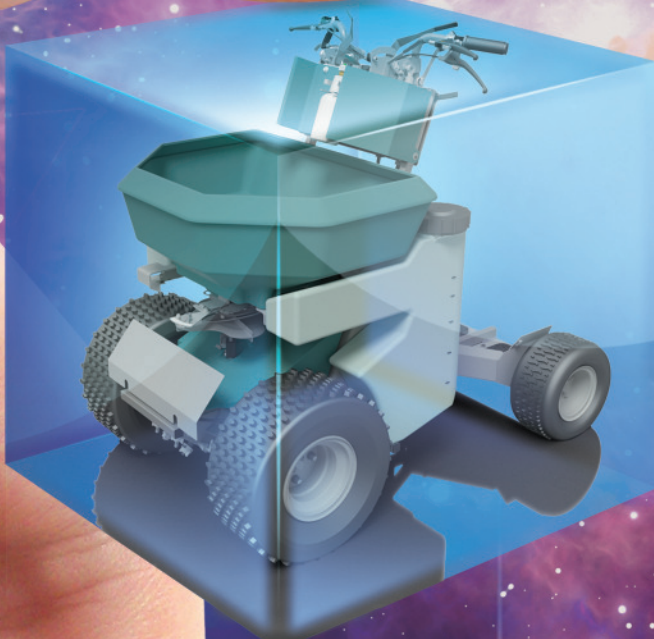


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August 2015

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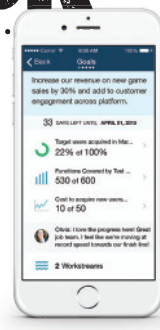


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# EDITOR'S NOTE

**MARISA PALMIERI**  
EDITOR

Contact Marisa at 216/706-3764 or  
mpalmieri@northcoastmedia.net

## Getting to the root

**D**id you know Andrew Jackson Downing pioneered the use of lawns around homes, and Frederick Law Olmsted promoted them by including turfgrass in public space designs? Or that four of the top five food crops are grasses? (Sugar cane, corn, wheat and rice.)

Neither did I, until late last month when I attended the Grass Roots exhibit at the U.S. National Arboretum.

It was a scorcher of a Sunday, and I was with my colleague Craig MacGregor in Washington, D.C., for the National Association of Landscape Professionals Renewal & Remembrance event at Arlington National Cemetery. We arrived early to visit Grass Roots.

I'd been hearing about the exhibit for the last two and a half years throughout the planning and construction stages, and I wanted to see the finished product.

We could have arranged an official visit or requested a press tour, but we opted to just show up like regular tourists would do.

The concept for Grass Roots was introduced a few years, but it was an underfunded endeavor. When Kevin Morris, president of the National Turfgrass Federation, got wind of it, he and then-director of the Arboretum, Colien Hefferan, took it to the green industry for support. The industry responded with several hundred thousand dollars of monetary and in-kind donations. The



One section of the Grass Roots exhibit details the history of lawns.


result is a four-year, 1.3-acre exhibit with 12 displays demonstrating benefits and uses of turfgrass. The ground breaking was in late 2013 with the grand opening last October.

Upon arriving at the Arboretum (which has plenty of free parking, by the way), we quickly made our way over to Grass Roots. It's located right next to the visitor's center. We checked out the displays, including a golf hole, a natural vs. synthetic athletic field comparison, an interactive irrigation section and more.

Before long, we were greeted by a staff member, who turned out to be Geoff Rinehart, program coordinator of the Grass Roots initiative. He's responsible for outreach and day-to-day maintenance, with the help of an intern. Often, he gives off-the-cuff tours and talks to folks who show interest—like us.

So far, he says, the exhibit is achieving its goals. "We wanted to make it fun, educational and try to weave in some best management practices that visitors can take home no matter where they live," he said.

Although Grass Roots isn't the most eye-catching exhibit at the arboretum (it's tough to compete with azaleas), it's likely one of the more relatable and practical ones for Americans, since an estimated 50 million acres of the U.S.—an area the size of New England—is covered in turfgrass, according to EPA.

It might not be the facility's main attraction, but Grass Roots is an informative stop for Arboretum visitors (estimated at 500,000 per year), a win for the landscape industry and definitely worth a visit the next time you're in the region. 



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"You have to wonder how many Angie's Lists the world needs. This must be the fourth or fifth such service launched this year."

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# BIG PICTURE

## READY FOR ITS CLOSE-UP

**LOCATION** Behind a local TV station's studios

**COMPANY** Southview Design, Inver Grove Heights, Minn.

**THE DETAILS** For 31 years, this TV station's "Back Yard" has hosted interviews, weather reports, cooking and gardening segments and more. But the space had seen better days. It was time for an upgrade. The station shared two design concepts on-air for viewers to vote on. They chose a Northwoods theme for the 62-by-62-ft. space. It features a waterfall/stream, permeable-paver patio, stone fireplace/patio, a pergola made from reclaimed wood, retaining walls, outdoor bar and grill, raised planters and a heated concrete stoop and steps.

There were a few challenges along the way. Southview had to remove a portion of the fence for machine access. Constant attention had to be paid to the overhead lines and studio lights, and underground utilities had to be located and moved. But upon completion, the renewed space was part of a local home tour event, so viewers could experience the concept in person.

**PHOTO** Native plantings were chosen to attract birds, bees and butterflies.

*See more photos from this project, which earned a National Landscape Awards of Excellence Grand Award from the National Association of Landscape Professionals, at [LandscapeManagement.net/BigPicture](http://LandscapeManagement.net/BigPicture).*

PHOTO: SOUTHVIEWDIGITAL



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# NEWS HOW-TO'S

LANDSCAPE  
INDUSTRY  
TRENDS,  
VIEWS  
AND TIPS

RECOMMENDER

BRUCE'S VIEW

STEP BY STEP

NEW STUFF

SAFETYWATCH

## THE DAILY FOUR



**A**t TBG Landscape in Whitby, Ontario, the management staff knows open communication is essential to the company's success. The primarily design/build company had \$17.2 million in 2014 annual revenue.

As such, at the end of every work day all foremen send an email to President Mark Bradley called the Daily Four. It includes the following information:

- The crew's three priorities;
- What got finished that day;
- What obstacles the crew faced that day; and
- What does the crew need?

Sharing this information every day is a simple platform to ensure everyone's on the same page and accountable, says Mike Lysecki, former director of operations for TBG. Lysecki is COO of Landscape Management Network, the landscape estimating and time-tracking software company that sprouted from TBG Landscape.

"If obstacles aren't reported, there's no good excuse to be over budget," he says.

“It forces the planning of goals and materials so stuff doesn't get missed.”



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## RECOMMENDER

## Design software

## Which do you prefer and why?



Landscape contractors have many design software options, including 2-D, 3-D, mobile and desktop offerings.

**CHRIS STAFFORD**

**PRESIDENT, THE CUTTING EDGE LANDSCAPING HARVEY, LA.**

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**ZECH STRAUSER**

**CEO, STRAUSER NATURE'S HELPERS EAST STROUDSBURG, PA.**

"Dynascape. We have used it for a while and are happy with it. As with any useful software, a lot of dedication is needed for the user to deliver a professional product. A few years of training and dedication are needed."

**BRUCE'S VIEW**

**BY BRUCE WILSON**

The author, of the Wilson-Oyler Group, is a 30-year industry veteran. Reach him at [bwilson@wilson-oyler.com](mailto:bwilson@wilson-oyler.com).

**COMPETENCE OR COMMODITY?**

**T**rue or false: To be successful, an account manager or business developer needs a degree in horticulture or experience in landscape maintenance.

False. Here's why: A company can have people with a lack of landscape or horticultural knowledge as long as there is a depth and sharing of that knowledge in the company.

As investment bankers, venture capitalists and corporate partners gain influence in our industry, they will bring with them a fundamental culture shift. This will contribute to a growing commoditization of our industry. Prices will continue to be driven down, making it harder to be a really good service provider.

In his book "Purple Cow: Transform Your Business by Being Remarkable," author Seth Godin says that a low-price strategy is the last resort when you run out of ideas. As a partner in a landscape company built on a strong foundation of landscape knowledge supported by a diverse team of interesting people, I believe that not running out of ideas means relying on a mix of talent and influences to keep our thinking fresh. It also requires us to leverage our horticultural foundation to become better at what we do before we become cheaper at doing it.

If customers believe that landscape service firms are interchangeable or replaceable, then they are perceived as commodities. Transcending commoditization requires building competence at all levels and across all positions, adding differentiating value and ensuring that applying and sharing our knowledge and expertise remains the foundation of what we do. 

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## STEP BY STEP

# Check trees for invasive pests

**W**hether a client's tree is showing signs of distress or you're taking a proactive approach, contractors need to be on the lookout for invasive insects.

Drought or heat stress can make trees more susceptible to insects that can severely damage or kill them, so it's important to catch damage early. Some of the most harmful pests are emerald ash borers, gypsy moths, polyphagous shot hole borers and pine beetles.

Before trying to identify if a pest is causing damage, talk with the homeowners to see if they've applied any chemicals or done anything else that could explain the tree's issues.

Once you've ruled out other causes, examine the tree. Some of the most obvious signs of insects are leaf damage, sudden decline, frass on the trunk, abnormal leaf sizes, borer holes, dead branches, wounds/tunnels in the bark, sawdust material around the tree or seeing the insects.

You can also check the plant color. If it's pale or bleached, pests might have invaded the tree. It will be especially noticeable if there are sucking insects, like borers, that have attacked the tree's nutrients.

Branch growth is another indicator of plant health, so look at the length from one set of end bud scars to the next. When the growth is less than it was in previous years, there might be a disease or pest.

If the canopy is thinning—especially when compared to others of the same species nearby—that can be a sign of insects, as well. Be on the lookout for off-color or yellowing needles, as well as creamy- to red-pitch tubes on the tree trunk.

When you notice these symptoms or are unsure what pest you're dealing with, contact your local extension office. Send photos, samples and a description of the pest and symptoms. They can help you correctly identify the problem so you know the best course of action to take. 📷

SOURCE: Rob Gorden, director of urban forestry, Arborjet

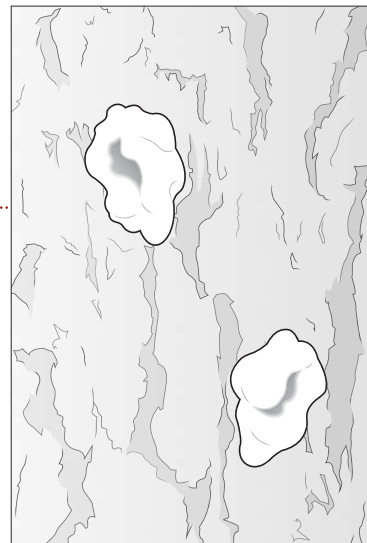
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### Example: PINE BEETLES

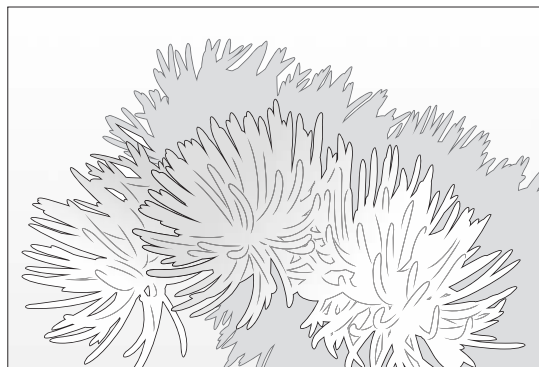
#### STEP 1

Examine the pine tree's trunk for pitch tubes (cream-colored resin holes) and blue stain fungi.



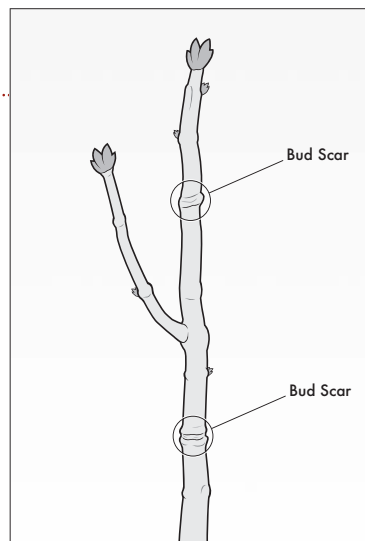
#### STEP 2

Check to see if the pine needles are off-color or yellowing.



#### STEP 3

Compare the branch growth by looking at last year's growth (before the bud scar) to this year's growth (after the scar). If the limb hasn't grown as much this year as it has in the past, it could have pests.





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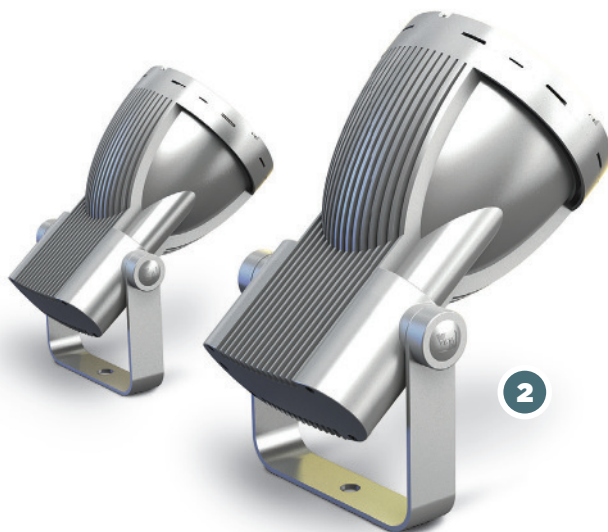


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# NEW STUFF



## 1. HS 82 AND HS 87 HEDGE TRIMMERS

**COMPANY:** Stihl

**URL:** [StihlUSA.com](http://StihlUSA.com)

Compared to the company's previous models, the HS 82 and HS 87 trimmers are lighter, have increased blade speed and are powered by a lower-emission engine, which is 20 percent more efficient. The machine is designed with these features, along with a central, multifunction control handle, for longer use. The HS 82 is built with a double-sided blade designed for sweeping, back-and-forth cuts, and the HS 87's one-side blade is designed for straight cutting.

## 2. 1050 SERIES COB FLOODLIGHTS

**COMPANY:** Vista Outdoor

**URL:** [VistaPro.com](http://VistaPro.com)

Designed for highlighting architectural and landscape features, the 1057 and 1059 up and accent luminaries use Chip-On-Board (COB) LED technology for controlled light output. The 1057 light is powered by Cree's CXA1830 LED bulb, while the 1059 light features a Cree CXA3050 LED bulb. The dimmable lights have high lumen output, which the company says provides exceptional color and uniformity. The COB floodlights are offered in three lighting distributions: spot, medium flood and wide flood.

## 3. SOLITAIRE WSL HERBICIDE

**COMPANY:** FMC

**URL:** [FMCProSolutions.com](http://FMCProSolutions.com)

This water-soluble liquid herbicide formulation is designed for increased application efficiency while controlling more than 40 weeds. It contains sulfentrazone and quinclorac plus a surfactant, which FMC says promotes faster plant penetration. It's designed to not settle out or separate when mixed with water. Solitaire is intended to combat crabgrass, sedges and broadleaf weeds in a single application, without the need to tank mix with other herbicides.



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To stay up to date on all the latest landscape industry products and services, visit [LandscapeManagement.net/tag/product-news](https://LandscapeManagement.net/tag/product-news).

#### 4. SP8018TRX STUMP CUTTER

**COMPANY:** J.P. Carlton

**URL:** [StumpCutters.com](https://StumpCutters.com)

The Carlton SP8018TRX is designed for clearing and large residential removal applications. A 99-hp, turbo-charged Kubota diesel engine, which combines with Carlton's two-stage cutter head drive, powers the machine. The Carlton Razor Cutting System offers a low profile holder design and large faced carbide teeth, which the company says provides a high cut-to-friction ratio. The SP8018TRX's cutting dimensions are 43 in. above ground, 18 in. below ground and 80 in. of sweep. The unit has a Caterpillar track undercarriage.

