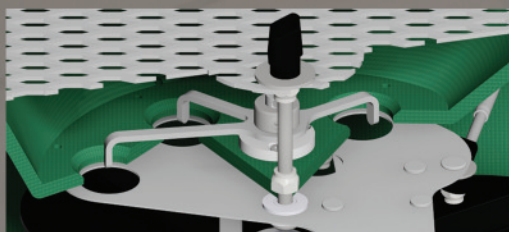


permagreen™

UPGRADE TO THE ALL NEW

BREAKTHRU AGITATOR



Featured on the new 2017 PermaGreen Triumph, the revolutionary **BREAKTHRU** Agitator is guaranteed to reduce clogging of your LESCO® or PermaGreen™ 3-hole spreader or your money back.

Visit permagreen.com to see for yourself why PermaGreen is the **GOLD STANDARD** of spreaders



TAKE THE 60-DAY CHALLENGE

TRY THE PERMAGREEN ON YOUR TOUGHEST PROPERTIES FOR 60 DAYS. IF YOU DON'T **LOVE** IT, WE'LL BUY IT BACK!

CALL FOR DEALER LOCATIONS &
REGISTER TO WIN A TRIUMPH

800.346.2001 permagreen.com



LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO GROWTH™

DESPERATE MEASURES

Why—and how—
some landscape
companies
are recruiting
workers from

PUERTO RICO





E824

KING OF THE HILL



Power or fuel savings—that was your choice. Until now. Say hello to the **Command PRO® EFI 824**. With best-in-class* torque, it's ready to take on any terrain. And with all the cash you save on fuel, it's the best thing your bottom line has ever seen. Man, it's good to be king.

*Class defined as vertical-shaft, commercial 800- to 875-cc gasoline engines.

KOHLER®
IN POWER. SINCE 1920.

KOHLERPOWER.COM



CONTENTS

APRIL 2017 • VOL 56, ISSUE 4

DESPERATE MEASURES

ON THE COVER

Why—and how—some landscape companies are recruiting workers from Puerto Rico.

48

NEWS & HOW-TO'S

10 Recommender

Compact utility tractor

10 Leadership Advantage

BY BEN GANDY

12 Step by Step

How to ID Weeds.

14 New Stuff

Six products and services that are fresh to the market.

16 SafetyWatch

Safely spreading fertilizer.

PROFIT CENTERS

30 Turf+Ornamental Care

How to easily and quickly identify different types of broadleaf and grass-like weeds.

To charge a design fee, or not to charge a design fee? Jody Shilan answers the question (page 38).



32 Mowing+Landscape Maintenance

Hear from contractors who are making the change to diesel engines.

38 Design/Build+Installation

A design expert explains why you should be charging a design fee.

42 Irrigation+Water Management

Manufacturers discuss the ins and outs of Wi-Fi-enabled controllers.

BUSINESS INSIDER

56 Business Basics: People

Improve your hiring process by asking these four questions.

BY MEL KLEIMAN

58 Let's Grow

Learn how to incorporate Facebook Live in your marketing scheme.

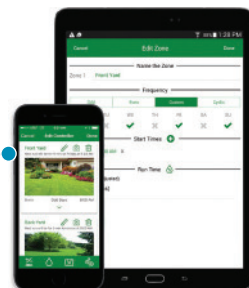
BY SHAUN KANARY

59 Case Study: Add-on Biz

Demolition proves profitable for a company facing a foreclosure crisis.

BY CASEY PAYTON

New smart irrigation controllers from Rain Bird and Hunter. (page 60).



IN EVERY ISSUE

2 Online Now

4 Editor's Note

BY MARISA PALMIERI

6 Big Picture

Grunder Landscaping, Miamisburg, Ohio

60 Product Focus

Chainsaws, irrigation controllers

62 Ad Index/Classifieds

64 Backstory

Jon Cundiff, president, Weed Man Kansas City, Lee's Summit, Mo.

BY DILLON STEWART

ON THE COVER: PHOTO ©ISTOCK.COM/WOODENDINOSAUR



LM GROWTH SUMMIT

LM GROWTH SUMMIT

TURF+
ORNAMENTAL CARE

MOWING+LANDSCAPE
MAINTENANCE

DESIGN/BUILD+
INSTALLATION

→ The LM Lawn Care Forum has rebranded and expanded into the LM Growth Summit. This new event will offer one-on-one meetings with manufacturers, suppliers and other sponsors; inventive educational sessions and laid-back networking opportunities to three segments: turf + ornamental care, mowing + landscape maintenance and design/build + installation. The invitation-only event is designed for landscape and lawn care owners/managers who are interested in discovering the latest innovations from suppliers and best practices from their peers. To apply, visit LandscapeManagement.net/LawnCare-Forum, and get advice from attendees of last year's event at LandscapeManagement.net/Video.

APP PICK

Countable Making sure Congress hears your voice is important but often daunting. Countable lets you check in on your state's three lawmakers daily. You can see what votes are coming up, how your representatives voted and how to contact them. Countable is your first step to understanding Congress—and holding them accountable.

Free • iOS, Android, Desktop



LM CONNECT

facebook.com/LandscapeManagement

twitter.com/LandscapeMgmt

linkedin.com/company/landscape-management-magazine/

plus.google.com > Search "Landscape Management magazine"

[@landscapemgmt">instagram.com > @landscapemgmt](https://instagram.com)

In today's ultra-competitive landscape environment, the need to operate at maximum efficiency and profitability has never been greater.

INFORMATION IS POWER



Purchase a digital copy of the "**Operating Cost Study** for the Landscape Industry" today to measure your company against others in the industry to:

- Improve efficiency
- Boost productivity
- Help manage expenses
- Identify areas for revenue growth

Get the Study Today: bit.ly/nalpbookstore

**\$99 for NALP
members**

**\$199 for
nonmembers**

Brought to you by



Prepared by **TURF BOOKS**



AMERICAN
MADE
Since 1984

YOU CAN'T OUTSOURCE PRIDE

We're proud to be here. Since 1984, the passion and attention to detail our people bring every day gives this feeling meaning. Together in our stateside facilities, we take personal responsibility to assure product integrity and to deliver the intangibles offshore companies can't. Immediacy. Flexibility. Accountability. Advantages that benefit you, your business, your customers.

Our way. Your way. The American way.



LANDSCAPE
LIGHTING

800-766-8478 | www.vistapro.com/pride

EDITOR'S NOTE

MARISA PALMIERI
EDITOR

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



Positive outcomes

Landscape professionals are often optimists, I've noticed. Have you ever observed the same?

I'm not sure why exactly. Maybe there's a causal relationship between optimism and all the fresh air green industry people breathe. Maybe small business people are predisposed to looking on the bright side. Or maybe it's purely incidental.

In any case, thinking positively is a good thing. Studies show optimists feel healthier, live longer, are less stressed and experience many other positive outcomes.

Sometimes, though, it's difficult to look on the sunny side, so I fully expected to hear only doom and gloom while reporting on the issue of *LM*. Now, there was a little bit of that. People I interviewed for the cover story certainly used the word "desperate" to refer to their companies' labor scenarios. But when I asked the *LM* Editorial Advisory Board to give their thoughts on the state of the workforce, I got more than the pity party I expected.

Here are a few snippets from the responses to the prompt, "The landscape laborer shortage is..."

"...an opportunity for innovative, ingenious businessmen."

"...an opportunity to out compete."

"...not an issue for a select group of high-performing companies."


"...by far the most critical issue in the green industry. Marketing to find workers will become as important and marketing to find customers."

"...never going away. The only way to win in this area is to passionately prioritize recruitment and retention as an everyday function of running and growing a successful landscaping business."

What do you see here? Optimism. Opportunity. I opened the door for a complaint-fest, but that's not what I got. I got responses from successful businesspeople who know pessimism is not the answer. (Read the complete statements from our Editorial Advisory Board members at LandscapeManagement.net/tag/editorial-advisory-board.)

I noticed the same positive persistence among the people I interviewed for the cover story on recruiting workers from Puerto Rico. Don't get me wrong: Sources emphasized the seriousness of their workforce concerns, but never did they say, "It's useless," or "We're giving up." They were compelled to experiment with recruiting from Puerto Rico because they're willing to exhaust every opportunity to hire legal workers amid a strong economy, limited local workforce and an inflexible guest-worker visa program.

This month, I co-opted the typical advisory board space to run an excerpt from a letter to the editor (see opposite page). As Yellowstone Landscape CEO Tim Portland explains, this situation is not just a matter of raising wages and calling it a day. It's a complicated issue that requires both immediate and long-term solutions from our lawmakers.

If the landscape professionals reading this note are the hopeful, get-it-done people I've observed you be, please continue to plan for the worst, hope for the best and take action to encourage your federal officials to create the positive outcomes your businesses, employees and clients deserve. 



HEADQUARTERS

1360 East 9th St., Suite 1070,
Cleveland, OH 44114

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor Marisa Palmieri

216/706-3764 | mpalmieri@northcoastmedia.net

Associate Editor Dillon Stewart

216/706-3756 | dstewart@northcoastmedia.net

Art Director Tracie Martinez

216/280-6127 | tmartinez@northcoastmedia.net

Graphic Designer Courtney Townsend

216/363-7931 | ctownsend@northcoastmedia.net

Digital Media Content Producer Kelly Limpert

216/363-7933 | klimpert@northcoastmedia.net

ADVERTISING STAFF

Publisher Bill Roddy

216/706-3758 | broddy@northcoastmedia.net

Group Associate Publisher Craig MacGregor

216/706-3787 | cmacgregor@northcoastmedia.net

Eastern Regional Sales Manager Chris De Cicco

216/337-4417 | cdecicco@northcoastmedia.net

Western Regional Sales Manager Jake Goodman

216/363-7923 | jgoodman@northcoastmedia.net

Classified Accounts Manager Chloe Scoular

216/363-7929 | cscoular@northcoastmedia.net

BUSINESS STAFF

Vice President, Sales Patrick Roberts

216/706-3736 | proberts@northcoastmedia.net

Administrative Coordinator Petra Turko

216/706-3768 | pturko@northcoastmedia.net

Manager, Meetings and Events Kyle Castro

216/706-3772 | kcastro@northcoastmedia.net

Marketing Manager Scott Gebler

216/363-7932 | sgebler@northcoastmedia.net

Manager, Production Services Terri Johnstone

216/978-9622 | tjohnstone@northcoastmedia.net

Senior Audience Development Manager

Antoinette Sanchez-Perkins

216/706-3750 | asanchez-perkins@northcoastmedia.net

Web Developer Jesse Malmacher

216/363-7925 | jmalmacher@northcoastmedia.net

MARKETING/MAGAZINE SERVICES

Reprints & Permissions Brett Petillo

877/652-5295 | bpetillo@wrightsmmedia.com

List Rental Brahm Schenkman,

The Information Refinery, Inc

800/529-9020 | bschenkman@inforefinery.com

Subscriber, Customer Service

847/513-6030 | landscapemanagement@omeda.com

For current single copy or back issues



CORPORATE OFFICERS

President & CEO Kevin Stoltman

216/706-3740 | kstoltman@northcoastmedia.net

VP, Finance & Operations Steve Galperin

216/706-3705 | sgalperin@northcoastmedia.net

VP, Graphic Design & Production Pete Seltzer

216/706-3737 | pseltzer@northcoastmedia.net

Director of Audience Engagement Bethany Chambers

216/706-3771 | bchambers@northcoastmedia.net

Editorial Directors Marty Whitford & Marisa Palmieri

216/706-3766 | mwhitford@northcoastmedia.net

216/706-3764 | mpalmieri@northcoastmedia.net

The real problem for legal employers, laborers

I'd like to thank Gregg Robertson for highlighting the labor shortage challenging the landscape industry ("Government Affairs: Get ready for the labor shortage coming," March 7, bit.ly/2n1maCt).

Landscape employers that run legal and compliant operations are being squeezed between a shortage of legal local labor; widely available and lower cost illegal labor—with no enforcement or consequences against employers who utilize this meaningful advantage; and a difficult, unpredictable and constrained H-2B guest-worker visa program that hasn't been expanded since it was created 27 years ago.

Requests to make the H-2B program more viable get criticized by activists and deferred by Congress. Meanwhile, the real problem continues to be ignored.


Employers who cheat and employ illegal labor to capture its cost and capacity advantages—and count on continued lack of enforcement to enable them to keep doing so—is what adversely impacts American workers, legal and compliant companies and taxpayers. Until the supply and demand imbalance in landscape labor markets is fixed, adverse impacts to legal American landscape workers and legal U.S. landscape companies will grow and generate ever-increasing needs for a viable H-2B program with a predictable returning-worker exemption so legal companies can field a competitive seasonal workforce and compete against the cheaters.

It's critically important for landscape companies to get their labor force right because labor is more than half of their total costs. If costs are too high, the company cannot be competitive and will lose work. But it can't serve customers without a workforce. So what should happen when demand for labor exceeds the supply? The wages to workers should go up, accompanied or followed by price increases to customers. But that can't happen today because the playing field is not level. The landscape companies that cheat and employ illegal laborers don't have to increase wages or prices to customers. Legal companies get squeezed. More companies will turn to illegal laborers as their only remedy because enforcement doesn't happen.

MORE ONLINE

Read a full version of Portland's letter to the editor and his proposed remedies at LandscapeManagement.net/PortlandLetter.

I encourage you to contact your Congressional leaders and ask them to actually lead. Immediately and for 2018, reinstate the returning-worker exemption; lower the regulatory, bureaucratic and reporting hurdles

of the H-2B program; and expand the H-2B program as the economy continues to grow. Then ask them to go to work on solving the far more difficult problem of how to best address the undocumented population. 

TIM PORTLAND, CEO

Yellowstone Landscape, Bunnell, Fla.

NOW APPROVED
FOR CALIFORNIA



There's a new and better way to kill weeds.*

Corner the weed-free market with this affordable and effective hybrid selective herbicide.

CIVITAS WEEDfree BRAND™ Concentrate

kills more than 60 listed broadleaf weeds without harming lawns! The innovative Microtechnology enables the product to penetrate more efficiently into broadleaf weeds, resulting in no offensive odor and significantly less active ingredients required to kill weeds right down to the root.

Take advantage of the first hybrid selective herbicide featuring Microtechnology. Stake your claim for a better solution with CIVITAS WEEDfree BRAND Concentrate today.

Civitaslawn.com



intelligro
Smarter growth for a better world

* Compared with other products using the same actives.

† Important: Do not apply to Bentgrass and Floratam. See full list of controlled weeds and use directions on peel away label. Patent(s): www.suncor.com/patents.
™ Trademark of Suncor Energy Inc. Used under license.





BIG PICTURE

MAKING A SPLASH

LOCATION Tipp City, Ohio

COMPANY Grunder Landscaping, Miamisburg, Ohio

THE DETAILS The clients wanted to add a pool, spa, waterfall and a pool house to allow for pool parties without access to their home. They also wanted to maintain as much lawn as possible and keep pool equipment out of sight and earshot. In the past, the company had built retaining walls, a patio, walkways, a covered gazebo, lawn areas, trees and mixed borders on the property.

Property access was a challenge, with only 8 ft. of clearance in and out of which to bring materials. Not only was this area small, it was often wet because it was a grass alley between the home and a retaining wall. When subcontractors were involved, the Grunder team had preconstruction meetings and was on-site to oversee activity. At times, there were up to 30 people working in the same area. In the end, all goals were met and the new features blended seamlessly with the existing features.

The project earned Grunder Landscaping a 2016 Grand Award from the National Association of Landscape Professionals' Awards of Excellence program.

PHOTO The new pool house and the existing sun patio blend into one harmonious landscape.

See more photos from this project at LandscapeManagement.net/BigPicture.

PHOTO: GRUNDER LANDSCAPING

Spring May be Right Around the Corner, But This Offer is Right Here Now.



0% FOR 48 MONTHS
AND \$300 OFF** + UP TO \$400 OFF†
with GreenFleet™

Get \$300 off* plus 0/48 Month** Financing on a New ZTrak™ Z930R or QuikTrak™ 652R.

Not only is spring in the air but so is a great deal on a new ZTrak 930R or QuikTrak™ 652R mower. Because right now, we're offering \$300 off* these incredible mowers. And we're combining this savings with 0% financing for 48 months.** Better yet, if you're a GreenFleet Platinum 1 member, you can get an additional \$400 off instantly.† See your John Deere dealer today for a deal on two great mowing machines.

