNDER is a speaker, consultant and author. He owns Grunder Landscaping Co. www.martygrunder.com; mgrunder@giemedia.com



## FOOT, MEET MOUTH

ere's the deal, folks. We are always being watched and listened to – always. More thought and consideration need to go into what we say. Why can I say this? I've learned the hard way. All eight things referenced below are things I've said and I've regretted all of them.

Here are three statements owners never want to hear their team members say:

1. That's not my job. If you truly understand the vision for your landscaping company, you would never say this. Owners of small businesses want teammates who will do whatever it takes to win. We all have to work together and not worry about what our job is and isn't, and instead, worry about what our internal clients (team members) and external clients (customers) want and need. All of us have parts of our jobs we don't like; that's life. Saying it's not your job won't endear you to anyone.

2. I don't want to embrace change. Charles Kettering said, "The only thing constant in life is change." No one likes change. We dread it as it makes our lives more complicated, even only temporarily. Change is the only thing that can make us better. Would you rather have a doctor use techniques from 1971 or 2014? Owners want people running alongside us that support us, believe in us and are willing to support some of our weird ideas because, quite frankly, some of them have worked.

3. I'm quitting. Yep, we don't like hearing that. It's the owner's responsibility to have a nice, equitable workplace. It's the owner's responsibility to treat you well. And, it's the owner's responsibility to talk to you if you aren't doing a good job and praise you when you are. We never want to hear you say, "I'm quitting!" So, if you have an owner who hasn't learned how to have a dialog with you, reach out first and ask, "How am I doing? What can I do better?" It's hard to find good people and it's hard to find a good job. If the good at your place outweighs the bad, push the issue and talk to the owner. Don't say, "I quit," say, "Can I talk to you about some issues?" Then work them out.

Here are five statements I have heard owners make that they should never say:

1. Woe is me; I'm not making money. Your team doesn't want to hear this and won't understand or relate to it. The owner is the leader. If you're not making money, it's not their fault. Everything that goes sideways in your company is your fault, and until you look at things that way, you won't improve. If you're not making money, complaining to your team won't help. Talking to your advisors and your team about improving will.

2. I built this business from scratch. Really? All by yourself? I don't think so. You had help, not from the government, but from a team of committed professionals on your payroll. Recognize your team every time you can. Say, "We built this business."

3. You did a good job. I hear this so often, but what does it mean? Your team doesn't want to hear general comments like that. They want sincere, specific compliments. For example, "Jim, you did an awesome job at the Winland residence. There was not ONE detail you missed. The beds were perfect; the lines were crisp; heck, even the door mat was clean." That's a well-thought-out compliment that your team remembers and is sincere. It's something they will share with others.

4. I'm working hard so I can buy my wife a Lexus (or some other item that doesn't have anything to do with the business). How does this help your team? Any type of self-aggrandizing comment isn't appropriate. It's better to be humble and not share things that don't help them. Be humble; be classy; keep your personal life to yourself. You don't need to apologize for what your hard work has gotten you. You just don't need to brag about it. Your team wants to hear you talk about doing things for them.

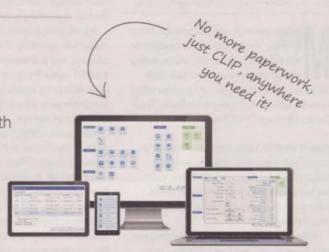
5. Mrs. Jones didn't pay, so I can't pay you. That's an excuse and no member of your team wants to hear that. Why is it their fault you didn't get a check from Mrs. Jones? The best thing the owner can do is model the behavior they want to see in their teams. The best leaders lead by example so, lead by example, take heed to all of the above and don't make excuses. Lou Holtz, the football coach, said it best, "Don't tell me how rocky the sea is, just bring the darn ship in." Let.

## MOW YOUR PAPERWORK

CLIP is the most POWERFUL paperwork eliminator in the lawn industry!

#### With CLIP you can know ...

- ✓ The profit margin on *each job* ✓ How much money you'll bring in next month
- $\checkmark$  Which service that brings in the most profit
- $\checkmark$  The efficiency of each employee



Are making b

#### WHAT ELSE?

CLIP also offers scheduling, routing, billing (or link to QB Desktop or Online), a customer portal, and almost endless pre-defined and custom reports.

For a FREE DEMO and information on pricing and features go to CLIP.com or call 800-635-8485. Sales@clip.com



LIMITED TIME: Start and stay free with less than 100 customers! >>CLIPitc.com



JIM HUSTON runs J.R. Huston Consulting, a green industry consulting firm. www.jrhuston.biz; jhuston@giernedia.com

## CHALLENGES ARE FUN

Editor's note: This is the third and final part of a series on finding, training and keeping good people.

ost people respond to a challenge. Unfortunately, we too often don't capitalize on this dynamic in our organizations. Author and business entrepreneur Jack Stack capitalizes on this innate human response when he likens business to a game in his book, "Great Game of Business." I encourage you to read it.

HOW IT WORKS. While a captain in the Marine Corps, I was a member of Marine Air Group (MAG) 22 stationed at Camp Pendleton, Calif. We had approximately 100 Huey and Cobra helicopters, plus a number of OV-10 fixed-wing observation planes.

Without certain parts (propellers, landing gear, etc.), these aircraft could not safely fly – Not Operationally Ready Supply (NORS). Lacking less essential parts (rocket launching component, machine gun mount, etc.), they could still fly but were Not Full Mission Capable (NFMC). Our group had approximately 30 aircraft missing 100 parts that prevented them from flying safely or fully performing their mission. Each morning MAG-22 sent a classified message to the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) informing them of our aircrafts' ability (or inability) to perform. We had too many planes down and our commanding officer was feeling the heat. Something had to be done.

My job as an aviation supply officer was for my section consisting of 10 marines to get these parts any way and anywhere I could. Because #%\$@\* (some things) always flows downhill, I was right in the middle and feeling the heat, too. Some parts were in our warehouse under a different part number.

Many were scattered around the U.S. or the globe in warehouses at stateside or overseas military warehouses. Others might be found at the military aircraft "boneyard" at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Arizona. Local manufacturers might be able to manufacture the needed parts or we could try to buy parts from the original aircraft manufacturers such as Bell Helicopter or Sikorsky. The possibilities were varied and many.

The reports from the U.S. Navy supply system bureaucracy that we were given were always late and virtually useless. The data weren't current and they weren't always correct. I decided to make a game of it. I found an old chalkboard, gathered my marines and laid down a challenge. On the chalkboard, I wrote the following:

	NORS	NFMC	TOTAL
Current #	55	45	100
Goal	40	35	75*

\*When reached, section party with four cases of beer.

The challenge worked and the atmosphere became electric. Marines made phone calls, sent messages and searched our warehouses for suitable substitutes. Within 10 days, we hit our goal of 75 total parts still needed. I bought four cases of beer and we had a party.

It worked once, so I decided to try it again. I set the goal at 50. Again, everyone went bonkers and in about two weeks, we got the number down to 50 - another party. I then set the goal to 25 with the same results. It took another two weeks but my marines hit the mark.

Finally came the big challenge. Zero parts missing was a huge objective. I added that it had to be held for three consecutive days. No other MAG throughout the Marine Corps was at zero. The gauntlet was thrown down and everyone went nuts. We'd get down to 15 and it would bounce back up to 18.

We'd get it down to 9 and up it would go again to 12. However, we could see steady progress as we hit 5-4-3-2-1-Zero! Like a robin pouncing on a June bug, my marines would attack any new requisition coming in for a NORS or NFMC part. And we held zero for three days.

THE LESSON. Leaders make work challenging. They also elevate the mundane to something meaningful and exciting. This isn't always easy to do but with a little forethought and creativity it can be done. Set lofty goals within your organization that are both measurable and timeable ... and make it fun. People will respond! L&L

"My job as an aviation supply officer was for my section consisting of 10 marines to get these parts any way and anywhere I could. Because #%\$@\* (some things) always flows downhill, I was right in the middle and feeling the heat, too."

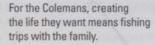
F

Greg Coleman (pictured), Frank Sr. and Frank Jr., Visionscapes, Inc. Cat Customer: 21 years

#### HELPING YOU MAKE A LIVING, SO YOU CAN CREATE THE LIFE YOU WANT.

Caterpillar is built to help businesses like the Colemans' succeed every day. Greg, Frank Jr. and Frank Sr. work together to grow their landscaping business with the help of Cat® machines. When their crew is working hard to meet tight deadlines, Cat E Series Mini Excavators and D Series Compact Track Loaders help them complete installation faster. Owning Cat machines is their smartest investment. **BUY NOW, PAY LATER. SKIP 3 PAYMENTS AND GET UP TO A \$1,000 CAT WORK TOOL CREDIT!\*** 

#### **BUILT FOR IT.**





See what the Colemans think about the E Series Mini Excavator. Visit CatResourceCenter.com/ColemanESeries

"Other with them Disease" (2014) a January 11. 2015 are executed way controls of machine transmissional to Disease (2014). The Disease (2014) are produced by the Disease (2014) and Disease (2014) are produced by the Disease (2014) and Disease (2014) are produced by the Disease (2014) and Disease (2014) are produced by the Disease





#### BY MARGIE HOLLY

HIRE POWER is a monthly column designed to help you recruit, hire and retain the best talent for your company, We've got a rotating panel of columnists ready to give you practical, tactical advice on solving your labor problems. Email Chuck Bowen at cbowen@gie.net with topic ideas.

## The softer side OF TRAINING



hen you think of training your employees, the first thing that likely comes to mind is ensuring your workforce is wellversed in the technical skills needed to perform their jobs well. Many smaller businesses, pressed for time or resources, typically overlook "soft' skills" - that collection of intangible, immeasurable behaviors that drive all business activities.

Business owners who have already tended to operational efficiency in order to remain profitable are discovering that basic people skills can be critical as they struggle to find ways to differentiate themselves in the marketplace and remain competitive.

As early as 2006, US Department of Labor employer surveys showed that youth entering the job market were not prepared with essential interpersonal skills needed to succeed. The major skill deficits reported were:

- · Oral and written communication
- Teamwork and collaboration
- · Critical thinking and problem-solving

But this is far from a generational gap. Traditional colleges and vocational training programs are only now starting to integrate interpersonal skills into technical curricula. So, unless your older workers have received specific training in soft skills throughout their careers, they may also benefit from some attention to these topics.

Take a quick look at how your team performs in the following categories to determine if you need to attend to soft skills. Include yourself in your assessment because as their leader, your team looks to you to model the expected behavior.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: This topic is broad;

personalities, comfort levels and styles of communication vary widely, so let's just look at the basics. On any given day, your employees are communicating with customers, colleagues and the public. They're using phone, email, text messaging and in-person meetings to affect your bottom line. Are you confident and comfortable with how they are representing you and your company? Have you checked the emails and/or text messages between your customer service reps and your clients lately? Does your millennial workforce even use the phone to have a conversation with the customer? Or do they rely on abbreviated text messages? (LOLI) While you want to have a comfortable relationship with your clients, getting too casual risks confusion and misunderstanding.

Are team meetings productive and presentations engaging or does the meeting leader tend to ramble on and get derailed by side conversations? Do your foremen deliver clear and complete directions to the labor force? Or do they leave the crew scratching their heads and improvising on a job site?

No doubt, there is always room for improvement where communication is concerned. Just be sure your team's lack of skill in this area is not actually damaging your business.

#### TEAMWORK AND COLLABORATION. Do the

members of your teams play well with others? Effective teams have role clarity among the members and a good mix of talent. There should be good leaders and good followers, accountability for deadlines and reporting progress, as well as collaboration across functions to achieve a common goal. These principles apply equally to a special project as to daily field operations.

Of course, everyone has an off day now and then, but if you find you are spending a lot of time settling disputes, intervening to correct avoidable operational glitches, or worse, having to do rework on a client site, chances are your teams could benefit from some training in effective teamwork

#### CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING.

Whether it's a challenge from a client, an issue with a supplier or an unexpected call from a key crew member, your team's day will be full of problems to solve. How they respond to these opportunities to apply critical and sometimes creative thinking can make all the difference in both the success of the business and the morale of the team.

Some people seem born to solve problems. Others panic at the mere thought of a plan going wrong. You probably have some of each of these personalities in your business. The fact is, though some critical thinking comes naturally, you can develop confidence in every team member by teaching problem solving skills they can rely on to address issues as they arise.

TRAINING RESOURCES. If you don't have an internal trainer or a relationship with a training consultant, there are several places you can turn. Local enterprise resources such as Service Core of Retired Executives (S.C.O.R.E.), trade associations. Chambers of Commerce and community colleges often run skill-building workshops, and some will even come to your workplace. On the internet, MindTools.com is a good place to start. It offers assessment tools, articles and a free newsletter as well as corporate training services if you need them.

The category of soft skills encompasses much more than the three behaviors we've discussed. Think about the specific challenges you have in your business, the outcomes of which, positive or negative, will be affected by employee behavior. Would any of them be easier to address if your team were more proficient in these critical soft skills? Would they even be an issue? If so, you can't afford not to conduct soft skills training. L&L

20 DECEMBER 2014 | LAWNANDLANDSCAPE.COM

## BIGGER. FASTER. STRONGER.

#### Introducing the all new, redesigned Bobcat 3400.

How do you put more work behind you? It takes size, strength, speed to match the workload. The Bobcat® 3400 is made with the highest payload and towing capacities in its class. Plus, there's more horsepower, quicker acceleration and faster travel. Everything you need to get things done. It's the only utility vehicle worthy of the hardest-working brand in the world.

#### LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ALL NEW 3400. Bobcat.com/AllNew5

#### 1.877.745.7813

Bobcat<sup>®</sup> and the Bobcat logo are registered trademarks of Bobcat Company in the United States and various other countries. @2014 Bobcat Company. All Rights Reserved. 1 1268R

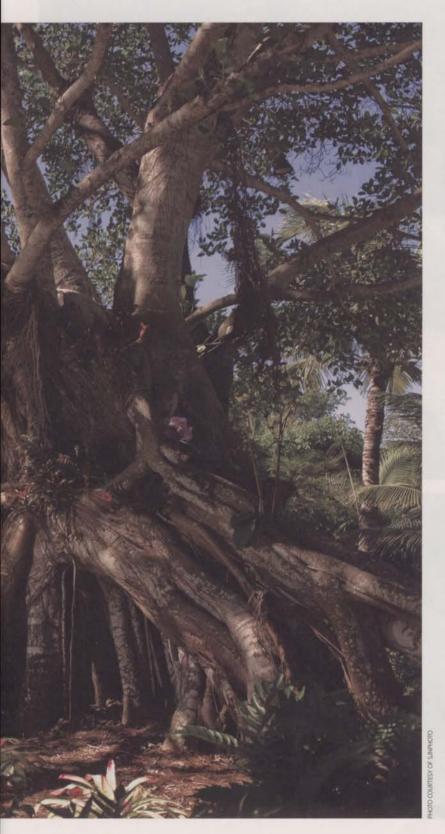


One Tough Animal

**COMPANY PROFILE** 

## MIX&MATCH

Bob Walsh diversified R.S. Walsh Landscaping's services and cross-trained employees during the difficult economic times to serve a full spectrum of landscaping needs. By Brooke N. Bates



B ob N of th

ob Walsh grew up by one of the largest landscape design-build firms in southwest

Florida. He worked there from age 10 until 25, eventually becoming manager of the landscape division. When the company closed, Walsh used his on-the-job experience to start R.S. Walsh Landscaping in 1982 with his wife, Lisa.

"I started very small with a truck and a trailer and worked hard to grow it up from there," says Walsh, president and owner. "I started with smaller residential jobs I could do myself, and then as I could add crew and equipment, the jobs got a little larger and the designs got a little more complex."

Walsh added services from low-voltage lighting to small water features, ultimately building a more diversified firm headquartered in Fort Myers. By making sure that every new addition – from a single employee to a whole division – contributes to the improvement of the entire company, R.S. Walsh continues to grow.

MAINTAINING GROWTH. Previously focused on landscape design/build, R.S. Walsh added maintenance in 2010. At the time, it was merely a way to stay busy during the recession as installations slowed down.

"As the economy turned, we didn't have enough installation work for all of the foremen we were employing," Walsh says. "Adding a maintenance division was kind of a natural way, as the economy slowed down, to retain good employees."