#### 5. CHILL-ITS 6000 SERIES VESTS

**COMPANY:** Ergodyne

**URL:** [Ergodyne.com](https://Ergodyne.com)

Three new products in the Chill-Its Phase Change Series include the 6215 Flame Resistant Premium Phase Change Vest, the 6215 Hi-Vis Flame Resistant Premium Cooling Vest and the 6230 Standard Phase Change Vest. Each vest comes with a honeycomb cooling pack, which is designed to maintain a temperature of 58 degrees F for up to four hours. The cooling packs are made with a nontoxic and noncarcinogenic dialectic substance, Ergodyne says.

#### 6. MYRIDE SUSPENSION

**COMPANY:** Toro

**URL:** [Toro.com/MyRIDE](https://Toro.com/MyRIDE)

The MyRIDE suspension system is available on select Toro Z Master zero-turn mowers, including the 3000 Series with 60-in. deck, 5000 Series with 60-in. deck, and the 6000 Series with the 60-in. and 72-in. cutting decks. Designed for comfort, the system features a fully suspended operator platform that delivers 3.6 in. of travel and isolates the operator from the rest of the machine, which is intended to reduce impacts, bumps and vibrations. It also features adjustable, soft to firm rear shocks.

## SAFETYWATCH

➔ This photo was staged to show several safety hazards or dangerous work habits. How many can you identify? Flip to page 91 for a list of potential hazards.

### DOWNLOAD IT

Visit **LandscapeManagement.net/SafetyWatch** to print a PDF of this page. Post it at your facility and encourage your employees to challenge their hazard-spotting skills.

*Ed. Note: Thanks to Schill Grounds Management in North Ridgeville, Ohio, for participating in our SafetyWatch photo shoots. Schill and Landscape Management do not practice or condone the unsafe methods demonstrated during photo staging.*



PHOTO: LAURA WATLO BLAKE

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# UTILITY VEHICLE — GUIDE —

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# TASK MASTERS

**Find out how industry members are using UTVs to make their operations more efficient.** BY DILLON STEWART

**U**tility vehicles (UTVs) are not an essential tool for a landscape company's success, and they probably won't save a failing one. No, a UTV is not appropriate for every operation. However, landscape contractors who operate UTVs agree these machines make their companies more efficient, and they make their work easier.

An *LM* survey reveals about 40 percent of readers own UTVs. Another 8 percent say they are considering purchasing one.

When it came to which region of the country UTVs are used the most, which task is performed most frequently with the vehicles or which area of the respondent's business used UTVs the most, the responses were varied. In fact, the results serve as a metaphor for the diverse uses of these vehicles. They're used creatively, which is what owners say makes them so valuable.

One trait that makes these vehicles so versatile, according to owners, is their ability to go wherever

operators need them to go. Not only are they smaller than a pickup truck, enabling them to fit in tighter spaces; they also have a much softer footprint than other vehicles.

"We like them so much because they can go over grass without doing much damage," says Michael Olivieri, owner of Michael & Sons Nurseries, based in Elmsford, N.Y., which mostly conducts new installations at high-end residential properties. "They can go wherever we need them to go."

Despite the varied uses for these machines, one trend stands out: UTV owners say they made their operations more efficient.

"We want to work smarter, not harder," says Robert Uguccioni. His company, Canadensis, Pa.-based Destination Landscaping, operates a Kawasaki Mule to transport employees to and from job sites on large properties. "That's why we use a UTV."

## PUTTING UTVS TO USE

Brian Brister is the project manager at Street, Md.-based Foxborough, a company that does 40 percent bed maintenance and 60 percent installation for a mostly residential clientele. The company is the landscaping-specific spin-off of Foxborough Nursery. The company owns three John Deere Gator UTVs: a TX 4x2, bought in 2005, and two HPX 4x4s, the first was purchased in 2009 and the second in 2014. The company's UTVs are equipped with roll cages, bed liners and bumper guards.

Brister says the vehicles are used for business 98 percent of the time, though occasionally the owner and his



Michael Olivieri

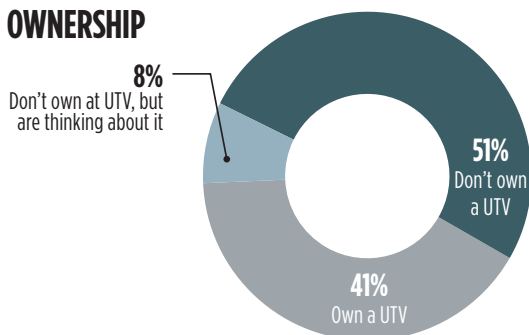


Michael & Sons Nurseries uses its four UTVs to help out with installations at high-end residences.

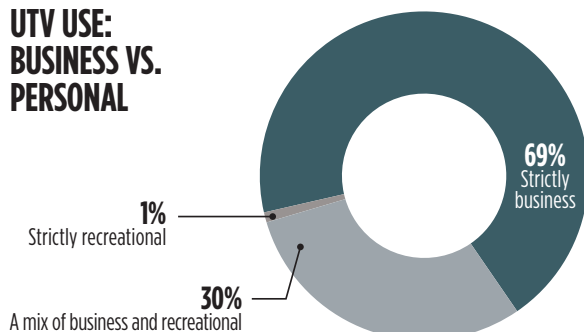
## Survey says...

We take a look at what the research says about UTV use among those in the landscape industry.

### UTV OWNERSHIP

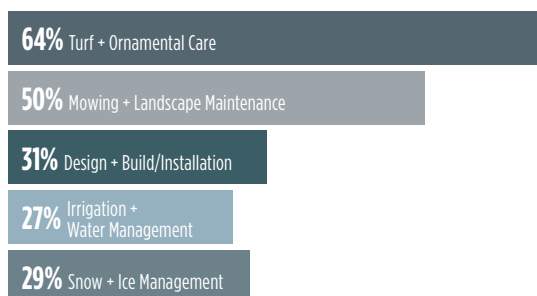


### UTV USE: BUSINESS VS. PERSONAL



### UTV USE: BUSINESS SEGMENTS

(respondents could select more than one)



sons, who live on the farm where the company is headquartered, use the vehicles for wintertime duck hunting.

Many of Foxborough's clients are large estate properties, with as many as 100 acres. These properties are where UTVs have proven most useful. The company does general installation, anything from plants and seed to drainage and lighting, at these properties. He says having the vehicles to transport workers or equipment across these large properties saves time and energy, making his operation more efficient.

The vehicles often replace a wheelbarrow, Brister says, carrying mulch or small trees. This application is especially beneficial when working at properties with varying elevation or stairs, which makes the use of wheelbarrows difficult.

"If we were wheelbarrowing, we'd get about 70 percent done," Brister says. "It's so much more wear and tear on our guys too. When you're pushing for quality work, you don't want your guys worn out."

Jeff Traynor noticed a similar effect with his employees. Traynor owns Lake Services Unlimited in Balsam Lake, Wis. The company is about 50 percent maintenance, 20 percent snow and 30 percent miscellaneous work, such as building docks and maintaining them in the winter. It caters to about 75 percent lake homeowners and 25 percent commercial customers. Lake Services Unlimited operates a John Deere Gator RSX850i. The company also has a spreader attachment, which is used to spread seed or salt.

Traynor has noticed how UTVs protect his employees from fatigue. When his employees use the vehicles, he sees a higher level of employee satisfaction, which has been as valuable for him as it is for them.

"The guys like to use it," Traynor says. "Whenever they get to run it, they're much more productive."

Similarly to Brister, Olivieri says his company mostly works on large estates and uses its UTVs to transport plants and materials and tow trees behind the vehicle on a trailer. His company does 80 percent new landscape installation and 20 percent maintenance with an annual revenue between \$5 million and \$8 million. His company operates two Kawasaki Mules and two Bobcat 2200s.

*Continued on page UTV6*



Jeff Traynor



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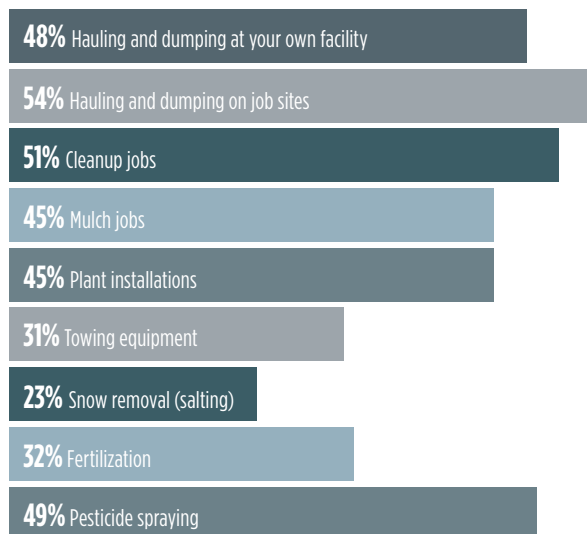
**Bobcat.**

***One Tough Animal.***

# UTILITY VEHICLE GUIDE

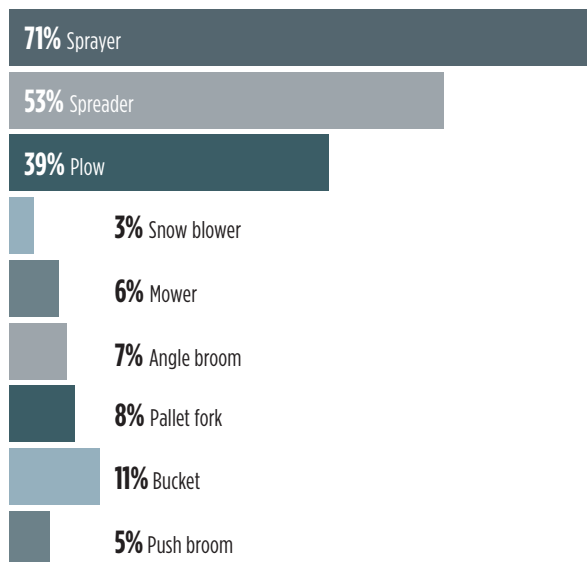
## UTV TASKS

(respondents could select more than one)



## ATTACHMENT/ACCESSORY USE

(respondents could select more than one)



## METHODOLOGY

LM fielded an online survey to a random sample of subscribers in June 2015. We assume a +/- 5 percent margin of error, based on the audience size and number of complete responses (474).

*Continued from page UTV4*

Olivieri says the vehicles would be worth having if the company only used them to transport workers across large properties, but Michael & Sons takes its UTVs to the next level by using an attached hitch-mounted spreader to apply granular fertilizer.

"The spreader hooks to the trailer hitch," he says. "We can load the body with bags of fertilizer, and we can apply fertilizer as we drive. It just keeps us moving."

To Olivieri's point, these vehicles go beyond glorified wheelbarrows and transportation.

UTVs can be equipped with a slew of attachments—trailers, pluggers, aerators and more—all of which can make the vehicles more resourceful and, most importantly, more efficient.

When it comes to attachments, LM research shows that of those who use attachments on their UTVs, 70 percent of respondents use a sprayer attachment, 52 percent use a spreader and 29 percent use a plow.

## BEFORE YOU BUY

If you think a UTV is right for your company and you're ready to pull the trigger, current owners suggest researching the

characteristics of each machine before you buy.

It's important to find a UTV with the attributes that match your application. For example, Brister learned his John Deere Gators, which he says have been extremely reliable and have aged well, are not the fastest units on the market. But the trade-off, which works to his advantage, is a UTV with a small footprint. Through his network of landscape contractors, he was able to learn what brands other companies were using, whether they were happy with them and why.

On the other hand, a more powerful vehicle might come in handy for other circumstances. Each vehicle



Using UTVs lowers employee fatigue and boosts their satisfaction, Jeff Traynor says.

At Foxborough, a landscape company in Street, Md., UTVs help workers transport materials like plants and mulch.



has a different threshold for power. Some operations might be able to do without four-wheel drive. For others, that aspect might be essential. It all depends on what you plan to use the vehicle for.

"If you're going to plow snow with it," Traynor says, "power, four-wheel (drive), frame and front-end durability are all important to make sure you're not stuck."

Brister says another key aspect when purchasing any vehicle is service and parts availability.

"When you're buying big things, UTVs or trucks, you need to make sure you can get the parts and service that you need because downtime is way too cost prohibitive," he says.

When buying, Brister looked for vendors near his shop for convenient parts and maintenance. He also found local service companies that would come to his facility and service his vehicles.

"That is a huge savings for us, since we do not have to take them to a shop for service," Brister says.

When it comes to buying vs. leasing, many sources say they elected to buy the machines, believing buyers get the most bang for their buck that way. Uguccioni says if you take care of your equipment, then it pays to purchase a vehicle.

"I asked my accountant whether I should lease or buy," Uguccioni says. "He said, 'Well do you take care of your equipment?' and I told him, 'I do.' 'Well than it's better to buy it,' he told me."

Finally, when making any big purchase, the deciding factor may come down to price. LM research shows that 47 percent of respondents who don't own a UTV but are considering it would prefer a machine less than \$10,000. Thirty-six percent said they would consider a UTV between \$10,000 and \$15,000; 17 percent said they would consider a machine more than \$15,000.

For companies that can afford it and are looking for an extra boost in efficiency, UTV owners say a UTV might be the perfect tool to push them to the next level. 

## PROPERTY TYPES

(respondents could select more than one)

43% Residential accounts

76% Commercial accounts

22% Industrial accounts

20% Government/municipal accounts

28% HOAs

20% Multifamily accounts

## UTV MANUFACTURERS

Start your UTV research here.

### Arctic Cat

[ArcticCat.com](http://ArcticCat.com)

### Bad Boy Buggies

[BadBoyBuggies.com](http://BadBoyBuggies.com)

### Bobcat Co.

[Bobcat.com](http://Bobcat.com)

### Case

[CaseIH.com](http://CaseIH.com)

### Caterpillar

[Cat.com](http://Cat.com)

### Club Car

[ClubCar.com](http://ClubCar.com)

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### Cushman

[Cushman.com](http://Cushman.com)

### Exmark

[Exmark.com](http://Exmark.com)

### E-Z-Go

[EZGo.com](http://EZGo.com)

### Gravely

[GravelyAtlas.com](http://GravelyAtlas.com)

### New Holland

[Agriculture.NewHolland.com](http://Agriculture.NewHolland.com)

### Jacobsen

[Jacobsen.com](http://Jacobsen.com)

### JCB

[JCB.com](http://JCB.com)

### John Deere

[Deere.com](http://Deere.com)

### Kawasaki

[Kawasaki.com](http://Kawasaki.com)

### Kioti Tractor

**Division of Daedong USA**  
[Kioti.com](http://Kioti.com)

### Kubota Tractor Corp.

[Kubota.com](http://Kubota.com)

### Kymco USA

[KymcoUSA.com](http://KymcoUSA.com)

### Mahindra XTV

[Mahindra.com](http://Mahindra.com)

### Polaris

[Polaris.com](http://Polaris.com)

### The Toro Co.

[Toro.com](http://Toro.com)

## Bobcat Co. 3600 and 3650 UTVs



Bobcat 3650  
utility vehicle

**T**he Bobcat 3600 and 3650 utility vehicles feature a 24-horsepower Kohler diesel engine—the same engine used to power the MY15 3400 and 3400XL models. The 3600 and 3650 offer industry-leading payload and towing capacity, exceptional durability and optimal comfort year-round. Additionally, the 3650 takes utility vehicle versatility to a new level with the ability to operate front-mounted power-take-off (PTO) and non-PTO attachments.

The 3600 and 3650 utility vehicles can handle and haul more materials for grounds maintenance professionals, agriculture producers or homeowners with acreage. Hydrostatic drive is ideal for tasks that require repetitive back and forth movements, such as hauling, mowing, sweeping and snow removal. Operators can drive forward or reverse by pressing their toe or heel to the travel pedal. The vehicles can drive forward to a maximum top speed of 30 mph.

### OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE

A hydrostatic transmission system offers operators the best of both worlds by combining smooth drivability with a durable suspension. The operator can



choose the setting that matches the load requirements to achieve optimum comfort and traction without sacrificing durability.

