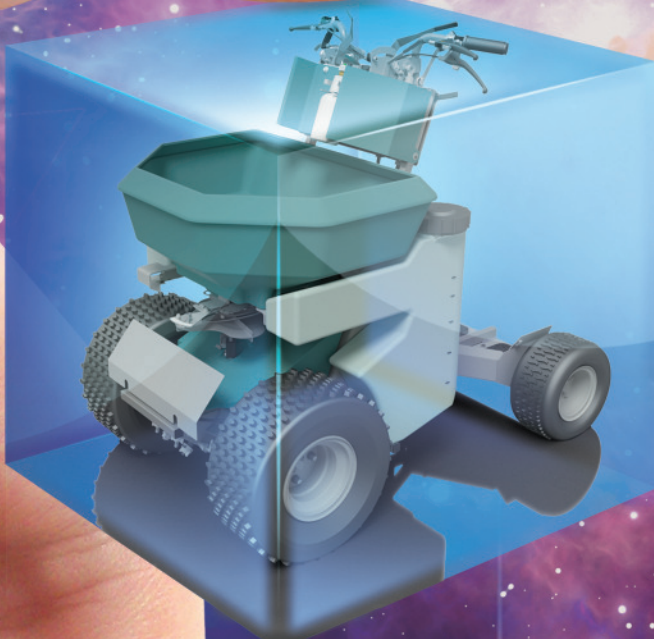


**It's your future. Look closely. Choose wisely.**



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

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

Visit [permagreen.com](http://permagreen.com) your chance to win a 2015 Triumph!

**permagreen™**

**800.346.2001 permagreen.com**

\*Visit [permagreen.com](http://permagreen.com) for details and limitations of our 60-day buy back Guarantee. © 2014 PermaGreen™ Supreme, Inc. U.S. Patents 6,366,600 & 7,954,573. PermaGreen™ is a registered trademark of PermaGreen™ Supreme, Inc. All rights reserved.





# LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO GROWTH™

Expert advice  
for LCOs

Zero-turn mowers

Water feature  
trends

## DIGITAL MARKETING REPORT

# HOW TO GROW

**YOUR AUDIENCE,  
YOUR REFERRALS  
AND YOUR BUSINESS.**

January 2017 VOL 56, ISSUE 1  
[landscapemanagement.net](http://landscapemanagement.net)  
A NORTH COAST MEDIA PUBLICATION





ALL  
NEW!

# ONE MACHINE. YEAR-ROUND PRODUCTIVITY.

**SWITCH ATTACHMENTS AND BOOST PROFITS NO MATTER THE SEASON**

with the all-new GrandStand® MULTI FORCE™ stand-on mower. This maneuverable machine combines the productivity of our proven, low-maintenance GrandStand mower with the ability to add attachments like a 5-foot BOSS® Plow or a Powered Bagger for all-season versatility. Watch for more attachments and accessories coming soon.

**TORO®**

AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL TORO DEALER | [TORO.COM/GRANDSTAND](http://TORO.COM/GRANDSTAND)





# CONTENTS

JANUARY 2017 • VOL 56, ISSUE 1

## DIGITAL MARKETING REPORT

### ON THE COVER

How to grow your audience, your referrals and your business.

30

### NEWS & HOW-TO'S

**10 Recommender**  
Irrigation sprayheads

**10 Issue Brief**  
BY MISSY HENRIKSEN

**12 Step by Step**  
How to compost landscape waste.

**14 New Stuff**  
Three products and services that are fresh to the market.

**16 SafetyWatch**  
Snow blower safety tips

### PROFIT CENTERS

**18 Turf+Ornamental Care**  
Expert panelists at the 2016 Lawn Care Forum discuss the common mistakes they see.

Job sequencing checklists create consistency at U.S. Lawns. (page 22).