Employees stayed busy as maintenance blossomed. By cross-selling to design-build cus-

LEFT: Bob Walsh, pictured here with Head of Landscape Design Leigh Gevelinge, started R.S. Walsh Landscaping in 1982 with his wife, Lisa. Maintenance services were added in 2010.

#### **COMPANY PROFILE**

tomers – 90 percent of whom are high-end residential – Walsh tapped into a built-in customer base to grow the maintenance division. As a result, it has tripled in size since 2010, now accounting for about 15 percent of the company's total revenue.

"We have done almost no advertising of the maintenance division," Walsh says. "Almost every new design we install, we are working with them on maintenance. That's been a built-in way to grow the company, and servicing our customers better has helped us retain them."

Handling the entire project lifecycle – from the inception of design to installation to maintenance – enables R.S. Walsh to serve customers cohesively. Most employees are cross-trained to bring projects full circle. Foremen are capable of design layout on site and installation of everything from large trees to mulch to lighting.

Collaboration between divisions also keeps projects running smoothly. Designers go onsite with foremen to translate each client's vision into reality.

The maintenance manager also gets involved to coordinate installation for proper maintenance in the future.

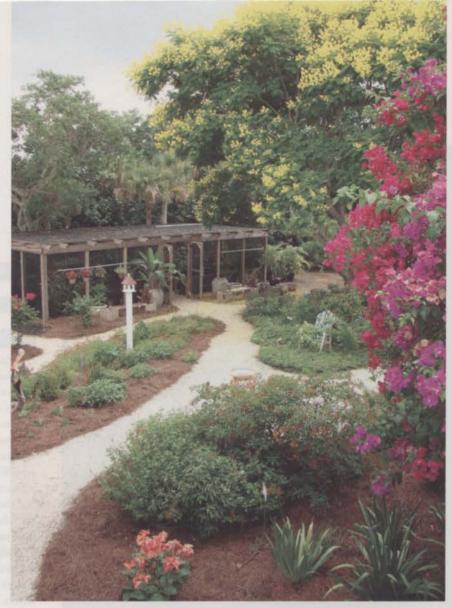
**SHOWCASING CAPABILITIES.** In 2010, R.S. Walsh also opened In The Garden, a retail garden center on Sanibel Island, Fla. Purchasing the property during the lowest point of the recession was a huge risk.

Initially, the addition was simply a way to showcase the company's landscaping capabilities. In The Garden isn't set up like a typical garden center because it's set up to sell more than just plants.

"Instead of sacks of mulch and plants in a row, our garden center looks more like someone's backyard garden," Walsh says. "It's sort of a strolling garden tour through pathways with small brick pavers and little water features." Of course, being new to

TOP: In 2010, R.S. Walsh also opened In The Garden, a retail garden center.

BOTTOM: L-R: Operations Manager, Justin; Founders, Lisa and Bob, Project Manager, Jeremy.





#### Introducing

## Strobe<sup>™</sup> 50WG

Broad Spectrum Fungicide



#### Customers have requested it, Quali-Pro\* has delivered it.

Strobe™ 50WG, the first postpatent azoxystrobin, is a new wettable granule from Quali-Pro that prevents or cures over 30 ornamental diseases and over 27 turf diseases. Due to preventitive properties, Strobe 50WG is systemicly absorbed by treated plants to control fungal diseases. Strobe 50WG is conveniently packaged in one and six pound tipand-measure bottles. This innovative packaging allows for cleaner and easier dosing. Strobe 50WG is used to control pathogens causing foliar, aerial and root diseases including leaf, tip, and flower blights, **leaf spots**, downy mildew, powdery mildew, anthracnose and rusts of **ornamental plants**. Strobe 50WG may be used to control certain diseases of container, bench, flat, plug, bed or **field-grown ornamentals** in greenhouses, shade houses, outdoor nurseries, retail nurseries, and other **landscape areas**.

Strobe<sup>™</sup> 50WG

NALI-PRÍ



For more information on our wide selection of turf and ornamental products, visit quali-pro.com or call 800-242-5562

Innovation you can apply.

### INVOLVE TO EVOLVE

s R.S. Walsh Landscaping grows and diversifies, the biggest challenge is building a culture that can keep up with the changes. "We have so many personalities that have been here for so long and so set in their ways," says Justin Walsh, operations manager. "You have to get the group behind you to go in the same direction and progress forward as the economy and the customer base change."

To keep employees aligned as the company grows in new directions, owner Bob Walsh communicates often with his team. Each week starts with a company-wide meeting to plan – and get pumped – for the week ahead. Seeking everyone's involvement, Bob encourages employees to share feedback and ideas.

"We try and incorporate everyone into some of the decision-making to keep people enthusiastic about their work here," Bob says. For example, employees might decide what the next company event will be – fishing, bowling or baseball? Team-building events like those make employees feel like part of something larger.

"It builds a real bond amongst all the people that are here," Bob says. "We're all working toward the same goal of improving the quality of the company and the quality of our work, and therefore the quality of our lives."

A close-knit, enthusiastic culture internally translates to quality work in the field because employees feel like they have skin in the game.

"That enthusiasm really shows through," Bob says. "People take ownership of the projects they're involved in; you can see it in our design meetings, and you can see it in our client meetings. Everybody really has a stake in the work, and it shows in our work."

the retail format, R.S. Walsh had to adapt some of its traditional approaches. Historically, the company had grown mostly through word-of-mouth. But to actively bring people into the new retail location, the company had to formally coordinate "I'm always looking for someone that's smarter than me, that has a talent I don't possess, that can expand the horizons of what the company knows. If everyone you hire has a little bit different perspective and a little bit better knowledge of something different, it just makes the whole company stronger."

- Bob Walsh

its advertising efforts for the first time.

As more people visit the garden center, business grows – but the growth isn't limited to retail.

"Not only has it increased our retail sales by 20 percent every year," Walsh says, "it landscaping sales. It's an avenue for people that didn't know our company to come in and stroll through the gardens and say, "These are the people we want to coordinate our landscape."

also has increased our

**NO DUPLICATES ALLOWED.** Walsh now has 30 full-time and 40 seasonal employees to bring larger projects to life. But he doesn't want employees just like him.

"I'm always looking for someone that's smarter than me, that has a talent I don't

possess, that can expand the horizons of what the company knows," Walsh says. "If everyone you hire has a little bit different perspective and a little bit better knowledge of something different, it just makes the whole company stronger."

For example, each of Walsh's four other designers has a distinctive style or specialty – such as Asian-themed gardens or large residential projects – that allows Walsh to match up each client with the appropriate designer.

Walsh sees each employee as a way to inject new knowledge, skills and ideas into the company. Young employees – like Walsh's sons Justin, the operations manager, and Jeremy, a project manager – bring new ideas to improve and expand the company.

"For a long time, everything had been done the same way," Justin says. "We've been lucky to have a lot of employees that have been here 10 to 20 years and longer. But you always need the influx of youth to get new ideas turning."

Younger generations have modernized R.S. Walsh into the computer age, leading the company toward upgraded design tools like new CAD software and tablets. "A lot of our clients need more than a 2-D piece of paper to see what we're trying to convey to them," says Leigh Gevelinger, Walsh's youngest landscape architect.

"In addition to using full-size drawings, landscape plans and graphic displays as presentation material to review with our clients, we also use Samsung tablets to reference other landscape photos to help our clients create the vision of their landscape."

By expanding the company's horizons through fresh skills, new services and modern tools, R.S. Walsh positions itself to better serve a spectrum of client needs. This diversification – though risky at times – secures the company's future through long-term, returning client relationships.

"Taking some of those risks has really helped us as a company," Walsh says. "Staying on the cutting-edge of new plants and new design ideas and constantly updating what we do has been key to our success." L&L



## **ARE YOU AS** PRODUCTIVE 451(0) COULD BE

## TheWalkerAdvantage.com



FORMULAS for SUCCESS

Dealing with service cutbacks and fixing a mistake can actually develop a stronger relationship with clients. By Kristen Hampshire

LEMONADE

ou know the importance of how a property looks, but your client doesn't always have the same appreciation. So, landscaping is often the first line item cut from budgets when they're looking to nip and tuck the bottom line. This month, Lawn & Landscape spoke with three companies about how they deal with customer cutbacks and client complaints. Here, they share why compromise and "making good" can create stronger relationships – and when to cut a client loose. FORMULAS for SUCCESS

#### RIVERTOP CONTRACTING

Rob Atema, owner

LOCATION: Swannonoa, N.C.

ESTABLISHED: 2000

EMPLOYEES: 70 in season, 50-60 off-season

> 2013 REVENUES: \$3.5 million

> > CUSTOMERS: 97% commercial, 3% residential

#### SERVICES: Landscape management, landscape design/build and construction

#### TAKE-AWAY TIPS

#### OWN YOUR MISTAKES.

"When we make a mistake, we own it, no matter what the cost is," Atema says.

#### EAT THE COST.

Rivertop's policy on design/ build projects is it will pay too percent of any errors that fall within the agreed-upon scope of the project. "I will not raise the bill unless the client changes the scope of work," Atema says.

#### TALK BRAND.

If clients' cutback requests compromise the quality of your work, level with them by talking about preserving the brand. "When we are talking to corporations, we explain to them, 'I have a brand, you have a brand ...'" Atema says.

### Get face time

**P** osted on an office wall at Rivertop Contracting is a quote that drives the firm's approach on every property: "Customers + Expectations + 110% Every Time."

"When everything you do sifts through that funnel, there is not really a big decision on what to do when things go wrong," says Rob Atema, owner of the Swannonoa, N.C.-based landscape maintenance and construction firm.

This golden rule at Rivertop guides the way the company responds when things don't go as expected in the field. If Rivertop's crews make a mistake on a property, they own it. Then they fix the problem so the result exceeds customers' expectations.

A perfect example of this is when a maintenance crew drove a skid-steer over a commercial property after a couple of rainy weeks and left mud tracks on the turf. "The next day, we had a crew out there sodding that piece of property," Atema says. "That was on us. It had everything to do with our lack of management in that scenario, and when that happens, we'll walk on water to get the problem taken care of."

Rivertop could have "made good" by just reseeding the damaged turf areas. "But we didn't just rake it out and throw seed on it, we tore it out and sodded it back, and the customers ended up coming out ahead and had a better looking property when we were all done," Atema says. "He was happy as a clam and told his friends about us."

Turning a complaint into a compliment requires dedication to the company mantra: Customers + Expectations + 110% Every Time.

The same is true when a client decides to cut back service. That is when achieving a 110 percent standard can get tough. Take a commercial design/build customer who needs to lop off cost to satisfy a shrinking budget. This is common because budget is always an issue with commercial design/build projects that go out to bid, Atema says.

First, Atema pushes for face-to-face meetings when bidding design/build jobs that require reductions to the budget. "We'll work to find out what's important to them. Is it brand recognition? Is it curb appeal? We try to figure out what is the most important thing to them and then we tailor our suggestions to meet their needs."

#### ADD A COUPLE HUNDRED EXPERTS TO YOUR ROSTER.

Get the support you need. With more than 80 service centers and 33 retail locations, real people with real answers are on your side to help you make all the right moves.



Learn more. Contact your local WinField representative or visit www.winfieldpro.com



WinField is a trademark of Winfield Solutions, LLC. © 2014 Winfield Solutions, LLC.

#### Celebrating 25 YEARS of Product Innovation!



#### **BioPlex Plant Survival Solutions...** Solving Difficult Transplant Problems by Integrating

(1) Advanced Horticultural Agronomics
(2) Current BIO-Science Best Practice Protocols
(3) Effective, Targeted ECO-Environmental Strategies

**BioPlex Benefits Don't Stop Here!** 

Speeds Transplant Fibrous Root Mass Formations & Stabilization
 Increases Cell Wall Permeability & Cellular Capacity for MAX-Hydration

Decreases Plant Stress, Decline & Mortality by 50-95% or MORE!

· Decreases Fiant Suess, Decline & Montanty by 50-5570 01 Monta

#### www.bio-plex.com

1-800-441-3573

## GO FOR A JOYRIDE.



The Rover Series of spreaders and the Pathfinder Series of spreader/ sprayers are commercial grade machines that will increase your productivity and decrease your downtime. No other machines feature the simplicity of operation and durablility of construction as Ground Logic spreading equipment. Contact us today to learn more.

#### 877.423.4340 · groundlogicinc.com



"Clients are worth their weight in gold and we don't want to lose clients, but on the other hand, I can't be on the property with that kind of lack of quality because it will adversely affect our company."

- Rob Atema, Rivertop Contracting owner

For example, a hotel entry is important for retaining the property's brand. So, Rivertop will look at ways to lighten their footprint on less visible areas of the property. This approach applies to the design/build and maintenance sides of the business.

But when clients want to cut back quality to the point that it could spoil Rivertop's own brand, then Atema has a tough decision to make: Satisfy the service cutbacks for some time as a bridge until the client can amend the budget to meet the property's base needs – or walk away.

Atema shares that one client hired a firm to complete a design/build project when the bid was half the price of what Rivertop provided.

Meanwhile, Rivertop does the maintenance on this property every week. Its trucks and crews and brand are at the forefront of the shoddy landscape. Atema had an honest talk with the owner and property improvements were made.

"Clients are worth their weight in gold and we don't want to lose clients, but on the other hand, I can't be on the property with that kind of lack of quality because it will adversely affect our company," he says.

Rivertop has stopped servicing clients that want to cut services or compromise design to the extent that Atema doesn't want his company name associated with the property. "It's not an easy decision to make," he says. But he has never regretted doing so.

"You want to do business with people who share your values, so you have to figure out who your ideal client is and align yourself with people with that mindset," he says.

"If they are going to cut a service to save a little money, maybe you can do that for a while, but if they want the cheapest guy in town, that's not a good fit for us." FORMULAS for SUCCESS

#### CLARENCE DAVIDS & COMPANY

Bill Davids, president LOCATION: Matteson, Ill. ESTABLISHED: 1951 EMPLOYEES: 2004 2013 REVENUES: \$17.4 million CUSTOMERS:

85% commercial, 15% residential

SERVICES: Landscape design/build, maintenance

#### TAKE-AWAY TIPS

ADMIT THE ERROR. The first reply to a customer complaint should always be an apology, Davids says. "We stay calm and think through the problem – and we always take the customer's side," he says.

#### ASK FOR A RETRACTION.

Dealing with a negative online review? Address it head-on by connecting with the client and correcting the issue. Then, ask the customer to write a retraction on the online review site.

#### ACT FAST.

"The sooner the better," Davids says of dealing with customer complaints. Don't wait for the concern to build into a bigger issue. And avoid getting attorneys involved. "Then, both sides are losers because you're spending money. It's always best to work it out directly with the client."

#### **Open communication**

istening goes a long way toward patching up a brittle relationship when a client files complaints. Sitting down in front of the client face to face can help you get to the root of the problem. "Let them talk. Listen and apologize," says Bill Davids, president of Clarence Davids & Company in Matteson, Ill.

Davids describes a situation when a hydraulic hose broke on a skid-steer. The crew on the property didn't realize this and drove the piece of equipment across a parking lot that had just been seal-coated, leaving a leak-spot trail behind. "They kept driving and there were several oil spots along the way until the skid-steer stopped," Davids says.

The property manager was irked. This error followed some snowplow damage from the previous winter.

The company talked to the property manager in person and addressed each problem, assigning the concern to the appropriate in-house manager to oversee. "In the meantime, we were completing a large landscaping project on that property that turned out beautiful, so between the positives (of fixing the mistakes) and that end result, we have the client on our side again," Davids says.

Keeping clients satisfied when working with tight budgets, multiple stakeholders and variables like weather and human error creates inevitable challenges. Open communication is almost always the answer.

And, a property walk with a client is often what's needed to identify issues that could be festering, Davids says. It's always better to nip little concerns in the bud, before they mount to a blow-up. The latter is uncommon at Clarence Davids, but after 65 years in business, the company has dealt with plenty of "oops" situations over the years. And keeping boards of people happy in multi-family home scenarios is never easy, Davids says.

"The account manager builds rapport with the managers and boards," he says, relating that a diligent account representative stays on top of board personnel changes and constantly builds those new relationships.