Keep Mowing



JOHN DEERE

JohnDeere.com/MowPro

*Offer available March 1, 2017 - May 1, 2017 on a ZTrak™ Z930R or QuikTrak™ 652R. Prices and models may vary by dealer. Savings based on the purchase of eligible equipment. Offers available on new equipment and in the U.S. only. Prices and savings in U.S. dollars. See your dealer for details.

**Offer available from March 1, 2017 - May 1, 2017. Subject to approved installment credit with John Deere Financial, for commercial use only. Up to a 10% down payment may be required. Taxes, freight, setup and delivery charges could increase monthly payment. Some restrictions apply, so see your dealer for complete details and other financing options, including financing for Consumer use. Available at participating dealers in the U.S. only.

†GreenFleet Platinum Level savings based on total units purchased. Amount shown in U.S. dollars is based on a Platinum 1 level discount for Z930R ZTrak™ or 652R QuikTrak™. Members per unit discount for an eligible sale is based on the highest accumulated qualifying equipment purchased at the time of an eligible sale. See terms and conditions at JohnDeere.com/GreenFleet for details.

NEWS HOW-TO'S

LANDSCAPE
INDUSTRY
TRENDS,
VIEWS
AND TIPS

RECOMMENDER > LEADERSHIP ADVANTAGE > STEP BY STEP > NEW STUFF > SAFETYWATCH

KEEPING TRACK



A year and a half ago, Cody Stickle's desk was piled high with paperwork, his crews' trucks were cluttered with receipts and the accuracy of his books was questionable.

"We really didn't have a good way to track things," says the owner of Stickle Landscape Management in Hampton, Va. "It was primarily just me taking all the receipts and field costs and entering them into QuickBooks."

Since implementing Autosist, Stickle says his accounting is "100 percent more accurate." The mobile app, which costs \$49 a year for 10 vehicles and unlimited users, lets crew leaders upload pictures of their receipts, for things like fuel, tying each expense to that crew's vehicle. Additionally, it serves as a platform to track maintenance intervals and service history for each

vehicle. It even lets users set reminders when it's time for things like an oil change—either at three months or at certain mile markers.

Stickle says he suggests the app to any organization suffering from disorganization. Using it showed him which vehicles were inefficient to run. For instance, Stickle's dump truck was giving the company less than 7 gallons per mile.

"Spend a little bit of money and take control of your business," he says. "Over the course of time, you'll get a better understanding of the true cost of running each piece of equipment."

“We didn’t
have a
good way
to track
things.”



BROUGHT TO YOU BY



JOHN DEERE

RECOMMENDER

What compact utility tractor do you recommend?

Linnemann Lawn Care & Landscaping in Columbia, Ill., uses a John Deere 4052R for snow plowing, grading and material loading.



MARK WEHMAN
OWNER,
BBC PROPERTY
MAINTENANCE
COLCHESTER, VT

"We have a Kubota B2650 with a cab. We use it for landscape installs. It is small but powerful enough to get the job done. The tractor is easier on the turf than a skid-steer. We also use it in snow removal, as it will easily fit on walkways."



JASON VON ESCHEN
OWNER, VON
ESCHEN LAWN &
LANDSCAPE
WAGNER, SD

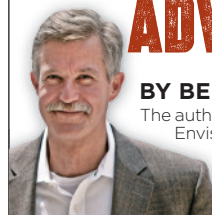
"I currently use a Massey Ferguson 1528 with a quick attach front-end loader. I use it in the spring with a three-point seeder to overseed lawns. I also use it to install mulch and landscape rock for customers because it does minimal damage to the turf when compared to a skid loader."



DAVID PERRY
OWNER,
MY LAWN CARE
POLAND, OHIO

"Our Kioti tractor is the perfect size. Just large enough to have a quarter-yard bucket for material handling but small enough to fit through a 5-ft. gate and go through a yard without damaging the lawn. It was the ideal investment to improve job site efficiency."

LEADERSHIP ADVANTAGE



BY BEN GANDY

The author is principal of Enviro Consulting. Reach him at bgandy@enviroco.com.

RETAINING TO GROW

Ensuring great relationships requires effort. Charisma and charm are great, but charm is not a strategy. Clients of landscape services are primarily looking for trust, expert advice, proactivity and effective communication.

Trust is earned on two levels: honesty and keeping commitments. While few of us will blatantly lie to a client, it's tempting to tell less than the full truth at times. Transparency and openness, even about our errors, matters to clients.

Clients will ask for advice eventually, and they expect us to be the experts. While no one knows everything about landscaping, having basic knowledge of plants, turf and agronomics goes a long way.

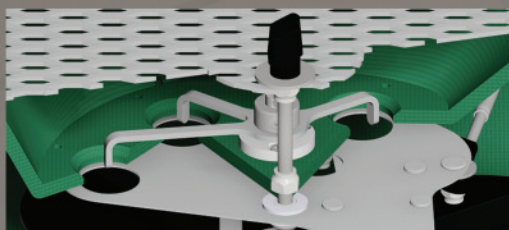
Proactivity means providing landscape improvement ideas before they're requested and reporting on problems before the client is aware of them.

Finally, effective communication starts with clear bullets whether by phone, email or text, followed by supporting information. Starting with the detail rather than the bullets is not effective. Explain who, what, when, where and how. It's frustrating to get a critical email that requires researching the thread to understand the comments. It's also frustrating to wade through paragraphs of information to find an answer. Effective communication is not the same as polite or sincere communication, it's providing clarity in a succinct and professional way that leads to decisions and actions. Remember, people hire and do business with who they know, like, trust and respect.

permagreen™

UPGRADE TO THE ALL NEW

BREAKTHRU AGITATOR



Featured on the new 2017 PermaGreen Triumph, the revolutionary **BREAKTHRU** Agitator is guaranteed to reduce clogging of your LESCO® or PermaGreen™ 3-hole spreader or your money back.

Visit permagreen.com to see for yourself why PermaGreen is the **GOLD STANDARD** of spreaders



TAKE THE 60-DAY CHALLENGE

TRY THE PERMAGREEN ON YOUR TOUGHEST PROPERTIES FOR 60 DAYS. IF YOU DON'T **LOVE** IT, WE'LL BUY IT BACK!

CALL FOR DEALER LOCATIONS &
REGISTER TO WIN A TRIUMPH

800.346.2001 permagreen.com

STEP BY STEP

DOWNLOAD IT

Visit LandscapeManagement.net/StepbyStep to download a PDF of this page to use as a training tool for your team.


How to create fire-resistant landscapes

Contractors in regions that are prone to wildfires can use proper planning and smart design to help protect their clients' homes.

Begin by creating defensible space around the property by designing the landscape to act as a barrier to impeding flames. Any plants near the home should be widely spaced out and low-growing to prevent the spread of flames from one plant to another. Incorporating rock, mulch and stone pathways among plants also can prevent fire from spreading.

Next, choose drought- and fire-resistant plants. Drought-tolerant plants have built-in features, such as waxy leaves, the presence of fine hairs and deep roots, to minimize water loss and maximize water uptake. Native species often best serve this purpose. Be sure to incorporate a variety of plants to ensure one problem or disease will not create an entire garden of dead, dry plants, which can more easily catch fire.

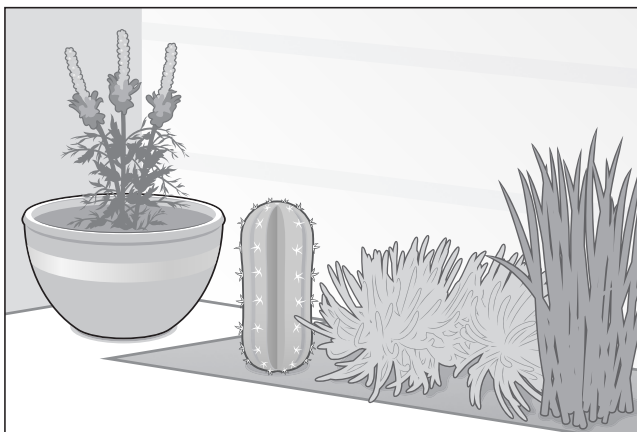
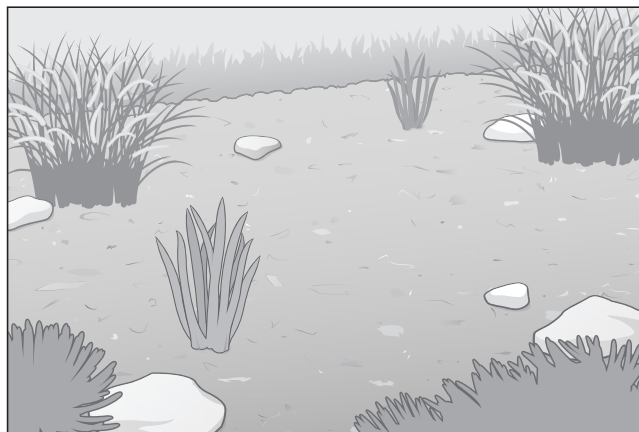
Lastly, offer clients an option for maintaining the landscape by caring for and watering the plants as directed. Keep grass around shrubs and plants short, and keep mulch fresh to conserve moisture. Rake up leaves and debris as they accumulate, and dethatch and aerate the lawn regularly to help water and oxygen reach the roots.

Follow these steps to create a fire-resistant landscape. 

SOURCE: Timberline Landscaping, timberlinelandscaping.com

➔ STEP 1

Create defensible space around the property by spacing low-growing plants widely apart and adding rock, mulch or stone pathways to act as flame-resistant barriers.



➔ STEP 2

Select a variety of drought-tolerant native plants. Selections will vary based on your location. Check with your region's extension service for recommendations.

➔ STEP 3

Maintain the landscape by caring for and watering plants as directed, keeping mulch fresh and keeping turf healthy.



ILLUSTRATIONS: DAVID PREISS

ADD ZORO TO YOUR TOOLBOX


Ordering Ground Maintenance supplies shouldn't be **hard work**.
You do enough of that already.

FROM
AA BATTERIES TO Z-CLIPS,
ZORO'S GOT YOU COVERED.


 **Huge product selection**
(over 1 million and counting)


 **Helpful customer service**

 **Net 30 terms available****

 **Great everyday prices**

 **Trusted brands**

 **Easy ordering**

 **Fast delivery**

*20% off your first order on \$50 minimum purchases. Maximum savings of \$2,000. Enter code above at checkout. Limit one (1) use per customer. May not be combined with any other promotions or discounts. Order minimum is required - excluding tax and shipping. Offer may not be applied to previous purchases. Promotion is non-transferable. Offer valid until July 10, 2017—expires 11:59 p.m. CT. Some exclusions apply. Visit zoro.com/rules_restrictions for details.

**Standard credit terms are \$1,000 with 30 days to pay. Credit is subject to Zoro's credit policies as determined from time to time in its sole discretion. Zoro reserves the right to terminate this offer at any time at its sole discretion.

VISIT

ZORO.COM/LANDMANAGEMENT

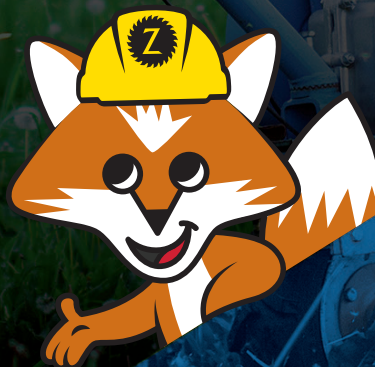
▼▼ **AND RECEIVE**

20% OFF

**YOUR ORDER OF
\$50 OR MORE***

TOOLPACK32

Enter code at checkout | One time use code.
Offer valid until July 10, 2017 11:59 p.m. CT*



zoro.com



Shop now at



© 2016 Zoro, Inc.

NEW STUFF

**1. STEINER 450 TRACTOR****COMPANY:** Steiner**URL:** SteinerTurf.com

A stacked gear pump design increases durability, hydraulic performance and efficiency on the new Steiner 450, the company says. The tractor features an integrated, fully adjustable hydraulic weight transfer system, Peerless 2600 dual range transaxles and a large operator platform. With ground speeds up to 6 mph in low gear and 9.5 mph in high gear, this machine has three available engine options: a Kubota 25-hp, liquid-cooled diesel; a Kubota 32-hp, liquid-cooled gasoline; or a 37-hp Vanguard EFI air-cooled gasoline engine.

**2. KX033-4 COMPACT EXCAVATOR****COMPANY:** Kubota**URL:** Kubota.com

The newest member of Kubota's KX series, the KX033-4 compact excavator, which replaces the KX91-3, features a larger cab, dash-controlled presets for auxiliary circuits, a digital control panel and a standard hydraulic diverter valve. It's powered by a 24.8-hp Kubota direct injection EPA Tier 4 Final-certified engine and designed with a large entrance, increased legroom and enhanced ergonomics to reduce operator fatigue.

**3. TREMRON PARK PLAZA 12-BY-24-INCH SLAB PAVERS****COMPANY:** The Quikrete Cos.**URL:** Quikrete.com

An extension to the Tremron Park Plaza line, these 12-by-24-inch slab pavers combine sleek lines and a smooth finish to deliver a modern look ideal for a variety of outdoor paver projects, Quikrete says. They're available in 13 colors and nine patterns. The 2/38-inch thick paver is appropriate for patios, pool decks, pathways and other pedestrian foot traffic, while the 4-inch paver can accommodate light vehicular traffic, the company says.



4



6



5

CHECK OUT MORE NEW STUFF ONLINE

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

4. SKS 753 SKID-STEER TIRES

COMPANY: Camso

URL: Camso.co

The Camso SKS 532 is designed to provide traction on soft soil, which helps the skid-steer dig deeper into the pile, the company says. The bias-ply tire gives extra-deep directional tread and curved lugs. Its stepped tread pattern provides mud clean out and comes with a Void Guard to reinforce and protect the carcass, preventing punctures and minimizing flats, the company says.

5. LANDSCAPE MINI ACCENT

COMPANY: WAC

URL: WACLandscapeLighting.com

The LED Landscape Mini Accent is available in a 2700K or 3000K color temperature and either bronze on aluminum or bronze on brass finishes. The factory-sealed water-tight luminaire is crafted of solid diecast brass or corrosion-resistant aluminum. Operating on a 9- to 15-v system, the Mini Accent can be used as an up or down light. It includes continuous adjustable beam angles indexed at 10, 25, 40 and 50 degrees. It delivers up to 365 lumens with a long 70,000-hour life.

6. MT 3500 S CHAINSAW

COMPANY: Efco

URL: EfcoPower.com

The MT 3500 S now features a sprocket-driven oil pump that has zero oil flow when the engine is idle, allowing for lower oil consumption and a reduced environmental impact, the company says. The MT 3500 S, designed for trimming and light pruning on small- to medium-sized properties, offers a 38.9-cc engine that delivers 2 hp. Also included is a six point antivibration system for increased operator comfort, a lateral chain tensioner for easy chain adjustments, an in-board clutch for simplified maintenance and a located air purge for cold starts.

SAFETYWATCH

SPREAD RIGHT

A fertilizer spreader is used to apply fertilizer and other granular products to surfaces. When properly maintained, the machine will spread products evenly and consistently over the surface of the ground.

Before fertilizing a lawn, fill the hopper and take the following precautions:

- Make sure the spreader is on level ground, with the shut-off lever in the closed position;
- Fill on a hard surface, not the lawn, as a spill is always possible;
- Double check the product label before filling;
- Even though many hoppers hold more, fill only one bag of fertilizer. A full hopper is heavy, prone to tipping and spilling, and harder to handle; and
- Set the control rate lever at the setting designated by your supervisor and then tighten the knob firmly.

Now, it's time to fertilize the lawn. If the spreader's pattern is about 6 feet on each side, start your first pass about 5 to 6 feet from the edge. You should be

moving when you open the product flow. If you open the flow before you start walking, a large amount of product will spill, causing waste and over application of product concentrated in one area. This excessive amount is often too much for a lawn to handle and can result in burning or killing the lawn in that area.

Walk at a steady pace with the spreader level with the ground for an even, consistent application. When you turn around, about 5 feet from the outside edge of your first pass, close the fertilizer flow and start walking on your next pass for a second or two before reopening the flow.