**22 Mowing+Landscape Maintenance**  
Adopt this simple checklist to become more productive.

**24 Design/Build+Installation**  
Water features are hot due to affordable, innovative technology.

**28 Irrigation+Water Management**  
Desert dispatch: See who won awards at the 2016 Irrigation Show.

### BUSINESS INSIDER

**38 Business Basics: People**  
Are you losing your best people? Here's what you're doing wrong.  
BY MEL KLEIMAN

**40 Let's Grow**  
Our resident marketing expert introduces Sponsored InMail.  
BY SHAUN KANARY

**42 Case Study: Our Way**  
Co-op programs give companies a pipeline to fresh, young talent.  
BY CASEY PAYTON

New Holland's 200 series compact track loader is just one of three hot new products. (page 14).



### IN EVERY ISSUE

**2 Online Now**

**4 Editor's Note**  
BY MARISA PALMIERI

**6 Big Picture**  
Southview Design, Prior Lake, Minn.

**44 Product Focus**  
Preemergent herbicides, zero-turns

**47 Classifieds/Ad Index**

**48 Backstory**  
Ryan Slipka, general manager/partner, Southview Design  
BY DILLON STEWART

ON THE COVER: ILLUSTRATION © ISTOCK.COM/SIMON2579





### LM NEWS

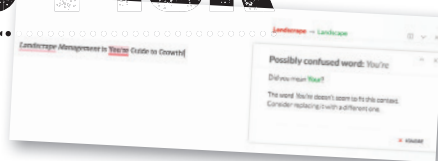
➔ There's so much more to *Landscape Management* than just the monthly print magazine. Our online news keeps you up-to-date on the latest happenings around the green industry. Trying to learn about a recent acquisition or merger? We've got you covered. Want to see the latest hires and promotions from landscape companies and manufacturers? Check out the bi-weekly People on the Move post. Whether its updates on the litigation over the Department of Labor's overtime rule or the pesticide ban in Montgomery County, Md., coverage of educational programming and trade shows or online-exclusive profiles of companies across the country, *LM* news and our *LMDirect!* weekly e-newsletter is just one more way we're "Your Guide to Growth." Visit [goo.gl/abVFKS](http://goo.gl/abVFKS) or follow *LM* on your favorite social media platform.



### WEB PICK

#### Grammarly

You may not be Hemingway, but you compose important emails, social media posts and documents every day. Spelling and grammar mistakes make you look unprofessional. Grammarly catches them, fixes them and suggests ways to make your writing sound better. It works seamlessly with Gmail, Facebook or anywhere else you write online. If you're grammatically challenged, download Grammarly today. **Free • Google Chrome**



### CONNECT

- [facebook.com/LandscapeManagement](https://facebook.com/LandscapeManagement)
- [twitter.com/LandscapeMgmt](https://twitter.com/LandscapeMgmt)
- [linkedin.com/company/landscape-management-magazine/](https://linkedin.com/company/landscape-management-magazine/)
- [plus.google.com](https://plus.google.com) > Search "Landscape Management magazine"
- [@landscapemgmt">instagram.com > @landscapemgmt](https://instagram.com)



## 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](http://prolandscape.com) | 800-231-8574 | [sales@prolandscape.com](mailto:sales@prolandscape.com)

**PRO Landscape**



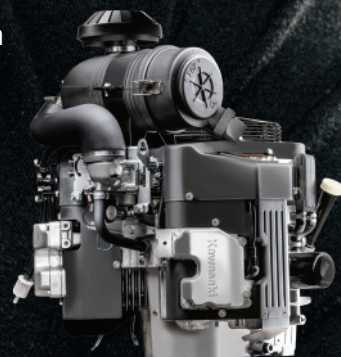
# Blade RUNNER

Nothing stops you: tough terrain, nasty weather, crazy hours, you thrive through it all. Advanced engine technology, solid efficiency and iron-clad reliability is what you need. Kawasaki is what you run. With your drive, nothing else gets it done. [www.kawasakienginesusa.com](http://www.kawasakienginesusa.com)

**Kawasaki**  

---

**Engines**





# EDITOR'S NOTE

**MARISA PALMIERI**  
EDITOR

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



## Seek to understand

**W**hen a small group of landscape industry communications pros gathered at the Las Vegas Convention Center in early December during the 2016 Irrigation Show, the “Fireside Chat” wasn’t meant to offer up New Year’s resolutions, but that’s what I took away.