"I tell our account reps to always think long term," Davids says of making good when clients report errors. "So, today is going to be bad. Maybe we'll lose \$5,000 or \$10,000, or whatever. But we retain the account and we have an opportunity to regain (that loss) the following year, and the year after that. In the long term, it pays off."

#### CONTROL YOUR SPRAY. CONTROL YOUR INVESTMENT.

Put your money where your turf is. Droplex'\* adjuvant helps reduce drift while improving deposition and increasing absorption for better control over your spray – and your budget.

DROPLEX"

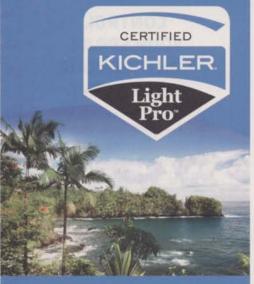
UNTREATED





WinField and Droplex are trademarks of -Winfield Solutions, LLC, © 2014 Winfield Solutions, LLC, Images are computer generated for reference only. Actual results may vary.

## Partner with an Industry Leader and **Enjoy the Rewards**.



Partner with Kichler to gain the benefits of our industry leading professionalgrade lighting products. Prosper from the knowledge and support of our professional landscape lighting team

Our goal is simple: to provide the tools to help YOU SUCCEED! Kichler's LightPro™ Rewards program is instrumental in helping thousands of landscape lighting contractors succeed

Grow your business and enjoy the rewards of that success including fantastic sponsored trips!

#### Key LightPro Rewards Program Benefits:

- LightPro Rewards points for purchasing Kichler<sup>®</sup> landscape lighting products – the more you purchase, the more you earn!
- Kichler's Design Pro Spotlight e-newsletter first-rate resource for product information, as well as trends, tips and strategies to keep you on the cutting edge of the industry.
- Free business building materials facilitate growth of your business and generate leads.
- Free Kichler landscape lighting product samples demonstrate the impact Kichler landscape lighting and close more deals.

Learn more or apply for membership at landscapelighting.com. Receive 500 LightPro Rewards bonus points for registering online.



#### **HEADS UP**

Eric Spalsbury, vice president, maintenance business development

> LOCATION: Albuquerque, N.M. ESTABLISHED: 1973

> > EMPLOYEES:

270

2013 REVENUES: \$17.5 million

> CUSTOMERS: 90% commercial, 10% residential

SERVICES: Landscape design/build, maintenance, irrigation

#### TAKE-AWAY TIPS

FIND THE PAIN. Ask questions and listen. Find out the root cause of a client's desire to cut back services and work from there so the solution addresses the problem.

#### PINPOINT A NUMBER.

If budget is the cause for cutbacks, Spalsbury recommends asking the client, "What were you hoping to save dollar-wise?" Find out a ballpark figure before throwing out a number to please a client, he says. "We may not have to cut as much as we think or fear."

#### EDUCATE CLIENTS.

Help customers understand why recurring property visits are important to maintain the image and ensure safety, too. That includes being that extra set of eyes looking for graffiti, vandalism, accident damage to parking lot lights, wasted electricity and more.

## Dig deeper

hy?" This is the most important question to ask when a client hints at cutting back services. "Try to get beyond the candy-coated outside of the jawbreaker, so to speak," says Eric Spalsbury, vice president, maintenance business development for Heads Up Landscaping in Albuquerque, N.M. "When we can find motivators behind the request, we can better develop a solution."

Spalsbury and his team want to know if the reason for cutbacks is budget-driven – and why. Is the client experiencing short-term "heartburn" with the property? Has there been a changeover in management, and therefore a shift in expectations?

Depending on the "why," Heads Up works to provide a solution that can satisfy the client's needs while keeping the customer on the roster. But also important is the assessment Heads Up makes regarding the client. "We evaluate the relationship: How are we doing financially with the customer?" Spalsbury says.

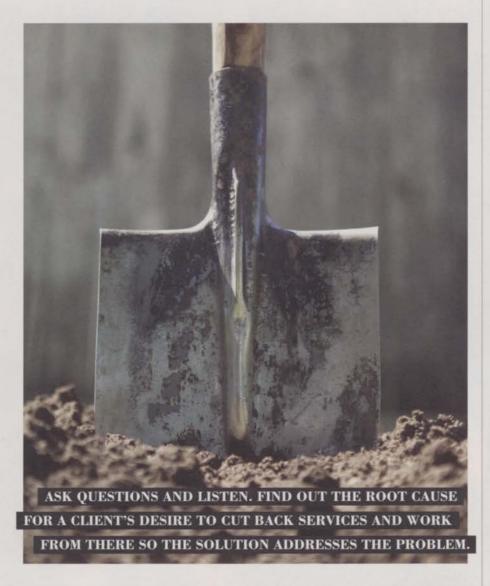
If the job is part of a portfolio of properties, the customer is loyal (and perhaps well-connected), Heads Up takes this into consideration. "You want to evaluate the total value and performance of the book of work, along with the potential network influence involved," he says.

If the job is break-even or a poor performer, is it part of a bigger picture where greater profitability is achievable? And, if the client has connections to other desirable accounts, the service cutback negotiation should be handled with care.

"If you don't handle the negotiation well, who do you think they'll tell?" Spalsbury says. "It may come up multiple times with other people in your network that you do business with, or hoped to do business with."

Another consideration that would encourage Heads Up to go "all out" for a client is the total revenue from the job, including irrigation, landscape renovations and maintenance. "It may be that maintenance is a 'front' for doing enhancement work," Spalsbury says. Heads Up may be willing to cut back the cost of maintenance if the company knows it can secure other more profitable business from the client.

#### FORMULAS for SUCCESS



On the other hand, if the customer has unreasonable expectations, is difficult to work with, takes up an unbalanced amount of management time and is a "stand-alone" property, Heads Up may consider whether bending over backward to meet a client's budget demands is worth it.

Some solutions, based on the client's pain, include reducing short-term expenses by shrinking the number of visits to the property, Spalsbury says, adding, "That's not something we love to do because it is tough for us to manage different expectations in the field, and this can have a negative reflection on our image." But, Heads Up will do this for a good customer. Ultimately, these discussions are a good opportunity to build loyalty, Spalsbury says. For example, Heads Up associates talk about how regular visits keep the property's image consistent. And, they emphasizes that their crews are extra eyes on the property. Then, Spalsbury might ask the client: "Where else are you going to get this kind of service?"

The goal is to settle on a solution that addresses the client's needs and keeps your company's integrity intact. "If handled well, a situation like this should not strain a relationship – it should make it grow stronger," Spalsbury says. 181

#### KEEP ONE EYE ON YOUR NUTRIENTS AT ALL TIMES.

The NutriTech Tool identifies key nutrient deficiencies, allowing you to make precise in-season adjustments quickly.



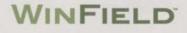
2. RESIN TECHNOLOGY



**3. PLANT TISSUE TEST** 



Learn more. Contact your local WinField representative or visit www.winfieldpro.com



WinField is a trademark of Winfield Solutions, LLC.

66 Like selling any other asset, it's always easier to sell your business if it has been maintained and properly cared for over the years." Why you should start thinking about selling your business now, even if you aren't ready to hand over the keys.

## the **EASIES** *exit*

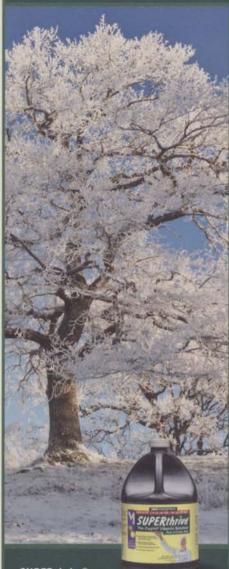
HETHER YOU ARE LOOKING TO RETIRE, move on to another venture, merge multiple businesses or start to plan for a transition, selling your business can present a variety of problems, stressors and uncomfortable situations.

In any event, setting your business up so that it's ripe for a future transfer should be a primary goal of any business owner (even if it's five or 10 years down the road). The benefits of doing so will not only ensure maximum value when you decide to transfer, but will help you maximize your current growth and profitability.

Identifying your options is paramount in this process. One of the most overlooked areas in this process is identifying your financial needs after the sale. In this regard, you need to be realistic in terms of what you have and what it's worth. I can't tell you how many times I've worked with owners who believe that prospective purchasers need to pay an amount equal to what they need in order to retire. Unfortunately, buyers are not interested in what you need but rather, can they purchase your business for a fair price?

#### **By Daniel S. Gordon**

#### SUPERthrive<sup>®</sup> ~ Always ahead in science and value.



#### SUPERthrive®

- ~ Essential during dry months.
- Maximizes potential by quickly building a strong root base.
- Perfect for edibles, landscaping, and transplanting trees of all sizes.

Our timeless formula is enhanced with kelp to integrate contemporary research with the existing nutrition that *SUPERthrive*<sup>®</sup> has provided since 1940.

Transplanting ~1 tsp. per one gallon of water weekly or monthly. Stressed trees ~12-20 oz. per 100 gals.



Vitamin Institute www.superthrive.com

#### COVER STORY

Your financial needs are not part of the equation. However, if your needs are congruent with the value of your business, a deal becomes much more feasible. Clearly it's important to hire the proper advisers, such as a CPA, to help you build value between now and your exit date as well as show you how to structure a deal so that taxes are minimized and the cash you receive is maximized.

In addition, a competent lawyer will represent your interests in making sure all agreements are workable such that the seller's post-sale obligations as they relate to seller representations and warranties are crafted to minimize the possibilities of lawsuits or reduction of any future payments that may be part of the deal.



For advice on how to prepare your company for your unexpected death, visit *bit.ly/lldeathbook* 

#### THE FUTURE.

Passing the business to the next generation. Do you have family members that are interested and or competent enough to take over the business and keep it growing profitably to ensure payments to the seller adhere to the plan? The last thing you want to do is take back the business once you are retired because the family member who took over the business doesn't have the skill set to continue your legacy. If keeping the business in the family is the plan, make sure your son, daughter or other family is well-trained and understands the operation and the vision. This includes proper training in operations, accounting, marketing and management.

Have you contacted an attorney that specializes in generational issues? A sale to a family member can be complicated and may involve working through gift and estate tax planning. Does your CPA have experience in these areas? Assembling this team of advisers early will make the process much smoother even if the transaction is several years in the future.

Selling to an outside party. The time to start the process is now, even if your plan is to sell in the future. It may not be your intention to sell immediately but sometimes life can throw us curves. Health and other issues may dictate that a sale happen sooner rather than later. A quick sale may not always yield the best price for the seller. For this reason, it's never too early to begin your exit plan. A two-pronged approach in this regard may be warranted. Determine when an exit might be desirable and how much you'd like the business to be worth. Then you can build the business to this value over time.

The second prong might include a plan in case a health issue or death befalls you prematurely. How easy would it be for your family to sell the business and would they be provided for adequately?

When crafting your future exit plan, the following points need to be considered:

Who will be the potential buyer? Will it be one of the larger players in the industry
or perhaps a local competitor? What will they be looking for in a potential acquisition?

2. Have you put together a solid financial plan for after the sale? Depending upon when you sell, you may have a lot of life to live. Will you be taken care of by the proceeds or will you be seeking another job after the sale?

3. How will your firm be valued by the acquirer? Do you have a large customer

## Less Weight Mower Power

Packed with power, the Honda GCV160 engine is lighter than ever. Now you can offer lawn mowers that deliver outstanding performance and remarkable fuel efficiency, along with legendary Honda reliability and quiet operation. Go with the engine that sips gas, guzzles grass and tells your customers they're getting the very best — the Honda GCV160.





Built like no other.

#### Visit us online at engines.honda.com.

For optimum performance and safety, please read the owner's manual before operating your Honda Power Equipment. @2014 American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

### MY CENTS IS LANDSCAPE STRONG!

 I am at CENTS each January because there is always something to learn about what to do and what *not* to do.

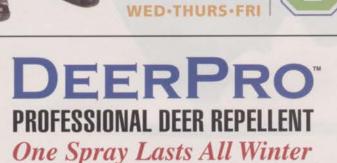
 I stay up to date on new plant material, operations and business training improvement, plant diseases, pests and more! CENTS University gets me ready for anything the year ahead might hold.

> Shawn Rine Rine Landscape Group, Inc.

JOIN US IN COLUMBUS, OHIO Register online at www.CENTSMarketplace.com or call (800) 825-5062.

ACE

UNIVERSI





"We have been in business since 1921 and this is the most effective and easy to use repellent in that entire time. We had almost NO DAMAGE especially in some heavily browsed areas." Palazzi Landscape Gardening Newfoundland, PA

#### 877.486.3337 TOLL FREE

Call today to learn how DeerPro can help your customers and your business, or visit:



## DeerProRepellent.com

#### COVER STORY

base that provides recurring revenue? Is the recurring revenue profitable revenue? Businesses that answer yes to both of these questions are usually worth more than those that don't.

4. Is your business in order such that you will pass the purchaser due diligence? This is an extremely important point as a purchaser will want to "look under the hood." A sloppy operation and messy books and records will make a potential buyer uneasy and may reduce the price and/or scare him away.

5. Will your plan maximize the after-tax proceeds? At the end of the day, the price you get for your firm is not as important as what you put in your pocket. Uncle Sam will want his share of the proceeds and it's extremely important to get the proper advice early in the process from a competent CPA or tax attorney on your options for structuring a potential deal.

6. What consideration have you given to a potential payout? Is this something that is acceptable? Do you need all your money up front to invest in another business or purchase that retirement house? Or will a payout work for you? If a payout works, you need to make sure the acquirer is financially stable. A little due diligence on potential buyers will help determine if you may have problems collecting your payment in the future.

7. What happens to valuable employees after the sale? Like most successful business people, it's hard to build a business without competent help. Many business owners want to make sure their valued employees are taken care of by the acquirer. Ask potential acquirers what they would do with your employees.

FINAL THOUGHT. Like selling any other asset, it's always easier to sell your business if it has been maintained and properly cared for over the years. If your current business philosophy and plan consider the endgame as laid out in this article, you will be in a much better position to maximize the fruits of your efforts when you do exit your business. L&L

The author is a CPA in New Jersey and owns an accounting firm that caters to lawn care contractors throughout the U.S. He can be reached at dan@turfbooks.com.

# GET BEHIND A CHOPPER

#### Introducing the Dixie Chopper Pursuit

The new Pursuit Walk-behind is perfect for commercial contractors who need to make a big impact with a small footprint.

Range of Deck Widths – Three compact deck sizes (32", 36", and 44") give you flexibility and precise cutting in tight areas

PURS

TIXIE CHOPP.

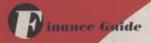
Zero-turn Maneuverability – Dual-drive models allow you to turn and reverse effortlessly to get in and out of close cutting areas with ease

**Power and More Power** – An 18 hp Professional series Briggs & Stratton engine powers you at up to 7 mph to get through the tough jobs quickly

Service Points - Convenient grease points make periodic maintenance a breeze

Add the Pursuit Walk-behind to your fleet today. For more information about the Pursuit or other Dixie Chopper products, visit www.dixiechopper.com.





# DOTHE

Weigh your options carefully when deciding to purchase equipment. By Lindsey Getz

> eciding whether to finance equipment and vehicles or to buy them outright may be at least partially based on personal preference. But there is also some strategy involved.

Making smart financial decisions means weighing the options and doing your homework.

MAKE PAYMENTS. Andrew Blanchford, president and founder of Blanchford Landscape Group in Bozeman, Mont., says that cash flow is incredibly important to his business and he can always find better ways to use capital than to lay it out for equipment. As a result, the company almost always finances its big purchases.

With interest rates as low as they've been, Bill Trimmer, founder of Professional Grounds in Lorton, Va., says that financing makes a lot of sense. While Trimmer says he can remember a time when it didn't make sense to finance – in the late 70s when interest rates were as high as 15 percent – that hasn't been the case in a long time.

> "Interest rates getting that high hasn't happened in 30 years so it's pretty safe to say that financing big ticket items makes sense," Trimmer says. "A good rule of thumb is that if you finance and the cost of financing is less than the income you would generate (the ROI) by those available funds,

"You can rent almost anything else these days and charge the exact cost of it back to the client. Renting and leasing keeps your overhead low. which frees up capital and credit to spend on things like hiring experienced people, advertising or acquisitions."