Fertilizer application gets thin on the edges of the spreader pattern. Separate each pass by 5 feet—rather than 6 feet to match the spreader pattern—to create 1 foot of overlap.

WATCH AND LEARN

Visit LandscapeManagement.net/SafetyWatch to view a video about spreading fertilizer, and use it as a training tool for your team.

SOURCE: Greenius



LITTLE BEAVER BIG POTENTIAL

Start and finish projects fast with our exclusive push-forward design and neatly deposited soil for convenient backfill. With the compact size and easy maneuverability, you'll get hassle-free operation and cutting speeds as fast as 30 feet per minute.

Call 800-227-7515 today. Reach your ROI potential with Little Beaver's Kwik-Trench.

See it in action at littlebeaver.com/kwik



Towable Hydraulic Earth Drills



Hydraulic Earth Drills



UN-Towable Hydraulic Earth Drills



Mechanical Earth Drills



Kwik-Trench Mini Trencher



LITTLE BEAVER.
EARTH DRILLS & AUGERS
littlebeaver.com



A SUPPLEMENT TO



**LANDSCAPE
MANAGEMENT**

SOFTWARE PRODUCTS GUIDE



GREENIUS your crew

YOUR SUITE OF **ONLINE** TOOLS
FOR TRAINING, ONBOARDING,
& PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE.

A+ Testing and Onboarding new staff

A+ Less equipment damage

A+ Industry standard safety certification

A+ Increase productivity

IT ALL
ADDS
UP TO
MORE
'**GREEN**'
ON YOUR
BOTTOM
LINE.



- 8 online crew leader videos • 40+ online equipment videos with exams
- 100% industry certified • Online. On the go. On site.



GREENIUS™

BY LS TRAINING SYSTEM

Online training for landscape crews

gogreenius.com • 1.877.482.2323

NEXT LEVEL

How (and why) smart landscape pros are getting the most from business and design software.

BY LAUREN DOWDLE

It's hard to imagine a time without current technology—when there weren't apps or programs to create designs, make estimates or manage client services. When combined with solid business practices, software can help expand team capabilities and grow sales.

There are dozens of software options to choose from, but here's a look at what three landscape companies are using to be successful and exceed client expectations.

EXPERIENCE DESIGNS

Helping prospects feel like they're in the design is vital to selling a landscape project, but that's nothing new. What is on the cutting edge is how some companies are doing that and how the advancements in software have helped.

One landscaper who has taken his digital designs to the next level is Damon Long, owner of Green

Planet Landscaping & Pools in Las Vegas. The company has a \$3 million annual revenue and provides pool and landscape design, along with hardscape, water feature, outdoor kitchen, fire feature and xeriscape installation to high-end residential clients.

Long has been using Pool Studio 3D design software for about 12 years and has seen it benefit his customer relationships. He says about half of his customers expect to see a digital design—and that's a trend that will only grow going forward.

"I love designing in there," Long says of the software. "The client has a good idea of what we're going to achieve before we get started, and that's really beneficial."

He says his employees also enjoy using the 3D software, compared to 2D plans, because it saves time and has more capabilities. "Visually, it's right there for you," Long says. "You don't have to build it in a CAD view. It eliminates so much work."

The software allows users to create 3D designs and videos that can feature things like where the sun will be on a specific day/time/month—which helps designers show and sell shade covers and their benefits.

They're also able to show the design in night mode, what it will look like from their neighbor's yard and a variety of materials to see what the client likes best. Plus, the software is compatible with SketchUp, which Long says saves them time.

3D designs help clients visualize what they're buying, contractors say.



SOFTWARE PRODUCTS GUIDE

A new add-on feature Long has just started using with his design software is virtual reality goggles from Oculus, which are compatible with Pool Studio.

"You can show them the design in a virtual world," Long says about the virtual experience. "You hook it up to your computer, put goggles on and walk around in that space. They can kneel down and feel like they are stepping in the pool."

Virtual reality goggles help take the design off the page or computer and put it into a realm that feels lifelike. The more real the design experience, the better it is for helping to close a deal with customers. Long says business owners not using design software "are missing out."

"My closing ratio has improved tremendously," he says. "People are expecting that technology. If they see that a company isn't using this technology, it hurts them."

That's especially true for higher-end projects and clients, he adds. "I wouldn't buy an \$80,000 to \$100,000 backyard without seeing it," Long says. "I'd expect them to have the technologies to show me."

INSTANT ANSWERS

Another landscaper who depends on design software and other programs to grow his business is Dean Ricci, owner of RLM in Hebron, Ind. It's a full-service landscape and irrigation company—with \$3.3 million in annual revenue—and it provides services to both commercial and residential properties. Ricci says the company has seen growth from incorporating a few software options.

For example, he uses the Pro Landscape iPad companion version for his design needs, only designing on his desktop a few times a year. Like many landscapers, his office is in his truck, so the more mobile he can become, the better.

Ricci says he likes how he can create a design right on site while he talks to a potential client—even sending them the design and estimate while he's with them (normally for jobs less than \$15,000).



"I design it while the customer is telling me what they like," Ricci says. Being able to give clients instant prices and images of what their property could look like has helped him boost his closing rate.

On-the-go contractors swear by mobile software options.

"I proposed \$2.2 million in sales and sold half of that," Ricci explains. "There's no way I could have done that five years ago. That's all design/build. We get jobs because other guys don't get back to them immediately."

Ricci and his team also use Unilock's Uvision to create 3D plans for complicated paver jobs. He says it has helped the company increase its closing rates by 10 to 15 percent.

"If you're not using (3D design software), you're not going to be able to compete in the market," Ricci says. "You're trying to sell people something you have to create, so you have to convey that message. Clients are very visual, and not many can read 2D drawings."

For landscapers not using software, he suggests they get their feet wet with something simple and moving up from there.

"Start off small, and do something with apps at a minimum," Ricci says, like ones where you can take site photos and add notes.

And it's not just design software that can help. Ricci's team also uses QuickBooks for accounting and Real Green Systems for recurring services like lawn care, irrigation and snow removal.

“(Contractors) can easily double their capacity because they have something like Real Green to invoice, follow up with clients, sell over the phone and take notes with that,” Ricci says. “It’s something specific to our industry and does a really good job.”

While software continues to improve and meet ever-changing needs, it isn’t enough on its own. Owners need to have a solid business plan and foundation in place to make the most of it, he adds.

“If you’re losing money, no program or app will help you,” Ricci says. “You need to change your mindset and business.”

COMBINING SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS

When it comes to finding the right software for a large-scale green industry business, Mike Bogan, CEO of LandCare (formerly TruGreen LandCare), doesn’t rely on just one to meet its needs. LandCare is a \$160 million landscape maintenance company serving commercial properties through 50 branches in 18 states.

serve multiple branches; combine financial data and reports into branch, region, division and company subgroups; pay employees across multiple tax and wage jurisdictions; and plan and organize landscape operations in diverse climate zones.

That led LandCare to choose Aspire to handle its operations and client service needs.

“Aspire was able to provide each of the components we required—estimating, proposal generation and submittal, mobile-time entry, purchase-order tracking, job costing and job-cost analysis—while allowing us to combine or break down the data in as many ways as we could conceive,” Bogan says.

The company also uses NetSuite for accounting and financial reporting and UltiPro for human resource tracking and facilitation.

“Each are well-suited for our company’s particular needs in these areas,” he says.

Incorporating these programs has helped improve their estimates, update material prices and labor rates to ensure appropriate renewal pricing, compare actual to estimated job costs to identify estimating or productivity deficiencies and analyze performance of groups of jobs by client, market segment, geography, supervisor or production leader.

“Data and information—organized and delivered effectively—help our leaders make better decisions to drive quality and service to our clients,” Bogan says.

“The span of control of a manager, measured in number of clients, crews or amount of revenue, increases as software brings improved access to real-time information and the ability to drive performance with quicker, more impactful decisions.”

His advice to other companies is to dedicate the personnel, time and financial resources to implement and lead the software program, which will change their businesses.

“Purchasing software is the easy part,” Bogan says. “Leading your team through change and empowering the implementation team is what determines the amount of value you will get from the software. Selecting the right software is an important starting point, but the implementation team and training efforts are what bring it to life in a powerful way.”

Dowdle is a freelance writer based in Nashville.



LandCare uses three separate software programs.

“While researching platforms, we found that there was no single solution that was built to optimally serve our needs,” Bogan says. “The systems that focus on providing general finance, human resources and CRM capabilities were not flexible enough to meet our landscape management needs.”

So, they focused on finding ones that had the ability to propose, plan and execute work efficiently;

LandCare relies on several software programs, including Aspire.

Aspire

You take care of the landscape... We'll handle the business. Everything in one place... Think about it... No more spreadsheets, redundant data entry and mistakes. Aspire is CRM – Estimating – Scheduling – Purchasing – Mobile Time Entry – Invoicing – Accounting.



Enter information once and it carries through the system. Even better, it's impossible to lose information on things like contracts, client requests, scheduled services, purchases and billing. Aspire seamlessly integrates with Outlook/Google calendar and email so you can track every client touch, and the reporting system integrates Sales Pipeline, Service Forecast, Job Costing, Revenue, and Profit/Loss.

Aspire is cloud-based and built-for-mobile... for EVERYONE in the company. All you need is a PIN and you are in the system working. Think about it... conduct site walks and produce estimates in the field... schedule jobs in real time so crews can provide precise time and GPS reporting daily. And managers have total visibility into everything using Dashboard reports.



Aspire is more than software. What good is a product without training and support? An Aspire Account Manager “lives with you” during the deployment process. They set it up and train you to use it. After that you use AspireCare™ – our online and telephone support program where you can talk to us or to other Aspire users like yourself.

What's the return on investment for all this? When you consider that you have information (and answers) at your fingertips, combined with less paperwork – your Gross Margins will improve, and your overhead staffing cost per revenue dollar will decline... net result: 1 - 2% gain on the bottom line – that's the goal.

- To see more, take the Product Tour at: www.youraspire.com
- To discuss if it's right for your business, contact kevin.kehoe@youraspire.com

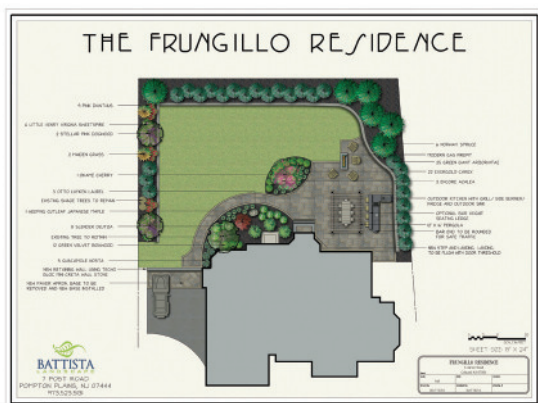
The **Aspire** Software Company

DynaSCAPE

Selling. Designing. Estimating. Purchase Order Management. Routing. Scheduling. Change Order Management. Time Tracking. Job Costing. Invoicing. Profiting. Managing. Analysing. Reporting.

DynaSCAPE Software has emerged a software solutions provider to the professional landscape industry with a cohesively connected suite applications critical to the operations of landscape design, design/build, maintenance, irrigation service, and snow removal companies.

Largely known for our landscape design software, DynaSCAPE's Manage360 has evolved to an enterprise level solution for professional landscape companies of all shapes and sizes. With this completely integrated software solution, you'll be immersed in DynaSCAPE from when someone expresses interest in getting work done by you, following them all the way through your sales pipeline, to the design and proposal stage. Ultimately winning the contract, you'll manage your crews, purchase materials, issue change orders, and track your crew's time. Handle all of your job costing with ease as your crews complete their daily timesheets and compare what you estimated against what the job is actually costing you.



Estimating for a landscape construction project is fundamentally different than estimating a seasonal landscape maintenance contract.

That's why we have very distinct estimating systems for both types of estimating.

Work area based estimation for landscape construction which tightly integrated the design you have created in DynaSCAPE Design. When connected, DynaSCAPE Design can be used to pull from your costbook in Manage360 to facilitate all of your takeoffs. Import your drawing into the estimate in Manage360 and you have a well-organized estimate that only requires slight tweaking afterwards.

Estimate your seasonal landscape maintenance contracts using repeatable services that can easily be routed and scheduled with a highly flexible recurrence pattern. Optimize your routes with Google Maps premium integration, increasing your crew's efficiency exponentially.

Get in touch with the DynaSCAPE Software team to find out how our professional software solutions will transform your landscape business.



DynaSCAPE

*Design & Business Management Software
for Landscape Professionals*

Go iLawn

Go iLawn is an online property evaluation software tool, used by green industry businesses to assess work sites in North America from a remote location.

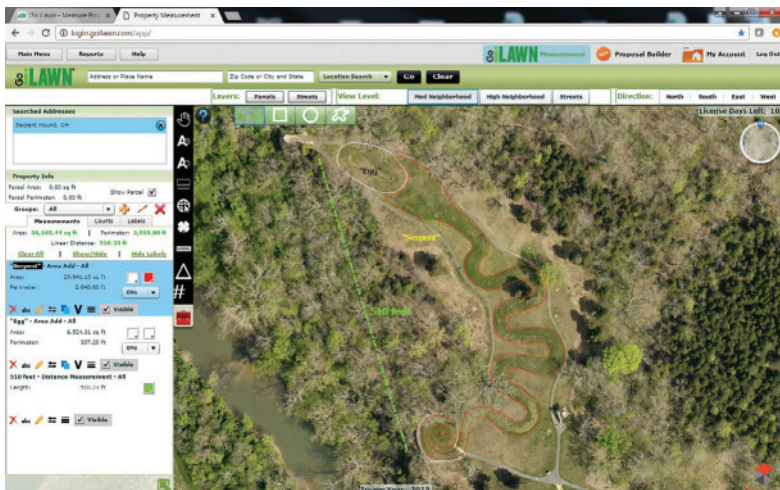
Our customers use Go iLawn for:

- **Pre-Sales Evaluation** – Using our measurement tools to produce the data they need to create a complete and accurate quote.

- **Sales Enablement** – Using our advanced imagery, drawing, grouping, and sorting tools to sell, so customers can SEE what they are buying.

- **Operations** – Creating detailed jobsite maps to direct crews on the scope and procedures for doing work on the site.

Go iLawn's aerial imagery is taken at high resolution and low altitude for maximum visibility. We offer overhead and directional images, so you can see from multiple angles, and our images are collected when the leaves are off the trees, so you can see the surface beneath.



Greenius

Eight years ago, Greenius CEO and founder Jay Murray had no luck finding any training for his landscape company's 70 guys, other than very long, technical equipment operators' DVDs. He decided to create his own training videos, but as the costs crept up to \$500,000, this venture was quickly becoming cost-prohibitive.

He thought, "Maybe if I sold this training to others like me, the whole undertaking would make sense."

Since then, his landscape company size has doubled. Greenius—his training system—as well as other systems,

changed the game for him. Under the leadership of President Arden Urbano, Greenius by LS Training is bracing for another year of double-digit growth. Helping over 1,100 companies put a formal training program in place—66,000 users to date—Greenius has hit its stride in the marketplace.

Greenius appeals to companies of all sizes who are trying to streamline on-boarding and refresh existing workers so everyone is speaking the same language. With over 30 equipment videos for workers in both English and Spanish and 8 videos for Crew Leaders/Foreman and Managers, Greenius is for owners and managers who want to improve their procedures.

Seasonality and time constraints make training tough for most landscapers. Now fully mobile, Greenius helps get the training done! Videos and exams are suggested to be done by workers at home; field checklists are completed in the field before starting the job.



All paperwork is completed right on your tablet or phone in convenient web-based apps. All records are stored in a learning management system and can be exported to Excel and printed if needed.

Greenius by LS Training has provided training for over 80,000 workers in North America over the past 7 years. Just over 500,000 videos have been watched, and 10 million exam questions have been answered.

The bottom line is you should be able to get 10:1 return on your money by improving inefficiencies. With Greenius, enjoy less broken equipment, less damage to clients' property, less complaints and have proof of due diligence. Also see a boost in motivation, morale and a feeling of belonging.

NEW THIS YEAR:

- Re-filming all snow videos in conjunction with SIMA and developing a new series of smaller, high-impact training for an additional 25-50 topics over the next three years.
- Launching a new system interface with improved usability—will be ready for the summer of 2017.
- Developing plans to re-film existing videos using newer technologies like drones and GoPros; adding the ability for users to upload their own videos.