The session “Is Anyone Listening?” was hosted by the Turf & Ornamental Communicators Association and sponsored by Ewing. It was presented by Cliff Woodbury, senior vice president of culture and engagement for Ewing. He offered an important reminder about the power of communication for all of us.

So what’s the resolution I walked away with? “Seek first to understand, then to be understood.”

Sound familiar? Woodbury shared this piece of wisdom as habit No. 5 from Stephen Covey’s “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.” It’s also a line from the Peace Prayer, otherwise known as the Prayer of St. Francis. It’s been quoted by people as diverse as Mother Teresa, Desmond Tutu and Bill Clinton, and it’s been adopted by Alcoholics Anonymous and others.

You can’t deny that it’s good advice for those in the landscape industry, where some of the biggest obstacles include creating a positive culture, retaining and recruiting workers and meeting client expectations.

Covey says when leaders listen with empathy the results are a positive environment and effective problem solving. What’s not to like about that?

There are five types of listening, according to Covey, and only the final one is *truly* listening.

Are you guilty of any of these?

- Ignoring—not listening;
- Pretending—acting like you’re listening;
- Selective listening—hearing what you want to hear;
- Attentive listening—trying to understand the words someone is saying, but not necessarily the meaning; and
- Empathic listening—listening with intent to understand the other person’s frame of reference.

Remember, empathic listening is not the same as showing sympathy or agreeing with the person. It’s about comprehending his or her point of view. That’s it.

Effective ways to achieve empathic listening—and resisting your instinct to prepare a response in your mind—include any or all of these tactics: repeating what the other person said; rephrasing the content; and reflecting the person’s feelings.

As Covey says, you don’t want to fall into the trap of evaluating (judging), probing (asking questions from your own frame of reference), advising (offering advice or solutions) or interpreting (analyzing others’ motives based on your experiences).

“Successful listening hinges on our intent,” Woodbury says. If your goal is to understand others above getting your point across, the people you interact with will know.

“What if your customers felt like they were truly understood before they were pitched or sold?” he asked.

Why don’t you resolve to find out in 2017? I am. 🙏



### 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

**Digital Operations Manager** Bethany Chambers

216/706-3771 | bchambers@northcoastmedia.net

**Web Developer** Jesse Malcmacher

216/363-7925 | jmalcmacher@northcoastmedia.net

### MARKETING/MAGAZINE SERVICES

**Reprints & Permissions** Brett Petillo

877/652-5295 | bpetillo@wrightsmedia.com

**List Rental** Brahm Schenkman,

The Information Refinery, Inc

800/529-9020 | bschenkman@infofinery.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

**Editorial Directors** Marty Whitford & Marisa Palmieri

216/706-3766 | mwhitford@northcoastmedia.net

216/706-3764 | mpalmieri@northcoastmedia.net

## EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD



### What's one New Year's resolution you recommend landscape professionals make for their businesses in 2017?

#### Landscape Professionals

**Richard Bare**  
Arbor-Nomics Turf  
Norcross, Ga.

**Bill Bemus**  
Bemus Landscape  
San Clemente, Calif.

**Chris Joyce**  
Joyce Landscaping  
Cape Cod, Mass.

**Adam Linnemann**  
Linnemann Lawn Care & Landscaping  
Columbia, Ill.

**Jerry McKay**  
McKay Landscape Lighting  
Omaha, Neb.

**Greg Winchel**  
Winchel Irrigation  
Grandville, Mich.

#### Industry Consultants

**Dan Gordon**  
TurfBooks  
Newton, N.J.

**Kevin Kehoe**  
3PG Consulting  
Laguna, Calif.

**Phil Harwood**  
Pro-Motion Consulting  
Farmington, Mich.

**Frank Ross**  
3PG Consulting  
Alpharetta, Ga.

**Jeffrey Scott**  
Jeffrey Scott Consulting  
Trumbull, Conn.

**Jody Shilan**  
FromDesign2Build.com  
Upper Saddle River, N.J.

**Bruce Wilson**  
Bruce Wilson & Co.  
Scottsdale, Ariz.

"Get on  
a good,  
routine  
exercise  
program."

"Raise your  
level of customer  
service. Sure, it  
might be good  
already. But what  
would make it  
great?"