Another characteristic of the hydrostatic system is dynamic braking. When the operator lets up on the travel pedal, a valve in the drive motor closes—blocking the flow of oil—and slowing the machine down. This dynamic braking feature makes the utility vehicles easier to control when under load.

To achieve industry-leading payload capacity for towing and hauling, the 3600 and 3650 utility



Bobcat 3400XL utility vehicle

vehicles feature independent front dual A-arm suspension with rear de Dion suspension. This feature improves the vehicle's ride comfort and provides improved stability to haul and tow heavy loads. Operators can choose between low- or high-range speeds for towing heavy loads or moving light loads at faster speeds.

# Gravely Atlas Job Site Vehicle

**T**he Gravely Atlas™ Job Site Vehicle (JSV) utility vehicle was designed specifically for heavy jobsite work. With a 1,900 lb. payload and 2,000 lb. towing capacity, the Atlas allows work crews to literally haul a ton. Supported by an on-demand, true all-wheel drive system and de Dion rear suspension, this JSV provides the heavy-duty traction and suspension required to maintain full ground clearance and a smooth ride even when carrying maximum loads.

The all-steel MX-18 JobBox features a 1,250 lb. capacity, steel walls to prevent bowing, and four integrated tie-down points to secure cargo. The extra-large 48" x 57" bed easily accommodates a standard wooden pallet, and an electric cargo bed lift is standard on all Atlas models.

The Atlas JSV-3000 fits three adults comfortably across one bench seat, while the Atlas JSV-6000 crew model fits six adults across two bench seats. Both models are available with a 1-cylinder, 570cc Polaris® DOHC gas engine or 3-cylinder, 1028cc Kohler® Diesel engine. All engines provide a 10-gallon fuel capacity and ground speed of 35 mph.



Atlas JSV-3000 models start at \$12,999 and the Atlas JSV-6000 crew models start at \$14,799.

"This vehicle was designed from the ground up with the contractor and facility manager experience in mind," said Ariens Co. Director of Commercial Sales Bill Engler. "Industry-leading features ensure that it will handle even the toughest jobs. Everything about the Atlas is designed for the jobsite. From pedal spacing that accommodates work boots to the details of the cargo bed."

A full slate of accessories is available for the Atlas JSV including a range of cab enclosure accessories that fit easily into a profiled tubular frame for quick installation. Other accessories include winches, snow plows and front receiver hitches as well as a tool rack, chainsaw press, gun mount and cargo box. For more information visit [GravelyAtlas.com](http://GravelyAtlas.com).



Ariens Co. (Gravely) | 655 W. Ryan Street, Brillion, WI 54110 | ☎ 920-756-2141  
 🌐 [GravelyAtlas.com](http://GravelyAtlas.com); [Gravely.com](http://Gravely.com) | 📱 @GravelyMowers | 📺 @GravelyMowers | 📘 Facebook.com/Gravely

## KIOTI MECHRON UTV series

**T**he KIOTI MECHRON® UTV series comes in three powerful machines including the MECHRON® 2200, 2200PS and the 2240. These UTVs are what customers request when they want reliability, durability, power, comfort, space and a workhorse built for tough and rugged jobs.

All three powerful KIOTI MECHRONs® come with features including a 12" ground clearance with 12" wheels and tires for handling all types of terrain. The MECHRON® also features the widest cargo bed in its class, excellent payload capabilities, 1,300 pounds of towing capacity and a steel frame construction for increased agility and maneuverability. The commanding powertrain highlights consist of a 22 HP Daedong® diesel engine (fully compliant with EPA NTE standards). The MECHRON® uses a continuously variable transmission (CVT) and has a time-proven Daedong gearbox with 2 speeds, (Hi/Lo) and 4WD. The engine and transmission are strategically located to provide optimal weight distribution and low center of gravity.

The suspension and handling provide a smooth ride on rough terrain with front and rear independent suspension, front limited slip differential, rear mechanical-actuated differential lock and four-wheel hydraulic disc



KIOTI MECHRON® 2200PS

brakes. These KIOTI MECHRONs® are built and ready for all types of unforgiving landscapes in your path.

Deck out your UTV with competitively priced optional accessories, including side rail extensions, winch kit, a poly carbonate or glass windshield, hydraulic bed dump, headrests and sun canopy.

The KIOTI MECHRON® 2200 and the MECHRON® 2200PS provide a wide and flat walk-thru design and comfortable seating for up to three passengers, offering excellent leg and foot room for easy entry and exit. Each of these two models boasts more than 112 inches in length and 60 inches in width. Its large cargo bed can provide space of upwards of carrying 1,100 pounds, a payload capacity up to 1,598 pounds and a flexible turning radius of 13 feet. They each come equipped with true hydraulic-assisted rack and pinion power steering and a standard heavy-duty brush guard.

What sets the KIOTI MECHRON® 2240 apart from its predecessors is the newly designed two-row bench seating along with a hinged front row, perfect for extra storage space. With a 1,325-pound payload capacity you'll increase your efficiency. A standard two-inch rear hitch receiver is great for pulling and towing. For easy placement of your load you can opt for the hydraulic dump kit. True hydraulic-assisted rack and pinion power steering makes for excellent responsive handling.



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MECHRON®  
2240

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# Kubota RTV X Series

**K**ubota RTVs have been the best-selling diesel utility vehicles in North America since 2004.\* Why? Because they set the standard for ruggedness and reliability, proving themselves ready to work longer and harder than any other machine on the market.



## TOUGHER ENGINES

No matter the project, you can rely on powerful Kubota diesel engines to keep you moving forward. Kubota-built and worksite-proven, each Kubota RTV X Series model is packed with a 3-cylinder, liquid-cooled Kubota diesel engine with horsepower ranging from 21.6 to 24.8. Ride assured that Kubota diesel engines are well known for dependable performance, even in the harshest terrains.

## GREATER PERFORMANCE

Kubota has more experience in variable hydraulic transmissions than any other utility vehicle manufacturer. The RTV X Series is equipped with Kubota's advanced VHT-X (Variable Hydraulic Transmission), which offers a wide torque band and large oil coolers that take performance and durability to a greater level.

## SMOOTHER RIDE

Found on all Kubota RTV X Series models, Kubota's Extra Duty IRS (Independent Rear Suspension) technology sets



Kubota  
RTV-1140CPX

the standard for durability. No matter the terrain or load, independent suspension on all four wheels ensures a smoother ride. It's one tried-and-true feature you'll appreciate on the toughest turf or largest jobsites.

## STRONGER FRAME

All Kubota RTV X Series utility vehicles are built around a high-rigidity steel frame. That means less noise, vibrations and harsh movements. With structural strength that few in the industry can match, this durable frame can take years of abuse from rough terrain and heavy loads.

## BETTER FEATURES

Kubota's full RTV X Series lineup comes packed with a variety of premium options. The RTV-X1100C offers a standard factory-installed Grand Cab, providing a virtually airtight, soundproof and rattle-free environment with highly efficient air-conditioning, heating and defogging functions. Kubota's RTV-X900 two speed in-line shift allows you to shift less often and maintain better control. If it's more room you're looking for, Kubota's RTV-1140CPX offers two rows of seating that can be easily converted for more cargo space. You'll be more productive with an available hydraulic dumping bed, standard on most RTV X Series models, and more organized with an optional, fully customizable Kubota RAC System.

## EASILY ATTAINABLE

Great deals and low-rate, long-term financing on all Kubota RTV X Series are available at your Kubota dealership.

\*Power Products Marketing North American Utility Vehicle Market Reports, May 2013.



Kubota  
RTV-X900

Kubota Tractor Corp.



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## KYMCO UXV UTVs

### UXV 450i TURF

The all new KYMCO UXV 450i TURF, with its rock steady EFI 450cc engines, produces peak performance in a compact design. Built for the toughest jobs, the UXV 450i's compact chassis is easy to maneuver, park in the tightest of spaces and fits into most full-sized pickup trucks. The 450i's ergonomic cab design with bench seat and tilt steering wheel offers both rider and passenger easy, fast access in and out of the vehicle. A true work horse with a 440 lb. capacity, gas assist, rear dump bed and built-in tailgate storage the UXV 450i TURF turns every job into a routine job. Tight Turf Control with on demand 2WD/4WD, open selectable front differential plus locking rear differential in 2WD or 4WD deliver tighter turns—perfect for home or commercial landscape use. Easy-on-the-lawn TURF tires bring the UXV TURF to smooth, light controlled stops on any surface.



KYMCO UXV  
450i TURF



KYMCO  
UXV 500i G



### UXV 500i G

The UXV 500i G combines all the features and benefits on our stock UXV 500i with a fully integrated, totally enclosed fan-cooled (TEFC) 5kW Generator combined with an integrated safety system, a KYMCO exclusive, including a GFCI safety circuit breaker, making all the power you'll ever need—taking it right to where you need it the most. On the jobsite, fire up your power tools, security lighting or service equipment when and where you need it. On your getaway weekend power up your secluded cabin or make the most rustic campsite or hunting spot a civilized weekend retreat. Full digital monitoring and industry-leading automatic electrical load compensation gives you smooth power delivery under the most demanding conditions. The UXV 500i G's reliable, powerful DOHC 501cc liquid-cooled EFI engine fires to life at the push of a button in any climate or altitude, promising consistent, efficient power.



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for KYMCO UTV  
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# Mahindra XTV UTVs

**Mahindra**  
*Rise.*

## XTV 750 S & XTV 1000 S

Mahindra's standard three-passenger mPACT XTV model is available with either a gas (750 S) or diesel engine (1000 S). Its cargo capacity is 1,200 pounds with towing capacity of 2,100 pounds. This model is capable of speeds up to 35 mph.

## XTV 750 C & XTV 1000 C

The crew-style Mahindra utility vehicle offers seating for six passengers and 1,000 pounds of cargo capacity and 2,100 pounds of towing capacity. It's also available in gas (750 C) or diesel (1000 C).

## XTV 750 L & XTV 1000 L

This longbed-style mPACT XTV is a three-passenger vehicle with a unique cargo area that folds to a flatbed and carries a capacity of up to 34 cubic feet in volume and 1,200 pounds cargo capacity and 2,100 pounds towing capacity. It is available in both gas (750 L) or diesel (1000 L) models.

## HAUL MORE

- Best-In-Class Cargo Box Capacity up to 1,200 lbs. on S and L Models; up to 1,000 lbs. on C models
- Cargo Box up to 34 cu. ft. vol. on L Models
- Standard Electric Cargo Box Lift
- Pre-Load Adjustable Shocks with Additional Mounting Points

## TOW MORE

- Best-In-Class Towing Capacity up to 2,100 lbs.
- Lowest Gear Box Ratio in Category at 36:1

Mahindra XTV  
S Series



Mahindra XTV  
C Series



Mahindra XTV  
L Series



- Heavy-Duty Brake System using 10.25" Auto-Style Rotors and Oversized Calipers
- Standard 2" Front and Rear Receiver Hitch

## GO MORE

- Best-In-Class 12" of Ground Clearance
- Standard 14" Aluminum Wheels with 27" Tires
- True 4WD Auto-Lock Front Differential and Push-Button Rear Differential Lock
- Independent Front and Rear Suspension with 10" of Wheel Travel

## Toro Side-By-Side UTVs



**H**elping customers drive productivity, The Toro Co. launched a new line of side-by-side utility vehicles (UTVs) designed to tackle tough jobs and demanding terrain. This includes two versatile, gas-powered electronic fuel injection (EFI) models—the 500 EFI and 700 EFI—that support more than 40 different accessories for year-round project needs.

These powerful, 4-wheel-drive vehicles offer hard-working hauling and towing capabilities, as well as comfortable seating for three. They can also be customized with a wide range of accessories including windshields, cabs, plow blades, light kits, winches, a stereo, and more.

The new Toro UTVs are powered by 4-stroke engines with EFI technology for improved fuel efficiency, and come with Duramatic™ automatic transmissions, dynamic engine braking, and electronic 2WD/4WD selection as standard. Additional features

Toro now offers two models of side-by-side utility vehicles, the 500 EFI and the 700 EFI.



include a digital display that provides instant access to critical operating information such as fuel level, temperature, oil pressure, speedometer/tachometer, and more.

The transformable design of the tilting rear cargo box allows conversion to a flatbed in minutes to enhance hauling versatility. The 700 EFI has a total payload capacity of 1,500 pounds (1,100 pounds for the 500 EFI), and both models are equipped with a standard front brush guard and adjustable CAM-style shocks for 10 inches of ground clearance to handle rough and challenging terrain. Integrated front and rear two-inch receivers give users the ability to hook up trailers or attachments at either end of the machine.



Toro 700 EFI UTV

NEW



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# KYMCO UXV TURF Series



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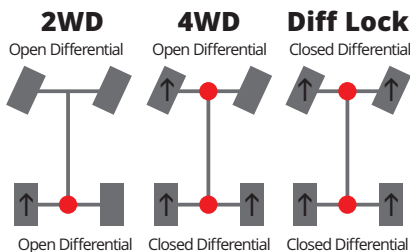


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## POWER PLAY

Fuel savings and technological advancements are driving the market for mower engines.



PAGE 40

# Learning From The Best

MICHAEL BONADIO

**When Michael Bonadio took over operation of the landscaping company his father founded in 1963, he had a vision: to harness the power of technology and create a plan for profit. In turn, this would offer efficiency, reliability and productivity. Here, he reflects on the early years of A. Bonadio & Sons, Inc., and how technological advances have helped his family-operated landscaping company thrive.**

## Tell us about Bonadio & Sons, Inc.

We are a hands-on, family-operated landscape company serving Eastern Massachusetts. Our company's founder, Anthony Bonadio (my father) immigrated in 1956 at the age of 15 with my grandfather. After working each summer alongside a gardener, he founded Anthony Bonadio Landscape in 1963, maintaining lawns (which involved mainly mowing and ornamental hand pruning). In 2011, we started succession planning and in 2012, I became full owner.

My father always had a great relationship with his clients and was very hands on with every aspect of the company – in fact, this was something he instilled in me, and is a big aspect of our company still today. My father worked every day with the maintenance crew right up until the day he 'retired', nearly 50 years after he founded the company.

I am proud to say: our company has the same business values that we did 52 years ago – and this is what sets us apart from our competition. We take pride in using

attention to detail, workmanship and great customer service with each and every one of our clients. This is exemplified in the fact that we still have many clients and employees that my father started with!

**It's quite common that the use of technology in a family business (especially with a generational divide) can evoke mixed responses. Did Bonadio & Sons experience this at some point?**

When I was looking into a computer for the company, my father was not willing to make the investment. He simply didn't understand the value. When he was on a 4-week vacation in February 1998, I was at a green industry event and was introduced to a small Radio Shack PC and a homemade landscape billing program that assisted with the invoicing process.

I spent many nights learning to enter the client's information with cost and I even ordered a dot matrix printer paper with the company name on it (because at this point, we didn't even have a logo yet). When my father returned I was so proud to show him how this was going to save so much time. From that day forward my dad no longer did any paperwork. We used that program for about 4 years and then upgraded to a more robust accounting and invoicing program.

Once we were introduced to LMN, we finally had an estimating program that was directly tied to our budget. By using this technology, we are now able to see our direct cost, overhead, equipment and labor cost, per estimate. With one of the many report options integrated into the software, our two 'favorite reports' are the Estimate Review and Job Planner, it allows us to job cost as the work is being completed.

**How has the use of technology allowed your company to improve its processes and business practices?**

I grew up in the company – as many first generation sons do. I taught myself how to use a computer, staying up many nights learning and entering data, trying to get invoices out so I could work in the field during the day. Our company grew quickly and I began searching for a system that would offer us efficiency, reliability and productivity.

In 2011, I was introduced to LMN at an

event and I was amazed to learn about the business systems library section within this suite of software that includes customizable templates for HR and Health & Safety just to name a few. I also learned why we needed a budget and how to plan for profit, which were both topics we never had the time for (or so we thought). We made our very first budget in 2012, after 49 years in business, with the information we learned in the LMN business management workshop. Many of the forms, procedures, flow charts in the library section of LMN are amazing, and the ability to customize and edit them for our use has been extremely beneficial in our daily operations.