> Aaron Rodolph, president of Rodolph Brothers



#### CALLBACKS DAMAGE RELATIONSHIPS.

Callbacks are more than an inconvenience; they're costly and can destroy your business. Fifty percent\* of customers who call to complain about dandelions will eventually end up canceling your service. Defendor<sup>™</sup> specialty herbicide helps reduce callbacks by providing early season control of dandelions, clover and other winter annual and perennial weeds. For proven crabgrass and broadleaf weed control, apply Defendor when you make your first applications of Dimension<sup>®</sup> 2EW specialty herbicide. So spend time building relationships and keep the honeymoon with your customers alive. To learn more, visit **www.DowProveslt.com**.

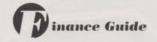


Dow AgroSciences

Solutions for the Growing World

'Jefferson Davis Consumer Research 2012, ""Trademark of The Dow Chemical Company ("Dow") or an affiliated company of Dow State restrictions on the sale and use of Defendor and Dimension 2EW apply. Consult the label before purchase or use for full details. Always read and follow label directions. T38-337-012 (01/13) BR 010-60828 DATOTURF2068 Scan this code for more information at www.DowProvesIt.com.





then you should always finance." It also makes sense to pay attention to the financing packages available year round. "If you need a truck in September and it's July, but the zero financing is going to end, obviously you need to buy the truck now," says Dyle MacGregor, owner of Keep It Green in Fair Lawn, N.J.

"Financing a truck at zero percent as opposed to 2.9 or 4.9 can add up to quite a bit of money. Cash flow is important. You can take that money and use it to your advantage somewhere else in the business." In looking for the best financing deals, Trimmer suggests making use of the online calculators that are available. You can even compare leasing versus buying scenarios.

And remember that there's often room for negotiation. "When the banker throws out a number, remember that you don't get what you don't ask for," Trimmer says. "It's competitive out there. Like anything nowadays, it's always beneficial to get another quote from someone else and have that in your back pocket for negotiating."

**OTHER WAYS TO PAY.** While financing makes sense in many cases, when the cash is available, some companies do like to pay in full to avoid debt. Aaron Rodolph, president of Rodolph Brothers in Casper, Wyo., says staying debt free is priceless. When possible, Rodolph does pay in full. But the timing is critical. Cash has to be readily available. If equipment is being purchased in the offseason, Rodolph will often seek out a financing deal with a short-term payment schedule and low interest rate.

"Many brands offer zero interest rates with two-year finance terms," Rodolph says. "The payments are really high but that is how we keep our debt ratio low which is important to us." Rodolph says he has been debt-free a few times in the last 16 years of his career. But he recognizes debt is necessary, as long as it's used strategically. "We utilize a tremendous amount of rental equipment whenever possible," Rodolph says.

"You can rent almost anything else these days and charge the exact cost of it back to



#### "THERE'S THE SAYING THAT WHOEVER HAS THE MOST TOYS WINS, BUT IT'S NOT TRUE."

#### Bill Trimmer, founder of Professional Grounds

the client. Renting and leasing keeps your overhead low, which frees up capital and credit to spend on things like hiring experienced people, advertising or acquisitions."

Trimmer agrees. "There's the saying that whoever has the most toys wins. But it's not true," he says. "Renting can be the more profitable option. You don't want something sitting in your yard that isn't producing income. Therefore, the harder question is not whether to pay in full or finance. The harder question is whether to rent, lease or buy? We have calculated that we only buy if we use a piece of equipment more than 22 days annually."

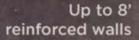
Blanchford has also come to the conclusion that owning isn't always the best option. He has been operating his company much leaner lately. That's included monthly seasonal rentals on some of the heavier equipment.

"That has worked out really well for us," Blanchford says. "For a 10,000-ton excavator we might pay \$2,200 a month for five months. But to buy that outright is at least \$60,000. While you could finance that over five years, you're paying year-round, and I'm really focused on cash flow. Making that payment in the off-season is painful, plus you have to factor in the cost of maintenance and repairs."

In operating leaner, Blanchford says he's even been selling equipment that is underutilized. Anything that's sitting around and not getting fairly regular use is dead weight, he says.

"Remember that equipment doesn't help you grow," Rodolph adds. "Some contractors get hung up on the idea that having a big fleet of equipment will make them a big company. Equipment is disposable and depreciates by the day. But investing in your people is priceless." LSL

## INTRODUCING TANDEM<sup>TM</sup> WALL SEGMENTAL RETAINING WALL (SRW)<sup>TM</sup> BY BELGARD



**P** 

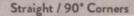
3 color blends -

24 different facial textures



#### DEDICATED TO INNOVATION FEATURES

- Meets ASTM standards (C-1372 and C-1262)
- Height Tolerances are within 1/16" of an inch (vertical and horizontal)
- Free Standing
- · Minimum outside radius of 6'
- . Free Standing walls up to 28"
- 6,000 PSI-exceeds ASTM C1372 by 100%
- · Gravity walls up to 3 feet
- · Three sizes available as single textured units and ashlar units
- · Cap unit available



Radius



Column Kits also available To see the Tandem™ Wall video go to: belgard.com/tandem



Manufacturers can offer a number of different financing packages to help you buy your next piece of equipment. By Lindsey Getz

s the economy continues to improve, more businesses are making investments to fuel their growth. If you're among those who have decided financing is the best bet, it's wise to do a little research on what's out there.

**DEALS AVAILABLE.** Without a doubt, the most popular financing options these days are the 0-percent interest programs, says David Adams, financial services manager for Toro and Exmark. Loan terms typically range anywhere from three to five years on such programs. Adams says there are more no-interest finance promotions available now than a few years ago and they are available for longer terms.

A main reason for these promotions is because the cost of money has been historically low the past few years. This makes it easier for equipment manufacturers to afford to offer zero percent programs to their customers, Adams says. "These allow a contractor to acquire new equipment now and pay it off over its useful life without paying any interest charges," he says.

While Dan Gundacker, product marketing manager for John Deere Financial, says that many contractors were paying cash when he first got into this business, most are taking advantage of low financing rates these days. "When an offer for zero percent is out there, it's pretty tough to think about using your own cash," Gundacker says. In fact, even contractors who have the cash available are choosing financing. "We're definitely seeing that most contractors are utilizing that low rate so that they can use their own funds to do something that will help them make even more money for their company," Gundacker says. "It makes sense to use low rate financing or leasing for the equipment purchase, saving capital for other business needs."

Tony Whitehurst, general manager of JCB Finance, says that these days, more contractors are also looking for leasing opportunities that include a stated purchase option as well as the ability to walk away after the lease term. But most are taking advantage of the zero percent interest programs available in the marketplace today.





www.amsoil.com/warrantysecure

No More Confusion One Mix Powers Them All

You know what a hassle it is to maintain different fuel containers at different mix ratios. Get the convenience of one fuel container for all your two-stroke equipment needs.

- Saves Time & Money
- Low Smoke
- Stabilizes Fuel

Tested and Proven at 100:1



The First in Synthetics

www.amsoil.com/saber



Call or Go Online For Our Free Factory Direct Retail Catalog.

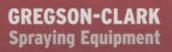
1-800-777-8491



#### The true measure of a sprayer is ROI.

Return on Investment. It starts with the right equipment for your application followed by exceptional service. That's our promise to you. We have many innovative spraying equipment options and look forward to discussing the best possible solutions for your needs.





A Division of Rhett M. Clark, Inc.

800-706-9530 sales@gregsonclark.com | gregsonclark.com Dinance Guide

Of course there are some financing packages that are not as popular. Adams says that anything with an interest rate more than 3.99 percent – even if it comes with an initial "no payment period," – is not as wellliked as others. "With so many no- or low-interest promotions available from manufacturers, contractors simply aren't willing to pay finance charges if they have decent credit," he adds.

In addition, Gundacker says that "no interest if paid in full" financing options are not a popular fit in the landscaping industry. Often seen in furniture sales, Gundacker says this "consumeroriented offer" is not ideal for someone managing a business. "With a package like this, you would get six or 12 months to pay in full with no interest but after that it defaults to a monthly rate," Gundacker says.

A CUSTOM DEAL. The landscape industry is certainly unlike many others. As a result, financing packages may also be tailored a bit differently than for other industries. Adams says that Toro and Exmark don't take a one -size-fits-all approach to financial packages.

Adams says Exmark and Toro have packages that may appeal to contractors at various stages of business. "For those simply preferring to 'use someone else's money' we offer attractive zeropercent interest programs," he says. "But for those where cash flow is a priority, we offer low interest rates over a longer term which minimizes the payment."

It does seem that most companies try to customize financial packages as much as possible knowing that needs can greatly

#### MORE ONLINE

For an expanded version of this article, visit lawnandlandscape.com and search "So many doors to open."

differ, sometimes based on region. Caterpillar Financial has territory managers located within a Caterpillar dealer's territory in order to explain to customers their financial options.

"While there are some standard terms within the finance arena, we tailor our financing options to meet a customer's needs," says Robert Hughes, market development consultant for Caterpillar's Financial Division.

"Our territory managers regularly meet with our customers to understand their equipment needs and determine which lease or loan structure best supports those needs."

Since two key issues with landscape contractors are cash flow and working capital, Whitehurst says that JCB Finance structures transactions that help match the contractor's cash flow. These customizations could include up-front skips, annual skips, six payments on and six payments off, low to high payments, quarterly payments, semi-annual payments or even annual payments.

Customization may also mean looking at a contractor's potential future needs. Gundacker says he's encouraging contractors to consider adding parts and attachments to their financial package so they can get them now.

"When the mechanic needs the parts, they're already there and ready to go. It saves time and it helps with fleet management," Gundacker says, 181

# CUTTING EDGE. COMMERCIAL GRADE.

KUBOTA



#### New Kubota 2700 Series: We Mean Business

Kubota's new Z700 Series commercial zero-turn mower raises the bar for quality, durability, precision and all-around productivity. No other commercial mower in its class comes close, Available with 48, 54 or 60-inch decks and a wide variety of attachments and accessories. Ready to cut with the best? Give your business the Kubota Z700 edge. **Demo one** today at your local Kubota dealer.



www.kubota.com



OKubota Tractor Corporation, 2014



A shop boss – whether mechanic, director of operations or business owner – should understand how equipment fits into the big picture.

## WHO'S THE (SHOP) BOSS?

How you manage your service operation directly impacts your bottom line. By Kristen Hampshire

mechanic does more for a landscaping business than maintain and fix equipment. This skilled professional improves a company's efficiency, minimizes equipment downtime and ultimately, ensures that every piece of working capital generates more revenue for the business.

Supervising the inventory and activity in the shop space is critical. You've got to account for every piece and part. You've got to protect that investment.

"If you have an open-door policy where employees can come into the shop and grab at will, the cost associated with your 'shop tools' is going to skyrocket," says Jeffrey Johns, president of Coastal Greenery in Brunswick, Ga, Equipment and materials is a significant expense at landscape firms. "Without proper oversight, you are taking money away from the bottom line," Johns says. A "shop boss" – whether director of operations, mechanic or business owner – should understand the company budget and how equipment fits into the big picture. This person should manage all shop activity while keeping costs under control, Johns says.

"The shop is business-critical and contributes to adding money to the bottom line, and that's what we are here for (as a company)," Johns says. "Controlling your costs and understanding your numbers, including in the shop, is huge."

SETTING A STRUCTURE. Depending on your

business size and equipment philosophy, the "shop boss" will take on varying roles, says Mike Ward, president of Mike Ward Landscaping in Loveland, Ohio. First, determine how you want to manage equipment repairs and ongoing maintenance. Then, you can assign appropriate responsibilities to personnel who will oversee the shop.

"How you manage your shop depends on two factors: primarily, the size of your company, and your philosophy about the shop," Ward says.

A landscaping firm could operate a full-service shop that essentially works like a business within a business. Or, the company could opt to do few repairs beyond routine maintenance and subcontract the majority of service work. Or, the company could set a bar for repairs: Any issues beyond a certain level go out to a shop. (This type of firm might employ a part-time mechanic.)

On top of these three philosophies are a few different mindsets for acquiring equipment that plays into the repair picture. Some land-

scaping firms choose to lease all equipment, meaning all repairs are on warranty and the only equipment maintenance taking place at the company is general upkeep: changing filters and oil, cleaning machines, etc.

Other companies purchase equipment, but turn it in frequently so they are operating a fairly new fleet all the time. This means much of the equipment is on warranty and so the dealer manages repairs, and lowermileage equipment is less likely to go down in the field. Again, the company's requirements for someone to manage repairs inhouse are limited.

Finally, businesses can operate the way Ward's does by hanging on to equipment for longer and managing the majority of repairs in-house. For two-cycle equipment,

# Over 10,000 outdoor power equipment partners.

# 1 retail finance provider.

Introducing Synchrony Financial, formerly GE Capital Retail Finance. With over 80 years of retail heritage, we are bringing new meaning to the word partnership. From the individual dealers to the largest manufacturers in outdoor power equipment, we bring together consumer and contractor financing solutions and deep industry expertise to help you engage your consumers in new and more meaningful ways. Find out what Synchrony Financial can do to strengthen consumer loyalty, and increase average transaction size at **SynchronyBusiness.com/OPE** or **1-855-433-5344**.

**Built from GE heritage.** 



Engage with us.

Credit is extended by Synchrony Bank. © 2014 Synchrony Financial. All rights reserved.



Ward replaces those hand-held tools every two years so he's constantly replenishing the stock and never really repairing them. But he purchases trucks every 12 to 15 years. "Our mowing equipment is not turned aggressively because I have not found a way to do that (cost-efficiently)," he adds.

So, based on the three different philosophies for maintenance and equipment/vehicle acquisition, there are about six different ways to manage a shop. Understanding your structure is a critical precursor to identifying who will be the "shop boss" and what that person's responsibilities will be.

As Ward said, company size also plays into the shop management structure. Once companies cross the \$1- to \$1.5-million mark, a part-time mechanic becomes a reality. At this point, a production manager is probably overseeing the inventory and maintenance. At less than \$1 million in revenue, the owner is likely running parts/maintenance, Ward says. Once a business surpasses \$2 million, then more strategic choices are required concerning the equipment purchase cycle

"The shop can't be a place where you repair equipment and your crews eat lunch and where tools are stored. It's hard for a shop to be all of those things."

> - Mike Ward, president of Mike Ward Landscaping

and taking on more in-house repairs.

At Mike Ward Landscaping, a "maintenance-intensive cycle" of changing out equipment calls for shop expertise – a fulltime prime mechanic and an assistant. The head mechanic is a manager who reports directly to Ward, and he reports to the shop at 4 a.m. daily so he can handle repairs before crews arrive.

"We are supporting \$4 to \$5 million in sales with our full-time and part-time mechanics, and then we selectively use our outside resources," Ward says.

**KEEPING SHOP.** The prime mechanic at Mike Ward Landscaping is basically independent, but consults with Ward regarding purchasing. "He works with our other managers to determine equipment priorities," Ward says.

The larger the shop, the more involved the equipment and extensive the parts inventory. This makes separating the shop from the rest of the facility even more critical, Ward says. "The shop can't be a place where you repair



equipment and your crews eat lunch and where tools are stored," he says. "It's hard for a shop to be all of those things."

When a shop is only a shop, the department runs more successfully, Ward says. "Mechanics need their space to get their work done, and you want to minimize interruptions," he adds.

At Longs Peak Landscaping in Longmont, Colo., Mike DePriest acts as the shop manager overseeing the full-time mechanic, who works 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. He was hired when the company hit between \$600,000 and \$1 million in sales. The company now generates approximately \$3 million. "We were too busy selling and producing to manage administrative functions and keep on top of the shop with our 'extra time," he says.

The full-time day mechanic acts as a "parts shop manager," DePriest says. "He knows each piece of equipment's history, strengths and weaknesses, and he often anticipates a major repair long before it is critical," he says.

The company also has a full-time night mechanic, and a full-time materials expeditor who works as an overflow mechanic and provides additional presence in the yard.

DePriest is the one who makes most decisions on replacing equipment, how much to buy and which brands. "Many of those decisions are based on how well we can get parts and service for those brands," he says.

However, some shop management tasks are handled by other leaders in the organization. For example, the operations managers assign trucks and equipment to crews, and track fuel consumption.

Meanwhile, hiring the mechanic has allowed these managers to mostly focus on getting the crews out the door and overseeing field operations rather than getting tied up in the shop.