Our service is subscription-based with flexible payment options. We are at your service to help you Work Smarter—Not Harder!



Real Green Marketing



COMMAND CENTER

This marketing platform provides comprehensive access to your marketing including social media posting, online reputation management, analytics, direct mail, and more. With the Command Center, you can manage your marketing and branding from anywhere on any device. It is your single-source lead generation, brand control, and customer engagement solution!

MY LOCAL™

Increased mobile searches and more customers wanting to buy from local companies are causing local search results to be shown more often. My Local provides a multi-faceted local marketing strategy:

- Locally optimized website
- Review program with bad experience filter
- Social media site creation and posting
- Online presence management
- Text messaging customer engagement program
- Drip campaign text messaging
- Analytics

MY LISTINGS™

Control your digital presence by ensuring your company information is listed consistently on over 65 search engines, social media, directories, apps, and GPS sites. Inconsistent company name, address, and phone number (NAP) can confuse search engines, degrade SEO, and damage consumer trust. Get it right with My Listings!

MY SOCIAL™

Real Green Marketing brands and designs your Facebook, Google+, Twitter, and Pinterest business social platforms to reflect consistent information

about your company. We will post theme viral posts every Monday-Saturday to create social engagement between your brand and its followers. Stay hands-on with the Command Center. You can post your own content anytime, any day, from anywhere.

MY REVIEWS™

Gain consumer trust and boost your local SEO with a review generation campaign. Generate positive reviews, and filter/respond to negative ones to keep your credibility intact.

PAY PER CLICK

Get first-page search engine results quickly, while controlling your budget, geo-targeting your ads, and tracking your results. Our Google Certified Specialists save you time and money by evaluating, analyzing, and reworking your pay per click campaigns throughout the month to bring you qualified leads at the lowest cost.

WEBSITES AND SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Our team can revitalize your existing website and SEO initiatives or create an entirely new online brand for your business. Search algorithms change constantly. You need a resource that stays on top of the changes and will keep your website in compliance for maximum lead return.

TEXT MARKETING

Text messages have a 96% open rate. Use this effective tool right from the Command Center. You can text offers, service status and more directly to customers' phones.



*Design & Business Management Software
for Landscape Professionals*



A completely integrated system

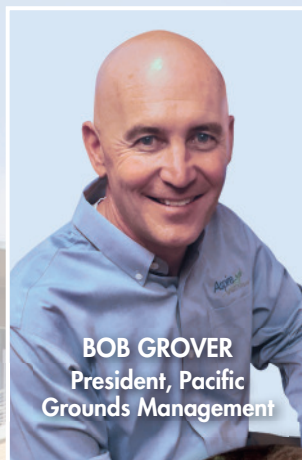
for every type of landscape company.

- ✓ Design
- ✓ Construction/Installation
- ✓ Maintenance Management



See how DynaSCAPE will transform your business
dynascape.com 1.800.710.1900

The Aspire Software Company



These Guys Like It!

"It's the software we trust to run our business."

VISIT: WWW.YOURASPIRE.COM

Contact: Kevin Kehoe
kevin.kehoe@youraspire.com

PROFIT CENTERS

IDEAS AND
STRATEGIES
TO KEEP YOUR
DIVISIONS IN
THE BLACK

TURF+
ORNAMENTAL CARE

MOWING+LANDSCAPE
MAINTENANCE

DESIGN/BUILD+
INSTALLATION

IRRIGATION+
WATER MANAGEMENT

DIESEL DEBATE

Contractors share when
they prefer to use diesel
and when they prefer
the alternatives.

▶ PAGE 32



HOW TO ID WEEDS

There's not a universal treatment that works for all types of weeds. It's vital to identify what weeds you're dealing with before figuring out the best course of action.

The two main types are broadleaf and grass-like weeds. These two are fairly easy to identify from the other, but it can be more difficult to narrow it down from there.

As the name suggests, broadleaf weeds have wider leaf blades than what you'll find with grass-like weeds. They have distinct leaf shapes, and each leaf normally has a main vein down the middle.

Also, broadleaf weeds are more likely to have colorful flowers. One way to start identifying which type of broadleaf weed you're dealing with is by looking at the leaves to see if they alternate or are opposite of each other.

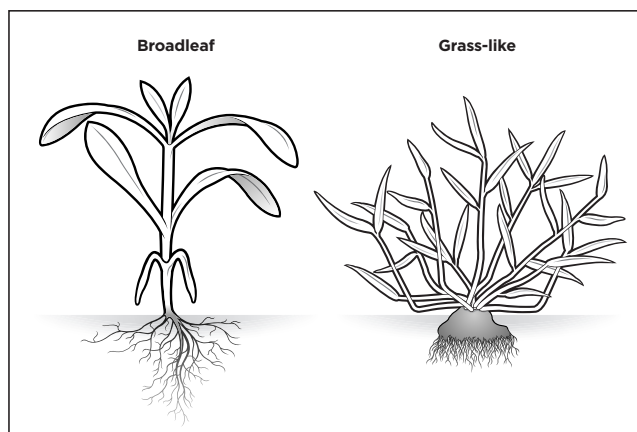
Grass-like weeds will have narrower leaves with veins that run parallel to each other. The best way to identify which of these you have is by looking at things like the seed heads, growth habits and vegetative features.

You can narrow down the type of weed some by your region, but you'll need to look at the weed's characteristics to accurately identify it.

To see which weed you're dealing with, start by following the instructions here, and then enter your state and results into the University of Wisconsin-Madison's weed identification tool at weedid.wisc.edu/weedid.php. (If you're unsure about a identification category or question, it's better to leave it blank than to guess.) 📄

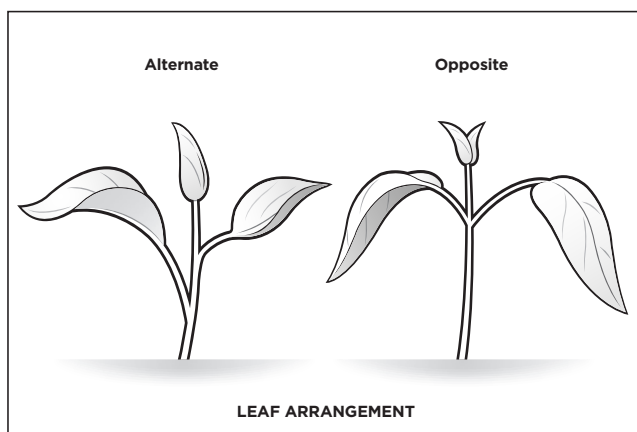
→ WHICH TYPE?

If the leaves are wide with a vein that runs down the middle, it's broadleaf. Weeds with narrow, ribbon-like leaves with parallel veins are grass-like.



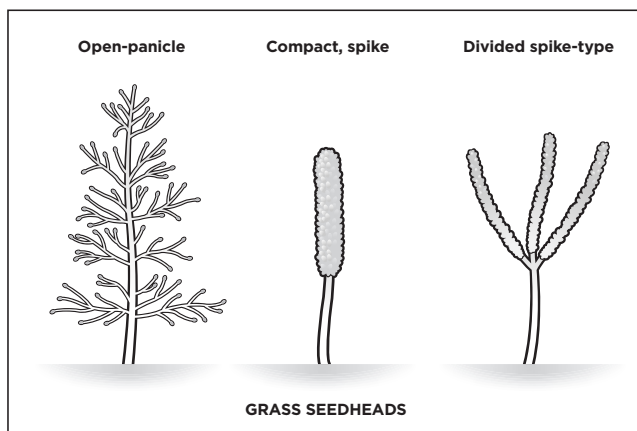
→ BROADLEAF

Look at its growth form, leaf characteristics (i.e., if it's simple or compound, leaf margin and spines), stem characteristics, leaf arrangement (right) and flowers.



→ GRASS-LIKE

Note its leaf characteristics (simple or compound), collar structure, growth form, plant hairs, ligules and spines/prickles, if present. Also, check the grass seedhead types (right).



SOURCES: UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EXTENSION, PENN STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES, PBI-GORDON CORP.

ILLUSTRATIONS: DAVID PREISS

NEWSFEED

WEED MAN REPORTS GROWTH IN 2016

National lawn care provider Weed Man USA surged in 2016, according to statistics shared by the company. Last year, it added 44 new territories nationwide, bringing the count to 503 territories. The company also reported 2016 revenue increased by 10 percent over 2015 to \$91 million. Weed Man expects this growth to continue, and it projected it would hit 540 territories by the end of 2017 and increase sales by 12 percent.

DYNA-GREEN ACQUIRES TURF MAGIC

Dyna-Green, a lawn care company based in Willoughby, Ohio, acquired the Turf Magic Co., a lawn care company based in Chardon, Ohio. The acquisition comes after Turf Magic owner Larry Morgan, who started the company with his wife, Lisa, decided to retire. The combined company projects 2017 annual revenue of \$1.5 million. It will operate under the leadership of Dyna-Green's Chip Soltesz and provide organic-based lawn care services and tree and shrub protection programs to nearly 4,000 residential and commercial customers in 13 counties in north-east Ohio and western Pennsylvania, including Erie and Pittsburgh. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

VALLEY INTROS HIGH-PRESSURE PLUNGER PUMP

Valley Industries released the Everflo 12-v, high-pressure plunger pump, the EFHP2000. The EFHP2000 plunger pump features multiple quick-connect ports that provides the necessary flow for a spray gun, boom and other sprayer accessories. Reaching up to 2 gal. per minute and 200 lbs. per square inch, the Everflo EFHP2000 can spray longer distances or atomized droplets for misting applications, the company says.

PURCHASE A NEW CAT® MACHINE AND GET UP TO \$6,000 CASH BACK*

INCLUDES 1.9% FINANCING FOR 60 MONTHS AND A POWERTRAIN EQUIPMENT PROTECTION PLAN.* PLUS ADDITIONAL CASH BACK REWARDS FOR OTHER MODELS AND MACHINE FAMILIES.

WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES CAT MACHINES BETTER THAN OTHER BRANDS?

"I think the reliability of the machines. They are pretty easy for us to work on, getting parts and service is a big part of that. 24 hour turn around for most parts is key to our business and we like the way they run." — Kent Muir, Good II Great Landscaping, Harmony, PA



Cleveland Brothers



www.ClevelandBrothers.com/LM-BCP | 844-800-0802

* For complete details, check with your local Cat dealer. Offer valid from February 1, 2017 to June 30, 2017 on select new models of machines manufactured by Caterpillar Inc. Building Construction Products Division.

STEP UP TO BIGGER PROFITS

By Stepping Onto the New **TT5000**

The TurfEx TT5000 Ride-On Spreader/Sprayer caters to nearly any sized property... sprays and spreads materials faster, yet more precisely... and empowers you to do more jobs in less time, with less manpower and equipment. It's one small step for your operator, but one giant leap for your operation.

Height adjustable boom kit

17-gallon capacity tank

3.0-cu-ft capacity hopper

Adjustable-pressure electric spray pump

Learn more about the full line of TurfEx equipment solutions at turfexproducts.com

TurfEx
INNOVATIVE TURF SOLUTIONS

Ride-On Spreader & Sprayer | Spreaders | Sprayers | Zero-Turn Mower Attachments | Accessories & Mounts

ECONOMICAL

Fuel economy is diesel mowers' major draw for many contractors.

Down with diesel

Some contractors are recognizing the benefits of diesel mowers and adding them to their fleets.

BY EMILY SCHAPPACHER



Dillon Schlimme keeps his four-mower fleet up to date by purchasing a new machine every year. Two years ago, when his equipment dealer suggested he try out a diesel mower, Schlimme initially thought it was just an attempt to sell him more expensive equipment. But after only one day in the field, the owner of Dillon's Lawn & Landscaping in Clinton, Minn., was sold on the mower's power, performance and fuel efficiency. He has since added two more to his fleet and plans to eventually replace all his gas-powered mowers with diesel versions.

"After the first day of use I had already made the decision to purchase a diesel just from the fuel savings alone," Schlimme says. "At that moment I knew we had to start upgrading all of our mowers to diesel."

Schlimme is not alone when it comes to recognizing the benefits of diesel mowers versus their gas- or propane-powered counterparts.

Contractors say these benefits include fuel savings, less maintenance, increased power and quieter engines. Many operators are adding one or more diesel mowers to their fleets for both everyday and specialized uses.

"Fueling your fleet with diesel has many benefits over propane and gasoline," says Brian Schoenthaler, marketing specialist for The Grasshopper Co. in Moundridge, Kan. "Fuel economy and power are the main reasons a diesel mower is a good option for landscape contractors who are concerned about



Brian Schoenthaler

Continued on page 34

NEWSFEED

RADIAL RELEASE

The Michelin X Tweel Turf airless radial tire is now available for stand-alone purchase at John

Deere dealers. The tire is certified for use on John Deere Z900 E-, M- and R-Series gas-powered mowers.

E15 CONFUSION

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute's new poll shows 31 percent of people incorrectly believe fuel that's higher than E10 is safe for use in any engine,

and about 44 percent of respondents pay attention to the type of fuel they use.

CANOPY EXPANDS

Canopy Lawn Care, a tech-enabled landscape

startup in Raleigh, N.C., recently entered the Charlotte, N.C., market by acquiring Huntersville, N.C.-based Southscape Landscaping's residential maintenance business.



**"TRULY AN
OVERALL
IMPRESSIVE
DESIGN"**



**THE NEW
PRO Z SERIES**



**"MAN,
THIS THING
IS A BEAST!"**

**"I'M TYPICALLY ABLE
TO DO AN EXTRA
ACRE PER HOUR."**



TO PROVE OUT THE TOUGHEST DECK, WE HAD TO FIND THE TOUGHEST CRITICS.

You don't test the strength of a zero-turn on the factory floor — especially not one with the industry's first triple-7-gauge steel cutting deck. So before launching the new PRO Z Series, we gave one to 100 landscapers and asked them to put it through the wringer. After thousands of hours on the job, they proved the PRO Z could handle anything a day of landscaping might throw at it.

Visit your local dealer to demo a PRO Z today.

Cub Cadet

CUBCADET.COM/PRO

© 2017 Cub Cadet

MOWING+LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

Continued from page 32

managing their costs and increasing productivity. Diesel-powered mowers have also been proven to provide higher torque, be more durable and use less fuel, and are also surprisingly environmentally friendly.”

Schlimme says his crews use diesel mowers on every property for nine to 10 hours per day. He likes that the engines run smoothly and quietly, and he says his crews normally let them idle on the trailer from job to job, so they’re running and ready to go when they reach the next site.

Dillon’s Lawn & Landscaping, a \$325,000 company, provides 60 percent maintenance services and 40 percent lawn care services to a 70-percent residential, 30-percent commercial clientele.

With many properties that contain hills and slopes, Schlimme says his diesel mowers can climb hills more easily than his gas units, especially when using a bagger. His diesel mowers also require less maintenance and fewer oil changes.

“We don’t have to worry about the carburetors gumming up and they run smooth and quiet,” Schlimme says. “I can run two weeks on an oil change, which is nice because there is less downtime for maintenance—and time is money.”

Schlimme says the fuel savings are by far the biggest advantage to operating his diesel mowers. On a typical day, his gas mowers use 9 to 12 gallons of gasoline depending on the conditions. His diesel machines use about 6 gallons of fuel per day, which results in huge savings by the end of the year.

Schoenthaler agrees the fuel savings can be significant, adding contractors who use “clean-diesel” mowers are seeing up to a 50-percent reduction in fuel usage compared to gasoline- or propane-powered mowers operating with the same horsepower. He says a diesel mower uses an average of 650 fewer gallons of fuel over the course of a 1,000-hour mowing season than its gasoline or propane counterparts because diesel mowers use fuel at or below one gallon per hour compared to gasoline and propane mowers, which consume between 1.65 and 1.85 gallons per hour.

“The biggest reason that diesel mowers are a good fit with a landscape company’s mower fleet is cost control,” Schoenthaler says. “By extrapolating those savings across a fleet, the fuel savings numbers become very attractive.”

Diesel mowers also can be easier on the environment. Schoenthaler says some mowers, such as the Grasshopper MaxTorque diesel engines, run on ultra-low-sulfur diesel No. 2, which emits less carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and other toxins into the air per hour than gasoline or propane engines with the same horsepower rating.

