**Flowtronex targets water quality management with new division**

**By Andrew Overbeck**

**DALLAS —** Flowtronex PSI has rolled out a new line of fertigation products that will be part of its long-term goal of building a water quality management division.

"The idea is to capitalize on Flowtronex's success in the water quantity business," said Allen Olson, the national sales manager that will head up the new efforts. "In addition to fertigation, we are going to develop a water quality management program that will help superintendents and management companies make agronomic decisions based on water quality readings."

The new system will be built in Dallas and marketed to customers in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Previously, Flowtronex was marketing fertigation products manufactured by Turf Feeding Systems. With the move, the company becomes the first pump station manufacturer to integrate a fertigation system into its product line.

"We have the advantage over a market that is still made up of regional players," Olson said. "We have a network of national service people and can support the pump station and other equipment that we are putting with it. It gives us the single source accountability that superintendents want."

**SYSTEM IN DEVELOPMENT**

Flowtronex will introduce the fertigation component Sept. 1. "Fertigation will be the first step because it is the easiest," said Olson. "Our eventual goal will be to be able to read different parameters in the incoming water stream such as salt and pH. That will all be on a central-control operating system that will enable the superintendent to adjust the fertigation program through the irrigation system from the desktop in his office."

According to Olson, Flowtronex will be looking to partner with other companies to deliver other products. The additional water quality components and remote interface are due to be rolled out in early 2002.

**MARKET GROWTH**

Fertigation and water quality management

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**Golf Ventures to distribute WinterStar**

**HUBBARD, Ore. —** Turf-Seed has struck an exclusive arrangement with Golf Ventures to distribute and market its Winterstar Poa trivialis in Florida. "We are pleased to be associated with Golf Ventures on an exclusive basis," said Turf-Seed CEO Gordon Zielinski. "We have developed a full line of overseeding mixtures for them and look forward to a long relationship." Winterstar, a recent release from Turf-Seed, has a deep green color with improved density and texture that allows a rapid spring transition in the southern overseeding markets. It can be seeded as a monostand or blended with turf-type perennial ryegrass or creeping bentgrass for niche overseeding mixtures. It will also tolerate mowing heights from one-eighth to one-tenth of an inch.

Located in Lakeland, Fla., Golf Ventures is a full service supplier to the turfgrass industry.

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**NEW PRODUCT OF THE MONTH**

**TRIPLA VERSUS GROUNDMASTER MODELS**

**BLOOMINGTON, Minn. —** The Toro Co. has begun shipping the latest in its line of Groundmaster mowers. The new 228-D has a new 28-hp Kubota diesel engine and offers a choice of five full flotation cutting units ranging from 52-inch to 72-inch widths. The 328-D features the same engine but offers four different 72-inch rotary cutting decks, a wider wheelbase and heavy duty welded steel decks and frames.

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**OGIO takes golf car to the 'extreme'**

**BLUFFDALE, Utah —** Golf bag maker OGIO has decided to produce an "extreme" golf car that it originally built for promotional purposes. The so-called "Battle Ready Vehicle" is a modified Yamaha golf car that has a tweaked engine, a six-inch lift kit, Hella lamps, Corbeau racing seats, a winch, studded tires, and a roof rack.

The car, which OGIO unveiled at the PGA Show in Orlando this winter, gener-
E-commerce woes

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altered their strategies entirely. That said, however, two entities are still pursuing e-commerce: GolfGM.com and the GCSAA/XS Inc.

Here is an update on where the e-commerce ventures stand:

GCSAA/XS INC.

The association, which is developing an e-commerce platform in conjunction with XS Inc., has completed its 60-day pilot program and is in the process of evaluating its Internet efforts.

The model tested two different methods of e-commerce. The storefront model is designed to showcase the wares of an individual distributor or manufacturer.

"When we balanced the current wants and desires from our membership on the buyers' and the sellers' side, it looks like the best solution at this point is to go with the storefront model," said Julian Arredondo, the association's CFCM.

It will take some time to evaluate the e-commerce plan, he continued. "We need to put a design together and do more focus groups," Arredondo said. "We intend to launch something in the next few months."

GOLFGM.COM

Sacramento, Calif.-based GolfGM.com continues to focus on the golf course industry with the development of GolfMarket maker and CloseOutlet features.

GolfMarket maker is designed to build private label purchasing communities for management companies, retail operations and groups of golf courses.

"They can choose vendors that they want to work with. It is a closed purchasing community," said CEO Chris Soderquist.

"The software is designed specifically for an individual company."

The CloseOutlet functions as a closeout site for manufacturers trying to unload excess goods. Products on offer vary from pro shop items to maintenance commodities.

The site has registered 330 vendors and buyers including Marriott Golf, ClubCorp, American Golf, Troon Golf and 125 individual facilities on the buy side.

Western Golf, Eagle One, Seed Research of Oregon, and West Coast Turf are on the sell side.

"So far the transactions are less than we projected, but we are in better shape now than we were four months ago," said Soderquist. "If we play our cards right, five years from now we might have something. This is not a get-rich-quick scheme."

GOLFSAT

Golfsat, having abandoned its strategy to become a community site for superintendents, has been concentrating solely on selling its software to companies that are building their own e-commerce sites.

"We are looking at ways to enhance the distributors and dealers in the market," said CEO Mike Scott. "We want to make our business more efficient through technology and communication and back-end support."

While Scott said that Golfsat is working with Lesco, he wouldn't divulge which other companies they are in talks with.

"We came out with Golfsat and made a lot of noise," he said. "In our particular venture right now there is no advantage to us telling the world what we are about. We are more productive behind the scenes right now."

SMALLER PLAYERS

GreenIndustryOnline.com is involved in both the lawn and landscape and golf industry and has changed its strategy from being a customer management software and e-commerce vehicle to being purely a directory portal for the entire industry.

"We are now selling the directory and enhanced listings and we have turned to building a Yellow Pages for the green industry," said president Steve Cissel. "I think we have value to offer and customer traffic is climbing."

Greentrac.com is another that has switched strategies in order to broaden its market appeal. The company still offers exchange and eRFP services on its site but has gone beyond the green industry to more general procurement solutions for any industry.

"The site can still be used by the green industry, but it is not our focus anymore," said Greentrac.com's Joanne Miller.