Fewer hands in the service and parts area of a facility reduces risk of "losing" inventory, Johns adds. His fleet manager arrives at 5 a.m. and works swiftly in the early hours, repairing machines and fueling up two-cycle equipment before crews arrive at 6:30.

The "fleet manager" role has evolved at Coastal Greenery as the company has grown. He is the head mechanic and part of the management team, and an assistant mechanic works underneath him.

The one standing rule that holds the "shop boss" accountable for everything in the service facility, and reduces liability, is an everybody-out policy. "Our crews are not allowed to step foot in that facility for anything," Johns says. "Everything has to go through the fleet manager." L81

1984

YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

2014

CELEBRATING

#### EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO GROW & MANAGE YOUR BUSINESS!

Operating and growing your service-based business has never been easier. With software designed to work the way you do, everything from managing your technicians' routes and providing quick, easy on-site estimates to effectively marketing your business – is as simple as clicking a button on any mobile or desktop device – anytime from anywhere.

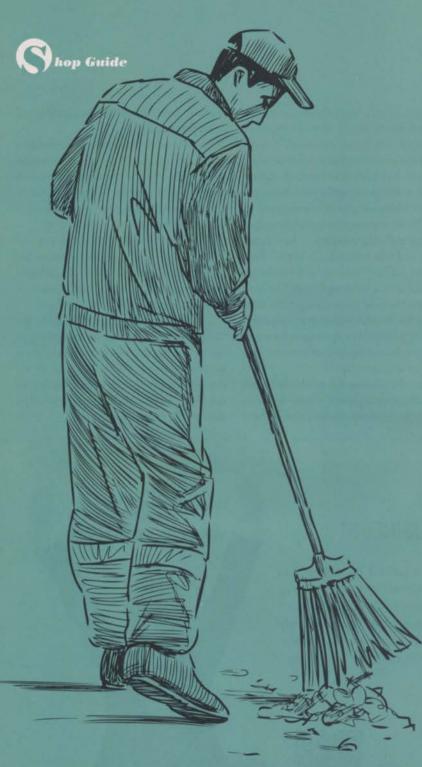






Scan the code above to sign up for a FREE product demo!

Call us today to register for our very popular, Management & User's Conference held at The Florida Hotel & Conference Center on January 5 - 10, 2015 in Orlando, Florida. We are also proud to be this year's Lawn Care Summit Platinum Sponsor.



## **SQUEAKY CLEAN**

An unkempt garage can signal company-wide disorganization and make daily tasks difficult to complete. By Kristen Hampshire hen a prospective commercial client suggested he'd stop by the headquarters of Cru Cutters to "take a look," Chris Cook realized that efforts to organize the shop at his \$3-million company were beneficial for productivity, security – and image. "He said, 'If you don't take care of your facility, do you think I'll trust you to take care of mine?" Cook recalls.

Interesting thought. "I never had a customer do that before – and there is a lot of truth to what he said," says Cook, president of the Florence, Ky.-based company.

Of course, the main purpose for properly stocking and maintaining an orderly shop is to keep equipment and vehicles up and running, and to support the mechanics working in-house. It all comes down to maximizing downtime. When parts are readily available (and easy to access), machines can be serviced efficiently and return to the field where they generate revenue.

Cook found out that a well-stocked, orderly shop has fringe benefits. It shows clients you walk the productivity walk and can make or break your efficiency.

**STOCKING THE SHOP.** "Organization and efficiency are the holy grail," says Mike DePriest, owner of Longs Peak Landscape, a \$3-million company in Longmont, Colo. DePriest stocks his shop for maintenance, irrigation and design/build construction services, and ensures that essential parts are available for the company's vehicles.

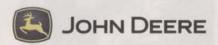
"We have a pretty well set-up shop," he says. Here is the essential stock that DePriest keeps stocked for various divisions of the company.

 Maintenance: DePriest says must-haves include extra blades, tires, trailer lights and consumables, including fluids. He also stocks hydraulic lines for snowplows and extra plow lights. "It is pretty much mandatory to have another crew's worth of equipment on standby in case of weather or mechanical issues," he says.

 Irrigation: Longs Peak Landscape keeps a vendor-managed inventory of irrigation parts on hand. "We order early and pre-order heads,

# YOUR BUSY SEASON.

Building your snow removal business together. As long as Old Man Winter cooperates, there is no offseason for landscapers. But you'll need the right snow removal equipment — like the new E-Series Skid Steers and Compact Track Loaders from John Deere. Thanks to input from all-season pros like you, they accommodate a wide range of snow removal attachments, including blades, blowers, pushers, brooms and buckets. And with our universal Quik-Tatch™ system, your machine can go from blade to broom in no time. Our forecast calls for accumulating revenue. To learn more, see your dealer or visit our website.



JohnDeere.com/Eskid



valve boxes, pipe and fittings that we know we will use," DePriest says. "We take those out of inventory using a sign-out sheet."

• Construction/design-build: Frequently used materials include mulch, soil, compost, rock and some plant material. All this is stocked at the shop, DePriest says. In the future, he hopes to acquire a larger yard to increase storage capabilities and make that a bigger part of the business model.

DePriest says the firm spends a lot of money and time acquiring materials from suppliers. The more that can be kept on site (and used in a timely manner), the better.

"Our construction division has one guy who spends the majority of his week running materials, and equipment around between job sites," he says. "The foremen of those five crews spend the first hour of their morning typically getting, loading, deliver-

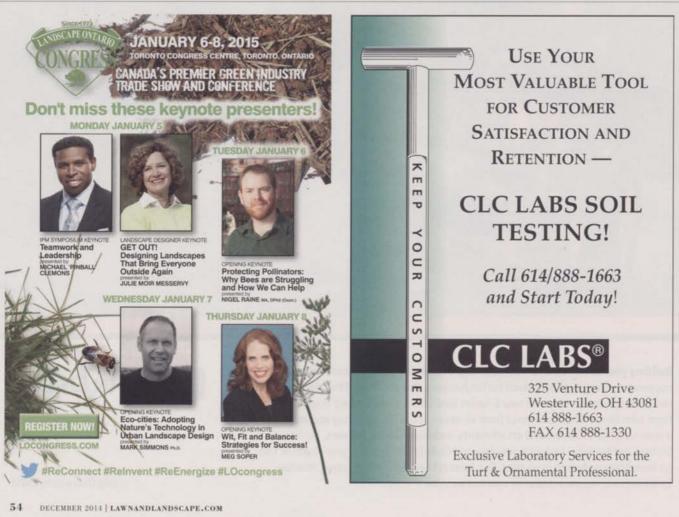


Keeping a clean shop can convey a positive message to a potential client.

ing materials to a job site too. We also have a construction supervisor who is seeing job sites and is often bringing materials, and equipment between crews.

 Vehicles: The standards include filters and spark plugs, "so basic service can be done any day without a trip to the parts store," DePriest says. Extra tires for trucks and trailers are also on hand. "Our auto parts supplier delivers materials to our shop with a phone call," he says.

 Repair equipment: Stocking the shop with parts is one thing, but the area also must have equipment to do repairs. At Longs



Peak, the shop has several floor jacks used for trailers and equipment. The company also has engine lifts, engine stands, tranny jacks and a custom workbench.

"You can drive a lawn mower or Dingo on it and work on the equipment from below, or at a more comfortable height," DePriest says.

Of course, there are luxuries on the list that DePriest would like to acquire for the shop. Those include a commercial hydraulic truck lift, a commercial tire changer and an industrial sand blaster.

SMART SHOP STORAGE. Giving Cru Cutter's mechanic a semi-private, secure and wellorganized working environment with the tools he needs to complete his work meant investing in parts and shop equipment.

"We gave our mechanic the power, and tools, to make the shop his," Cook says. That has involved reworking the space to create a better workflow and rounding out the parts inventory including how it is arranged in the shop.

For one, Cru Cutters acquired a tool inventory system. The company purchased an initial inventory – nuts, bolts and other necessities – and based on monthly use, parts are replenished.

"It includes hose clamps and electrical fittings – a wide range of parts that keep us from running out every 10 minutes to pick up what we need," Cook says. The investment runs \$5,000 to \$10,000, but Cook says it's well worth it in saved windshield time and downtime.

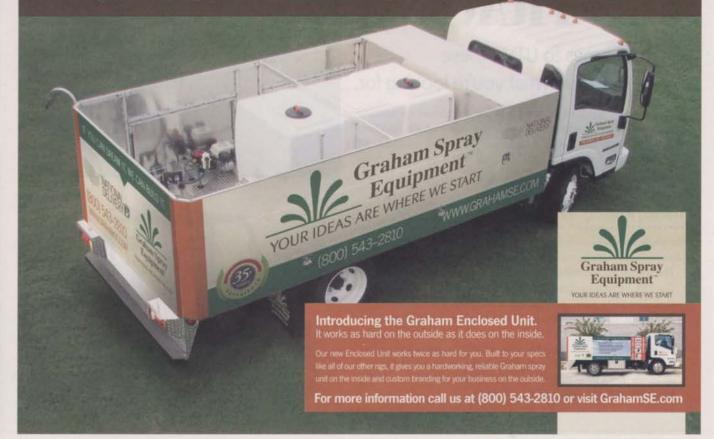
Next, Cru Cutters moved to a bin system of organizing pieces-parts. All parts are stored in clear plastic bins rather than the old way of keeping them in cardboard boxes stacked on shelves. "Keeping parts in view is helpful, and it has improved the look of the shop," Cook says.

Meanwhile, dedicated areas in the shop for cleaning equipment or changing tires keeps service processes organized at Longs Peak. Two blow-down cleaning stations at either end of the shop manage debris and dust. "We have and need a large compressor to keep up with all of the needs in our shop," DePriest says.

Crewmembers are expected to clean up equipment daily, and those stations are also used for tire maintenance. Also, the shop has a dedicated wash station with a pressure washer.

Cook adds, "An organized shop makes us feel like we have our company in line, and that's important when customers and suppliers come to our facility. It's part of the whole image package." ISL

#### Now you can get that Graham quality in an enclosed unit.



# THE TRACK

## When it comes to UTVs, these companies have what you're looking for.

TVs aren't just for fun, and landscape contractors are noticing that. If you're thinking about adding a utility terrain vehicle to your equipment lineup, there are many options out there. All UTVs are not created equal, so take a look at this list and see what works best for your needs.

#### Ariens/Gravely Atlas JSV

The pitch: Ariens/Gravely unveiled its Atlas JSV, with JSV standing for jobsite vehicle, making it a vehicle specifically for work instead of play.

- The vehicle has a 1,900-lb. payload and 2,000-lb. towing capacity.
- The MX-18 JobBox features a 1,250-lb. capacity, all made of steel. The 48-in. x 57-in. cargo bed is also on electric lift, which is standard for all Atlas vehicles, and the bed can fit a full-sized wooden pallet.
- There are four models available, with two fuel options: EFI and diesel. Each can come as either a three-seater (The SSC-3000) or six-seater (the SSV-6000).

For more information: www.gravely.com

#### KUBOTA RTV-X SERIES

The pitch: Kubota's RTV-X Series is new to the product lineup, with three models: the RTV-X900, RTV-X1100C and RTV-X1120D.

- The RTV-X900 has a payload capacity of 1,598 lbs. with a towing capacity of 1,300 lbs. The RTV-X1100C has a payload capacity of 1,510 lbs. with a towing capacity of 1,300 lbs., and the RTV-X1120 D has a payload capacity of 1,629 lbs. with a towing capacity of 1,300 lbs.
- All three come with three tire options: Heavy Duty Worksite, ATV or Turf.
- All three are four-cycle, three-cylinder diesel engines, and each has a 60/40 split-bench with under-seat storage.
   For more information: www.kubota.com





#### Bobcat 3400 and 3400XL

The pitch: Bobcat's four-wheel drive 3400 and 3400XL UTVs are new for 2015 and feature improved suspension systems, faster travel speeds and more integrated accessories.

- Both models are available with either a 40-horsepower gas engine or a 23-horsepower diesel engine. With a dealer-installed kit, they can reach up to 40 mph.
- The 3400 has a cargo box load capacity of 1,250 lbs. and the 3400XL has a cargo box capacity of 1,100 lbs. Both have a towing capacity of 2,000 lbs.
- The vehicles can be converted from an open to an enclosed cab in a few minutes with the installation of optional hinges. The cabs feature front and rear windows, a roof and canvas or hard-sided doors.

For more information: www.bobcat.com



#### John Deere Gator HPX 4X4

The pitch: John Deere's Gator HPX 4X4 UTV features an SAE and OSHA certified ROPS (Roll-over protective structure), making it a good choice for worksites.

- Features a 1,400-lb. payload and towing capacity, and the steel cargo box has a 1,000-lb. capacity. The cargo box loads at under 3 feet and tilts for easy dumping.
- The HPX 4X4 features on-demand four-wheel drive that automatically senses when the rear wheels slip, then engages front wheels with full torque, maximizing traction.
- It has an Occupant Protection System with a passenger-side handhold and three-point seatbelts that are SAE ROPS certified.
   For more information: www.deere.com



Track work crews on your own device with ExakTime Mobile. With landscaping's #1 time tracking app, employees can track themselves or supervisors can clock in an entire crew. Our feature-rich app lets you keep track of workers and keep workers on track.



- Leave the pain and hassle of paper time cards
- Team View shows you where all your crews are clocked in with GPS
- Field Notes easily creates records of incidents or updates in the field
- FaceFront Biometrics snaps photos of workers at clock-in and clock-out—so long, buddy-punching
- Easily sync all job site data with your accounting package

#### ExakTime 1.877.391.0475 | www.exaktime.com/lal

LAWNANDLANDSCAPE.COM | DECEMBER 2014 57

UTVs



#### Polaris GEM eM1400

The pitch: Polaris has released the GEM eM1400, the first GEM model completely designed and engineered by Polaris.

- The eM1400 features a 1,400-lb. payload capacity, a 1,100-lb. rear cargocarrying capacity and can tow up to 1,250 lbs.
- It has a top speed of 19mph and as an electric vehicle with zero emissions, it can be driven both indoors and outdoors, making it a good fit for facilities and grounds maintenance, indoor warehousing, lawn and landscape, farm utility, hospitality and property upkeep.
- · It comes with a 7 horsepower AC motor that has a range of up to 45 miles per charge, depending on temperature, grade, payload and driving style. For more information: www.polaris.com

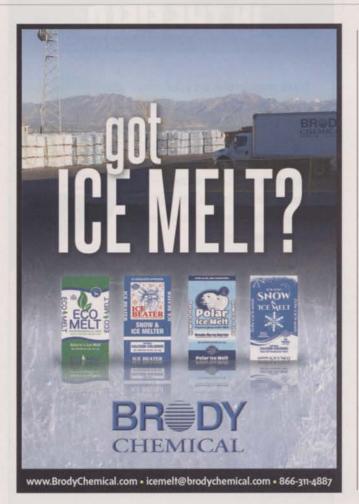


#### **Cub Cadet Volunteer 4X4 EFI**

The pitch: Cub Cadet's Volunteer 4X4 EFI UTV is a versatile machine with more than 40 attachments that can be used for different projects.

- · The UTV has a 1,400-lb. payload and towing capacity.
- · Features a 31 horsepower Kohler Aegis 747cc V-Twin EFI engine with liquid cooling.
- · Some of the optional attachments include a digital speedometer and fuel gauge, an electric bed lift, a heavy-duty molded bed and tailgate liner, a 72-inch super-duty blade and an acrylic windshield.

For more information: www.cubcadet.com



BOOKS www.turfbooks.com

#### Accountants to the Lawn Care Industry

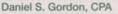
Does Your Accountant understand the Lawn Care Industry?

- Accounting/Bookkeeping Services
- Tax Preparation and Audit Representation
- Bank and Credit Card
- A/P and A/R Management
- Outsourced CFO Services

Reconciliations

Fast, Reliable, Affordable

#### Serving Lawn Care Companies Nationwide





As an Owner, Manager, CFO and Industry Consultant, Dan has been involved with the development of several service companies from inception to \$15 million in annual sales levels and beyond.

#### What Others are Saying:

Dan has helped take my business to a new level with focus on improving accounting, operations and financial management. If you are looking for one of the finest accounting service providers in the industry. Dan is your guy! He listens, is down to earth, and provides crucial feedback to help your business arow!