Our latest growth spurt is a direct result of creating a budget and knowing our numbers. Before LMN, we never truly understood the importance of knowing why we were charging what we were charging; it was always just more of a "guesstimate".

**How have LMN's online tools and systems boosted your company's success?**

When we started using LMN's budgeting software in 2011, it forced me to look at cost and how it directly affected our bottom line. When we started the 2012 landscaping season, we now had a plan – a plan for profit – and we knew what our overhead was and how we needed to recoup it.

Thanks to LMN, we were also able to determine our labor and equipment cost. Our sales have increased, but more importantly our overhead is now recovered as well. We have been able to re-invest into the company, as well as our employees and when new equipment is needed, we can see how it affects the budget and if we are able to afford its future replacement.



*LMN has been a game changer in the industry...*



### Like so many other companies in the green/snow + ice industry how have you dealt with the challenges of job costing

We now have a system in place that collects the proper cost and allocates it for the correct project or client. This allows us to have all the pieces necessary to build a successful project.

As a result of using LMN, our crews are able to receive necessary information and by using the Job Planner, they know the parts involved

in each project, how much material they need, how many hours are allocated for each task, what equipment is needed, etc.

In a nutshell, we can effectively manage each of our projects with extreme attention to detail. This leads to true profit margins and being able to sustain continued success.

### LMN offers free training. How do you find the programs beneficial to your company?

I have attended two LMN business management workshops, the initial one involved learning how to build our budget and the second was with my management staff. Both workshops were helpful and offered unsurpassed ratios and first-hand knowledge about the industry as a whole. Learning from a company that 'walks-the-talk' is priceless! We also use [www.learnlmn.com](http://www.learnlmn.com) all the time!

### If you could 'forecast the future' – what do you see?

Quite honestly, I see technology within the landscaping industry only increasing. We must embrace technology, not only in the office but in the field as well.

LMN has been a game changer in the industry and we are looking forward to implementing more of the system.

*A. Bonadio & Sons, Inc. is a family-operated landscape company, established by Anthony Bonadio in 1963. The company has proudly grown into a leading Boston-area provider of landscape design, maintenance and installation services in a variety of styles and scales. Expertise includes: Lawn and garden maintenance, Plant care and installation, Water features and pools, Outdoor kitchens, Walls and patios and Outdoor landscaping structures. For more information, please visit: <http://abstoday.com>*

*Developed by landscape contractors for landscape contractors, LMN's online tools, systems, workshops and training modules offer one-of-a-kind access to drive productivity and profit. LMN proudly offers budgeting software, estimating software and mobile timesheet software, giving business owners the unique ability to convert their company into a profitable landscaping business. For more information, please visit: [www.golmn.com](http://www.golmn.com).*

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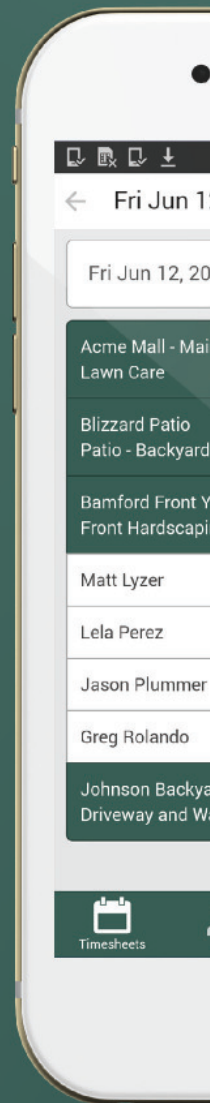


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# Actively seeking solutions

As many turf and ornamental pesticide active ingredients have gone off patent, LCOs have more choices when it comes to product selection.

BY MARISA PALMIERI

## HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHETHER TO USE A PATENTED OR OFF-PATENT PESTICIDE PRODUCT?

### 1. CONSIDER PROFITABILITY.

Most lawn care companies operate on slim margins and are affected by factors outside their operational control—such as the weather or how clients mow and irrigate their turf.

“So you have to look for any advantage you can get in the marketplace,” says Bob Mann, corporate agronomist for The Lawn Dawg, based in Nashua, N.H. “When you can purchase something at a lower price point, that drops right to the bottom line.”

Typically, off-patent products are cheaper than their brand-name counterparts, but when the active ingredients come off patent, the original manufacturers often reduce the price of the branded products to be more in line with the generic competitors, Mann says.

“It’s not as though you automatically go to the off-patent product,” he says.

### 2. EVALUATE PRODUCTS CAREFULLY.

Take the same approach to test an off-patent product as you would any branded product to ensure it’s effective and works within your program.

“We use it in a limited circumstance initially, so we can evaluate it and in the worst-case scenario, shut the barn door on it,” Mann says. “These (off-patent) products aren’t formulated in the same way the original product was, so you have to be careful with how they’re interacting with the other products you’re using.”

Even though most products—branded and off-patent—have been tested extensively by the manufacturers, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and universities, there’s no substitute for real-world trials, Mann says.

At The Lawn Dawg, experienced staff members, typically branch managers, will test new products on their own properties or on “pet routes.” They’ll photograph the results and relay them to Mann. If the first season’s trials go well, the company will consider budgeting for the

product for the following year. The Lawn Dawg typically makes these decisions in August for the following year.

Tim Johnson, president of Tim Johnson Landscaping in Statesville, N.C., also carefully evaluates off-patent products before making a switch in his program.

“I’ve got 80,000 square feet of turf at my house and we have another 30,000 square feet at my father’s house,” he says. “We’ll use those to do a limited test before we take (new products) out into the yards.”

Mann also hesitates to use any new product the first season it comes out. “You never buy the first year of a particular car model,” he says. “It’s just good business and common sense. Let somebody else make the mistake.”

### 3. ASK AROUND AND CONSIDER SUPPORT.

Remember, distributors and manufacturer reps are your friends. Ask their opinions and request that they connect you with other LCOs who have used a certain product, whether it’s branded or off patent.

“We have a very strong relationship with our distributor,” Johnson says. “We rely heavily on his opinion and his opinion determines how we test a product.”

Johnson also has cultivated strong relationships with his reps at the manufacturer level and doesn’t hesitate to ask them for application and tank-mixing advice or about what they’re seeing in the field.

And don’t forget to rely on manufacturers’ technical support teams.

“With the original manufacturers, their deep pockets really show,” Mann says. “You get a deep bench as far as staff agronomists and technical people. But there are a number of off-patent manufacturers that do the same thing and make sure the customer is well taken care of. But as soon as you realize you’re dealing with a company that’s not willing to support you, you simply move on to someone else. There’s a lot of choice out there.”

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## TURF+ORNAMENTAL CARE

### BRANDED VS. OFF-PATENT PESTICIDE GLOSSARY

**Active ingredients:** The chemicals in pesticide products that kill, control or repel pests. Pesticide product labels include the name of each active ingredient and its concentration in the product.

**Basic manufacturers:** Companies, such as BASF, Bayer, Dow, FMC and Syngenta, that invest millions of dollars and many years to discover, research, test, formulate and patent active ingredients and bring branded products to market.

**Branded products:** Also known as on-patent products, these are typically marketed by basic manufacturers.

**Inert ingredients:** Other ingredients in a pesticide that are not named on product labels for EPA-registered pesticides because their identity is considered "confidential business information." These are typically different between a branded product and an off-patent product and may play a key role in a product's effectiveness.



**Off-patent products:** Also known as a generic or post-patent products, these pesticides are manufactured or formulated by a company that doesn't hold the original patent for the active ingredient but has purchased the rights to it.

**Off-patent manufacturers or formulators:** Companies that purchase the rights to an

active ingredient after it goes off patent.

**Patent process:** Once an active ingredient is patented, the original manufacturer has 17 years of patent protection to exclusively market it. When the patent expires, other companies can purchase the rights to the active ingredient to formulate off-patent products.

Sources: BASF, FMC TurfWire, National Pesticide Information Center

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## NEWSFEED

### SMART PARTNERSHIP

Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE) and Abby Wambach, co-captain of the World Cup champion U.S. Women's National Soccer Team, partnered to raise awareness about the benefits of natural turf. Wambach has vocalized her support of natural grass fields since FIFA announced in July 2014 that the 2015 Women's World Cup stadiums would feature synthetic turf.



### BAYER UPDATE

Bayer CropScience hired Mike Dzurenko as key account manager for the lawn and landscape division. He previously served as director of strategic partnerships at U.S. Lawns and in business development for TruGreen LandCare. Bayer also appointed Glen Rougier to head of marketing for its Environmental Science's North American turf and ornamental business.

### MANUFACTURER ACQUISITION

EarthWay Products, an equipment manufacturer based in Bristol, Ind., purchased the PSB spreader division of White Castle, in Columbus, Ohio. EarthWay will produce Prizelawn brand spreaders and market them through the Prizelawn dealer network.

# Tick-Tock, Tick-Tock **CHA-CHING.**

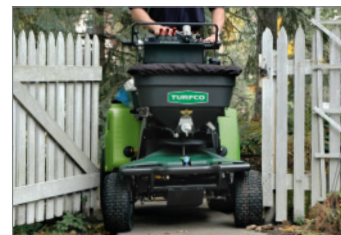


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## MOWING+LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE



### SERVICEABILITY

Less and/or easier maintenance are on landscape contractors' wish lists for mower engines, manufacturers say.

# Revved up

**Commercial mower engines become more efficient and advanced.** BY LAUREN DOWDLE

**F**uel prices may be down from last year, but fuel efficiency is still a top concern for landscape maintenance professionals.

Fuel savings coupled with technological advances are powering the commercial mower engine market, experts say—and there are no signs of it slowing down.

### EASE OF USE

The bar for mower engines has been raised across the industry, creating a new, higher standard. So, manufacturers are focusing their efforts on taking engines to the next level.

“For commercial engines, performance, quality of cut and durability are still critical,” says Tim Malinowski, director of OEM sales and product development for Kawasaki Motors. “But now, we’re looking more at decreased noise and vibration. The market is asking for those standards.”

On the technology front, manufacturers are adding more access, data management and tracking features to engines.

“The end users want the flexibility and ability to transmit data,” Malinowski says.

Landscape professionals are also asking for improved serviceability. “They really want either less or easier maintenance,

plus more responsive service if it’s needed,” says Ben Miller, platform manager for large vertical engines for Briggs & Stratton. “It’s all about productivity and saving costs.”

### ALTERNATIVE DEMAND

But the biggest trend with commercial mower engines has been the growth of fuel-efficient options.

“We are seeing advancements in engine design that reduce overall fuel consumption and result in cleaner burn-off that lowers overall emissions,” says David Holmes, franchise consultant for The Ground Guys.

## NEWSPEED

### ALLIANCE ENDS

John Deere and Wright Manufacturing will not extend their commercial mower design and

manufacturing agreement beyond May 2016. John Deere will move production of stand-on mowers to a

Deere facility in North Carolina.

### NORTHERN EXPANSION

The Dwyer Group, which has marketed The Grounds Guys in the U.S. since 2010, acquired

The Grounds Guys of Canada. The acquisition includes 34 franchisees representing 40 locations across Canada.

### GOING REMOTE

Evatech released its



2015 Hybrid GOAT 22T commercial robotic slope mower.

The Ground Guys, based in Waco, Texas, has 232 franchises in North America with 192 of those in the U.S. and 40 in Canada.

To help landscapers with fuel efficiency, several manufacturers have released engines that use electronic fuel injection (EFI) systems. “(EFI) is becoming more prevalent and robust,” Miller says.

Closed-looped EFI systems deliver fuel where and when needed, which helps cut back on fuel usage compared to carbureted engines.

“Gasoline and propane EFI engines are currently in high demand due to the reduction of fuel costs by as much as 20 to 40 percent alone,” Holmes says.

The market for propane engines also has grown.

“Landscapers who prefer propane-powered equipment do so because of the desire for additional operating cost savings, as propane fuel is significantly cheaper than gasoline,” says William Schnell, senior product manager of Kohler Engines.

These fuel savings can have a significant impact during a typical mowing season, helping alternatives become a more popular option.

“In the past couple of years, we have seen several manufacturers pushing on propane and electric alternatives,” says Gary Benson, general manager of Dreamscapes Landscaping, based in Cheektowaga, N.Y.

Dreamscapes is a full-service landscape and snow removal company with just north of \$2 million in annual revenue.

Benson says propane is a good alternative with low emissions, and it’s also not as aggressive on engine seals as gasoline containing ethanol.

Miller agrees, adding that propane, or liquefied petroleum (LP) gas, has become a big topic within the industry. “There’s a lot of discussion about why propane might be important, and we’re starting to see that in some aftermarket and factory direct sales,” Miller says. “For landscapers, it’s more about the fuel savings with LP.”

While Benson is on board with propane, he isn’t as sure about battery-powered equipment yet.

“Battery technology scares us a bit, but only because I don’t think it is as far along as they would like it,” Benson says. “Plus, what does it really take to make great battery technology and at what cost, in regards to disposal once used up?”



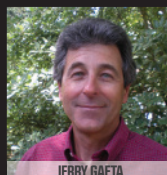
**MANY OPTIONS**  
Contractors are seeing propane and battery-powered mowers as options, but they aren’t giving up on gas.

PHOTO: THE GROUND GUYS

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## MOWING+LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

### FOCUS ON FUEL

Helping drive all these trends is the demand for fuel efficiency, cost savings and increased power.

"They have labor and equipment costs, and they can't really change those," Malinowski says of landscape contractors. "But fuel economy costs are something they can gauge and monitor to see if they can improve it."

While fuel prices are the main reason for these trends, Benson says, another driving force is that the industry is making a conscious effort to reduce emissions and its carbon footprint. "Being good stewards of the very earth we manage is a wise and healthy thing," he adds.

State and federal regulations also have an impact on the engines manufacturers are delivering to the market, Holmes says.



**COMFORT LEVEL**  
Decreased noise and vibration levels are two end-user requests engine manufacturers are looking to fulfill.

### LOOKING AHEAD

Fuel efficiency and on-board technology will continue to be the main focus for both manufacturers and landscapers.

"We would like to see continued focus on reducing end-user operating costs and increasing power—while reducing emissions, just as they have been doing in recent years," Holmes says. "That being said, we don't want these

advancements to cause an increase in the cost of the units we are purchasing."

Benson says he would like manufacturers to continue improving gasoline technology. "I think there is still some life in the gasoline engine," he says. "I think more technology for EFI would be a tremendous move to extend the life of the gas mower. We have one EFI machine in our fleet, and it consumes 40 percent to 50 percent less fuel as compared to its non-EFI twin."


Operators can expect to see more on-board electronics that will increase the engine's productivity, Miller says. More engines will have sensors that help protect the engine and monitor how and when it's being used.

"We'll continue to see the growth of electronics and what else the (engine's) computer can do on the productivity side of things," Miller says.

This technology will help take away the guesswork and show operators exactly what needs to be done to increase their engines' efficiencies.

"From a business standpoint, they want to know when it's being run and how efficient it's being used," Malinowski says.

Trends from the agriculture industry also will continue to affect the commercial mower engine marketplace. For example, Miller says contractors will start to see machine-to-machine interactions among engines in the future.

"We're going to see some neat products in the next three to five years." 

Dowdle is an Alabama-based freelance writer.



Pathfinder  
(shown)

Rover XR  
(shown)

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# Hitting the road

Accepting out-of-town work can be a good business move—but only if it's done right. **BY EMILY SCHAPPACHER**

### DISCRETION ADVISED

Experts say to accept out-of-town jobs only for the right reasons and the right price.



**J**ason Cupp recalls a situation where a client needed some emergency landscape maintenance done on a property the client owned out of state.

"I got the phone call at 4 p.m. and was on a plane at 7 p.m.," says Cupp, a Kansas City, Mo.-based landscape industry consultant and former CEO of a landscape design/build firm. "My crew was on a plane the next morning, and we planned the job overnight."