“The diesel fuel of today is not your grandfather’s diesel,” he adds. “Gone are the days of black-smoke-belching diesel engines.”

Jeff Grizzle, owner of Grizzle Lawn Care in Wimauma, Fla., owns three diesel mowers and uses two of them to cut 60 to 70 lawns per day. The company’s third diesel mower, a 72-inch zero-turn, is used on larger lots or on lawns that are significantly overgrown. Grizzle says the power and speed of these mowers is a benefit when maintaining his clients’ large, rural



Jeff Grizzle



**COMPLETE LINE OF COMMERCIAL
SPREADERS AND SPRAYERS**

GROUNDLOGICINC.COM | 877.423.4340

POWER
Diesel engines
offer increased
torque, making
mowers more
powerful.



properties covered in thick Bermudagrass. Grizzle Lawn Care provides primarily maintenance services to a residential clientele.

“One pro to using a diesel mower is definitely the power,” Grizzle says. “Our diesel zero-turn outperforms our gas units in thick, tall grass every time.”

While Grizzle sees benefits from the power of his diesel mowers, he says that level of power may not be necessary for all contractors.

“One question contractors need to ask themselves before buying a diesel-powered mower is, ‘Do I need a mower with this much power?’” he says. “If you’re only mowing a few well-groomed yards every day, there’s no point in spending the extra money on a diesel mower.”



With quieter engines and less vibration, diesel mowers also can be easier on crew members who operate them all day every day, says Tom Vachal, senior turf product manager for the Kubota Corp. in Grapevine, Texas. With a low center of gravity, diesel mowers can also be safer to operate on hills and uneven terrain, he adds.

“Overall operator fatigue is less with diesel mowers, which is a pretty big thing because your people are a large expense and taking care of them and keeping them around is important,” says Vachal. “If they are working on a big, comfortable machine that doesn’t wear them out, they are more apt to stay around.”

PHOTO: KUBOTA



PREMIUM SCIENCE WITH PREMIUM VALUE

LINK® products are high-quality liquid nutrients which provide a customizable agronomic package to enhance nutrient uptake and plant vigor while meeting the specific needs of your turf and ornamental plants. LINK provides premium science with premium value, linking your needs to a solid nutrition program. Your Wilbur-Ellis representative is your “LINK” to help you with all of your plant nutrition needs.

pro.wilburellis.com

Find your local specialist at locations.wilburellis.com



WILBUR-ELLIS®

Ideas to Grow With™

For information only. Not a label. Prior to use, always read and follow the product label directions. WILBUR-ELLIS logo, Ideas to Grow With, and LINK are registered trademarks of Wilbur-Ellis Company LLC. K-0117-518

MOWING+LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

Grizzle and Schlimme agree the biggest downside to diesel mowers are the upfront costs. Schlimme says his diesel mowers cost several thousand dollars more than their gas counterparts. While Grizzle says his diesel mowers tend to break down less often than his gas versions, he says repairs tend to cost more. Schlimme says his has had some issues with the radiators getting clogged with grass and dirt, causing the mower to get hot. He says when the mower gets to a certain temperature it will shut off the blades so the operator knows to stop and clean it. Most diesel mowers also come with a hood over the motor which can make it harder to perform oil changes and other maintenance, he adds.

"So far I haven't seen a brand that is easy to work on," Schlimme says.

Schlimme says contractors should make sure they are logistically prepared to operate a diesel mower, and says for the first year it was a hassle to have one gas mower and one diesel mower on his truck at the same time.


"We have transport tanks in our trucks with gas, so the operator on the diesel mower had to always make sure he had a can of diesel with him to fill up if he needed it," Schlimme says. "If I could do it over again, I would have just bit the bullet and bought two diesel mowers at the same time."

Schlimme says contractors should consider how much time they spend mowing to make sure a diesel mower is worth the investment.

"We mow about 140 lawns per week, so each mower gets about a 1,000 hours per year," he says. "If you don't do that

much mowing and only put a couple hundred hours a year on the mower, then a gas mower is more than likely a better choice."

Vachal says contractors should also take into consideration how long they plan to own the equipment and should look at diesel machines as long-term investments to truly reap their benefits.

"We are seeing a growing number of contractors adding diesel products to their fleets every year," he says. "Improved fuel efficiency and reduced operating expenses associated with the product seem to be key. If contractors are trying to move more money to the bottom line, diesel could be a good way to that." 

Schappacher is a freelance writer based in Cleveland.

Humic PLUS Activated Humic Acid with Solu-Cal Humic Acid. Actively Better.



New **Humic PLUS** from Solu-Cal combines the power of Activated Humic/Fulvic Acid with Solu-Cal Soluble Calcium in a dust-free pellet for active plant nutrition. The wet chemistry alkaline extraction behind **Humic PLUS** is the preferred method for refining the natural benefits of organic plant matter humus into an effective Humic Acid treatment. Without this process, raw Humic Acid material is inactive and could take years to produce results in the soil.

- 6% Activated Humic/Fulvic Acid • 30% Solu-Cal Soluble Calcium • 9% Plant Based Organic Acid
- Economical delivery of Activated Humic/Fulvic Acid
- Essential Carbon source to stimulate and improve soil microbiology
- Promotes super aggressive seedling turf

50lb bag covers 11,000 sq.ft.
Coarse Grade 210 SGN

Powered by
Humic Acid Technology

www.Solu-Cal.com • 774.678.0288

Solu-Cal



“WE LOOKED AT ALL OF THE
IRRIGATION CONTROL OPTIONS,
AND **WE CHOSE** HYDRAWISE.”

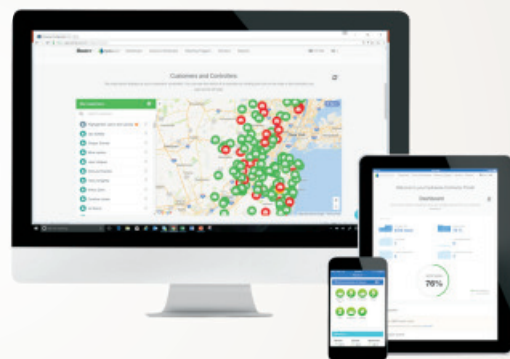
Alfred and Tony Dilluvio

Aqua Turf Irrigation, New York, USA

RELY ON HYDRAWISE WHEN CUSTOMERS DEMAND THE BEST

These days, modern homes aren't just beautiful — they're high-tech. Alfred and Tony know that their clients don't want just any controller for their irrigation management needs. They want the best.

Discover awesomeness at [hydrawise.com](https://www.hydrawise.com) ►



RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL IRRIGATION | *Built on Innovation®*
Learn more. Visit hunterindustries.com/hc

Hunter®

 **Hydrawise™**



To fee or not to fee?

NO FEAR
Overcome the fear
that you'll lose
jobs by charging
a design fee.

Design fee proposals aren't created equally. Here's one design expert's approach. BY JODY SHILAN

I'm still amazed when I get push-back from landscape designers and contractors about design fees. They either won't charge a design fee because their competitors don't, don't want to lose the installation over a design fee, lack the confidence to charge a design fee or all of the above.

Just in time for the spring rush, let's drill down into my design fee proposal, step by step, showing you why you should use it.

The first and probably most important thing about my design fee proposal is it can be signed and deposited at the initial client meeting, which is tremendous. I don't have to go back to the office, figure out how many hours I need to put the plan together, set up a second appointment to review it with the client or worse, mail it or email it. If you walk out the door on a sales call, your chances of getting a signed

proposal and deposit diminish by 50 percent. Not good.

Next, I charge flat fees based only on the size of the property. This means that regardless of whether a client wants a planting layout or as I like to say, an "all you can eat" landscape plan, the price is the price.

The flat fee model also gives homeowners a sense of security, making it easier for them to say yes. They also know there's no design fee price inflation due to the fact that they have an expensive home or live in an expensive neighborhood. Now before you run out the door and try this approach, keep reading because there are some important details that make this document so successful.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN

The first section lists what's included in the landscape design. There are five

inclusions, all of which are straightforward and should be familiar to anyone who provides design services.

1 The *initial consultation*, which is free, is my opportunity to show them who I am and to sell my services. It's the only thing that's complimentary.

2 If they sign the proposal and provide a deposit, I immediately perform a *site analysis* as spelled out in my proposal.

3 Next is *base map prep*, which is a fancy way of saying that I go to Staples and get the client's survey (plaat) enlarged to 1:10 scale.

4 The next step is creating their *dream design*.

5 Lastly, I color render the design or what I call the *presentation drawing*.

Continued on page 40

LET'S BUILD BUSINESS.

Surround Yourself with the Nation's Leading Products, Tools and Resources



Build your business on solid ground. Learn more at www.belgard.com/partner

DESIGN/BUILD+INSTALLATION

Continued from page 38

DESIGN FEE CALCULATIONS

The next section lists my design fees. As I mentioned before, my designs are based on property size only.

The categories are up to 0.25 acres, 0.25-0.5 acres, 0.5-0.75 acres and 0.75-1 acre, which covers most properties in my area. Anything above an acre, I charge per additional 0.25 acres. I also charge for travel time for clients beyond a 30-minute radius from my office.

Prior to the meeting I can look up a prospect's address on Zillow.com and know exactly what size the property is, allowing me to have the proposal already filled out, reinforcing the fairness of the document. It also makes me look that much more professional. Knowing the property size and design

“If you walk out the door on a sales call, your chances of getting a signed proposal or deposit diminish by 50 percent.”

—JODY SHILAN



fee category beforehand also eliminates some of the shenanigans and quick math required to determine the size of their property and fee in front of the client.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The payment schedule is also straightforward. Half is an upfront deposit so I can go outside and start my site analysis and half is due when I deliver the final plan. In other words: no deposit, no work. It's as simple as that. Within

the payment schedule section of my proposal is a place for the client to sign and date. I presign and date the proposal before the meeting so they know I mean business. It may be subtle, but it certainly helps close the deal.

GENERAL NOTES AND CONDITIONS

Finally, I include a list of general notes and conditions. It's no different than the laundry list of exclusions you have in your installation contracts. Here I describe what's not included in the



EASY INSTALLATION IS A LOK.

Who says there are no sure things in construction? Hardscapes built and designed with VERSA-LOK are a cinch to go up quickly and easily. Our pinned in place design makes perfect installation and structural stability a sure thing. When you use VERSA-LOK, once it's built, it's built to last. And last. To create retaining walls, freestanding walls, columns, steps and ore with no need for special units, there's only one product to trust. Simple, reliable and beautiful. That's the VERSA-LOK promise.

To find out why landscape architects prefer VERSA-LOK, call (800) 770-4525 or visit www.versa-lok.com.



Freestanding Walls



Mosaic Random Face Patterns



Fully Integrated Stairs



Random-Pattern Tall Walls



Freestanding Columns



Multi-Angle Corners

VERSA-LOK[®]
Retaining Wall Systems
Solid Solutions[™]

plan, along with some clarity about assumptions clients may make—the most important one is I charge for revisions.

Anyone who provides design services knows revisions can take five minutes, five hours or five days, unless you put a cap on them. A revision can be anything from a couple of plant changes to an entire redo of the design itself. Since I started charging for revisions many years ago, I've found I rarely do any. And to be totally honest, most of the revisions I do make are out in the field with a can of marker after the client has signed for the installation. 🍷

Shilan is a landscape design/build sales consultant, editor of FromDesign2Build.com and former executive director of the New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association. Reach him at jshilan@gmail.com. Download a free copy of Shilan's design fee proposal by entering your email address at FromDesign2Build.com

NEWSFEED

PRO LANDSCAPE UPDATE

Drafix Software released Version 23 of its Pro Landscape design software, which contains an additional 3,000 high-quality images of both plants and nonplants, Add Soldier Course, Irrigation Color Coding and other tools. It's now available in English, with Spanish, Italian and German versions available later in 2017.

ASLA SURVEY SAYS

Consumers prefer sustainable—yet tech-friendly—elements in their outdoor living spaces, according to a survey from the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA). Drought-tolerant plants, water-efficient irrigation and wireless connectivity all ranked in the top 10 project types with the expected highest consumer demand.

NEW COATINGS

Black Diamond Coatings, a national producer sealers, launched a new line of color-enhancing sealers. Colors include SG+ (Gloss to Semi-Gloss), LG+ (Semi-Gloss to Low-Gloss), NG+ (Low-Gloss to No Gloss), Stone+ (Low Gloss to No Gloss) and WOOD+ (Semi-Gloss to Low-Gloss).

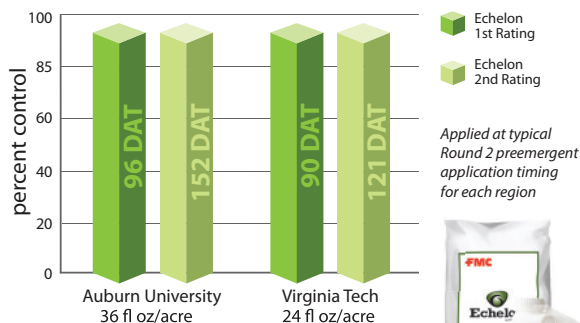


DON'T LET LAST YEAR'S SEDGE BE THIS YEAR'S PROBLEM

Echelon® Herbicide is the first in its category to provide pre-emerge control of perennial sedges while also providing industry standards for Poa annua, Crabgrass and Goosegrass pre-emerge control.

Proven Preemergent Sedge Control

2008 University Trials



Echelon®
HERBICIDE

“In one year, one sedge tuber can become
6,900 NEW TUBERS.”

Source: Tumbleson & Kommedahl, 1961



@FMCturf



FMCturf

fmcprosolutions.com

fmccturfwire.com

Always read and follow label directions. FMC, FMC logo and Echelon are trademarks of FMC Corporation. ©2017 FMC Corporation. All rights reserved.

Cloud cover

Irrigation manufacturers offer details to help contractors become more comfortable with Wi-Fi-enabled irrigation controller technology.

BY EMILY SCHAPPACHER

Irrigation technology continues to evolve rapidly. And while this trend ultimately improves systems' efficiency and performance, technological advancements can leave some contractors in the dark about how to best incorporate them into their businesses.

A recent Irrigation Association (IA) webinar focused on the growing popularity of Wi-Fi-enabled irrigation controllers and the advantages and opportunities this technology brings to the landscape irrigation market.

Wi-Fi-enabled controllers draw information from data stored in the cloud via a client's Wi-Fi signal and determine a lawn's precise watering needs based on real-time weather events. Presenters Stuart Eyring, president of Hydro-Rain, a manufacturer of professional irrigation and low-voltage lighting products based in North Salt Lake, Utah, and Chris Klein, CEO and co-founder of Rachio, a manufacturer of smart irrigation controllers based in Denver, discussed the basics of Wi-Fi controllers and how the technology can improve water efficiency.

Q: HOW DO WI-FI IRRIGATION CONTROLLERS WORK?

CHRIS KLEIN (CK): A Wi-Fi irrigation controller leverages the homeowner's Wi-Fi network to connect to the cloud. When you think about the cloud, there is nothing mysterious about it, it's just computers running somewhere else. That's where a lot of the process and scheduling takes place, and then that information is sent back down to the controller. The cool thing about having a Wi-Fi controller is that you can have access to it through an app on any device you want—a desktop computer, mobile phone, tablet, etc.—and they all communicate with the same computers in the cloud.

Q: HAVE YOU SEEN EXAMPLES OF WI-FI CONTROLLERS BEING USED TO UPGRADE OLDER SYSTEMS?

CK: Yes, this is happening at a rapid pace. Eighty-five percent of our customers are replacing working controllers, and it's just as easy as replacing any other controller.

Continued on page 44

NEWSFEED

HUNTER ACC2 RELEASED

Hunter Industries released its ACC2 controller, which runs up to 14 valves simul-

taneously. It can be configured for 12 to 54 stations, with up to six flow meter inputs, and pump/master valve

outputs. It also features a full-color backlit display and reversible facepack.

ON AIR WITH IA

The Irrigation Association (IA) is partnering

with "The Water Zone" radio show to provide on-air educational training for irrigation and landscape professionals. The Water Zone broadcasts live Thursdays at 6 p.m.

PDT on KCAA 1050 AM, 102.3 FM and 106.5 FM in Southern California. Outside of the listening area, the show can be accessed through UStream or at www.kcaaradio.com.



Get What You Need.