Matt Jesson

President, Green Lawn Fertilizing, Inc.

Want Better Financial Information? Call Turf Books Now Ph: 973-300-0288

### JOIN TODAY! bit.ly/joinplanet 800-395-2522



#### Become more professional and grow your landscape or lawn care business through:

- National, non-competitive networking with likeminded professionals
- Peer support and mentoring for your growing or established business
- Business and technical education on topics most relevant to you and/or your staff
- Recognition of your superior projects through the National Landscape Awards of Excellence
- Discounts on industry events, certification, publications, equipment, and supplies
- Protection of your business interests through state and federal legislative representation
- And more!

PLANET is the premier, national trade association with 4,000 members representing more than 100,000 landscape industry professionals, who create and maintain healthy, green living spaces for communities across America. Become a PLANET member today!



# **REV IT UP**

With engine companies improving their products, it's time to take a look and decide what's best for your equipment. By Katie Tuttle

any engine companies have new or upgraded engines in their lineups. More importantly, these companies have the landscape contractor in mind. Read on and find out what the manufacturers have in store for you and your equipment.

#### **BRIGGS & STRATTON**

Briggs & Stratton has updated its Vanguard 810 line with the Vanguard 810cc EFI. The EFI system the company chose is a closed-looped system, which means it's monitoring the exhaust to try to optimize what's happening on the intake side.

"A lot of people don't understand that if engines are working really hard, the engine needs a certain amount of fuel to get that work done," says Dan Roche, marketing manager for Briggs & Stratton. "What a fuel injection system does is it pulls back on the fuel use when the system is not being taxed." The 810 was introduced specifically with commercial turf contractors in mind. Roche says there is a lot of variety in the commercial turf marketplace and most machines are between 24 and 28 horsepower, something the company didn't offer previously. Roche says the 810 was made for zero-turn mowers, because not many other pieces of equipment run full throttle all day long.

"The way that those guys use that equipment, they're using a lot of fuel," Roche says. "We are trying to solve or improve that situation for them that uses up to 25 percent less fuel on their commercial lawn cutting equipment."

#### KAWASAKI

Kawasaki has revealed the Kawasaki Electronic Fuel Injection System, available on the new FS730V engine. The engine is designed to provide constant torque to allow for cutting large

## Bring your landscape lighting designs to life with the new Kichler Proj ED Controller



#### By Offering Homeowners a New Level of Lighting Design Personalization.

helping you create lighting effects personalized to every homeowner's unique lifestyle needs. With it you can light up to six unique zones for different areas of a property and control each zone independently with 12 scheduled events. It also works with Z-Wave® technology to control various types of 120V products such as outdoor lanterns and holiday lighting.



landscapelighting.com/ledcontroller



#### ENGINES

acreage, and with its instant power-to-load response, operators will be able to maintain the desired blade tip speed to cut grass one time without needing to repeat passes.

Kawasaki engines are tested in accordance with SAE J1995 and certified by SAE International. The FS730V features Kawasaki's v-valve technology and hemispherical heads and pistons.

It has an ECU-controlled automatic cold start, which eliminates the chance that the engine will choke, and an ECU-controlled ignition coil timing process, which retards spark during start-up and then advances the spark at full throttle for maximum power.

The engine has head temperature monitoring, which helps prevent it from overheating.

#### KOHLER

For the 2015 season, Kohler has brought out the Command PRO EFI 824cc engine. The Command PRO has a closed-loop electronic fuel injection system that is Kohler-designed and has a sensor in the muffler to continually analyze the air/fuel mixture.

If the mixture strays from the ideal level, the sensor triggers the amount of fuel injected into the system.

"The 824cc was really a project to satisfy what we saw as a growing need in the commercial turf market for both more power as well as lower cost of operation," says Eric Hudak, marketing manager, Gas Engines Americas for Kohler.

"With deck sizes continuing to get larger and ground speeds continuing to go up, the demand for high power has continued to climb, so we needed to do an engine that could satisfy that."

All Command PRO EFI engines are supported by diagnostic software which is used to look at performance data.

The software provides important information, such as a log of operating conditions, total hours, oil temperatures and load parameters.

The Command PRO also features two spark plugs per cylinder head. These enhance combustion to maximize engine torque



BRIGGS & STRATTON VANGUARD 810CC EFI

and fuel efficiency. Other features include a commercial high-density air cleaner and engineered baffles and cylinder heads.

"It's all about getting a high degree of productivity and a very low cost of operation," Hudak says.

The Command PRO is available in four models, which offer between 27 and 33 horsepower. Kohler is also introducing two propane models, which have 27 and 29 horsepower.

#### SUBARU

For 2015, Subaru has made updates to its big block engines, the 35-horsepower EH90 and 40-horsepower EH99, by adding heat sensor technology to prevent the engine from running at high temperatures or without lubrication and thus prolonging the engine's life.

The sensor monitors the engine's temperature, and if it gets too high, an alarm warns the operator. Another sensor warns the operator of low oil pressure.

"These sensors allow the user to stop,

check the engine and make adjustments to prevent damage to the engine," says David Frank, vice president of sales and marketing for Subaru Industrial Power Products.

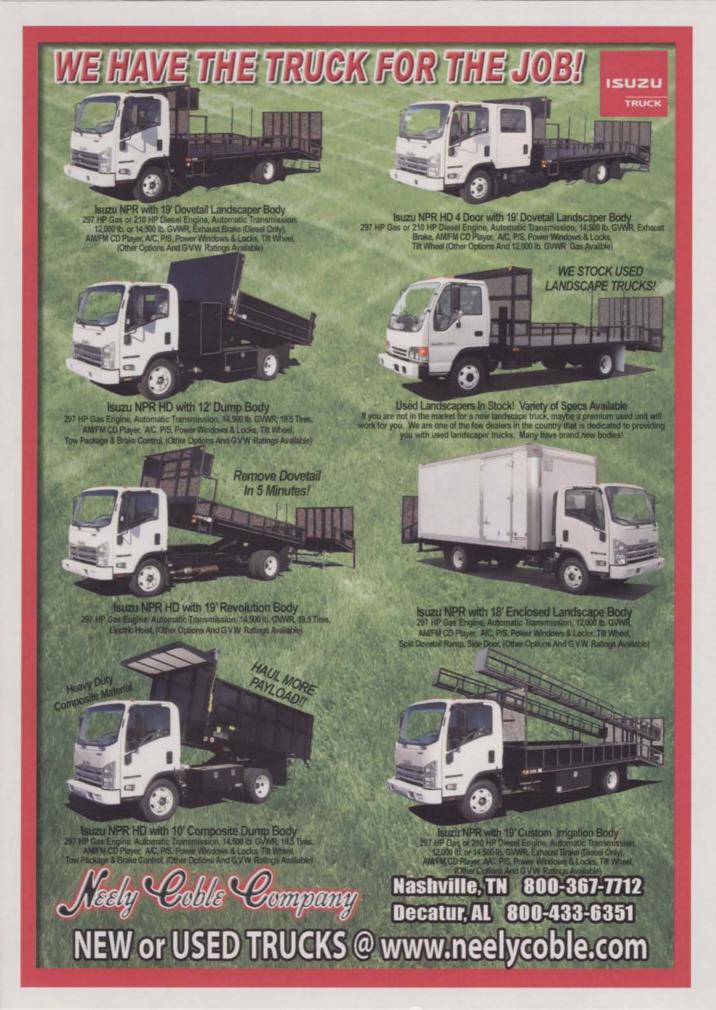
The engines will also feature a pressurized lubrication system that allows the overhead valve engine to use an automotive-grade spin-on oil filter.

The filter removes dirt and carbon solids, thus extending the time between oil changes. The engines also come with Subaru's optional Donaldson canister-style air cleaner.

Subaru decided to make the updates with the sensors because the company wanted to offer a viable alternative to diesel engines.

"Diesel units have nearly doubled in price because of compliance requirements," Frank says. "We believe offering our customers quality, reliable equipment is more important than anything."

Frank says contractors will like the changes because they're nothing drastic. "Consistent quality without constant changes is what keeps (customers) coming back." LBL



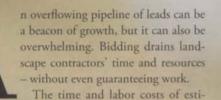
MAPPING SOFTWARE

# SAVE YOURSELF THE TRIP

340

081

Mapping software eliminates driving from property to property to measure sites, saving you time and money. By Brooke N. Bates



mating add up. Just ask Nate Harmon, who physically measured several hundred leads for his family's company, Harmon & Sons Lawn Care Specialists, after each home and garden show.

"I would have days that were just packed," says Harmon, operations director of the company in Layton, Utah. "I'd have 200 to 300 bids, and it would take several days. Sometimes, it would take two or three trucks going out to measure all day."

From travel time to tedious manual measuring, estimating can slow down contractors. To reclaim lost time, Harmon started using mapping software six years ago to bid fertilization, weed and pest control services. By leveraging mapping software to virtually measure prospective properties, contractors can save time and money.

"It used to take me almost a whole day to measure a huge HOA with 100 houses, and now it takes me an hour. I do it all with just a click," Harmon says, citing his record of 287 bids in one day. "When I look back at the amount of money

### It's your future. Look closely. Choose wisely.

Before you bet \$10,000 on the myth that a bigger and faster machine will put more money in your pocket... you owe it to yourself to get all the facts.

We guarantee that our redesigned 2015 Triumph is the most practical and productive spreader sprayer - in the universe, or your money back.

Visit permagreen.com your chance to win a 2015 Triumph!



# permagreen.com

permagreen.com for details and limitations of our 60-day buy back Giarantee. © 2014 PermaGreen™ Supreme, Inc. U.S. Patents 6,366,600 & 7,954,573. PermaGreen™ is a registered trademark of PermaGreen™ Supreme, Inc. All rights reserved. your tuture. Look closely. Choose wisel

#### MAPPING SOFTWARE

we were spending to measure, with fuel and wage costs, we're saving all of that now."

Here's how contractors can take advantage of mapping software – and understand its limitations – to accelerate growth.

SEE THE BENEFITS, BIG AND SMALL. While mapping software can measure any size property, contractors with large commercial clients or geographically dispersed projects realize benefits on a large scale.

For example, Global Industrial Services, a large facility services provider headquartered in Syosset, N.Y., recently adopted mapping software to measure properties. It selfperforms grounds maintenance, along with janitorial and snow management services, to more than 5,000 locations throughout the northeast. With large multi-location clients, it may estimate services for 1,000 locations at once.

"It's just impossible to send somebody out to effectively measure those areas," says Lee Trachtman, vice president of business development. "Their time could be spent better elsewhere; that's why we use mapping software. For us, it's about being able to get to those locations without having somebody actually travel. It's certainly a lot easier, given our amount of sites and their geographic reach."

The software also benefits smaller companies – especially when limited manpower is stretched between time-consuming estimates. Five years ago, the owner of Mc-Cabe's Nursery & Landscape Construction physically mapped properties to bid landscape construction and maintenance services around Temecula, Calif. Then the company bought mapping software.

"The owner's time is the most valuable," says Melissa McCabe Navaroli, managing director. "The marginal cost difference of having him out there measuring for two hours then taking three to five hours to draw it into CAD, versus having a perfectly scaled satellite image, is huge."

GET IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME. Speed isn't the only advantage of mapping software; accuracy is key. "No matter how well someone measures by hand, there's an element of human error," Navaroli says. "Properties aren't always square, so you get the wrong angle and wind up having to put in 50 percent more concrete than you estimated. We were losing money because of it. Now, we can hand a drawing to the construction or maintenance division with more confidence in the accuracy."

The software helps Navaroli figure exact measurements and square footages for construction and maintenance projects by relying on recent satellite footage, with additional tools to gauge slopes and shady areas.

Accuracy upfront lays a foundation for projects to succeed beyond initial estimates.

"It expedites the execution, too, because if the plan is more accurate, there are fewer change orders during the job," she says. "It means the construction crew can to physically inspect about one of every 12 lawns mapped with software.

Common software limitations force contractors back into the field.

"Some of the satellite views can be outdated," Trachtman says. "Properties do change, and you don't get as granular a view as you would if you were there. Some angles might be blocked because of the limitations of these overheads."

Software may not show every line or edge. Areas of new development are especially tricky, often requiring physical visits because satellites can't keep up with construction progress.

At McCabe's, mapping software is a supplemental tool to prepare for collaborative client meetings – not a replacement for face-to-face interaction. In fact, the software helps determine who to send, making time in the field more efficient. "Now we can

"It used to take me almost a whole day to measure a huge HOA with 100 houses, and now it takes me an hour. I do it all with just a click."

- Nate Harmon, operations director at Harmon & Sons Lawn Care Specialists

build faster because they're building off of something accurate."

ADD A PERSONAL TOUCH. When Harmon & Sons began using mapping software, Harmon trained his team to generate estimates instantly when customers called. But it didn't always work that way. Although they could calculate square footage, they couldn't always diagnose lawn issues remotely.

"The problem is: I can measure their lawn, but I cannot tell them exactly which weed is which, if they have a fungus or if they have bugs, because I'm not physically on their lawn," Harmon says. "Before, I could because I was there already measuring it."

Harmon realized that mapping software couldn't generate every detail. While some issues can be deciphered over the phone, and trucks are equipped with products to treat any problem, Harmon sends someone pre-check properties before we meet with customers," Navaroli says. "It helps us geographically and demographically target the right sales rep to send."

The software prepares sales reps with a property picture to help clients visualize projects in the context of their yards. By understanding the limitations of technology to integrate mapping software into their landscaping toolboxes, contractors can accelerate growth. Harmon has doubled its work volume since adopting the software in 2008.

"We have increased quite a bit, and a lot of it is due to being able to measure people's houses quickly (and) accurately, and answer their questions fast instead of putting them off for a few days," Harmon says.

"When people are looking for a quote, they don't want to wait. Whoever can get it to them the fastest is probably going to get the work." L&L



## CORDLESS OUTDOOR POWER EQUIPMENT

# GAS PERFORMANCE. GUARANTEED.



**AVAILABLE IN EARLY 2015** 

LEARN MORE WWW.DEWALT.COM/OUTDOOR

\*Maximum initial battery voltage (measured without a workload) is 40 volts. Nominal voltage is 36.



## **FAR-FLOWING REACH**

Rain gardens are coming into demand for their environmental benefits.

#### **By Stacie Zinn Roberts**

n certain parts of the country, rain gardens are growing in popularity and that trend is becoming a factor in the health of local environments. And it's a trend in which you can take part.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the east coast's Chesapeake Bay watershed. The Chesapeake Bay watershed spans more than 64,000 square miles. It encompasses all of the District of Columbia and parts of six states: Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

Nearly 18 million people live in the watershed area. They live in houses, drive on asphalt streets, walk on sidewalks and park cars in large mall parking lots. When it rains, water falls on the impervious surfaces of roofs, parking lots and streets, and funnels into sewer systems that dump into nearby rivers. The Susquehanna, Potomac, Rappahannock, York and James rivers all connect to the Chesapeake Bay.

When it rains, pollutants like road oil and other chemicals wash down storm drains and into the watershed where large populations of crabs, oysters

#### RAIN GARDEN RESOURCES

North Carolina State University Residential Rain Garden Certification for Professionals **bit.ly/rainncsu** 

Washington State University rain garden workshops for professionals **bit.ly/rainwsu** 

Rutgers University Rain Garden Certification Program **bit.ly/rutgerwater** 

For more resources, visit Lawnandlandscape.com and other sea creatures live. These fish and crustaceans feed the people who live in the watershed area and support a large watershed-based fishing and tourism economy.

That's why there's such a huge push in the region, and in many other places around the country,



Eric Drenner

for new construction or renovation projects to include an on-site system that captures rainwater and filters it before releasing it down into the water table. These systems are known by the much more consumerfriendly term of "rain gardens."

"A rain garden, as we define it, would be a garden with soil and plants where stormwater or rainwater is diverted," says Eric Drenner, president of E-Landscape Specialty Solutions, a design-build firm based in Davidsonville, Md.

ABOVE: This rain garden by Ross NW Watergardens is at the end of a long, dry creek containing several dry wells. It processes rain water from two roofs and a parking area.