"It was the only time I ever received a tip on a job," he adds.

Cupp says his relationship and level of trust with that client was so strong—and the reoccurring business so profitable—that it was a no-brainer to accept the project, despite the hoops he had to jump through to get it done.

Accepting out-of-town projects may be a good business move—but only if it's done right and for the right reasons, experts say. There

are several things contractors should consider before accepting a job in unknown territory and hitting the road.

"In my opinion, the only reason to accept an out-of-town job is because it's based on a relationship—either with an existing client or with a client whose business you want to get—or because it's a strategic move that will help you enter a certain part of the marketplace," Cupp says. "And the numbers absolutely have to make sense."

Brandon Keuhler, owner of Light It Right in Baker, Texas, says his company takes on about five out-of-town jobs per year, such as servicing a client's lake house or second home. The \$900,000 company, which offers low-voltage lighting services primarily works in cities throughout Texas, but also has clients with homes in Colorado and North Carolina. Keuhler says word-of-mouth referrals have triggered more out-of-town requests. For example, he



was recently offered an opportunity to service Applebee's restaurants throughout Texas and in Oklahoma. He considers each project on an individual basis.

"We are pretty busy in Houston, so it's a balancing act," he says. "It depends on the job and what it is."

### JOB CONSIDERATIONS

To make an out-of-town job

profitable, Cupp and Keuhler say it's necessary to take into account extra costs associated with travel, equipment, materials and labor.

For out-of-town clients, Light It Right adds hotel costs and a per diem stipend of \$40 per day per crew member as line items on the customer's quote. For jobs far enough outside of the Houston area,

*Continued on page 46*

## NEWSPEED

### OLDCASTLE ACQUISITIONS

Oldcastle Architectural acquired Anchor Block Co. and Anchor Wall Systems.

### NEW SKID-STEER

Bobcat released its first Tier 4-compliant 700 frame-size loader, which is



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### TIER 4 WHEEL LOADERS

John Deere updated its K-Series wheel loader line to adhere to Tier-4 standards by launching its 444K, 5245K and 544K utility-class wheel loaders.

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## DESIGN/BUILD+INSTALLATION

*Continued from page 44*

the company would also add a vehicle usage charge. Many of Cupp's out-of-town jobs also included airfare costs.

"You have to make sure the project is priced right and that the loaded costs are in there," Cupp says. "I've seen contractors do a project many hours away and not make any money on it. It became a drain."

Keuhler agrees. "You have to make sure you budget for that extra unexpected expense, and that it's worth your time and investment."

One pricing mistake Cupp has seen contractors make is assuming job costs

will be similar in different marketplaces. For example, his firm did several jobs on the West Coast, where the costs of materials and labor are significantly higher than they are in Kansas City.

He suggests investigating material costs prior to accepting an out-of-town job by contacting industry peers or vendors in that market. These contacts also can recommend local suppliers and subcontractors, and perhaps even offer their office space as a staging location. Beyond that, Cupp recommends vetting suppliers by researching them online to make sure they're reputable.



**CONSIDER COSTS**  
Material costs, like lighting supplies, differ by market. Consider this fact when pricing.

While Keuhler usually comes prepared with all the materials he needs for an out-of-town job, he also makes sure to locate a reliable supply house in that region in case of an emergency. Like Cupp, he relies on recommendations from his local suppliers and his peers and does online research. To avoid hauling a large load, Keuhler also has

shipped his supplies to local supply houses he has relationships with and picked them up when he arrived in the area.

"We always try to have everything we need for the job, plus some," Keuhler says. "But if we happen to break a pipe or need a special adapter for a fixture we're installing, it's always

*Continued on page 48*

PHOTO: LIGHT IT RIGHT

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**FREIGHTLINER**

## DESIGN/BUILD+INSTALLATION

*Continued from page 46*  
nice to know of a local specialty supply house.”

In addition to researching local suppliers, Keuhler recommends looking into other aspects of the new marketplace. For example, his crews are used to working with the clay-like soil in Houston, so when they take a job in a place like Austin, where the soil is harder and rockier, Keuhler knows to factor in more time to complete the job and to come prepared with the appropriate tools.

Different cities also have different construction codes contractors must follow, so

Keuhler does his homework to ensure he's in compliance with the local standards. He says professional organizations, such as the Association of Outdoor Lighting Professionals, can help steer him in the right direction.

“Don't be afraid to call and ask for help,” he says. “Other organizations can help you find out what you're up against.”

Cupp and Keuhler both agree that marketing out-of-town work can be tricky and that these types of jobs are not for everyone. While Cupp listed “out-of-town concierge landscape services” on his company website, he doesn't

## 'Tis the Season

One benefit of out-of-town work is it can help keep crews busy during the offseason. Jason Cupp, a Kansas City, Mo.-based landscape industry consultant and former CEO of a landscape design/build firm, used to scheduled jobs on the West Coast during the Missouri winters. While it was snowing in Kansas City, he also would take on jobs three hours south where many of his clients had lake homes and the weather isn't as severe.

“Because we were a Midwest company in the snow market, we would try to sell some of our out-of-town work in our offseason,” he says. “Seasonality can help with scheduling.”

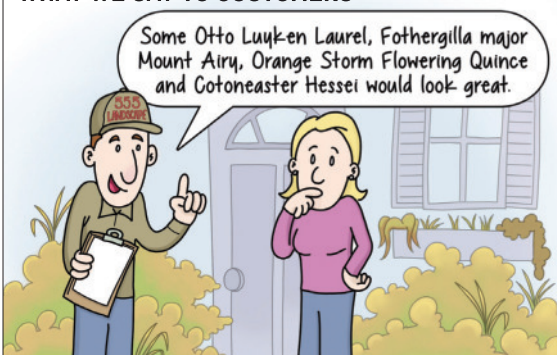
believe any business came from that mention. Keuhler does not actively market this type of work. Both Cupp and Keuhler agree that the out-of-town jobs that make the best business sense come from word-of-mouth referrals, strengthen existing client relationships or open profitable new doors.

“Some contractors get excited about out-of-town work,

but for us, we never would have done it if it didn't completely connect us to a client we already had or was a great client for us to pick up,” Cupp says. “Doing out-of-town work isn't for every contractor, and most companies have enough work in their home market to make them successful.”

Schappacher is a freelance writer based in Charlotte, N.C.

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## IRRIGATION+WATER MANAGEMENT

# Time-saving tech

Technology helps streamline the irrigation division of Echo Systems, resulting in a better use of technicians' time and better looking client properties. **BY EMILY SCHAPPACHER**

"I can be 30 miles from a site and tell you pretty much everything that has happened with the client's irrigation system in about a minute," says Josh White.

The head of business development for Echo Systems in Memphis, Tenn., is able to do so through the use of an advanced, cloud-based irrigation system that combines Web-based management, real-time weather data and wireless-connected smart controllers to determine a landscape's ideal irrigation schedule using minimal water.

The technology has streamlined the irrigation division of the \$3 million full-service landscape company, resulting in a better use of technicians' time and better looking lawns for clients. And it has allowed White to promote the importance of water conservation.

"We are a little different than the typical landscape company in that



Josh White

we have been pushing this technology as a water conservation platform, with the added benefit of it being a wonderful service tool for our own organization," White says. "By understanding the technology and using it as a tool, we promote water conservation."

Echo Systems offers 60 percent landscape management, 20 percent lawn care services and 20 percent irrigation services. Its irrigation client base is 60/40 commercial to residential, compared with an 80/20 commercial/residential split for the rest of the company.

### HOW IT WORKS

Echo Systems uses technology from ETwater. Using its online management system, White sets up an account for each client by entering the landscape's profile. A local weather station provides daily weather and rainfall data, which



### GOOD FIT

Irrigation technology touted mobile access to data has helped Echo Systems reduce its visits to small commercial and residential sites.

is accessed by ETwater servers to compute the evapotranspiration rates and generate daily watering schedules for each landscape. The servers then connect wirelessly to a smart controller to exchange schedules and data. White's technicians can access this data anywhere there is an Internet connection, even through their smartphones with the use of an app.

"This is real-time, in-your-face information that really hasn't existed in this type of environment," White says. "It's giving people more information to make better decisions, and helping them understand that more water isn't necessarily a good thing."

The company started using ETwater's irrigation technology in 2007, and White quickly saw a 50 percent reduction in the time it took his crews to conduct regular system inspections. Most Echo Systems customers have a monthly irrigation system inspection built into their contracts, which used to

## NEWSPEED

### ACQUISITION NEWS

Hunter Industries acquired all the landscape irrigation products,

patents and trademarks from Alex-Tronix Controls of Fresno,

**Hunter®**

Calif. Hunter also intends

to buy Senninger Irrigation, and the companies have entered into their due diligence phase.

### SMART SITES

In honor of the

Irrigation Association's Smart Irrigation Month campaign, Rain Bird expanded its "25 ways to save 25" program with [25ways.Rainbird.com](http://25ways.Rainbird.com), providing water-saving tips and resources for

residential and commercial irrigation sites. Meanwhile, The Toro Co. launched [WaterSmart.Toro.com](http://WaterSmart.Toro.com) to educate homeowners and businesses about options to save water.

## IRRIGATION+WATER MANAGEMENT

take two technicians two to four hours to complete. With this new technology, one technician can complete the inspection in half the time using his mobile phone. This constant access to real-time data helps White's technicians stay on top of problems before they arise, which has allowed them to decrease the number of annual visits from eight to four.

"My irrigation department is more on standby now," White says. "You'll never eliminate all instances of physically going to inspect a site, but as a time saver, you can take any site that has a controller like this and reduce the number of times you have to go visit, and one person can run through the system with their mobile phone. You no longer need that extra person with a basic run through."

Another ETwater technology, Hermit Crab, has made life easier for White and his irrigation techs. The product attaches to any irrigation system's existing controller and converts it to a smart controller that can be managed through any Internet-connected device. White says the Hermit Crab is compatible with any irrigation controller brand and model number that exists in residential and commercial irrigation, and it has allowed him to convert his clients' existing systems into "smart" ones without upgrading their entire systems.

"With one cable, you're online with a controller that may be 20 years old, and you have improved that system to be as advanced as you can find on the market today," White says. "It gives you new avenues—you don't have to throw away



### INFO IN

Echo Systems uses technology that allows it to specify plant types to ensure proper irrigation.

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a system that still works, and you can still create a smart water environment.”

Echo Systems recently used Hermit Crab to upgrade the irrigation system on the campus of a major regional health care provider. It overhauled the entire property’s watering schedule at once using the system’s existing equipment. White was even able to customize the schedule to meet the water needs of different plants, trees and turf found throughout the hospital’s landscape, a task that used to require manual calculations by experts. With this new technology, White’s technicians simply input the type of sprinkler heads into the system, and the device uses algorithms to determine how much water is needed and where.

“It used to be like doing calculus,” White says. “Something that used to


take an irrigation expert is all in a small little box now and is easily teachable to anyone on our team.”

White adds that the technology is so straightforward that he has even taught property managers how to monitor it, giving them an unprecedented look into the benefits of proper watering.

“It’s simple enough that (property managers) can understand it without being bogged down with technology they don’t understand,” White said. “This is as smart as you can get in the small commercial/residential irrigation game.”

As with any new technology, White says there is a learning curve to mastering the ins and outs of the platform. But he has seen his own technicians have a “breakthrough

moment” when they realize how much it simplifies daily operations. White views the ability to monitor a client’s irrigation system from anywhere at any time as a sales opportunity for the industry that can help technicians, homeowners and property managers alike become more conscious of what they’re doing when it comes to water use.

“Water conservation has become a really important thing, and I feel like that’s where we’re heading as industry,” White said. “(This technology) benefits you as the contractor because you get to use it, and benefits your clients because they start to understand what proper watering looks like in their area.” 

Schappacher is a freelance writer based in Charlotte, N.C..

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# amazon OPPORTUNITY

The Internet retailing giant now offers professionals services. Here's how it could affect the landscape industry.

BY LAUREN DOWDLE

**C**onsumers want everything to be instant, hence the success of on-demand services like Uber and Grub-Hub. Now, using a car service or ordering food delivery is just a click away on a mobile device or computer.

This trend of acquiring services quickly and hassle-free also has made its way to the landscape industry with Amazon Home Services, which launched in late March.

Known mainly for its products, reviews and delivery, Amazon also has created a way for people to search for local home, yard/outdoor, automotive and electronic services on its website.

There are more than 700 services to choose from, although not all are available in every city yet. The current focus is on the Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York City metro areas, but services are available in more than 40 states.

With 85 million customers purchasing products on the site in the past year, Amazon wanted to make it easier to find and hire the best professionals, says Bhavnish Lathia, general manager at Amazon Home Services.

"We've heard from our customers that it's hard to find trusted experts in their neighborhoods and

know if they're getting a competitive price," Lathia says. "That's why we created Home Services—to help make shopping for services as easy, trusted and reliable as it is to shop for products."

#### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Amazon is the largest Internet-based retailer in the country, so when it launches something, it's going to have an impact on a wide range of industries.

"Although Amazon Home Services is still off of the radar, you better take it seriously," says landscape industry consultant Jeffrey Scott, president of Jeffrey Scott Consulting. "You need to pay attention when Amazon enters into a marketplace. It can make markets, and it can destroy markets if it wants to."

Other services, like Lowe's Pro Services in partnership with Porch, have tried to match homeowners with professionals with limited success, but Scott says he thinks Amazon's offering has a good chance of working, if Amazon remains committed to it.

"This service is going to attract new competitors into the landscape industry from outside industries," Scott says. "You might not get rich from lead-in services from Amazon, but if you're an expert at providing services, you'll expand your relationships."



## HOW DOES IT WORK?

Amazon Home Services helps consumers find professionals in their areas when they are in need of services from lawn care and landscaping to assembling patio furniture. They can even rent a goat to eat their grass.

Buyers visit Amazon.com/services, type in their ZIP codes, look through the available services and pick a professional. They also can view the pro's profile page, including reviews and company overview.

Professionals set prices for standard services, like mowing for four hours, delivering and installing 2 cubic yards of mulch or trimming three to four shrubs.

Prospects also can request specific landscape work, defining where the work will be done (such as front yard, driveway, etc.), when they need the service done and any other specifics. Those messages are sent to landscapers in their areas, and the pros reply with free estimates.

Once the consumer chooses a professional, he or she can schedule an appointment to have the work completed. Payment goes through Amazon, and companies are paid within seven days of completing the services.

Amazon collects a fee from professionals using Home Services only after the work is completed, and there's no charge for leads or advertising. For standardized-scope services, the fee is 20 percent. For custom-scope, customer-defined services, the fee is 15 percent. For recurring services, such as lawn maintenance, it's 10 percent.

These fees cover invoicing, payment processing, fraud protection, marketing, advertising, seller tools and customer service. Amazon deducts the fees as a percentage of the service price, excluding any taxes collected through Amazon tax services.

Amazon is built so its visitors come ready to make purchases.

"High-quality clients are on Amazon, and they want shopping to be easy and fun," Scott says. "Homeowners are going to begin testing it out, especially if they are dissatisfied with their current contractors. Amazon Home Services will be a way for them to find people who are deemed dependable through Amazon's trustworthy rating system."

When consumers are ready to look for a pro, they can search Amazon Home Services by their ZIP codes to find services—helping businesses reach local prospects.

"We want to help them get their business in front of customers in their neighborhood who are actively shopping for services and help take care of things like invoicing and scheduling," Lathia says.

### WHO'S USING IT?

Ninety percent of the companies on the platform are small- and medium-sized businesses, Amazon says, although it declined to define what it means by "small" and "medium."

One professional who uses Home Services is Christian Waugh, owner of NY Landscape Lighting in Yorktown Heights, N.Y. After doing well on Amazon Local, a daily deal site similar to Groupon, he says he decided to participate in Home Services, too.

"We joined it to try and get more business," he says. "It has a good theory behind it."

Waugh has also used similar sites, like HomeAdvisor and Angie's List, in the past.