Our stores feature an open floor plan, stocked shelves and experts on staff. You'll be sure to quickly get what you came for.

Stop by today and see what Ewing is all about.



Estimating your next job is quick and easy online at EwingIrrigation.com.

Create custom lists and assemblies while browsing products. Download or print your custom lists for easy ordering and importing into your estimating software.

Follow us on
social media:



EWING[®]
Irrigation & Landscape Supply



IRRIGATION+WATER MANAGEMENT

Continued from page 42

Q: HOW DO YOU PROGRAM WI-FI CONTROLLERS?

STUART EYRING (SE): In terms of programming, the smart-phone apps dramatically add to the ease of which programing is done—it's much better than programming a typical display controller. But there's a difference in comfort level in terms of where the user base is coming from. There is a transition point to getting people comfortable with this.

Q: TRADITIONAL SMART CONTROLLERS HAD THEIR OWN WEATHER INSTRUMENTS ON-SITE, BUT WI-FI CONTROLLERS NOW HAVE ACCESS TO MILLIONS OF WEATHER STATIONS. HOW DO THEY GET EVAPOTRANSPIRATION (ET) INFORMATION?

CK: We use a variety of weather data providers and run them through equations to get ET. This process is getting more and more sophisticated. The other cool thing is homeowners can choose a weather station, which promotes continued engagement with their irrigation system.

SE: In our case, we use the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service database in the

U.S. Internationally, we use a database out of Norway. But it actually can be very helpful to have a rain sensor at the location, as well, because it can improve reliability.

Q: SO YOU CAN ADD OTHER SENSORS TO A WI-FI CONTROLLER?

SE: Yes, we've seen an increase in the use of sensing devices like weather stations and moisture sensors on-site that improve the quality of data.

Q: HOW ACCURATE ARE A WI-FI CONTROLLER'S WEATHER TRACKING CAPABILITIES?

SE: There are potential issues within a climate or a micro-climate. There is always the risk that a weather event close by was picked up by a weather station but was not observed on the actual site where the controller is. That is why it's important to choose weather stations that best represent the homeowner's area. As we move forward, we will see a



Stuart Eyring

Continued on page 46

Technology moves fast.
Move with it.

Become a Rachio Pro.

Partner with the technology leader to outpace your competition. Become a Rachio Pro to make modern watering easy and bring better value to your connected customers with the highest-rated smart sprinkler controller on the market.

Text "PRO" to 844-501-3733
to receive a discounted
personal-use controller.*



rachio.com/pro



* Valid only
through 9/30/17

NOW YOU CAN >>



Introducing a truly unique machine with endless possibilities.

The new JCB Teleskid is the first and only skid steer and compact tracked loader with a telescopic boom, making it the most versatile machine you've ever seen. It can lift higher, reach further and dig deeper than any other skid steer on the market and can access areas you wouldn't have thought possible, until now.

JCB TELESKID >>



TELESKID.JCB.COM

IRRIGATION+WATER MANAGEMENT

Continued from page 44

greater proliferation of weather stations that will make data better. But the addition of the on-site sensors that we talked about can help compensate for inadequacies.

Q: WI-FI TENDS TO BE A WEAK SIGNAL.

HOW FAR AWAY CAN YOU GET FROM

THE CONTROLLER AND STILL HAVE IT WORK?

CK: That depends on the router at the home and its location, as well as what the house is made of. But typically you can get about 100 feet away from the router. The best way to check is to walk out with your phone and get a feel for what the Wi-Fi range might be. We don't have a ton of Wi-Fi range issues, so I wouldn't get hung up on this issue. Most homes have 10 to 20 devices hooked up to their Wi-Fi, so most homes are equipped for this.

SE: If range were an issue, Wi-Fi extenders (can extend the range) and are relatively inexpensive.

Q: WHAT HAPPENS TO THE CONTROLLER IF IT LOSES THE WI-FI CONNECTION?

SE: The majority of the data is kept in the cloud, but there is a basic operating program that's stored on the actual controller. While the controller won't typically make any adjustments based on environmental conditions while in that mode, it will continue to run. When the connection is reestablished, the adjustments will begin again. This is typical across manufacturers.

Q: HOW DO YOU PROTECT SECURITY IN TERMS OF WI-FI AND PASSWORDS?

SE: Security definitely can be a concern to a homeowner when they allow someone access to their network. But there is a difference between a contractor connecting to a homeowner's network and connecting through the cloud. In an ideal case, the homeowner is giving their contractor access through the cloud rather than through a peer-to-peer network. The homeowner is sharing an access code through an app that would allow their contractor to control the system through the cloud but not have access to the homeowner's network.

Q: HOW CAN SMART WI-FI CONTROLLERS SAVE WATER?

SE: The biggest opportunity in the area of water savings is to eliminate the set-it-and-forget-it mentality. It's very common to see a controller set to the same schedule year after year, so there is a large opportunity to save there.

CK: With Wi-Fi controllers, the main point is getting the scheduling into the cloud. The smart controllers and their related apps encourage high engagement rates with homeowners. For example, 95 percent of our customer base uses the app

on a monthly basis, 75 percent of them are interacting every two weeks and 25 percent are interacting with it daily. The customer is really involved.

Q: WHAT HAPPENS IF I BUY MY CONTROLLER TODAY AND IN 60 DAYS IT'S OUT OF DATE?

CK: Updates to the firmware and the app happen automatically, so customers always have the latest and greatest version. In terms of hardware, who knows what will happen in the future, but as of now, our Generation 1 and 2 products work the same.


SE: In most cases, you won't even know the firmware has been updated unless you go in and look at it. And if you're not getting updates on a regular basis you should be nervous. Just like a smartphone, there are periodic updates that can include things such as new security features. To have high confidence in the company that's providing this service, you should see frequent firmware updates because it means they are paying attention. If the system is automatically being updated, you won't have to go out and buy another model unless there is a big hardware change. Then, the model will be constantly improving automatically over time as manufacturers make things work better.

Q: WHAT ARE THE BUSINESS IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT CAN BE ENJOYED BY CONTRACTORS VENTURING INTO THIS ARENA?

CK: There is a great opportunity to impact a contractor's business by having a number of connected customers. Step one is giving the customer a product they want and a product they love. By installing that product and working with them you have a connection with them—and it's a sticky connection, more so than emails and flyers. You can stay in touch, the homeowner knows where to go for help and it presents an opportunity for customer retention.

Q: WHAT ABOUT SUPPORT? HOW DO YOU HELP CONTRACTORS WHEN THEY ARE STUCK?

CK: We have a dedicated contractor phone line and can be reached through email and chat, too.

SE: We have noticed that there is really more upfront hand-holding required, but once the controller is installed and operating, support requirements go down because of the ease of the interface and how intuitive it is. Getting started can be challenging, but once contractors get the hang of it, it's really very easy. 



Chris Klein

Schappacher is a freelance writer based in Cleveland.

Flushing dirt and debris, and
defeating extreme conditions.

That's intelligent.



Rain Bird® R-VAN nozzles simply perform better.



Real Convenience:

- Pull up to flush
- Hand adjustable



Real Performance:

- Wind-resistant streams
- Large water droplets



Real Savings:

- Saves water
- Lower priced

RAIN  **BIRD®**

DESPERATE MEASURES

Why—and how—some landscape companies are recruiting workers from **PUERTO RICO**

BY MARISA PALMIERI

Late last year, William Merkler was on vacation in Puerto Rico, thinking about how he would reconcile his landscape firm's contracts with the new prevailing wage the Department of Labor told him he must pay his H-2B guest workers this year—a 17 percent increase.

"We contacted our clients and told them our labor rate has gone up," says the president of Down To Earth Landscaping, based in Jackson, N.J.

"We offered to keep their contracts but told them we'd need an increase. They said 'We love you guys, but we can't pay that much more.'"

On his trip to the Caribbean island, Merkler considered how Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory and Puerto Ricans are American citizens who don't need visas to work in the U.S.

He heard talk about the island's 12 percent unemployment rate and how there was a proposal to drop the minimum wage from \$7.25 per hour to \$4.25 per hour for workers under 25 to help solve its debt crisis.

Then, Merkler thought, recruiting workers from the island just might be the answer to his labor woes.

He isn't the first in the landscape industry who's had this idea. National landscape company BrightView has done it, at least in Florida and perhaps in other markets. Large regional companies like Landscapes USA, based in Austin, Texas, and Yellowstone Landscape, based in Bunnell, Fla., are trying it for the first time this year. Austin-based CleanScapes and Atlanta-based Russell Landscape have both given it a try.

Recruiting from the island happens in other industries experiencing worker shortages, such as nursing and agriculture. It's not a well-known practice, says Clay Martin, owner of

MRC, a direct hire agency specializing in recruiting Puerto Rican workers for landscape companies, but he considers it to be a viable, long-term solution for the landscape industry.

"These guys are American citizens and have the ability to move to the states," says Martin, who has the combined experience of interning for a landscape company in college, working alongside Spanish-speaking employees; living in Ecuador for two years in the Peace Corps; and recruiting workers from Puerto Rico for another industry. Since November, he has placed about 100 Puerto Rican recruits for 15 landscape companies, including Merkler's. "If they have a positive working environment, it's going to be a sustainable employment option for my clients—both the landscape company and the Puerto Rican recruits."

The one thing all landscape companies who are turning to Puerto Rico agree on is they're in a dire labor situation brought on by a



William Merkler



PUERTO RICO AT A GLANCE

- Puerto Ricans are American citizens and have been since 1917, although they cannot vote for president and have no representation in Congress.
- Fewer than half of Americans know Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens.
- Island residents participate in Social Security, but they are exempt from paying federal income taxes.
- The island's official languages are Spanish and English.
- The 3,515-square mile island with approximately 3.4 million people is similar to Connecticut in terms of area and population.
- Puerto Rican median household income is \$19,350, compared with \$53,889 in the U.S.
- About 46 percent of Puerto Rican people live in poverty, compared with 13.5 percent in the U.S. Unemployment is 12 percent, compared with 4.7 percent in the U.S.

SOURCES: U.S. CENSUS; THE ECONOMIST/YOUGOV POLL; UNITED STATES COUNCIL FOR PUERTO RICO STATEHOOD

strong U.S. economy, a limited legal U.S. labor pool and an insufficient guest-worker visa program, so any new idea is worth considering.

"At the end of the day, what are our options?" says Ivan Giraldo, president of CleanScapes. "Shrinking our business, closing down operations or keeping it very limited? Reducing the opportunities for the people who do want to work? I don't think that's what we want, so I don't have any other options than to keep trying and doing what I can to make a difference."

That said, recruiting from Puerto Rico hasn't proven to be a panacea for CleanScapes or the other companies that have tried it. Like any new venture, there are pros and cons to this concept, and landscape contractors say they have seen varying levels of success.

Though it's early in the process, Merkler is optimistic. A third of his 60 recruits arrived on March 20—just before press time—and the rest will follow soon after.

"It seems like we're on to something," he says. "We're anxious to get the season started and get rolling in this process."

WHY PUERTO RICO?

There are a few big challenges when it comes to hiring in the landscape industry, according to Ralph Egües, executive director for the National Hispanic Landscape Alliance. He says the hurdles include seasonality; the demanding nature of the physical, outdoor work; and industry image—people don't realize the opportunity and upward mobility offered at many companies. These are issues the industry has faced for years, and he acknowledges overcoming them is "something all of us in the industry have a lot of work to do on."

On top of these obstacles, the U.S. unemployment rate dropped to 4.7 percent in February; some say hiring illegal immi-

grants has become more difficult, especially in states that require E-Verify, thus shrinking the labor pool; and the H-2B guest-worker visa program is bursting at the seams.

The latter point is the linchpin. All but one of the companies LM identified that are recruiting from the island are or were users of the H-2B program and have faced challenges with it.

"Whenever I hear a company talk about H-2B they call it a 'headache' or a 'nightmare,'" says Martin, the recruiter, adding all of his landscape company clients have used H-2B.

"We've been using the H-2B program for at least 10 years," says Merkler, whose company employs 400 people at its peak and operates in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. "It seems like there are so many obstacles every year—this one being the biggest. We cannot afford to pay that (new prevailing wage)."

In addition to being priced out of the program, H-2B users lament the inability to bring in enough workers and the uncertainty of not receiving any workers due to the 66,000-worker cap imposed by the government. In some years, Congress has allowed for a returning-worker exemption, which omits returning workers from the head count, effectively raising the cap, but that's not yet the case this year.

"With everything with H-2B up in the air, we have to look other places," says Joseph Barnes, a spokesman for Yellowstone Landscape, which hired Puerto Rican workers as a trial in several markets this year. It's too early to tell what the results will be, he says, but the company determined it was worth a shot. "If we could find qualified, legal domestic workers, we would be hiring them."

Russell Landscape, which has not used the H-2B visa program, hired about 75 workers from Puerto Rico out of "desperation" a few years ago, following the passage of



Ralph Egües

Georgia's immigration enforcement bill, HB 87. The law resulted in an extreme shortage of entry-level workers across the state, due to an E-Verify mandate and other measures.

"We were looking for all options to meet our labor force needs," says Russell of what prompted his company to attempt to recruit from the island.

HOW IT WORKS

Although there are some requirements when it comes to hiring workers from Puerto Rico (see sidebar, "Rules and regs"), for the most part contractors say it's similar to hiring an employee from another state in terms of logistics—and risks.

"(Puerto Ricans) are not H-2B workers," Martin says. "They do have the opportunity to work anywhere they want to. Coming here is a good opportunity for them, but it's also a

COVER STORY

sacrifice, so you have to provide them with a positive working environment and a good offer.”

Landscape companies employing

Puerto Rican workers hire them directly by recruiting on the island or through an agency.

Employers typically cover flights and arrange housing for employees. Companies say it's a necessity. If the

recruits had the financial means to leave the island to search for employment in the U.S., they would have done so already.

Unlike the H-2B program, there are no wage requirements other than U.S. state and federal laws.

Merkler, who is working with Martin's agency, expects to start his new recruits at \$11.50-\$12.50 an hour, the same rate he pays local workers.

CleanScapes has done its own recruiting in Puerto Rico. Giraldo and a few of his staff members set up meeting times in coordination with the island's Department of Labor—“almost like a job fair,” he says. They do interviews and offer jobs on the spot.

Giraldo estimates the costs to be around \$2,000 per employee. More importantly, he noted, it's complicated.

“The logistics of bringing someone, even from another state, to be so far away for three months or more, it's a

challenge,” he says. “You can also go with a recruiter. It will cost you more money, but if it fits your budget, they will do the logistics for you.”

Russell Landscape Group worked with an acquaintance from Puerto Rico to do its recruiting on the island. Russell estimates it cost the company about \$1,000 per recruit for travel and upfront money the company provided the employees to get on their feet.

Martin, whose agency charges a flat fee per worker, says recruiting a worker from Puerto Rico is about the same price or cheaper than the cost of participating in the H-2B visa program. Similar to H-2B, costs vary based on travel expenses, whether you're working with an agency or going it alone, and other factors.

TRIAL AND ERROR

The CleanScapes team has hired about 30 Puerto Ricans from two trips to the island over the past few years. They were hired on three-month contracts with the option to stay longer. Four are still employed by CleanScapes. Others have left the company to join family members on the East Coast, or they have returned to the island.

Of the 75 workers Russell Landscape hired from Puerto Rico, there are only a few remaining; they work in the company's Nashville branch.

“It was quite a flawed effort,” Russell says of his company's

attempt at recruiting from Puerto Rico. “Many of them were just not the quality of worker that we were accustomed to. And a few of them were very good but became homesick or returned to their home country for whatever reason.”

Russell acknowledges his company's lack of success may have been due to poor recruiting.

Continued on page 52



Clay Martin

RULES AND REGS

Companies looking to hire workers from Puerto Rico must comply with Public Law 87. It requires employers who are recruiting on the island to obtain authorization by the Secretary of Labor and Human Resources of Puerto Rico, according to Odemaris Chacón, a labor attorney with Estrella, based in Puerto Rico. Employers also must provide workers with contracts in English and Spanish.

A violation of these provisions is punishable as a misdemeanor.

For more information, contact the Employment Service Division of the Puerto Rico Department of Labor and Human Resources (787-625-3137).

WEB EXTRA

Get sample contracts and a letter template in the Web Extras section at LandscapeManagement.net.



www.turfbooks.com

Accountants to the Lawn Care Industry

Does Your Accountant understand the Lawn Care Industry?