### Use GPS Tracking to MAINTAIN YOUR VEHICLES FOR LESS

Take control of vehicle maintenance expenses with Verizon Networkfleet, the GPS tracking technology that drives smart business management decisions. Improve preventive maintenance scheduling. Reduce labor and repair expenses. Minimize vehicle downtime. Whether in your office or on the road, get the data you need to take your business to the next level.

Help decrease maintenance costs while improving customer service. That's powerful.

866.869.1353 | networkfleet.com

#### RAIN GARDENS

"That garden uses the soil mix and the plants to filter out contaminants whether they are chemicals or road oil or heavy metals. The water is filtered through the soil. The rain garden allows the water to dissipate through the soil so that we are not relying on water inlets or drain inlets that just dump into our waterways without any kind of treatment." Drenner has designed and built "a couple hundred" rain gardens in the Chesapeake Bay watershed over the past decade.

Right now, Drenner's company is working on a low-income housing project in the District of Columbia that, according to regulations, is required to have an onsite rain garden system that can contain and process a rain event of up to 1.25-inches of precipitation. The approximately 5-acre project will need more than 20 rain gardens on the property to handle the job. The goal, Drenner says, is to "alleviate the pressure put on stormwater management systems by having these properties handle and manage their rainwater runoff."

Design and construction of a rain garden, Drenner says, runs from \$75 to \$95 per square foot retail to the customer.

**CURBSIDE SERVICE.** In the Pacific Northwest, rain gardens are a growing trend. A campaign by Washington State University sets a goal of 12,000 rain gardens installed in the Seattle/ Puget Sound area by 2016 in order to soak up 160 million gallons of polluted runoff.

Portland has an initiative called Green Streets that converts curbsides into rain gardens. The retrofit uses landscaped curb extensions, swales, planter strips, pervious pavement and street trees to intercept and infiltrate stormwater before it reaches storm drains.

Portlanders, now familiar with the rain garden concept, have embraced the structures, says Ben Bowen, a landscape designer with Ross NW Watergardens, based in Portland. He says the average home lot in Portland is 5,000 square feet, requiring a rain garden of about 100 to 150 square feet. The rain gardens are considered "desirable and responsible to have on your property." Although his company has been building rain gardens for about 15 years, they have become "much more common over the last five to six years," Bowen says.

**GOVERNMENT EFFECT.** In Fairfax County, Va., local stormwater regulations limit a property's percentage of impervious surfaces including rooftops, driveways and even swimming pools, says David Marciniak, owner first came out, rain gardens were not embraced because of poor plant choice," Drenner says.

To figure out the right mix for any region, Marciniak says "in most cases, the local area will have a stormwater best management practices guide. I'll crib off what they use there and use the local recommendations."

YOUR TURN. For professionals wanting to add rain gardens to their mix of services, learning how to properly design and construct them is becoming easier. More and more university extension offices offer workshops for pros and at least two programs, one at Rutgers University in New Jersey and one at North



and lead designer of Revolutionary Gardens in McLean, Va. "If what you're proposing exceeds (that percentage), you may want to look at solutions like permeable paving and rain gardens."

A rain garden requires soil sandy enough to allow infiltration and plant material (usually native plants) that can handle periods of dryness followed by cycles of 24 to 48 hours of wetness while the water drains. "When they

"Specifying of rain gardens is becoming more and more common. Done improperly, they become a waterlogged mess that kills everything in them. Done correctly, they're pretty awesome."

- David Marciniak, owner and lead designer at Revolutionary Gardens

Carolina State University, offer professional certification.

"Specifying of rain gardens is becoming more and more common. Done improperly, they become a waterlogged mess that kills everything in them. Done correctly, they're pretty awesome," Marciniak says. "I think it's a huge opportunity for contractors willing to explore the idea to a get handle on plants that will like wet feet. If 90 percent of these look awful and you're among the 10 percent that make them look amazing, that's a fantastic marketing tool right there." **LSL** 

The author is a freelance writer based in Mount Vernon, Wash.

Lawn&Landscape

# SHATTERING App-spectations.

Engage yourself with the new **Lawn & Landscape** app today. Available FREE on the App Store.

# **Expand your horizons**

Here's what you need to know about adding a biostimulant program to your service portfolio.

#### By Jake Zuckerman

f your company is looking to add to its repertoire, including a biostimulant service could be a smart option. Biostimulants are organic chemicals or microorganisms you can apply to help plants cope with various stressors like drought, too much sun, excessive heat and more.

Whether on the plant or in the soil, biostimulants work by enhancing a plant's ability to soak up nutrients and reach its fullest potential.

Lawns Unlimited in Milton, Del., runs a biostimulant service April through August. Owner and agronomist Edward Fleming recommends it not just for the benefits in root health, resilience and nutrient absorption, but also for the good it does for the environment.

"Biostimulants are an organic material that airify that soil and make nutrients more accessible," he says. "It enables broad leaf control and decreases the nitrates put on the lawn which reduces flesh growth and decreases the growth of plant material, meaning less clippings."

David Beaudreau, co-chair of The Biostimulant Coalition, adds that biostimulants are a good option for those in drought-stricken areas.

"A lot of biostimulant companies have found that when there's a drought, their plants perform better than control groups," he says. "It makes the plants more resilient to stress."

Given their efficiency, plant potency and economic future, Fleming advises landscape companies to add a biostimulant service if they can. "If they're serious about the market," Fleming says, "they'll utilize biostimulants as an excellent management tool."

MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY. When drier conditions make survival harder for plants, causing dis-

ease and fertility issues, biostimulants can be used for a healthy lawn. The process works because the additives facilitate the breakdown of different nutrients in the soil for plants.

"Biostimulants reduce fertilizer runoff, which is especially good for sites near watersheds," Beaudreau says. "You'll see yield improvements, better quantity or quality, better flower color."

One issue with using biostimulants, however, is picking the right brand. After research started showing the efficacy of biostimulants, a lot of companies started producing knockoffs that make it harder to find an effective biostimulant.

The organic biostimulants that are reported to work well are made from plant hormones, vitamins, enzymes, humic acid, sugar, sea kelp and fish emulsion.

"The basic concept is that biostimulants improve the nutrient use efficiency of the plant in question," Beaudreau says. "When used, plants absorb more of the nutrients from the soil."

Another perk of using biostimulants is that they lessen dependence on artificial fertilizers, thereby lowering input costs and helping the environment.

"When I use biostimulants, I'll save about 2 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of ground," Fleming says.

Fleming adds that using biostimulants is also good for the environment because it cuts back on the amount of fertilizer that would run off to nearby bodies of water causing an algae bloom. L8L

The author is a freelance writer based in Athens, Ohio.



# LAWN CARE R·A·D·I·O N·E·T·W·O·R·K

# **A FEAST** FOR THE EARS!

Original podcasts

New ideas

Practical advice



Check it out at LAWNANDLANDSCAPE.COM and on iTunes!

#### **NEW PRODUCTS @ GIE+EXPO**

For more products from GIE+EXPO, visit www.lawnandlandscape.com/products



# SENSORY OVERLOAD

With so much going on at GIE+EXPO, we know you couldn't learn about every new piece of equipment on display. Below, find out about some of the products you may have missed.

#### **Altoz XE Series**

**The pitch:** Altoz is adding to its zero-turn mower line with the launch of the XE series including the XE 480, XE 540 and XE 610. All are powered by a Briggs & Stratton Commercial Turf engine with electronic fuel management. The models are available in 48-, 54- and 61-inch cutting deck widths.

- Large 22-inch rear tires and an optional suspension seat combine for a comfortable ride.
- All have a 10-gallon fuel capacity.

The durable Hydro-Gear 3200 commercial transmissions are featured on all three models.
 For more information: www.altoz.com

#### **Billy Goat Hydro Drive Aerator**

The pitch: Billy Goat's new hydrostatic drive 30-inch reciprocating aerator features Variable Aeration Density, In-Ground Turning and FLEXTECH arms. The aerator is 30 inches wide with a speed up to 4.3 miles per hour, and can complete quarter-acre aerations in as little as 15 minutes.

- The unit creates 2-10 times more holes than drum models in a single pass.
- The FLEXTECH arms provide flexible limb reciprocating action, driving plug depths up to two times that of drums, even in dry soil.
- In-ground steering means no lifting to make turns so there's no turf repair and no wear and tear on the operator when compared to drum aerators.

For more information: www.billygoat.com



#### Bobcat MT52 Mini Track Loader

**The pitch:** The Bobcat MT52 mini track loader is designed for projects that are too big for shovels and wheel barrows, in areas too small for a full-size skid-steer.

- The MT52 has a platform option that can be installed or removed in a couple of minutes.
- It is outfitted with a new control system. The direction and speed are now controlled by one multi-function handle, instead of two independent hand levers.
- This mini track loader has a 520-lb, rated operating capacity. Its compact size (3 ft, wide, 6 ft, long) enables it to go where many skid-steer loaders cannot.

For more information: www.bobcat.com

#### CASE TR310 Alpha Series

The pitch: CASE Construction Equipment introduces the new Tier 4 Final TR310 Alpha Series compact track loader (CTL).

 The new TR310 features wider tracks, a greater overall width and lower ground pressure than other medium-frame

CTLs in the CASE lineup.

 The new TR3to weighs in at 8,800 pounds with a rated operating capacity



of 3,100 pounds and a bucket breakout force of 8,680 pounds.

 The machine has 74 HP, 232 footpounds of torque and increased hydraulic flow (standard: 24.2 gallonsper-minute (gpm); high-flow: 32.4 gpm)

For more information: www.casece.com

#### **NEW PRODUCTS @ GIE+EXPO**

For more products from GIE+EXPO, visit www.lawnandlandscape.com/products

#### **Exmark Vantage S-Series**

The pitch: Exmark has unveiled the Vantage S-Series Propane 52-inch standon rider, which uses a Kohler Command Pro PCV740 EFI propane powerplant.

 The engine's automotive-style closedloop EFI system adjusts fuel/air mixture settings in real time for use in any conditions.



- The Vantage S-Series Propane model is available with a 52-inch UltraCut
- Series 4 cutting deck. The deck features Exmark's Flow Control baffles. Blade spindle assemblies feature rugged cast aluminum housings and
- zero-maintenance sealed heavy-duty bearings to maximize service life. For more information: www.exmark.com

#### John Deere Z997R Diesel ZTrack

The pitch: John Deere has updated its commercial zero-turn offerings with the new Z997R Diesel ZTrak.

 The Z997R is available with a 60-inch or 72-inch 7-Iron PRO side discharge deck, a 60-inch 7-Iron PRO Mulch On Demand deck or a 60-inch 7-gauge fabricated rear discharge deck.



- It's designed with a heavy-duty frame, features a shaft drive to minimize deck belt costs and flat-free front tires to reduce field downtime.
- New electrically powered 14-bushel hard shell dump-from-seat Material Collection System (MCS) allows the operator to accumulate material with minimized leakage and extends intervals between emptying.

For more information: www.deere.com



#### Kubota Z700-Series

**The pitch:** Kubota is introducing three new models to its Z700-Series: the Z724X-48, Z724X-54 and Z726X-60. The Series features a Parker TorqPact GT 14 transmission.

- Ergonomics feature a wide operator station, a thick high-back adjustable seat and convenient deck height adjustment dial.
- Smooth steering provides control and drive-ability at speeds topping n mph.
- Equipped with an n.5-gallon fuel tank for more operating hours.
- For more information: www.kubota.com

#### **Michelin X Tweel Turf**

The pitch: Michelin Tweel Technologies is partnering with John Deere to equip its ZTrak 900 series line-up. The Tweel Turf will replace the standard tire.

- Available on the 54-, 60- and 72-inch deck sizes, the Tweel Turf is designed to eliminate downtime.
- The airless radial tire is made for landscape professionals who normally experience expensive and inconvenient downtime associated with flat tires.
- · The tread lasts up to three times longer than standard turf tires.
- For more information: www.michelinman.com

#### STIHL Lithium-ion Powered Adjustable Telescopic Hedge Trimmer

**The pitch**: The HLA 85 Lithium-Ion, extended-reach hedge trimmer has a runtime of up to 11 hours at full power.

- The battery-powered trimmer produces low noise and low vibrations.
- Weighs 12.6 pounds
- Has a runtime of up to n hours at full power with the AR 900 backpack battery.

For more information: www.STIHL.com

#### SnowEx Brine Pro 2000 Brine Maker

The pitch: SnowEx has introduced the Brine Pro 2000 brine maker.

 Engineered for use with low-flow water input and standard 220VAC power sources, the Brine Pro is compatible for a variety of operations.



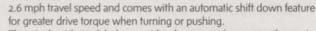
- It features touch-screen controls with separate modes for automatic and batch production, as well as a special cleaning mode.
- Its automatic salinity control helps ensure proper salt/water proportions with minimal effort from the operator.

For more information: www.snowexproducts.com

#### Takeuchi Tier 4 Final TB216 Excavator

The pitch: Takeuchi-US has recently introduced the TB216 compact excavator, replacing the TB016. The TB216 features a Yanmar Tier 4 Final engine, producing 15 HP.

- The excavator has an operating weight of 3,900 pounds, and features a retractable undercarriage to transport and maneuver between gates and in confined areas.
- The undercarriage has a two-speed planetary travel motor that delivers a maximum



- The 9-inch wide track helps provide a low ground pressure of 4.3 psi for working on sensitive surfaces
- For more information: www.takeuchi-us.com

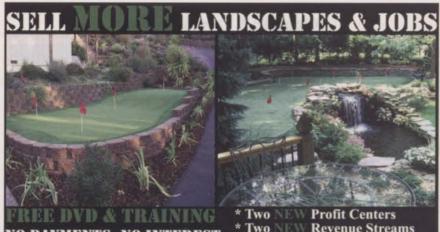






## CLASSIFIEDS Place a Classified today! Please contact Bonnie Velikonya at 800/456-0707 x5322 or bvelikonya@gie.net.

**BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES** 



NO PAYMENTS, NO INTEREST FOR 90 DAYS We FUND Your Installs www.allprogreens.com/training \* Two Profit Centers \* Two Revenue Streams \* Two Customer Bases \* ODAS - NO Payments/Interest \* A Simple, Easy Add-On Service \* Buy Manufacturer Direct 1-800-334-9005

# SELL MORE LANDSCAPES & JOBS



FREE DVD & TRAINING NO PAYMENTS, NO INTEREST FOR 90 DAYS We FUND Your Installs www.allprogreens.com/training \* Two Profit Centers \* Two Revenue Streams \* Two Customer Bases \* ONO Payments/Interest \* A Simple, Easy Add-On Service \* Buy Manufacturer Direct 1-800-334-9005

## Maximize your advertising dollars

We offer the industry's lowest costs for you to be seen in both Lawn & Landscape magazine and on www.lawnandlandscape.com.

Please contact Bonnie Velikonya at 800/456-0707 x291 or bvelikonya@gie.net.



#### BOOKS

#### Job Descriptions for Green Industry Professionals

Publication Special for Jim Huston's new book! Over 95 Industry Specific Job Descriptions! • Job Description book • Job Description audio book on CD • Job Description MS Word CD 33% Discount! All three for \$200 plus \$19 5&H

Email Tiffany for more info at tiffany@jrhuston.biz

#### **BUSINESS FOR SALE**

#### SNOW AND ICE MANAGEMENT COMPANY FOR SALE IN ONTARIO

Specializing in Commercial and Municipal customers. Company is 20+ years old. Excellent reputation in marketplace. Consistently profitable. Multi-year contracts. Excellent safety record, good documentation. Owner retiring, but will stay on to aid in transition. Equipment, customers, assets, highly trained staff. Building optional. The Company maintains good documentation and a strong health and safety program.

This Company is a leading edge snow contractor effectively using technology when their competition does not.

If you are interested in potentially purchasing this business, please contact us.

Richard Sippola, Investment Banker PJA, Inc. dba John Allin Consulting Tel: (440) 520-5864 RICK@JOHNALLIN.COM

#### Dixie Chopper Dealer East Coast of Florida

FOR SALE WITH FINANCING Lawn Equipment Sales & Repair Business Business and Real estate asking \$685K Owner nets over \$120K per year 35 Years same location time to retire Contact John Brogan 772-220-4455 Acquisition Experts, LLC or visit www.acquisitionexperts.net

LAWN & LANDSCAPE: VIEW CLASSIFIEDS ONLINE AT LAWNANDLANDSCAPE.COM Place a Classified today! Please contact Bonnie Velikonya at 800/456-0707 x5322 or bvelikonya@gie.net. GLASSIFIEDS

## FOR SALE

Discount

#### **BUSINESS WANTED**

#### John Allin Consulting PJA, Inc.

We represent a company seeking to expand operations in all of PA, MD, WV, OH & NJ through acquisition of companies with snow profit centers.

