"I am not going to go to everyone's individual web site," he said. "That is going in the wrong direction, we need a one-stop-shop."

Randy Nichols, superintendent at Cherokee Town and Country Club in Dunwoody, Ga., and a Greentrac.com user has been impressed with the cost and time savings available on-line. "Every time I have placed an eRFP I have saved the club money, anywhere from 10 to 35 percent," he said.

Exactly how the Internet will alter existing vendor relationships is still unclear, although some companies are envisioning a new sales model. Linde Sorensen, managing director of Internet services for Toro Co., believes that the Internet will not replace face-to-face customer support, but will enhance it.

"It may get salespeople out providing training and product support and help them spend less time pushing paper," she said. Casey Pearson, director of e-business for Textron Golf and Turf, looks to take it one step further.

"I see customers using [on-line] "configurators" to put together specific combinations of accessories that they are looking for in a piece of equipment," he said. However, companies are approaching the young e-commerce industry with guarded optimism.

"We are taking the conservative approach," said Sorensen. "We are looking at all the sites. There is not one solution."

Dursban rates

Above and Below Ground

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