"It's just another way for companies to advertise and get in with a new customer," Waugh says. "You might not make as much upfront, but you make that connection that could lead to additional projects."

His business offers landscape lighting, irrigation, mosquito spraying and holiday/event lighting services for residential and commercial properties. Its annual revenue is \$600,000.

Waugh joined Amazon Home Services about five months ago and has received several requests for his services, although none have turned into jobs yet.







He says it took about two to three days to be approved to join Amazon Home Services after submitting his company information, such as certifications and insurance, to Amazon.

He's found an important aspect to reaching more potential customers and selling services is having a good profile on Amazon.

In the beginning, there were a few kinks to work out, Waugh says, such as people calling asking if he offered goat grazing (a real service offered on the site).

"We get a lot of people who are just trying to figure out what it's all about," Waugh says.

**BROWSE** Users can search for landscape services like mowing, trimming, design/build work and more.

 <p><b>Lawn, Garden or Yard Maintenance - 2 Hours by Amazon Home Services</b> We're sorry, no pros near ZIP 10001. Available in select cities. We're continuing to expand and expect to add this service soon.</p>	 <p><b>Porch Swing Installation by Amazon Home Services</b> <b>\$200.00</b> 2 offers near ZIP 10001 Amazon Home Services Hand-picked pros. Backed by our Happiness Guarantee.</p>	 <p><b>Hire a Landscaper by Amazon Home Services</b> Pros are available in ZIP 10001 Amazon Home Services Hand-picked pros. Backed by our Happiness Guarantee.</p>
 <p><b>Mailbox Installation - Post Mounted by Amazon Home Services</b> <b>\$70.00 - \$110.00</b> 8 offers near ZIP 10001 Amazon Home Services Hand-picked pros. Backed by our Happiness Guarantee.</p>	 <p><b>Lawn Mowing - 4 Hours by Amazon Home Services</b> <b>\$100.00</b> 2 offers near ZIP 10001 Available in select cities. We're continuing to expand and expect to add this service soon.</p>	 <p><b>Patio Set Assembly - 6 pieces by Amazon Home Services</b> <b>\$199.99 - \$200.00</b> 8 offers near ZIP 10001 Amazon Home Services Hand-picked pros. Backed by our Happiness Guarantee.</p>

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**TRYING IT OUT** NY Landscape Lighting offers a variety of outdoor services on Amazon Home Services, and it hopes the site will be especially helpful with selling its holiday lighting services this winter.



## DIFFERENT OPINION

There are other professionals, like Kirk Brown, owner of Kirk’s Lawn Care in Spring City, Pa., however, who won’t use Amazon Home Services.

“My company is at a point where we are well known within our service area, and our normal marketing mediums have been highly effective in generating new job leads,” Brown says. “I also do not believe in setting flat rates for services within our industry due to the amount of variables that each property may have. I always visit a property and meet with the customer before pricing is discussed.”

Waugh agrees it’s important to visit the prospect’s home to do a proper evaluation instead of only giving an estimate online.

Brown’s business has an annual revenue of \$130,000 and offers mowing, lawn aeration, overseeding, new lawns, mulching, mulch recoloring, spring/fall cleanup and snow and ice removal for residential and commercial clients.

Brown believes the service will attract bargain hunters looking for the lowest prices among local landscapers.

“I mean, you go to Amazon for the deals, right? My company goal is to provide quality services with excellent customer service, and we always try to market the value of using our company rather than the price,” Brown says. “I don’t feel that the buyers using this service are our target clients.”

Looking ahead, Brown says he thinks Amazon Home Services will drive down the cost of services.

“In my opinion, home services cannot be formed into apples to apples comparisons like products,” he says. “Even if the end result is similar, each contractor has a different way to do things, different equipment to complete tasks and different customer service approaches.”

Taking away the first estimate visit makes the landscaper-client relationship impersonal, Brown says. That



Kirk Brown

can be detrimental to the project, because it's important to build trust with customers, he adds.

"I don't feel trust is something that contractors can convey through a computer screen," Brown says.

Overall, he says Amazon Home Services and similar websites don't fit into his company's values and the direction it's headed.

"Our main focus has never been on competing to be the lowest-priced contractor," Brown says. "I would much rather shoppers read customer testimonials, view project pictures and learn about our company directly on our website that we have full control of rather than Amazon's site."

### LOOKING AHEAD

Pros who decide to participate in Amazon Home Services should be organized to be successful, grab more of the market share and set themselves apart from the competition.

"If you're a low-quality provider or unorganized, you're not going to make it," Scott says. "You have to raise your own bar in order to be competitive in this new economy."

Amazon Home Services is still in the early stages, so Scott says it isn't crucial for landscape companies to join right away. But they need to be prepared for it, he adds.

"Homeowners are always complaining about the lack of responsiveness of their contractors," Scott says. "You must either solve this problem yourself or be overtaken by a competitor who does."

For professionals who do join the service, Scott says they should be prepared for a few bumps in the beginning, but they should work themselves out, assuming Amazon is committed to making this work.

"You're going to get a lot of distraction calls through it at first, but that's always the case when something is newer," Scott says. "When I was running my landscape firm and we'd try a new marketing program, it would often have a few months or a half year of distraction with shoppers



## HOW TO GET APPROVED

Professionals who want to offer their services through Amazon Home Services have to be invited to join. The site only invites professionals who have a strong track record of service quality, says Bhavnish Lathia, general manager at Amazon Home Services.

"We screen through a combination of media searches, online interviews and reference checks," Lathia says. "We conduct comprehensive business background checks and require each pro traveling to (customers') homes to pass a six-point criminal background check."


The professionals also must maintain any required trade licenses and insurance and keep them on file with Amazon.

Those interested in being invited to participate can visit [amazon.com/sellingservices](https://amazon.com/sellingservices) to be considered. The form asks pros for their names, company name, address, phone number, email address, website (although not required) and a link to a third-party review, like Yelp or Angie's List.

calling us. Then, it would work its way out, and we got better leads. If Amazon stays focused to improvement, then it could become viable."

As the Uber effect continues to spread across all industries, Scott predicts Home Services will become even more instant, allowing

customers to have a pro at their home within a day or two.

"The old way of shopping, such as through referrals, isn't going to disappear," Scott says, "but now, there's a new channel available." 

Dowdle is an Alabama-based freelance writer.



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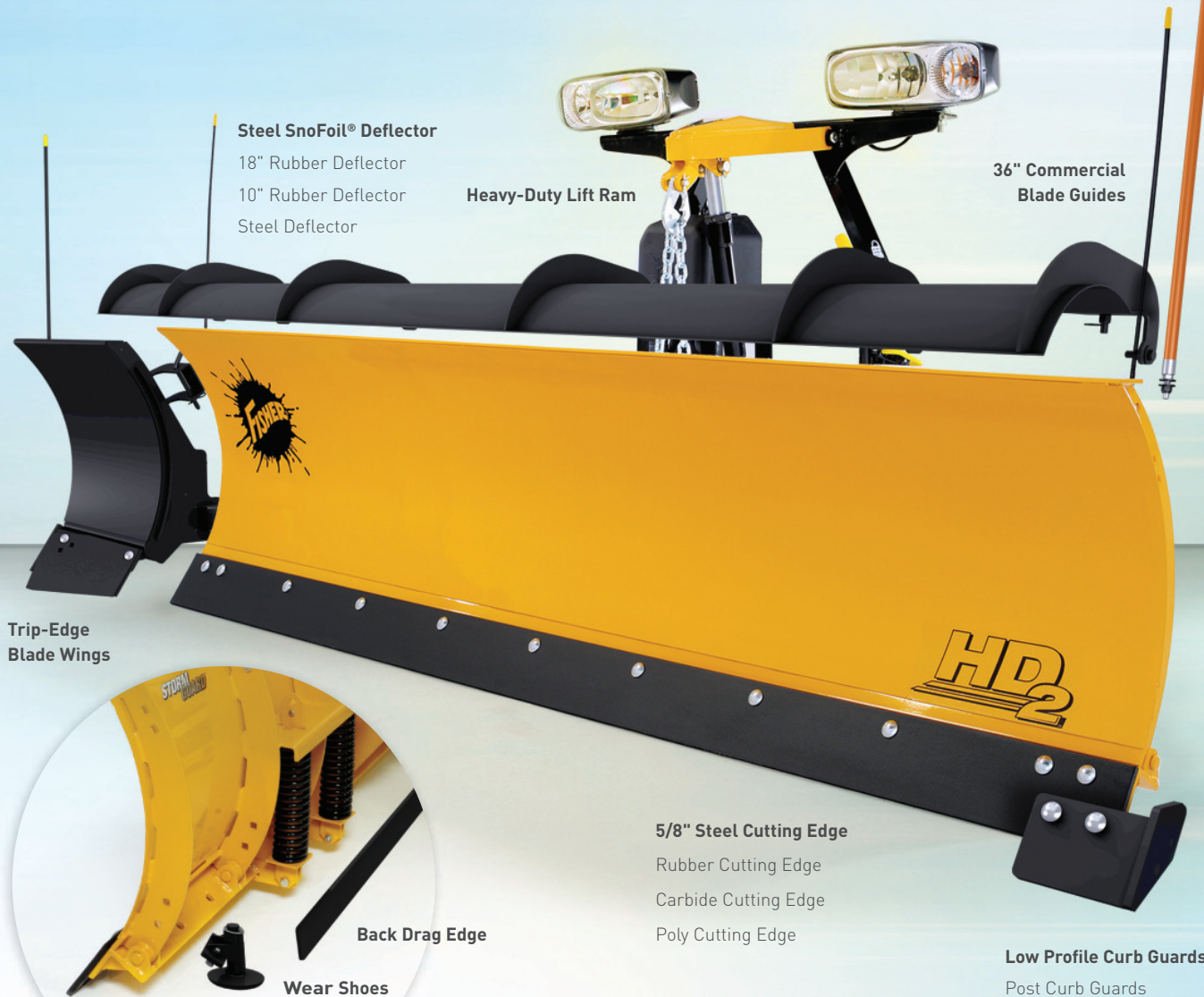


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# SNOW+ICE

## GUIDE

# Extinguishing burnout

How to keep long hours and stressful work from plaguing snow employees. **BY DILLON STEWART**

**L**ast winter, the East Coast was battered with snowstorms. In late November, after the city got more than six feet of snow, the Buffalo Bills paid fans \$10 an hour plus game tickets to help shovel snow in and around the stadium. Bangor, Maine, saw its second snowiest winter on record, receiving more than 130 inches. Boston had its snowiest winter on record, as 108 inches fell. Within 10 days in February, the city was hit with two of the 10 biggest snowstorms ever, which dropped 64.8 inches throughout the month. Some of the snow hadn't melted yet when the calendar hit June.

Even in places not hit as hard as New England—or in less treacherous years—the long, unpredictable snow season is the perfect recipe for employee burnout.

Chris Joyce's company, Joyce Landscaping, was one of many tasked with removing the Boston-area blanket of snow.

"We had our busiest snow season in the history of our business," says Joyce, whose Cape Cod, Mass.-based company pulls in just over \$10 million

in annual revenue and consists of around 12 percent snow work. "I had guys working 80-plus hours with very little sleep, which is not an ideal situation. We just got clobbered."

### WHO'S AT RISK?

"Employee burnout is the physical manifestation of how an employee feels mentally," says Matt Heller, owner of Performance Optimist Consulting, a speaker and author of "The Myth of Employee Burnout."

A study conducted by Staples Advantage and WorkPlaceTrends.com found that 53 percent of Americans reported feeling burned out at work. After years of managing employees in amusement parks, which often employ workers for the summer, Heller knows how susceptible seasonal employees like those in the snow industry can be.

Employee burnout stems from many sources. Long hours of physical, grueling work certainly play a factor. For seasonal employees, scheduling is difficult due to the unpredictability of weather, Heller says. So, an employee continuously missing his or her child's

sporting events or bedtime can burn out, as well. Beyond workload, other frustrations may contribute to burnout. For example, a long-time employee who lost a promotion to the boss's friend is susceptible to burning out.

### IN THE MIDST OF THE STORM

It's January, the height of winter, and your operation should be running like a well-oiled machine. Instead, it seems sluggish. Employees' shoulders are slumped, and they're moving lethargically. Demands are met with eye-rolls, and on multiple occasions, you've overheard staff complaining to their peers about equipment, management or work in general. These warning signs point to a case of employee burnout, Heller says.

Joyce has seen further warning signs. "You don't see any drive in what employees are doing," he says. "Their excitement and passion are gone."

Bruce Moore Sr., owner of Eastern Land Management in Stamford, Conn., knows the importance of detecting burnout. He has seen a seemingly small case spiral into employees who stop showing up or stop answering the phone. It becomes "a domino effect," he says.

"Morale goes down and a whole slew of things start happening," says Moore, whose company does about \$10 million per year in revenue and



# SNOW+ICE GUIDE

pulls from a database of more than 100 employees during snowstorms. "You see more property damage, equipment breaks down. Everything starts deteriorating, including efficiency and production."

## NO BADGE OF HONOR

Jeff Tovar, owner of Chicago-based Tovar Snow, which consists of about 80 percent commercial snow work, sees an epidemic in the snow industry, where working extremely long hours is looked at as a "badge of honor." Not only does this mentality put employees at risk of burnout, Tovar says, it's dangerous.

To prevent employees from getting worn down and to keep them safe, Tovar's employees work on rotating shifts. "That's the whole key to the snow plow business," he says.

Tovar splits workers into multiple teams. One team sleeps while the other plows. After eight hours or so, the rested team will replace the team that's been on the job. His employees say he constantly stresses sleep management.

While long hours play a factor, burnout also stems from employees not feeling appreciated, hard work going unnoticed and problems going unrecognized, Heller says.

To Heller, open lines of communication are key. Becoming aware of employees' concerns can stop burnout in its tracks. Small acts of appreciation, such as gift cards, thank-you notes and impromptu free lunches, go a long way too.

## ALL SMILES

Stopping burnout prevents problems like equipment damage, says Bruce Moore Sr. of Eastern Land Management.



One cold winter, for example, Moore handed out heavy jackets and thicker gloves to make his employees a little more comfortable. When his employees are forced to work long hours unexpectedly, due to a storm, Moore gets food to them on the job.

Recognizing his employees were working frequent overtime hours during one holiday season, Tovar saved them trips to the store by buying and wrapping Christmas presents for them. He also brought in Christmas trees one season to decorate his employees' homes.

"It's all about finding creative ways to help people out," he says.

## WEB EXTRA

Visit the Web Extras section at [LandscapeManagement.net](http://LandscapeManagement.net) to get Heller's advice for documenting feedback.

## BURNOUT PREVENTION

Employee burnout is important to tackle midseason if it comes up, but the most effective way to tackle it is through prevention. The key to prevention, Heller says, lies in hiring, training and firing.

For starters, new employees need to buy in to the company's goals.

"It's not just getting the right people on the bus in the right seats," Heller says, "It's also about getting people who are willing to get out and push the bus when it breaks down."

*Continued on page 72*

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Continued from page 70

As Tovar puts it, snow work is a tough gig. So when hiring, it's important for employees to know what they're getting into.

That means don't sugar coat the job description, Heller says, as it just leads to surprised employees who are in over their head.

To find employees with the grit to "push the bus," even when the job is as tough as being a snow worker, Heller suggests behavioral interviewing to make sure the personality fits with the company. Questions like, "Describe a time when you had a disagreement with your boss or another employee. How did you handle the situation?" or "Tell me about a time when you had to get a lot done in a short period of time. What did you do to make sure everything got done?"

In the snow removal industry, hiring quality employees can be challenging. Sometimes, you'll take what you can get, contractors say. That makes training imperative.


"The more you build an employee's competence, the more you can build their confidence," Heller says.

An initial training program is essential, but training also should be ongoing. Employees need feedback to know what they're doing right or wrong. Rather than silently getting frustrated or giving intangible criticism, like "work harder," Heller says to give employees concrete examples. Training also can be a "tip here or there that's going to make an employee's job easier," he says.