For more information contact: John@johnallin.com Rick@johnallin.com

814-452-3919

#### CONSULTANT

#### How to WIN commercial lawn care accounts

Coming this fall 2014, affordable, practical, and in-the-trenches advice on how to win commercial lawn accounts. If you're desire is to add commercial to your residential portfolio, but need some guidance, I can help.

Visit www.winwithcommercial.com and sign-up today so you're first to get the info

Learn more about me online: www.linkedin.com/pub/zoran-ploscar

#### Jim Huston's Consulting

I will provide your company with the tools and training you need to make your business more efficient and profitable. I help you: Develop and Implement a Strategic Plan Create Accurate Budgets Bid Jobs More Confidently

Our consulting can be customized to your needs.

For more details email Jim at jhuston@jrhuston.biz

#### FOR SALE

#### NEW/USED/REBUILT

Plows and parts Largest diverse plow inventory Western, Fisher, Blizzard, Meyer, Diamond, Snoway, Snowman, Boss 1000 plows in stock WWW.STORKSAUTO.COM 610-488-1450

#### FOR SALE

#### REDUCE PESTICIDE USE BY 50% OR MORE



#### NEED PLOW PARTS? www.plowpartsdirect.com

The name says it all. Western, Snoway, Meyer





## Landscape Channel Manager

LebanonTurf is seeking a Landscape Channel Manager to guide our product and program offerings to the landscape industry. The successful candidate will have a strong understanding of, and background in, the lawn care/landscape industry. Position is based in our Lebanon, PA corporate headquarters.

#### Please submit resume to:

Cindy Smith at csmith@lebsea.com or 1600 E. Cumberland Street, Lebanon, PA 17042



#### **CLASSIFIEDS**

Place a Classified today! Please contact Bonnie Velikonya at 800/456-0707 x5322 or bvelikonya@gie.net.

#### **HELP WANTED**

# RUPPERT

We offer an environment that is: • Devoted to employee development & team building • Committed for the long-term • Eager to appreciate & celebrate our employees • Employee & family owned

Come be a part of a: • History of growth and success • Tradition of community support

We are expanding and have immediate openings for landscape management and construction positions in PA, MD, VA, NC & GA.

Contact Lauren Moyer at: Imoyer@ruppertcompanies.com Check us out at: www.ruppertlandscape.com

#### Snow and Ice Management Company We are looking for Subcontractors in

DE, FL, GA, IN, KY, MD, NC, NJ, NY, OH, PA, SC, TN, VA, WV to provide SNOW removal, landscaping, parking lot sweeping. Please go to our website **www.snowandicemgmt.com** and fill out our form "Join our Team"

#### LAWNANDLANDSCAPE.COM

#### HELP WANTED

#### GreenSearch Since 1995, GreenSearch is recognized

as the premier provider of professional and confidential employment search exclusively for exterior and interior landscape, irrigation, and the overall green industry throughout North America. Check us out on the Web at www.greensearch.com or call toll free at 888-375-7787 or via e-mail info@greensearch.com

LANDSCAPEJOBS.COM Jobs & Resumes for Landscape Pros.

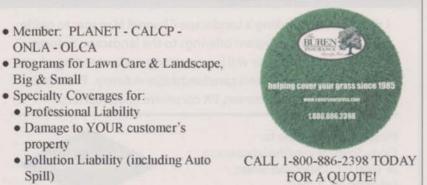
http://www.landscapejobs.com/ 1-717-479-1850



LMI Landscapes is a growing company that specializes in all aspects of commercial landscape and irrigation needs including commercial grounds maintenance with offices in Dallas, Austin, and Denver. We are currently hiring professionals for various positions within our company including maintenance account managers, branch managers, construction superintendents, and many more.

Send your resume to hr@lmilandscapes.com.

#### INSURANCE



Herb/Pest Endorsement

FOR A QUOTE! Brett Adams, Green Industry Specialist brett.adams@coveryourgrass.com

#### INSURANCE

#### Liability Insurance For Your Work

Most insurers will not provide coverage for damaged lawns as a result of **your work** as defined in all standard General Liability policies. If your tech is negligent, the product applied is improperly mixed or agitated, a roque em-



ployee intentionally damages the yards, or perhaps the lawn was not properly diagnosed, there is no coverage for the damage done to the customer's lawn as a result of **your work**. Some insurers call this the business risk exclusion.

Other common endorsements that have been added to General Liability policies in the past such as the Pesticide-Herbicide Applicators endorsement and various forms of Contractors Limited Worksite Pollution endorsements will not cover damages to your customer's lawns based on the issues discussed above and damages caused as a result of **your work**.

The Keenan Agency, Inc. has designed a stand alone Lawn Care Professional Liability policy which will provide coverage for damaged customers lawns due to your negligence including damages which are/were the result of **your work**.

This program is not a replacement for your standard commercial general liability policy.

In summary, you probably do not have the coverage you think you have. Please contact The Keenan Agency, Inc. if you are concerned that your current coverage does not cover your work.

Premiums as low as \$550/yr.

The Keenan Agency, Inc. 6805 Avery-Muirfield Dr., Suite 200 Dublin, Ohio 43016 614-764-7000 Rick Bersnak – Vice President rbersnak@keenanins.com

Gen. Liab., W.C. and Comm. Auto, Property Programs also available.

VIEW CLASSIFIEDS ONLINE AT LAWNANDLANDSCAPE.COM

#### Place a Classified today! Please contact Bonnie Velikonya at 800/456-0707 x5322 or bvelikonya@gie.net. CLASSIFIEDS

#### LANDSCAPER ACCESSORIES

W.E.CHAVPPS
Chemical Spray Vest and Chaps, Mower Trash Bags, String Trimmer Chaps, Hedge Trimmer Chaps, Zero Turn Mower Covers, String Trimmer Covers, Arm Chaps, and Much Much More!!!
Over 200 Quality, Innovative Landscaper Accessories

#### LANDSCAPE EQUIPMENT

#### TREE STAKES

Doweled Lodgepole Pine CCA Pressure Treated 2" Diameter, Various Lengths Economical, Strong and Attractive Phone: 800-238-6540 Fax: 509-238-4695 JASPER ENTERPRISES, INC. We ship nationwide. Web site: www.jasper-inc.com

#### LAWN SIGNS

#### PROMOTE TO NEIGHBORS



View Hundreds of Promotional Ideas, Layouts & Exclusive Images Online!

RNDsigns.com • 800.328.4009 Posting Signs • Door Hangers Brochures • Mailers More

# LETTERS to EDITOR

Want to sound off on something you saw in this issue? Have an idea that you think would be worth featuring in next month's Lawn & Landscape? We want to know.

Call or email Chuck Bowen at 330-523-5330 or cbowen@gie.net.

#### MEETINGS

#### Jackson Hole Brainstorming Meeting Hosted by Jim Huston

January 29-31, 2015 3 days of interaction with up to 20 non-competitive green industry companies at Jackson Hole, WY. Great site-seeing and winter activities with plenty to do for the whole family. Stay an extra day and watch the Super Bowl with us! For more details email: Tiffany: tiffany@jrhuston.biz

Or Jim: jhuston@jrhuston.biz

#### **PLANTS, SEEDS & TREES**

#### NATIVE SEEDS

Largest distributor of native seed east of the Mississippi, from Canada to Florida! We specialize in upland to wetland sites, including bioengineering for riparian sites. Your native seed source.

Contact ERNST SEEDS today. www.ernstseed.com – 800/873-3321

#### GROUNDCOVERS

Over 150 varieties – constant supply Ajuga, Daylillies, Euonymus, Ferns, Hostas, Ivies, Jasmine, Liriope, Mondo, Pachysandra, Sedum, Vinca

#### LIRIOPE

World's Largest Supplier – Over 15 Varieties Heavy field grown divisions! THE HOME OF SUDDEN SERVICE Free Full Color Catalog **CLASSIC GROUNDCOVERS INC.** 405 Belmont Rd., Athens, GA 30605 Toll Free: 1-800-248-8424 Fax: 706-369-9844 www.classic-groundcovers.com

#### Let us help you get the word out.

The L&L Media Group's reprint service. Email reprints@gie.net to learn more.

Lawn&Landsca

#### SOFTWARE



Slash Your Recurring Monthly Costs and Save Big There are no maintenance or support fees with BILLMASTER. BILLMASTER is a one time fee product (which you can pay off in interest free payments) Simple, Reliable, Affordable

#### We can convert ANY system to BILLMASTER in minutes! Start today for as little as \$50

## Tired of QuickBooks<sup>™</sup> or your current software?

Billmaster is the best software in the Landscape industry. ALL at a price your business can afford, with no recurring costs. CRM, Billing, Scheduling, Proposals, Sales Tax Calc, Reports, E-mail Billing, Integrated Credit Card Processing. No need to learn another software package, BILLMASTER is customized to fit your needs. Conversion from ANY system included. New Tablet Apps for Windows 8! Unlimited training, support, updates. New Product: BILLMASTER-OnTheGo the paperless solution for Windows tablets and laptops. VISA, MC and AMEX, Checks. GET YOUR BILLS DONE FASTER WITH BILLMASTER!

e-mail: sales@billmaster.info 201-620-8566 www.billmaster.info

#### WEB DESIGNERS

Web Design, Brochures, Logos, Lettering and Printing Services for Landscapers. Your single source for marketing your landscape business. Samples online: www.landscapermarketing.com or call 888-28-DSIGN.

> LOOK FOR LAWN & LANDSCAPE ON

facebook.

facebook.com/lawnandlandscape

# Lawn&Landscape.

# YOUR TRUSTED SOURCE FOR FOUR DECADES









# www.lawnandlandscape.com

#### AD INDEX

Advertiser	Website	Page #	Advertiser	Website	Page #
ABM Landscape & Turf Services	www.abm.com/landscape	50	Jack's Small Engines	www.jackssmallengines.com	50
American Honda	www.honda.com	37	John Deere	www.JohnDeere.com	53
AMSOIL	www.amsoil.com	45	Kichler Lighting	www.landscapelighting.com	32, 61
Ariens/Gravely	www.gravely.com	83	Koch Agronomic Services	www.KASTurf.com	7
Belgard	www.belgard.com	43	Kohler	www.KohlerEngines.com	5
BioPlex	www.bio-plex.com	30	Kubota Tractor Corp.	www.kubota.com	47
Bobcat Go	www.bobcat.com	23	Landscape Ontario Congress	www.LOCONGRESS.com	
Brody Chemical	www.BrodyChemical.com	58			54
Caterpillar	www.CatResourceCenter.com	19	MistAway	www.mistaway.com	13
CLC Labs	www.syntheticturflesting.com	54	Neely Coble	www.neelycoble.com	63
Clip Software	www.CLIP.com	17	ONLA CENTS	www.CENTSMarketplace.com	38
Dan Gordon	www.turfbooks.com	58	PermaGreen Supreme	www.permagreen.com	65
DeWalt	www.Dewait.com/outdoor	67	Pro Landscape / Drafix	www.prolandscape.com	84
Dixie Chopper	www.dixiechopper.com	39	Qualipro	www.quali-pro.com	
Dodge	www.ramtrucks.com/commercial	23	10000000		25
Dow AgroSciences	www.dowagro.com	41	Real Green Systems	www.RealGreen.com	51
Exaktime	www.exaktime.com/lal	57	SUPERthrive / Vitamin Institute	www.superthrive.com	Эб
Exmark	www.exmark.com	14-15	Synchrony	www.SynchronyBusiness.com	49
SMC Chevrolet	www.chevy.com/silverado	9	Techo-Bloc	www.techo-bloc.com/register	Belly Band
Graham Spray	www.grahamse.com	55	RECITO-DAT.	www.ieciio-oloc.com/register	59*
Great Oak	www.DeerProRepellent.com	38	Verizon Network Fleet	www.networkfleet.com	69
Gregson-Clark	www.gregsonclark.com	46	Walker	www.walkermowers.com	27
Ground Logic	www.groundlogic.com	30	Winfield Solutions	www.winfield.com	29, 31, 33

\* denotes regional advertising

# Expertise. Reliability. Professionalism.

#### OU ARE AN EXPER

in the industry

You have the most KNOWLEDGEABLE AND PROFESSIONAL STAT

> You have a OMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

> > Courses are ONLY \$15

Visit the **LEARNING CENTER** and earn your certification today!





www.ascaonline.org



#### TIPS FROM THE TOP

Interviewed by CHUCK BOWEN





# **Jeremy Hittle** // PRESIDENT

My father started this business in 1973. And I took over operations in the late '90s and took ownership in 2006.

I went to Purdue for a while, wanting to be a mechanical engineer. I decided to come back and work for dad's business. And considering going into the bubble, and nobody really knew it in the early '90s, but it didn't take too long for it to be a great place to be working in the construction industry.

And I'm glad that it worked out that way.

When I took over operations it was probably \$3.5 million and then through the bubble in the early 2000s it grew up to, I would say we were at \$7.5 million in 2006, \$9 million in 2008 and then the tumble in 2009.

We lost a third of our sales in the downturn

and then we've grown back up to \$15 million. Now, those are landscape sales. Our snow removal operations are done under a separate corporation. Last season was \$2.9 million.

The Indianapolis market was a little over 12,000 permits on residential construction and new home construction per year and we dropped down to about 2,500 and we're back up a little over 5,000 now. I don't know what the numbers are up there but the impact in Chicago was probably 300 percent what we experienced.

Geographically I would say we are heavily concentrated in the north half of the Indianapolis metro area. But for our larger customers, we certainly go to the south side of the metro area.

I think we're probably the only landscape company in the Indianapolis market that is as diversified as we are, strong in all aspects, maintenance, residential, design/build and very few large landscape companies play in the national homebuilders arena. I think it's considered to be a tight margin and maybe volatile. But for us, we've found that it has helped feed our other divisions. It really enhances our diversity.

Looking back from where I sit today. I learned because of all that cost accounting, the importance of it, divisional profit and loss statements, diversity, building brand recognition.

Those are all some of the things that after fighting that fight over these several years, those are some of the things that stand out that we did well at that helped us get through it and get us where we're at today.

It's thin picking when you're looking for good workers because the college-aged kids or the kids that don't want to go to college sometimes aren't all that interested with their career path and their work ethic.

They're still there. You can find them but it might be one out of 10 who really want to stick around and work. I mean, it's a lot of turnover to find good people.

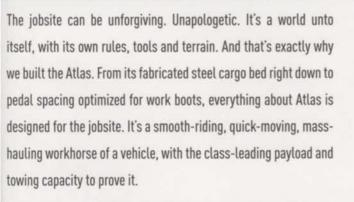
And I think just over the last two years, I've felt like maybe whatever it is that allows us to be big draws to potential workers, we're starting to run dry. And I think a little of it is because all the landscape companies are growing and the construction industry is back growing.

We're focused on better training programs and just constantly searching for the next most creative way to get ourselves out there as a viable employer.

I'm sure we could add 50 percent to the top line over the next couple of years if there were plenty of workers that wanted good jobs and were hardworking people. L&L

Company: Hittle Landscaping Location: Westfield, Ind. Top 100 Ranking: 96 2013 Revenue: \$14.9 million

# **RULE THE JOBSITE** WITH THE ALL-NEW ATLAS JSV FROM GRAVELY.



## THIS IS NO UTV. IT'S A JOB SITE VEHICLE. AND IT CAME TO WORK.



ATLAS JSV. MOVE YOUR WORLD.

An Ariens Company Brand



# Your Vision, Their Dream – Anywhere

Communicating your vision to prospective customers has never been easier with PRO Landscape design software. Whether your design platform is a desktop, laptop or tablet you can design and sell anytime, and now – anywhere.

PRO Landscape is not only easy to use, but feature rich including stunning photo imaging, night and holiday lighting, 2D CAD, 3D renderings, and complete customer proposals.

Bring your customer's dreams to life - starting today!



prolandscape.com sales@prolandscape.com 800-231-8574