"...resolve  
to be  
bold and  
proactive!"

#### MORE ONLINE

See more great advice and  
complete answers from our  
Editorial Advisory Board in the  
online version of this feature at  
[LandscapeManagement.net](http://LandscapeManagement.net).



**OUR MISSION:** Landscape Management shares a  
comprehensive mix of content designed to stimulate  
growth and take our readers to their next level.

## THE KEY TO EARNING AN EXTRA \$200K A YEAR.



LITERALLY.



But don't just take our word  
for it. Do the math.

Buy our 600-gallon spray unit and truck  
for just \$49,900 and spray an average  
of twenty 6,000-square-foot lawns a day  
for ten months. At \$50 per lawn, that's  
\$200,000 in one year. Add Graham's  
reputation for lifelong reliability and service,  
and you have the key to success.

  
**Graham® Spray  
Equipment**

YOUR IDEAS ARE WHERE WE START

© 2017 Graham Spray Equipment

(770) 942-1617 | (800) 543-2810 | [GrahamSE.com](http://GrahamSE.com)







# BIG PICTURE

## MAKING A POINT

**LOCATION** Prior Lake, Minn.

**COMPANY** Southview Design

**THE DETAILS** This residential project took three years to plan and two years to complete. The first meeting took place on the property, which had an existing 1950s home, between Landscape Designer Matt Burton, the real estate agent and the homeowner. Before new home construction could begin, a plan to control erosion and drainage had to be approved by city and state inspectors and the boulder walls had to be installed.

Raising the main level of the house plus having water on three sides proved to be a challenge. A 7-ft. deep, 8- to 9-ft. wide water collection well, featuring 6-in. perforated drain tile, connects to a bio-swale, allowing stormwater to percolate down through the soil. Water coming off the south side of the house is directed toward the plants, trees and sod. Boulder walls around the entire point raise the grade of the yard to prevent water from getting to the lake.

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

**PHOTO** A backyard play area for the owners' children was a vital component of the project.

*See more photos from this project at [LandscapeManagement.net/BigPicture](http://LandscapeManagement.net/BigPicture).*

PHOTO: TROY THIES PHOTOGRAPHY



Stay Yards Ahead Next Year With a Great Deal This Winter.

**0% FOR 60 MONTHS\***

**AND**

**\$300 OFF\*\***

**PLUS**

**\$400 OFF\*\*\***

**with GreenFleet™ Discount**



Maybe the season is starting to wind down, but a deal on a terrific ZTrak™ mower is just starting up. Right now, until February 28, 2017, we're offering \$300 off \*\* any Z930M mower plus 0% financing for 60 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 the ultimate zero-turn mower.

[JohnDeere.com/MowPro](http://JohnDeere.com/MowPro)



**JOHN DEERE**

\* Offer ends February 28, 2017. Subject to approved installment credit with John Deere Financial, for commercial use only.

\*\*\$300 off and fixed rate of 0.0% for 60 months available October 29, 2016 through February 28, 2017. Savings based on the purchase of a Z930M.

Offers available on new equipment and in the U.S. only. Prices and savings in U.S. dollars. See your dealer for details. Available at participating dealers.

\*\*\* GreenFleet discount offer expires October 28, 2017. \$400 off with GreenFleet Platinum 1 Member discount. GreenFleet level savings are based on total units purchased. A member's per unit discount for an eligible sale will be based on the highest accumulated qualifying equipment purchased at the time of an eligible sale. See terms and conditions at [JohnDeere.com/GreenFleet](http://JohnDeere.com/GreenFleet) for details.



# NEWS HOW-TO'S

LANDSCAPE  
INDUSTRY  
TRENDS,  
VIEWS  
AND TIPS

RECOMMENDER

ISSUE BRIEF

STEP BY STEP

NEW STUFF

SAFETYWATCH

## SEPARATE FOR SUCCESS



**F**or more than a decade, Mazelis Landscape Contracting has operated with the mindset that it's more efficient and profitable to leave landscape bed maintenance to a dedicated crew.