Jeff Tovar

When the proper training techniques are in action, but an employee is still not making the grade, termination can strengthen a team. When managers tolerate poor work, employees feel quality work isn't valued, and they feed off each other. It's important for leaders to set an example and create the right environment.

Whether it's the betterment of the community, supporting a family or working toward a promotion, it's an employer's challenge to find what drives each employee and foster it. In Heller's experience, money is not enough motivation. "When employees don't see the value in what they're doing, things like long hours can make them lose their minds," Heller says. "It's important for them to say, 'I know that I bring value.'" 



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BY PHIL HARWOOD

The author is president and CEO of Pro-Motion Consulting. Reach him at phil@mypmcteam.com.

# Filling buckets

Carrying an evenly distributed load is much easier than hauling an uneven load. Imagine carrying a single bucket of water, switching hands to alleviate the strain one side or the other. Now imagine carrying two buckets of water—one in each hand. Regardless of the weight, two buckets are preferable to one because of the weight distribution. The same could be said about the snow business.

In the snow business, the two buckets are “fixed” dollars and “per” dollars. The “fixed” bucket includes any and all money to be earned from things like seasonal contracts, retainers and prepaids. This money is virtually guaranteed, if not already in the bank. The weight of this bucket stays the same, regardless of how much it snows.

The money in the “per” bucket is from everything else, including contracts that are per hour, per visit, per event, per application and so on. This money is not guaranteed,

as it’s only realized when it snows. The more it snows, the heavier this bucket gets.

Over the last 135 years in my home market, it has never snowed less than 12 inches or more than 95 inches for a winter season. In fact, 80 percent of the time, seasonal snowfall is between 20 inches and 60 inches, meaning that 20 percent of the time, the total is less than 20 inches or more than 60 inches.


What are your market statistics? Do you know? It’s important to have this information at your fingertips and factored into your snow and ice management estimates.

A few years ago, I developed a spreadsheet called a scenario analysis tool. The purpose of this tool is to understand the financial implications of evenly distributed buckets, from 100 percent “fixed” to 100 percent “per” and anything in between, under various seasonal snowfall scenarios. (See Web Extra to download this tool.)

As you can see with the scenario analysis tool, profitability is evened out across all types of winters when both buckets are filled, even if not filled equally. As long as costs are in line, profitability is basically guaranteed.

However, when only one bucket is used, there’s a very real possibility of financial loss. I don’t know about you, but the last thing I want to do is lose money after working nights all winter.

I occasionally meet people who claim they cannot fill both buckets in their market. If this is true, a weather insurance policy may be advisable to reduce the risk. Of course, it would be better to crack the code for filling both buckets than to buy an insurance policy or absorb significant portfolio risk.

As you renew your contracts and sell new work this summer and fall, I encourage you to keep track of how full your buckets are, especially in relation to each other. Review the status of these two buckets at your weekly sales meeting so everyone involved knows the current levels. As you monitor the buckets, you may choose to alter your proposals or selling strategy. For example, if your “fixed” bucket is getting too full, you may decide to stop offering these proposals or to apply a cap (or a lower cap)—something that discourages adding more to the “fixed” bucket or only does so under more preferable terms. The goal is to end the selling season with both buckets filled. 

## WEB EXTRA

Visit the Web Extras section at [LandscapeManagement.net](http://LandscapeManagement.net) to download the scenario analysis tool.



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## HDX SNOWPLOW

**COMPANY:** Fisher Engineering

**URL:** FisherPlows.com

The HDX snow plow features an adjustable attack angle that can be set to accommodate different plowing surfaces, weather conditions or operator preferences. It also features an articulating A-frame that allows the blade to pivot from side to side to freely follow the contours of the plowing surface.



## SNOW PUSHER

**COMPANY:** John Deere

**URL:** Deere.com

Designed with reversible and replaceable rubber cutting edges, the Snow Pusher can create paths ranging from 96 in. to 120 in., depending on the model: SP8 (8-ft. width, pictured) and SP10 (10-ft. width). The optional pullback edge is designed for opening confined areas and working around vehicles, buildings, fences and other obstructions.

## STRIKER STAINLESS STEEL HOPPER SPREADER

**COMPANY:** Western Plows

**URL:** WesternPlows.com

The Striker's chute design directs deicing material out and away from the truck. A circular shutter deflector allows one-sided spreading. Two 12-V electric motors provide independent control over the conveyor and spinner. Gas and hydraulic options are available.



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## VBX 9000 HOPPER SPREADER

**COMPANY:** BOSS Snowplow

**URL:** BOSSPlow.com

The new VBX 9000 features a 3-cu.-yd. capacity for 1-ton-and-over class trucks. Customers can choose from pintle chain and auger feed options. Its stainless steel drivetrain components are corrosion-resistant for reduced maintenance and longer life. The LCD screen controller is backlit and features dual motor control for quick adjustments on the fly.

## SNOWDOGG VUT65 PLOW

**COMPANY:** Buyers Products

**URL:** SnowDoggPlows.com

Designed to work with most full-size utility vehicles, the VUT65 features stainless steel. Its flare is designed to move the maximum volume of snow coupled with a simple, torsional trip edge for smooth plowing. Its V-plow design offers 60-in. width (at V), a 70 degree attack angle and fast-acting hydraulics, the manufacturer says.



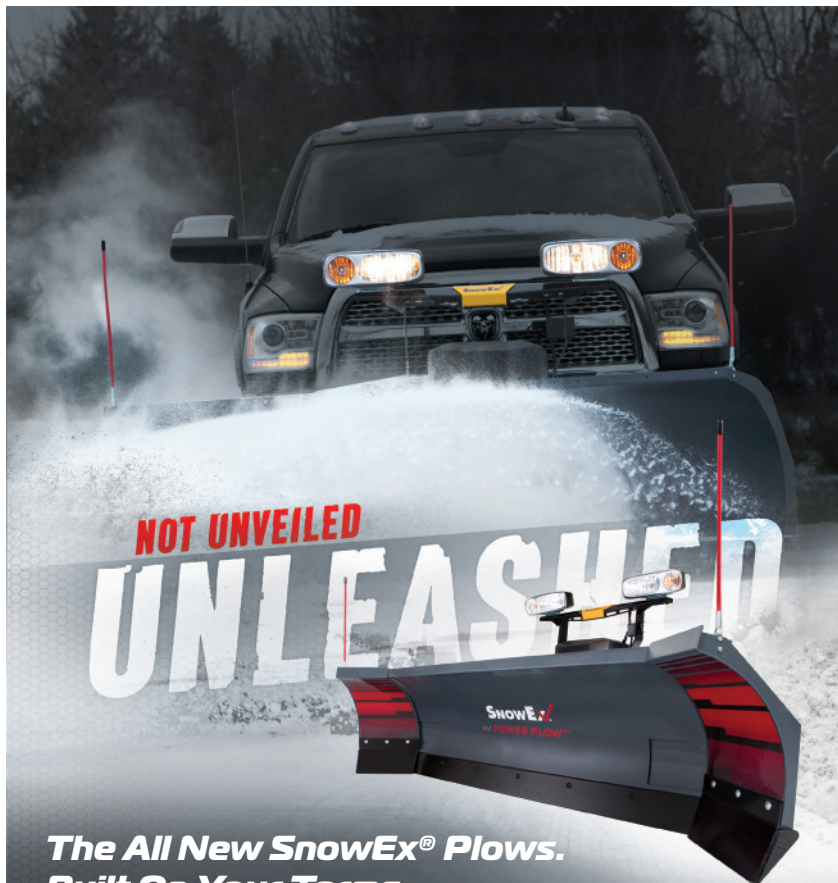
## HGX HEAVY GABLE BUILDINGS



**COMPANY:** Alaska Structures

**URL:** AlaskaStructures.com/portfolio-view/hgx-series

Made with a galvanized steel frame and polyvinyl chloride (PVC) fabric, the HGX Series tents are rugged, easy to install and portable. They are available in widths ranging from 15 ft. to 30 ft. and any length. They also can be used for large machine sheltering purposes.



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# SNOW+ICE GUIDE PRODUCTS



## LIQUIMAXX SPRAY SYSTEM

COMPANY: SnowEx

URL: [SnowExProducts.com](http://SnowExProducts.com)

With its modular tank, pump and boom design, the LiquiMaxx allows snow and ice professionals to build their own sprayers. It also provides the ability to switch out individual components when looking to upgrade equipment. It's available with four polyethylene tank sizes (300, 500, 750 and 1,250 gal.), each featuring an elliptical design, a low center of gravity and a sump for complete draining.

## BRUTUS SNOW BLADE

COMPANY: Polaris

URL: [Polaris.com](http://Polaris.com)

The blade's hydraulic angling allows users to angle it 30 degrees left or right from inside the vehicle with an intuitive remote switch. Adjustable-depth skid shoes prevent scraping by holding the current height of the blade, while the rolled trip blade allows materials to flow easily, creating less drag. Optional rubber and poly cutting edges are available.



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## POWER MAX HD 928 OXHE SNOWBLOWER

COMPANY: Toro

URL: [Toro.com](http://Toro.com)

Powered by a 265 cc Toro Premium OHV 4-cycle engine, the 928 OHXE can take on up to 1,900 lbs. of snow per minute, throwing it up to 45 ft. out of the way. A 28-in. clearing width creates a wide path, while a commercial-grade gearbox powers the 14-in. diameter, serrated auger.



## 3X SNOW THROWER

COMPANY: Cub Cadet

URL: [CubCadet.com](http://CubCadet.com)

The Cub Cadet 3X three-stage snow thrower is designed to remove 18 in. of snow and clear deep snowfall up to 50 percent faster than a traditional two-stage snow thrower, the manufacturer says. The machine also features trigger-control power steering.



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## GROW GOOD

One landscape firm uses an organic garden to practice sustainability and give back.

 **PAGE 85**

# 6 tips for organizing your finances



**BY DANIEL GORDON**

The author is a CPA who caters to landscape and lawn care firms. Reach him at [dan@turfbooks.com](mailto:dan@turfbooks.com).

**A**s a busy owner or manager of a landscape or lawn care firm, you have to juggle many functions. Unless you have someone on staff who has the skills to manage the finance and accounting piece, this function may be a source of frustration. The key is to stay organized. The following are six important things you can do to get your finances under control.

**1. Talk to a CPA.** When most people think of a CPA, they think of taxes, but there's a lot more to accounting than taxes. A competent CPA should be able to file your taxes and prepare financial statements for banks, creditors and other stakeholders in your business. The overall goal of your accountant should be to help you accumulate and preserve wealth. Saving taxes is just a small part of this task.

**2. Look at your business entity structure.** There are a variety of ways to legally organize a landscape company, and it may be advantageous to change the legal structure as you grow. Generally, there are three business structures: sole proprietorship, partnership or corporation. A fourth choice—and a good one for this industry—is a limited liability company (LLC). For accounting purposes, an LLC can be set up like either of the first three and taxed accordingly. Under the current law, in most cases, S corporations will minimize your federal taxes. Consult your accountant or lawyer to help assess state and federal tax consequences and how this structure fits into your overall picture.

**3. Separate personal and business finances.** For legal purposes and to keep tax records straight, you want to make sure your finances are




separate. Start by tracking your business expenditures accurately without commingling your personal expenses. The easiest way is to maintain separate bank accounts. Another simple idea is to get a personal credit card and business card and separate your purchases using the proper card.

**4. Set up your chart of accounts to match your objective.** Financial statements are the culmination of the accounting process. They're used to convey a concise picture of the profitability and financial position of your company. The two most important financial statements that give you this snapshot are the profit and loss statement (P&L) and the balance sheet. The P&L shows how much profit or loss your firm made for a given period. The balance sheet shows what you own, what you owe and how much accounting equity you have in the company. But more importantly, financial statements show how the profit or loss was derived and how the assets, liabilities and equity are categorized. The categories are defined by the chart of accounts you set up when you begin your business. You should update it to ensure it provides useful information. It's important that the person setting up the general ledger chart of accounts understands accounting concepts and

the industry, so items like direct labor, material percentages, marketing and sales expenses are tracked properly.

**5. Use QuickBooks to get organized.** QuickBooks is the most widely used general ledger program among small businesses. It's particularly enjoyed by non-accounting types, allowing them to perform accounting tasks using a graphical interface that reminds them of using familiar documents like checks and invoices. QuickBooks allows the business to manage revenue, expenses, payroll, cash flow and budgeting. Having accurate and timely information is paramount to success in the green industry, and it simplifies this process.

**6. Set up a budget.** Budgeting is nothing more than creating a coherent financial plan for some period in the future, usually one to two years. As you implement the plan, you can rate your efforts compared to the budget. Budgeting allows you to predict the amount of technicians, vehicles, equipment and more that you'll need in the future based on your revenue projections. During the budgeting process, you determine the expenses you can reduce and analyze revenue to determine which area is the most profitable and if there are other areas that can contribute to the bottom line. You should budget annually and compare results to budgets monthly.

Understanding your finances is key to operating a successful business. The more you know, the more effective you will be at guiding a profitable ship through seasonality, growth and times of difficult cash flow. Working on the six items discussed above will help you maintain financial visibility. 

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<sup>1</sup>2014 Employer Health Benefits Survey, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, September 10, 2014. <sup>2</sup>One Day Pay<sup>SM</sup> is available for most properly documented, individual claims submitted online through Aflac SmartClaim<sup>®</sup> by 3 PM ET. Aflac SmartClaim<sup>®</sup> not available on the following: Short Term Disability (excluding Accident and Sickness Riders), Life, Vision, Dental, Medicare Supplement, Long Term Care/Home Health Care, Aflac Plus Rider and Group policies. Individual Company Statistic, 2015. <sup>3</sup>Eastbridge Consulting Group, U.S. Worksite/Voluntary Sales Report. Carrier Results for 2002-2014. Avon, CT. Coverage is underwritten by American Family Life Assurance Company of Columbus. In New York, coverage is underwritten by American Family Life Assurance Company of New York.

**LET'S GROW**

# Sell more with tech tools



**BY KEVIN KEHOE**

The author, owner-manager of 3PG Consulting, is a 25-year industry veteran. Reach him at [kevinkehoe@me.com](mailto:kevinkehoe@me.com).

**Y**our prospects are busier than ever and harder to meet with face-to-face. They're bombarded with requests for sales meetings—an activity they don't like that much, as it takes too much time and delivers too little benefit. If you want to sell more in this environment, you need to address this reality.

Technology provides some solutions. Email is changing the sales game, making it easier to “get in front” of the prospect without the hassle of voice mail. But it's impersonal and

**“Online meeting programs work for prospects because they feel less pressured than in a face-to-face meeting.”**

doesn't provide the opportunity to build rapport the way a face-to-face meeting does. But if you add an online conference platform like GoToMeeting with your email strategy, you add the relationship-building element of a face-to-face meeting.

Online meeting programs work for prospects because they feel less pressured than in a face-to-face meeting, and they require a smaller commitment of their time (they control when it starts and ends). It works for the salesman because it's less expensive than driving across town, and it frees up time to make more calls in a day.

Despite the potential this technology offers, ineffective use of it can backfire and hurt your sales effort. The key is to marry email and an

online meeting program into an effective sales process. Use email to set up the call, and use the meeting software to conduct it.