- ▶ Accounting / Bookkeeping Services
- ▶ Tax Preparation and Audit Representation
- ▶ Bank and Credit Card Reconciliations
- ▶ Outsourced CFO Services
- ▶ A / P and A / R Management
- ▶ Fast, Reliable, Affordable

Serving Lawn Care Companies Nationwide

Want Better Financial Information? Call Turf Books Now

Ph: 973-300-0288



Daniel S. Gordon, CPA

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

What Others are Saying:

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

Matt Jesson
President, Green Lawn Fertilizing, Inc



IT JUST SCREAMS, "FAST!"



TZone™ SE is the fastest triclopyr combo on the market.

Formulated for speed, and delivering twice the triclopyr per acre as most combination products, TZone™ SE Broadleaf Herbicide For Tough Weeds leaves the competition in the dust. The reduced-solvent ester formulation of TZone SE controls more than 60 of the toughest broadleaf weeds. And TZone SE does it with a fast visual response for fewer complaints and callbacks.

***Leave the lesser herbicides behind:
Choose TZone SE.***

GordonsProfessional.com

TZone™ is a trademark and Checkered Flag Label Design®, Gordon's®, and ProForm® are registered trademarks of PBI-Gordon Corp. 10/16 04538

 **pbi/gordon
CORPORATION**
Employee-Owned


COVER STORY

Continued from page 50

"If you went down there with the proper scrutiny and really vetted the individuals, I think you could be successful," he says.

Giraldo says he wishes he knew why his success rate hasn't been higher. He believes it's a combination of things, including factors like employees' difficulty being away from their extended families and a lack of employment opportunities in Puerto Rico that has left workers unprepared for the rigors of a job in the landscape industry.

Still, Giraldo intends to recruit on the island again. He says he will do some things differently, such as venturing outside the cities and into the agricultural areas.

"I do think the potential is there—it's finding where (good workers) are," he says. To other companies considering this strategy, Giraldo says, "Have a lot of patience, save a lot of money and fill yourself with persistence. I would say, 'Try it.' We're running out of options." 

WEB EXTRA

For an H-2B update and details about when Congress votes next on the returning worker exemption, visit Web Extras LandscapeManagement.net.

Ivan Giraldo



DO MORE WITH YOUR MOWER!

ONE MOUNT BAR

GIVES YOU ACCESS TO 7 ATTACHMENTS



AERATOR BLOWER BUGGY DETHATCHER



LEAF PLOW SPRAYER SPREADER TRANSPORTER

(866) 537-6238 | JRCOINC.COM/LMM

NALP CAREERS SITE, JOB BOARD 'A LONG TIME COMING'



In response to member concern over a workforce shortage, the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) debuted a new website it says will help draw new people into the industry.

LandscapeIndustryCareers.org highlights career paths, industry details, education opportunities, a job board and information for parents and advisers of students interested in landscaping. Content includes articles, statistics and more than a dozen video profiles of professionals, such as arborists, landscape designers, account managers, lawn care technicians and others, who explain what their jobs entail and why they are passionate about their careers.

The job board is free for industry members through the end of the year. Starting in 2018, there will be fees to post jobs; those rates haven't been determined yet. Following an early March soft launch, employers added more than 250 postings to the job board.

LandscapeIndustryCareers.org is one facet of the Industry Growth Initiative (IGI), which NALP introduced in late 2015 with two goals: grow the industry and grow the workforce. IGI operates as part of the NALP Foundation.

The foundation board, the public affairs advisory committee and industry academics—including those on the board, instructors who are part of the Faculty Forum and other academic members of the association—provided input to develop the site.

Next, a national public relations and marketing campaign will support the launch, along with online advertising and social media promotions.

"We don't want people to think we've built a website and our work is done," says Missy Henriksen, NALP's vice president of public affairs. "The website is really the beginning of our work to promote the industry."

Henriksen estimates the association invested at least \$175,000 into the website's development.

"It's been a long time coming," she says. "It's important we invest because we're vying for the same people a lot of industries are. It's not something we want to do halfheartedly. The stakes are too high."



Missy Henriksen



SOME SECRETS ARE BEST KEPT IN PLAIN SIGHT.

CONTRACTORS ARE SEEING GREEN BY SWITCHING TO PROPANE.

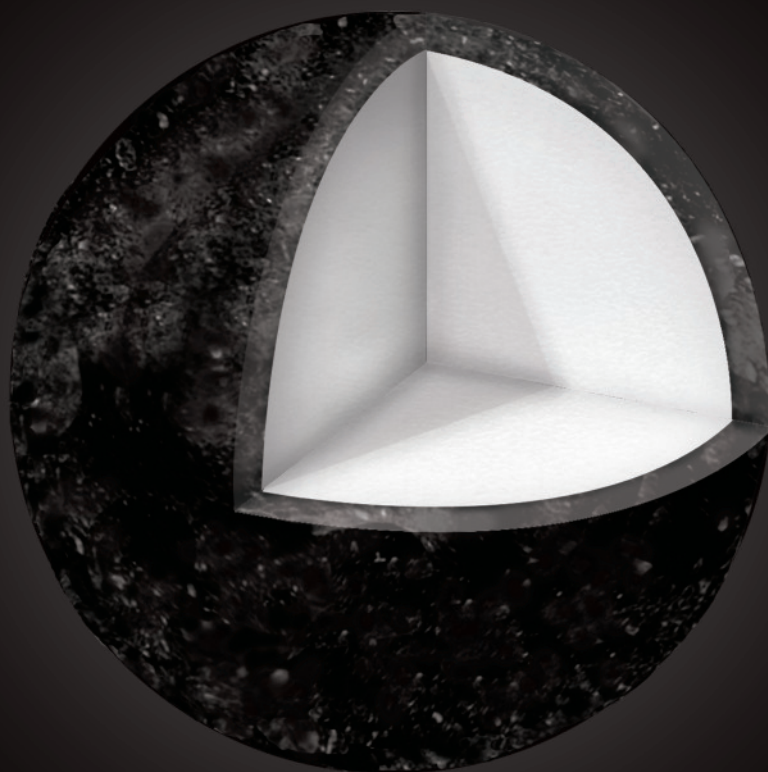
Inside every propane cylinder is the power to win more bids. By increasing productivity, cutting fuel costs, and reducing spills and pilferage — you will have what you need to stand out against the competition. No wonder more businesses are switching to this clean, American fuel to improve both sides of the balance sheet.

Learn more about propane-powered equipment at propane.com/commercial-landscape.





HUMIC COATED UREA



BLACK IS THE NEW GREEN™



www.DiscoverHCU.com

BUSINESS INSIDER

PRACTICAL
ADVICE FOR
RUNNING A
PROFITABLE
COMPANY

BUSINESS BASICS: PEOPLE

LET'S GROW

CASE STUDY: ADD-ON BIZ

DEMO DAY



When opportunity struck for one landscape company, it turned home demolition into a new service offering.



PAGE 59

4 interview questions you must ask



BY MEL KLEIMAN

The author is the founder of Humetrics. He helps companies build high-quality, frontline, hourly workforces. Reach him at mkleiman@humetrics.com.

Life is all about choices. In every moment, we make choices. Do this or do that. Go here or go there. It's endless. And every choice produces a logical outcome, a result. The most important choice we make in business is who gets hired. When you hire the right people, you create a win/win/win situation. You win, your employees win and your customers win. The question is: Why can't we do it right more often?

My take on it is that rather than hire the person who is best for the job, business owners and hiring managers most often hire the person they like best. The only way to override this built-in, faulty bias is to create a hiring system that screens in those who meet the hiring criteria—not those who make a good impression.

BE PREPARED: Don't be one of those hiring managers who wings interviews.

At the heart of every hiring system, no matter how simple or how elaborate, is the interview. It's

here where people make the most mistakes. While the people who are looking for jobs prepare for interviews by reading books and rehearsing their answers to the most frequently asked interview questions, the interviewers most often wing it.

And because they're ill-prepared, 98 percent of interviews start with these profound words: "So, tell me a little about yourself." If you want to find out if an applicant is honest or dependable or innovative or a team player, would this prompt get you the information you need? The next move is usually to scan the application and ask the applicant to confirm information he or she provided there. "So, I see you worked at Mighty Fast Foods. How did that go?"

Let me suggest that—rather than asking the applicant to ad lib or confirm things you already know—you use this structured, four-question set to get the information you need to do a better job selecting the people who will do the best job rather than those who make the best first impression.

1 "Tell me about your very first paying job and three things you learned from it."


This question catches most applicants off guard. As they recall and recount mowing lawns, baby-sitting or flipping burgers, the experience immediately lowers their defenses. The implication is you are more interested in them as a person than what they did on their last job. The response will also give you a glimpse into motivation and how the person's work ethic

developed. Then, to get the big picture, have the applicant tell you a little about each successive job and what he or she learned. This gives you a sense of the types of successes the applicant has experienced as well as any common frustrations or roadblocks.

2 "On a scale of 1 to 10, rank yourself in terms of your (customer service skills) and tell me your reasoning." Repeat this for every trait, skill or characteristic that is important to success on the job. The responses will indicate what kind of standards and expectations applicants hold themselves to. For instance, let's say you did ask about customer service skills. The answer may be, "I'd say I'm about a nine because at my last job I got more raises than anyone else in my department." Or it could be, "I'm about a five because I find putting up with stupid client questions is really frustrating."

3 "How were you rated for each of the areas we've just discussed on your last performance appraisal? Could you give me a copy of the last one you had?"

This holds the applicants' feet to the fire because they will assume you will be checking references. When they provide you with a copy, you will find out if the applicant's supervisor had a different opinion. Probe any discrepancies for better or worse to understand why the applicant and the former manager did not agree.

4 "Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about yourself and your abilities?" This effectively closes the interview in the best possible way, by letting the applicant have the last word. It also may elicit information that you never would have discovered otherwise. 



Visit rainbird.com/IQ.
Watch the video and see
what IQ-Cloud can do for you.



Controlling your system from any device, anywhere.

That's intelligent.



The IQ™ Platform—another water-saving technology from Rain Bird.

As water conservation becomes increasingly critical, Rain Bird is leading the charge to develop water-saving irrigation products. One example is Rain Bird IQ-Cloud v3.0, which allows you to remotely manage commercial irrigation from any web-enabled device. With email alerts to help you correct problems faster and automatic weather-based adjustments that prevent overwatering, it's one more way we help you save water.



RAIN BIRD®

LET'S GROW

Go Live with Facebook Live



BY SHAUN KANARY

The author is director of demand generation for Kuno Creative, a digital marketing agency. A green industry veteran, he's also an adjunct professor of marketing at Baldwin Wallace University. Reach him at skanary@gmail.com.

With the release of Facebook Live, which allows users to create free live broadcasts, businesses are jumping at the chance to create live broadcasts that engage with their consumers. Let's look at the best ways for a green industry company to get started with this exciting new technology.

HOW IT WORKS

Facebook Live lets users, including business pages, broadcast live over the Facebook channel. People can watch your broadcasts in real time, commenting while you discuss various topics. The livestream, which can run up to four hours, shows up in the timelines of Facebook users who are your fans or friends. After completing your broadcast, a recording of your video is saved on your page.

All your friends/fans won't see the broadcast; only those who engage with your other posts will. Another caveat, the feature is "mobile only," meaning you can only use it on your mobile device and within the Facebook or Facebook Pages application.

TECHNOLOGY NEEDS

Here are a few things to remember before broadcasting to Facebook Live.

Download the Facebook Pages app. Facebook Live is only available to use with mobile devices. Additionally, you cannot use a mobile device's web browser to launch this feature; instead, you will need to download the Facebook Pages app from the iOS or Android store. After downloading this app, you'll need to log into your Facebook Page using your administrative credentials.

Use a mobile device cradle and tripod. You'll need a device that runs a mobile iOS or Android operating system. With these options, recording a live broadcast more than 20 minutes long can make holding your phone an exhausting feat. That's why a mobile cradle that you can attach to a tripod will make recording your broadcast much easier. Additionally, the secure hold will make for a clearer video, limiting the "bounces."

A lavalier microphone can help sound. Mobile lavalier microphones can connect directly into the headphone jack and cost less than \$100. For that investment, your broadcasts will have crisp audio.

GET THE MOST OUT OF FACEBOOK LIVE

While no one is expecting a broadcast worthy of an Emmy, here are a few things you can do to get the most out of your Facebook Live events.

Plan, plan and plan. Like any video, have a plan for what you'll talk about in order to limit rambling or dead air. A great way to keep things moving and stay on track is to create cue cards to place behind the camera.

Target your audience with ads.

Use Facebook Ads to increase the size of your audience. Using Facebook Ad targeting, you can segment your potential audience by demographics, interests and other factors. The week of your live event, run an ad each day featuring the day and time of your broadcast with a topic you plan to address, and ask for comments from users to address during your event.

Encourage feedback. During the broadcast, encourage viewers to comment, and respond to any comments you receive. Also prompt viewers to hit the "subscribe" button on their screen during your broadcast. It will notify them of your future live events. Finally, make your broadcasts 30 minutes or more, so more people can stumble across it and tune in.

Choose a high-traffic time. Plan to go live at the time most of your fans and consumers are online. Lunchtime and early evening tend to be high-traffic Facebook times, but use your Facebook Insights to see when your fans are online the most.

FACEBOOK LIVE FOR LANDSCAPE PROS

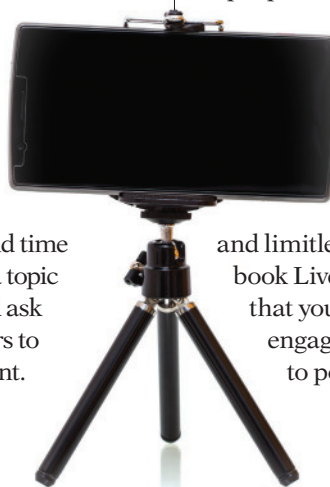
Some ways to use this feature for the green industry include:

- Feature a behind-the-scenes look at how you plan for a project. Show the amount of work it takes, creating value in your service.
- Provide maintenance tips to help consumers get the most out of their landscaping investment, such as plant health tips and more.
- Feature new products that can enhance outdoor living spaces.

While it was originally intended for people to share experiences with

their friends and loved ones, Facebook Live has become viable for businesses to connect with their customers and prospects. Quick, no cost

and limitless in potential, Facebook Live just might be the way that your business can attract, engage and sell more services to potential clients. 📺



CASE STUDY: ADD-ON BIZ

Diversifying with demo work

One landscape company found new work amid the foreclosure crisis. BY CASEY PAYTON

In 2008, the economic downturn left many landscape business owners wondering if they would survive. As businesses and homeowners cut back on expenses, landscaping services often got the axe. Many companies were looking for ways to diversify.

Around this time, J. Barker Landscaping Co. in Bedford, Ohio, found itself in a holding pattern on an urban garden project with the city of Cleveland. It couldn't be completed until a home was demolished. The company's forte—high-end residential design/build work—had slowed down along with the economy, and J. Barker's management felt stuck. While the company waited for the demolition firm to tear down the house, the idea to do it themselves was born. After renting an excavator and successfully completing the job, the group decided to enter the demolition business officially.

After demolishing its first home, it wasn't long before the city—in the midst of a foreclosure crisis—came forward with more jobs, says Brandon Barker, commercial operations manager for the company. It was obvious there was a market for this line of work. In fact, at that time, the city of Cleveland had 14,000 vacant homes that had to be torn down.

Getting the demolition division up and running as The Barker Group took about a \$50,000 investment. Though the company already had a large, semi flatbed trailer and truck, it had to buy an excavator, a semi-tractor and some larger tandem axle

dump trucks. It also had to register as a demolition contractor with the city, and it became a contractor for the Cuyahoga Land Bank, a non-profit entity dedicated to eliminating vacant, blighted properties in the county where Cleveland is located.

Barker says demolition has been a perfect fit with the company's existing landscaping work. In fact, jobs often seamlessly transition from demolition into landscaping now that they do both. After a property is torn down and proper grading is done, the next step is seeding—so, the landscaping work begins.

Getting into the demolition business has been a fairly smooth transition, but Barker says a learning curve exists when using a larger machine. Luckily, the company's existing operators picked up the role, and it didn't need to hire anyone.