"Mowing crews mow only; bed maintenance crews tend to beds either monthly or bimonthly," says Stephen Mazelis, owner of the Nesconset, N.Y.-based company. "We've done it both ways and find this way to be the most productive, efficient and profitable."

The company's lawn maintenance crews used to mow, in addition to caring for clients' beds for a small upcharge. This method didn't work. When crews ran behind schedule they often skimped on the bed service or skipped it altogether, leaving homeowners unsatisfied.

Now, Mazelis charges \$50 per man-hour for bed maintenance, which includes manual weed removal, bed cultivation and bed edging.

The company dispatches several two-man crews on Mondays with work-orders in hand and GPS on the trucks for any hour disputes.

"Customers seem to like it, and they seem to be willing to pay that money to keep beds neat and tidy," Mazelis says.

In addition to the extra revenue, the bed crews' efficiency has improved because they're focused on one task only, which also improves quality.

"The lawn maintenance guys are more efficient, too, plus I'm just sending out a truck with a few tools, not with \$50,000 in equipment sitting on it."

“(Dedicated crews are) productive, efficient and profitable.”

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



JOHN DEERE



## RECOMMENDER

# What irrigation sprayheads do you prefer and why?

Irrigation contractors' preferences vary.



## JAROD ROBERTS

OWNER, WESTSIDE SPRINKLER  
& PROPERTY PERFORMANCE  
LAKEWOOD, COLO.

"IrriGreen Genius Sprinklers. As shown in testing by the Center for Irrigation Technology, these heads with multistream nozzles use 40 percent

less water to increase soil moisture by the same amount as regular rotors. With only one computerized smart head per zone, instead of six to nine rotors, there is less pipe and less wire, fewer valves and fewer fittings. Installations require much less time and effort for me and my guys, minimize disturbance of clients' landscapes during installation and with less product in the ground there is much less to go wrong after we leave."



## RYAN HARRELL

PRESIDENT, RYAN'S LANDSCAPING  
DELAWARE, OHIO

"I've been using Hunter products from the time I was 16 years old, when I installed my first system. We still maintain that system to this day and 95 percent of the heads are original. We currently

use Hunter MP Rotators and Hunter adjustable nozzles. Most of our clients' properties have experienced a great savings in water usage using the MP design. The MP has also allowed systems with poor designs to be improved without a ton of work. We've switched most of our sprayheads over to MPs over the past two years with the help of our irrigation subcontractor and our employees."

## ISSUE >>> BRIEF



BY MISSY HENRIKSEN


The author is vp of public affairs, National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP).

## WHY PREEMPTION MATTERS

**P**reemption can greatly affect your business, yet not everyone knows what it is. And since it's different in every community, it isn't on all contractors' radars the way it should be.

What if you had different rules in each town or county about whether or not you could use pesticides on lawns and trees? What if some municipalities limited the times of year you could use fertilizer (each location with slightly different dates) and some had no restrictions? How much harder would it be to train your employees to comply with the rules? How would you explain to customers if their yards looked worse than peoples' yards a few miles down the road?

This scenario can happen when a state doesn't have a pesticide or nutrient preemption law. If a state has a preemption law, it means that every locale within that state must follow the same rules for lawn and landscape treatments. In states without a preemption law, each town or county may vote to pass their own rules and regulations.

NALP supports state preemption laws. We want the rules and regulations surrounding products to be based on the best science and want them to be uniform across the state. Without preemption laws, communities like Takoma Park, Md., can decide to ban pesticides. If your state doesn't have preemption laws, it's especially important to advocate for professional lawn and landscape care and to take notice if there are any proposals to discuss bans. Contact NALP and your state association to see how we can work together to educate the public about how the community benefits from well-maintained parks and playgrounds. 



**Now you can put  
"cruising" and "aerating"  
in the same sentence.**



It aerates up to 92,000 sq. ft. per hour. You can set the auto depth once and it holds all day. Plus, the chain comes protected so dirt can't clog up the drivetrain. Or your work day. The all-new Turfco XT8 aerator. Equipped for efficiency. Call 800-679-8201 or visit [turfcoirect.com](http://turfcoirect.com) to learn more.