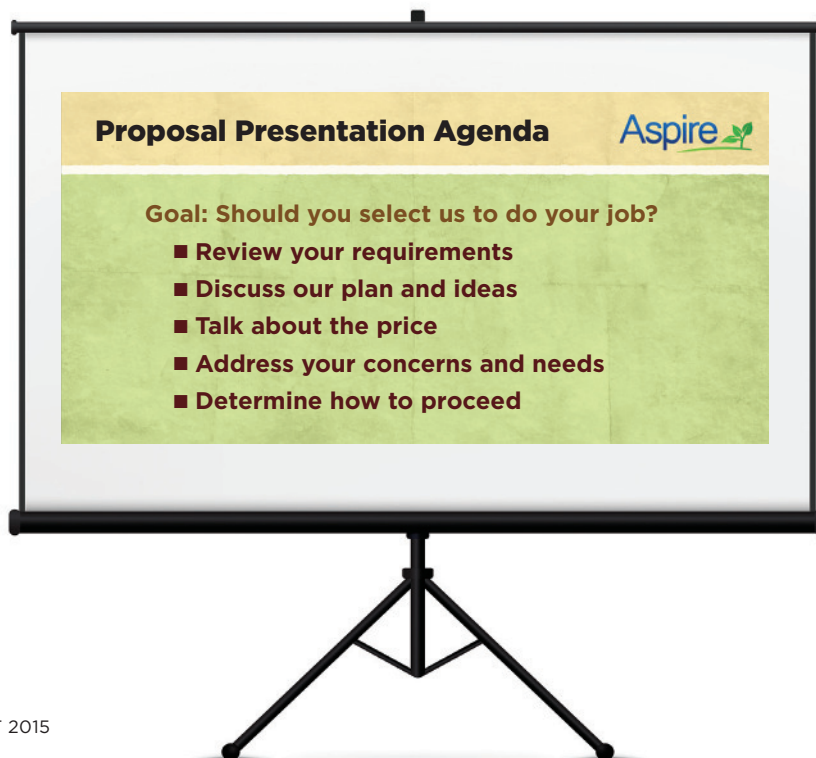
## **TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE ONLINE MEETINGS**

The first key is addressing the prospect's potential lack of experience with technology. Many prospects are not computer literate. They require set-up and training assistance, which is OK because it provides you with an excellent opportunity to build rapport as you show them how to use it. They learn something new while you get to demonstrate expertise.

The second key is controlling meeting time and content. The best ways to do this are: 1). Keep the meeting short, and 2). Rely on visuals. I recommend simple and attractive graphics/photos with perhaps one or two “verbal” slides (see example below).

Ten to 12 slides are more than enough for a 30-minute meeting. Be sure to keep the meeting under 30 minutes unless the prospect wants more time. Short meetings are appreciated. And the point of the meeting is to get the prospect to commit to something, not to review every aspect of the project/contract. That should have happened in a series of preparatory emails.

If you want more face time with the prospect, and you want to do more in a day, you must use technology. It benefits both you and the prospect. I know this from experience. My sales process uses both email and teleconferencing. As a result my productivity (number of calls per day) has soared, and my close rate is significantly better. And all it costs is \$50 per month, or about what you spend in gas driving to/from a few calls in a week. ☺



**CASE STUDY: OUR WAY**

# Cultivating an experience

A landscape firm's large garden serves its staff and the community. **BY CASEY PAYTON**

**G**achina Landscape Management in Menlo Park, Calif., has practiced sustainable gardening as part of some of its maintenance contracts for nearly a decade. It naturally parlayed those skills into its own project: a large garden area it calls The Farm.

The Farm, launched in January 2014, is located about three blocks away from Gachina's headquarters. The one-acre lot is divided up into company parking, a supply holding yard and the 5,500-square-foot farm. This project hasn't only been an employee learning experience, it's also been an excellent community outreach opportunity.

"As stewards of the environment, we felt the necessity to nurture and protect local and migratory wildlife in our daily practices," says Stacie Callaghan, customer experience and marketing manager. "This approach has been performed in our own vegetable garden as well as promoted through our large clientele."

Those efforts have included developing this site without the use of any pesticides to control insects, diseases or weeds. It's been an opportunity to train employees on the use of organic practices, while also "respecting the natural habitat and the existing wildlife."

Of course, not being able to apply any herbicide for weed control has posed challenges, such as a lot of hand pulling, says Callaghan. But volunteers' enthusiasm about cultivating an organic site has made it doable.

Volunteers include students from JobTrain, a vocational training program from which Gachina rents space for The Farm. Three salaried and four hourly Gachina employees also support the garden, to the tune of about 20 man-hours per week.

"We were able to reclaim the weeded lot by sheet mulching the entire site," says Callaghan. "This had reduced weeding by 80 percent. We then brought in organic garden soil and compost to build beds on top of the cardboard. The unplanted areas were then mulched with recycled arbor mulch. All of this has helped to reduce weeds and conserve water."

Another challenge has been the lack of automated irrigation, which caused some of the plants to die prematurely.

"The volunteers on this project stepped in," says Callaghan. "Currently we're installing an easy-to-move-around drip system, which allows us to seasonally change crops."

Callaghan acknowledges there has been a learning curve for many employees, as they get more comfortable with organic practices.

"My compost pile disappeared twice because they had 'cleaned up,'" Callaghan says, laughing. "I also had some guys help with the artichoke division, and they took out my mature plants and left only the little starters. But it's all a learning experience."

Callaghan says that in addition to being a learning opportunity for employees, The Farm has given the company a chance to show clients that the company truly "walks

the talk." She adds that The Farm has helped increase clients' confidence and they have a physical site to show future clients who are interested in this kind of work. The company spends about \$3,000 per month in labor and materials on the garden.

"Clients are looking to us to provide them with cutting edge solutions and options when it comes to a lower carbon footprint," Callaghan says. "We now have a physical site to practice and develop some of those solutions."

Gachina has also partnered with a local culinary class. Every Monday, the students harvest the vegetables/fruits with a chef. Volunteers also harvest produce, which is delivered to three of the company's branch locations to be distributed to employees. Extras go to the volunteers.

"They are getting a first-hand learning experience," says Callaghan. "Overall, it's been a great experience for everyone involved."

**The Farm, a 5,500-square-foot organic garden, proves Gachina "walks the talk."**



## BUSINESS BREAKDOWN

**COMPANY:** Gachina Landscape Management

**HEADQUARTERS:** Menlo Park, Calif.

**2014 ANNUAL REVENUE:** \$25.1 million

**EMPLOYEES:** 335-plus

**SERVICE MIX:** 60% maintenance; 40% enhancement

**CLIENT MIX:** 35% residential; 35% commercial; 30% public works and municipalities

## TRIMMERS



### 40-V MAX BRUSHLESS STRING TRIMMERS

**COMPANY:** DeWalt

**URL:** [DeWalt.com/outdoor](http://DeWalt.com/outdoor)

The 40-V MAX Brushless String Trimmer comes with either the 4 Ah lithium ion battery (pictured) or the 6 Ah lithium ion battery for 50 percent more capacity. The trimmer features a 15-in. cut swath, dual-line bump feed head and a gear drive design, which provides amplified torque and maintains cut speed under load.



### 525L PROFESSIONAL TRIMMER

**COMPANY:** Husqvarna

**URL:** [Husqvarna.com/us](http://Husqvarna.com/us)

The 525L's intuitive controls make choke and purge easy to reach and understand, and Smart Start is designed to get the engine running with minimal effort. Like other Husqvarna 500 Series products, the 525L features X-Torq engine technology that combines high performance with fuel economy and lower exhaust emissions.



### ST275 TRIMMER/EDGER

**COMPANY:** Oregon Outdoor Power Equipment

**URL:** [OregonCordless.com](http://OregonCordless.com)

As part of Oregon's 40-V MAX Cordless Tool System, the ST275 delivers power and performance without the hassles associated with gas-powered tools. Weighing less than 10 lbs. with the battery, it features a dual-line, quick-loading trimmer head, flip-down edge guide and variable speed control.

### DS 3500 SERIES PROFESSIONAL BRUSH CUTTERS

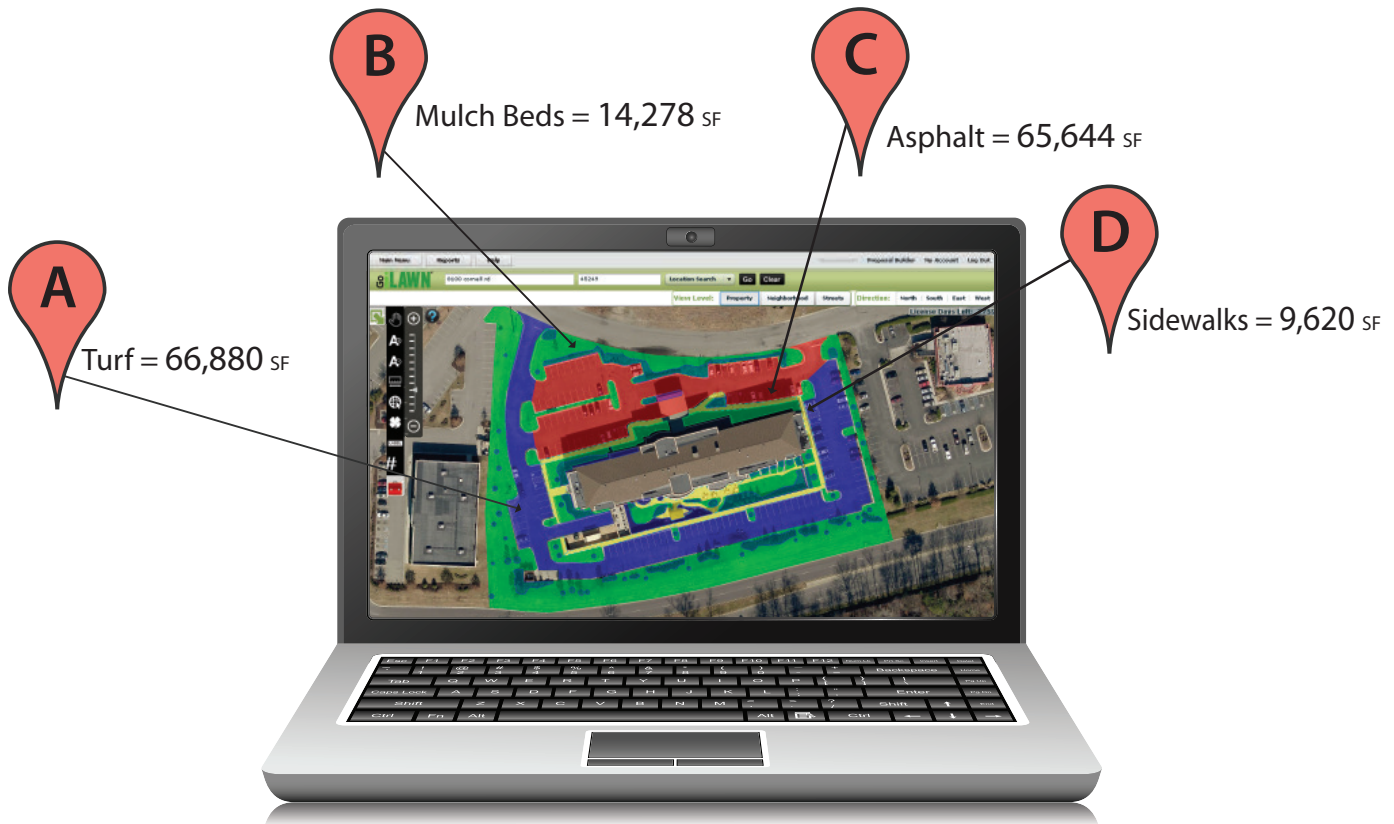
**COMPANY:** Efco

**URL:** [EfcoPower.com](http://EfcoPower.com)

The series' 36.3-cc, two-stroke engine delivers 1.9 hp, while remaining lightweight. It includes ergonomic handles and easy-to-reach controls, and it is backed by Efco's two-year commercial warranty.



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## HHT25SLTA STRING TRIMMER

**COMPANY:** Honda

**URL:** [PowerEquipment.Honda.com](http://PowerEquipment.Honda.com)

Equipped with a standard loop handle, this lightweight trimmer is easy to use, yet designed for heavy-duty trimming and brush removal. Its strong low-end torque characteristics allow many jobs to be performed at partial throttle, increasing fuel efficiency. It features Honda's Quick Start system, runs on regular gasoline and is designed to be quiet and clean running.



## 56-V MAXLITHIUM CORDLESS 24-IN. HEDGE TRIMMER

**COMPANY:** Worx

**URL:** [Worx.com/en-US](http://Worx.com/en-US)

Model WG291's high-capacity 56-V MaxLithium Battery provides gas-like performance and extended run time with zero emissions. Its dual-action cutting blades provide less vibration for fast, clean cuts up to 0.75 in. in diameter. Its full wrap front handle is designed for easy side and top cutting, while the blade tip protector prevents accidental cutting.

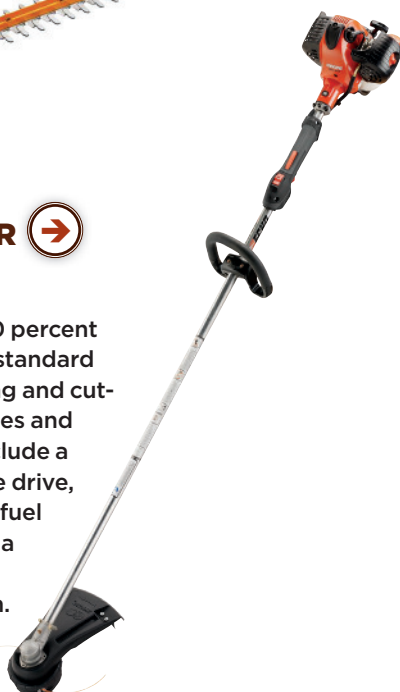


## SRM-266T TRIMMER

**COMPANY:** Echo

**URL:** [Echo-USA.com](http://Echo-USA.com)

The SRM-266T features 50 percent more cutting torque than standard Echo trimmers for trimming and cutting in thick regional grasses and dense weeds. Features include a 59-in., four-layer flex cable drive, a 16.9-fl.-oz., see-through fuel tank for long run time and a debris shield with built-in cut-off knife for line length.



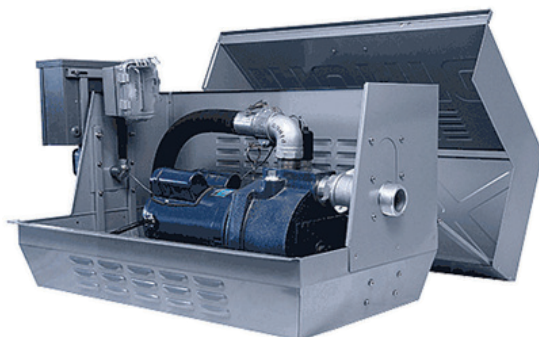
## IRRIGATION PUMPS

### COMPLETE PRO II

**COMPANY:** Munro Cos.

**URL:** [MunroCompanies.com/completevideo](http://MunroCompanies.com/completevideo)

All of Munro's irrigation pump pieces and parts are in one package. A professional-grade pump, pump control and simplified plumbing connections all come in an exclusive enclosure designed for a pump.



### CLP PUMP STATION

**COMPANY:** Rain Bird

**URL:** [RainBird.com](http://RainBird.com)

Rain Bird's CLP Pump Station is a 5-hp unit designed for small to medium landscape sites. The CLP series' compact design, durable centrifugal self-priming or boost pump and ease of installation make it an ideal solution for homeowner associations, small sports fields, schools and parks, Rain Bird says.



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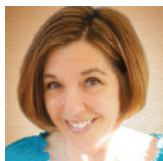
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# RESOURCES

[from page 16]

## SafetyWatch list of hazards

The list of hazards in this photo includes but is not limited to:

- Lack of hearing protection;
- Lack of eye protection;
- No safety vest; and
- Lack of attention being paid to job at hand.

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Class of 1998

Saint Anselm College  
Manchester, N.H.  
Bachelor of Science  
Business  
Class of 2003

Northeastern University  
Boston  
Certification, Construction  
Project Management  
2003-2004

### WORK EXPERIENCE

**2003-2009**  
Vice President  
The J.E. Case Cos.  
North Attleboro, Mass.

**2009-Present**  
President  
Case Snow Management  
North Attleboro, Mass.

**2014-2015**  
Chair, board of directors  
Snow & Ice  
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Association  
Milwaukee

"I started concentrating a little more on snow, and the opportunity presented itself to break away and start my own company."

"A company is only as strong as its team members. We've been able to build a really solid core team. The dedication and commitment of these employees has catapulted this company to the next level."



"I first got involved in 2003 after I got out of college. I went to a Symposium and brought a briefcase full of my think-tank stuff and just started rubbing elbows."

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