As for manpower, most jobs involve an excavator operator and two dump truck drivers, who drive back and forth from the landfill each day, dropping off construction debris and bringing back dirt to fill in the hole. Dumping fees and time spent dumping are costs associated with demolition work, Barker says.

"We already had commercial drivers' licenses within our company, which was helpful since the larger trucks do require that," Barker says. "You can't succeed in this line of work unless you have an experienced operator running your machines."

Today, the company has done several hundred demolitions. The investment in the equipment has



been beneficial not only for the demolition work but also because a lot of it can be used for landscaping.

Barker says getting into demolition has been a great fit for the company, but the risky work is not something to just jump into.

"I do think that landscaping and demolition go well together but that's not to say that just anyone should jump into this role," Barker says. "Taking down homes—especially when they're close together—is risky work. The last thing you want is a home you're demolishing to fall on a home that you're not." 🏠

Demolition jobs often transition into landscape work.

Payton is a freelance writer from Philadelphia.

BUSINESS BREAKDOWN

COMPANY: J. Barker Landscaping Co.

HEADQUARTERS: Bedford, Ohio

CLIENTS: 60 percent residential; 40 percent commercial

SERVICES: 50 percent design/build; 27 percent maintenance; 15 percent snow removal; 8 percent demolition

BEST TIP: Be prepared to invest at the onset to make this kind of work successful. The equipment is not cheap, but it's necessary.

BIGGEST CHALLENGE: When you're first starting out, knowing how to estimate and create a competitive bid is difficult without experience.

PRODUCT FOCUS

CHAINSaws

MTT 3600

COMPANY: Efco

URL: EfcoPower.com

The top-handle chainsaw weighs just 8.4 lbs., with a 35.4-cc engine that delivers 2 hp. Other features include the Easy-On starting system and easy-to-attach snap hook with operator's harness.



MSA 120 C-BQ

COMPANY: Stihl

URL: StihlUSA.com

As part of the Stihl Lightning Battery Systems, the chainsaw weighs 8.4 lbs. (including battery, bar and chain) and features low vibration, quick chain adjustment and the Stihl Quickstop Plus chain braking feature. A 12-in. guide bar and exclusive 0.25-in. Stihl Picco saw chain are standard.



536LIXP

COMPANY: Husqvarna

URL: Husqvarna.com

As part of Husqvarna's 500 Series lithium ion battery-powered lineup, the chainsaw features a 14-in. bar and heavy-duty construction. It weighs 5.29 lbs. (without battery and cutting equipment) and is designed to be ergonomic, Husqvarna says. The battery and charger are sold separately.



GS180

COMPANY: Greenworks Commercial

URL: GreenworksCommercial.com

Powered by an 82-v battery and brushless, electric motor technology designed to provide low maintenance and high torque, the 18-in. chainsaw features a push-button start, zero emissions and reduced noise and vibration.

IRRIGATION CONTROLLERS

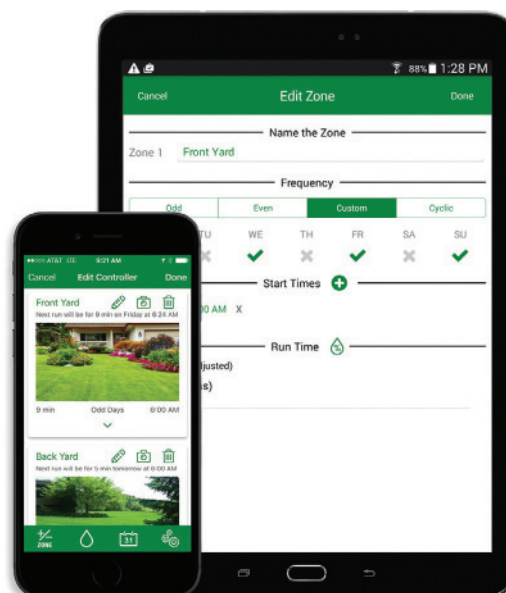


WI-FI-BASED PRO-HC CONTROLLER

COMPANY: Hunter Industries

URL: HunterIndustries.com

Featuring Hydrowise web-based software, the Pro-HC is offered as six-, 12- or 24-station fixed indoor and outdoor units. It also has a dedicated master valve to help prevent water loss and supports Hunter's pump start relay. Large terminal strips are included for easy installation of solenoid wiring.



LNK WIFI MODULE



COMPANY: Rain Bird

URL: wifi-pro.RainBird.com

The LNK WiFi Module is a small device that plugs into an accessory port on Rain Bird's ESP-Me and ESP-TM2 controllers. It provides complete irrigation system management via a free, downloadable mobile app. The module receives weather information from the Internet, automatically adjusting system run times on a daily basis.

LIGHTING FIXTURES

MINI FLOODLIGHT SERIES

COMPANY: Vista Professional Outdoor Lighting

URL: VistaPro.com

As part of Vista's Up & Accent fixture line, these two slim, compact models (5105 and 5106) provide a higher output and more lumens per watt than standard LEDs. The dimmable floodlights are available in a variety of mounting options, including adjustable knuckles, junction or tree-mount boxes, ground stakes and mounting canopies.

Sixteen standard polyester powdercoat finishes are available.



LED PATH LIGHTS



COMPANY: Super Bright LEDs

URL: SuperBrightLEDs.com

The weatherproof, rust-resistant pathlights are constructed of powdercoated bronze or black aluminum. Styles include mushroom, frosted glass, offset cone or hammered cone shades and offset linear light heads. Several of the new fixtures are equipped with two 8-in. down rods for adjustable height options. Each path light comes with a screw-on ground stake.

LM SHOWCASE

PRODUCTS + SERVICES
FROM LANDSCAPE
INDUSTRY SUPPLIERS



INSTANT GRATIFICATION

Your customers want it,
PRO Landscape lets you deliver it.



In the office or on the go, PRO Landscape has all
the tools you need to create winning designs.

LEARN WHY PRO LANDSCAPE DOES IT BETTER

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

PRO Landscape



Unique Patent Pending Design

Mighty-Spikes™ can be used for holding down most any product securely
to the ground. Made from strong Polycarbonate plastic with 8 unique Patent
Pending alternating reverse arrows, designed to resist pulling back out.

Last For Years • Re-Usable • Sharp Point

Large 3/4" Head • Super Strong • 6" Length

www.mightyspikes.com • Phone: 1-800-410-7661



Proudly Manufactured In The USA



**Great performance
and maneuverability!**

ECO 75 Top Dresser

**The Eco 75
is a unique
Mower
attachment!**

The PTO drive hookup takes topdressing to a whole new level,
making this combo smooth and fast for big or small jobs.

www.ecolawnapplicator.com

AD INDEX

The Andersons	54
Aspire Software Co.	SG6, SG12
Belgard	39
Blue Thumb Distributing	Outsert
Cleveland Brothers	31
Cub Cadet	33
DynaSCAPE Software	SG7, SG11
EcoLawn	62
Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply	43
FMC Professional Solutions	41*
GoiLawn	SG8
Greenius	SG2, SG9
Ground Logic	34
Hunter Industries	37
Intelligro Civitas	5
JCB	45
John Deere	8
JRCO	52
Kershaw Law Firm PC	Cover Tip
Kohler Engines	CV2
Kubota Tractor Corp.	CV4
Little Beaver	16
Mighty-Spikes	62
PBI/Gordon Corp.	51
PermaGreen Supreme	11
PRO Landscape by Drafix Software	62
Propane Education & Research Council	53
Project Evergreen	41*
Quali-Pro	CV3
Rachio	44
Rain Bird	47, 57
Real Green Systems	SG10
Solu-Cal USA	36
Turfbooks	50
TurfEx	31
Versa-Lok	40
Vista Landscape Lighting	3
Wilbur-Ellis	35
Zoro Tools	13

*denotes regional advertisement

The ad index is provided as an additional service. The publisher
does not assume any liability for errors or omissions.

RESOURCES

[Online]

Be featured in Landscape Management!



We're always looking for great
reader stories to tell. That's why
we've created a space on our
website to invite you to share
your article ideas, growth stories,
letters to the editor, press releases and more.

Visit **LandscapeManagement.net/BeFeatured** for more
information or email your thoughts to LM Editor Marisa Palmieri
at mpalmieri@northcoastmedia.net.



LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT (ISSN 0894-1254) is published monthly by North Coast Media LLC, IMG Center, 1360 East 9th Street, Suite 1070, Cleveland, OH 44114. Subscription rates: For US, Canada and Mexico, 1 year \$59.95 print and digital; two years \$95.95 print and digital. All other countries, 1 year print and digital \$169.95; two years \$255.95. For air-expedited service, include an additional \$75 per order annually. Single copies (prepaid only) \$10 plus postage and handling. For current single copy or back issues, call 847-513-6030. Periodicals postage paid at Cleveland OH 44101-9603 and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Please send address change to Landscape Management, PO Box 2090, Skokie, IL 60076. Printed in the U.S.A.



Copyright 2017 North Coast Media, LLC. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical including by photocopy, recording, or information storage and retrieval without permission in writing from the publisher. Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use, or the internal or personal use of specific clients is granted by North Coast Media, LLC for libraries and other users registered with the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Dr, Danvers, MA 01923, phone 978-750-8400, fax 978-750-4470. Call for copying beyond that permitted by Sections 107 or 108 of the U.S. Copyright Law.

Landscape Management does not verify any claims or other information appearing in any of the advertisements contained in the publication, and cannot take any responsibility for any losses or other damages incurred by readers in reliance on such content. Landscape Management welcomes unsolicited articles, manuscripts, photographs, illustrations and other materials but cannot be held responsible for their safekeeping or return. North Coast Media LLC provides certain customer contact data (such as customers' names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses) to third parties who wish to promote relevant products, services and other opportunities which may be of interest to you. If you do not want North Coast Media LLC to make your contact information available to third parties for marketing purposes, simply call 847-513-6030 between the hours of 8:30 am and 5:00 pm CT and a customer service representative will assist you in removing your name from North Coast Media LLC's lists.



Every month the Classified Showcase offers an up-to-date section of the products and services you're looking for. **Don't miss an issue!**

ADVERTISING INFORMATION

Call Chloe Scoular
at 216-363-7929,
FAX: 216-706-3711,
E-MAIL: cscoular
@northcoastmedia.net



Payment must be received by the classified closing date. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and American Express.

Mail LM Box # replies to:
Landscape Management Classifieds,
LM Box # _____
1360 E. 9th St., Ste. 1070
Cleveland, OH 44114
(please include LM Box # in address)

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

WANT TO BUY OR SELL A BUSINESS?
Professional Business Consultants can obtain purchase offers from numerous qualified potential buyers without disclosing your identity. There is no cost for this as Consultant's fee is paid by the buyer. This is a **FREE APPRAISAL** of your business. If you are looking to grow or diversify through acquisition, I have companies available in **Lawn Care, Grounds Maintenance, Pest Control and Landscape Installation** all over the U.S. and Canada.

708-744-6715 • Fax 508-252-4447
E-mail pbcsmello1@aol.com

HELP WANTED

Looking for a place to grow?

Full-service landscape company seeks experienced Field Operations Manager.

Must have a valid driver's license, min. 5 years of landscaping experience and min. Associate's Degree in green industry. Competitive Salary, Sales Commission, 401K and much more.

Email resumes to :
employment@completelawn.com

Contact: Rusty Stout 703-560-5296

**PLACE YOUR
AD TODAY!**

HELP WANTED



**COMMERCIAL
LANDSCAPE
INC.**

WINNER OF COMMERCIAL
LANDSCAPE AWARDS

IRRIGATION TECHNICIAN

1139 E. Dominguez St. Unit A, Carson, CA 90746

Large Landscape company is seeking experienced Irrigation Technicians with valid driver's license. Must have a minimum of 3-5 years of previous experience. Qualified females are encouraged to apply.

Full-Time, \$14-\$18/HR

INTERVIEWS: Tuesday's 7:00am to 9:00am

RESUMES email to: paulw@fslandscape.com

Call (909) 851-3763



**COMMERCIAL
LANDSCAPE
INC.**

WINNER OF COMMERCIAL
LANDSCAPE AWARDS

SPECIAL PROJECTS LEADER

43197 Osgood Rd., Fremont, CA 94539

Large landscape company is seeking experienced installer of plants and irrigation. Must have a minimum of 3-5 years of previous experience.

\$15-\$25/HR

RESUMES email to: greg@fslandscape.com

Call (925) 786-2780

FLORASEARCH, INC.

In our fourth decade of performing confidential key employee searches for the landscape/horticulture industry and allied trades worldwide.

Retained basis only.

Candidate contact welcome, confidential and always FREE.

1740 Lake Markham Road
Sanford, FL 32771

407-320-8177 * Fax: 407-320-8083

E-mail: search@florasearch.com

www.florasearch.com

Looking to hire?



Reach **thousands** of professionals in your industry by placing a classified ad.

SAVE SAVE SAVE

**IN ADDITION TO SAVING YOU MONEY,
FREQUENCY ADVERTISING HELPS
PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS RECALL YOUR
SERVICES WHEN THEY NEED YOU MOST.**

Please email Chloe Scoular at cscoular@northcoastmedia.net for rates and additional information.



Jon Cundiff



PRESIDENT
WEED MAN KANSAS CITY
LEE'S SUMMIT, MO.

EDUCATION

Raytown South High School
Raytown, Missouri
Class of 1978

Northwest Missouri
State University
Maryville, Missouri
Business science/marketing
Class of 1982

WORK EXPERIENCE

1976-1981
Kansas City Royals
Grounds Crew

1982
Evergreen Lawns
Salesman

1983-1984
Beauty Lawns
Sales/Marketing

1984-1987
Dick Smith Car Dealership
Salesman

1987-2000
Turf's Up Lawn Service
President

2000-present
Weed Man Kansas City
President

"The car salesman has a bad reputation, but learning how to negotiate has bode me very well. It's about both parties coming out feeling good about what's going on."

"Our industry is a great industry to be in, and there are numerous opportunities to get into our industry and be successful, so we always want to keep pushing the envelope on workforce development."



1993-2003
Professional Lawn Care
Association of America (PLCAA)
Board member

2003
PLCAA President

Present
National Association of
Landscape Professionals
President

"After 30 years, I'm still excited to get up in the morning and capture the day, and I have just as much drive and passion as I did the first day."

Weed Man®
WE CARE FOR YOUR LAWN



"(George Toma, now a Super Bowl consultant) taught us that it wasn't enough to do your job. If you're going to be the best, you have to do your job and then some."

"When you first start out, you're everything. My wife and I built an org chart of what a million dollar company looked like, and our names were on all the positions."



Jon and Vicky Cundiff, CFO, started their company together 30 years ago. They have 28-year-old twin sons, Brandon and Cameron. Cameron runs the company's satellites. "It's very easy to talk shop nonstop," Cundiff says. "We had to learn the discipline that work is work, home is home."

WORDS OF WISDOM "One place that we're all equal is we all have 1440 minutes (a day). That's all you get. You need to learn to use them correctly because you can't save them and you can't make them up." • "Keep an eye on regulation. It's the one thing that can change your business overnight." • "Life is not a dress rehearsal. You need to capture every day."

TIME IS MONEY



INTRODUCING

Fahrenheit™ Herbicide

- Cost-Effective.** A little goes a long way. The low cost of this Dicamba + Sulfonyleurea (SU) herbicide formulation improves your bottom line.
- Simple.** One bottle treats one acre. No more complicated dilution ratios.
- Flexible.** Fahrenheit produces results in temperatures as low as 50 degrees.
- Effective.** Faster visible activity in just 7-10 days that reduces the amount of callbacks.

Contact your Quali-Pro representative for more information on Fahrenheit Herbicide. This product may not be registered in all states, please check the CSI website or the state's department of agriculture for registration information.

QUALI-PRO

Innovation you can apply.

Call 800-242-5562
www.quali-pro.com



Quali-Pro is a registered trademark of the Adama Group.



THE PRECISION TO CAREFULLY LIFT YOUR JAW UP OFF THE FLOOR.



Meet the new Kubota SSV75. Built with the precision engineering you've come to expect from Kubota, it features a smooth-running 74.3 HP Kubota diesel engine, vertical loader lift arms, a tilt-up cab and more. The SSV is pure Kubota, and delivers the kind of performance that raises eyebrows. And drops jaws. Locate your dealer today at Kubota.com/Construction.



© Kubota Tractor Corporation, 2015.



Kubota