## STEP BY STEP

# How to turn landscape waste into compost

**DOWNLOAD IT**

Visit [LandscapeManagement.net/StepbyStep](http://LandscapeManagement.net/StepbyStep) to download a PDF of this page to use as a training tool for your team.

**M**any landscape jobs produce green waste contractors must dispose. Compost is one way to manage those grass clippings, tree trimmings, leaves and other debris.

Compost needs a combination of “green” material—grass clippings, green leaves and vegetable scraps—to produce nitrogen and “brown” material—dead leaves, branches and wood chips—to produce carbon. Compost also needs water. Microorganisms, which break down waste, prefer moisture content between 40-60 percent and shut down when they get too wet or too dry. Test for adequate moisture by squeezing a handful of the material. A few drops of water should come out.

Microorganisms also need air. Turn compost weekly for aeration and to prevent unpleasant odors. Turning large amounts of compost may require heavy equipment, like a skid-steer. Processing larger trimmings also may require a chipper or grinder.

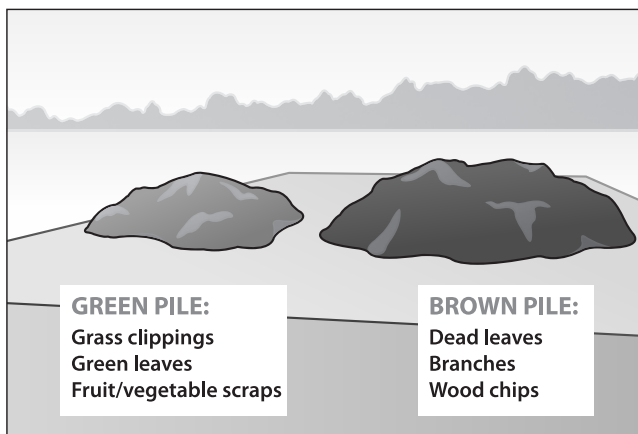
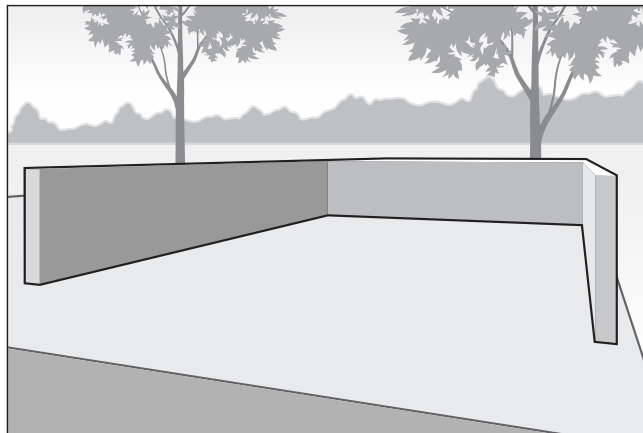
The composting process takes several months, depending on season and temperature. When the compost becomes dark brown and crumbly and has an earthy aroma, it's ready to use.

Small-scale landscape compost operations are generally exempt from solid waste regulations. But before beginning any composting, check with local regulatory agencies. Many localities also provide free composting workshops and information.

Follow the steps here to properly compost landscape waste. 

## STEP 1

Select a dry, shady spot near a water source. Compost bins vary in terms of size and cost. Compost can be made in a homemade or manufactured bin or on the ground.

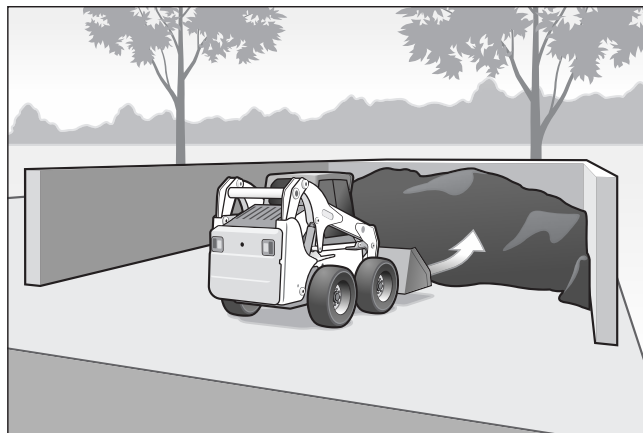


## STEP 2

To create compost, add brown and green waste material to the bin in alternate layers. The ideal ratio is roughly three parts brown to one part green. Shred or chop larger pieces of material.

## STEP 3

Tend to the compost by adding water as needed and by turning it weekly.



SOURCES: Stihl, [StihlUSA.com](http://StihlUSA.com);  
CalRecycle, CA.gov



# REDEFINE YOUR MOWING EXPERIENCE

with the new BlackHawk HP from Dixie Chopper



## ***BlackHawk HP™***



**Suspension Seat** – Full suspension for ultimate comfort



**OCDC** – Foot-operated discharge chute to control grass clippings



**Parker® HT Series** – Smooth steering and 1,000 hour oil change intervals



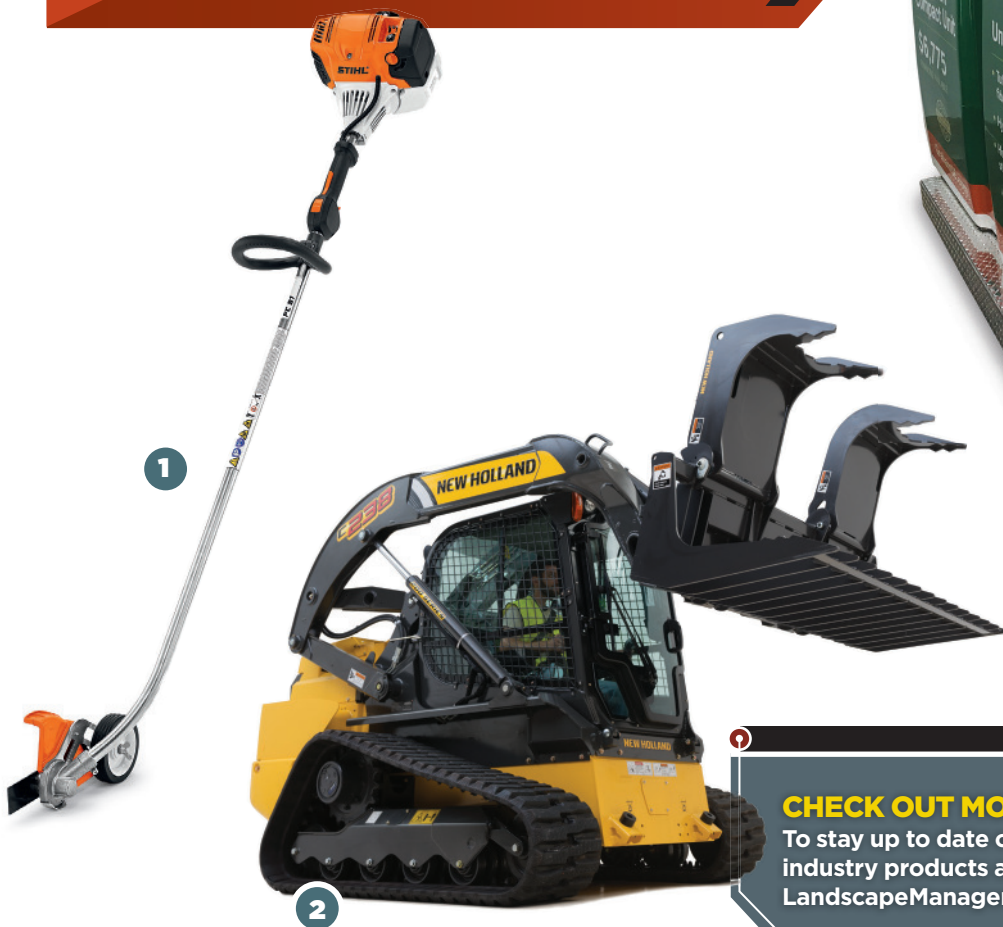
**InCommand Console** – Keyless ignition, SoftStart clutch engagement, and more

A mower built to give you an unparalleled mowing experience is coming to a Dixie Chopper dealer near you. Elevate your ride with the smoothest steering, excellent hillside stability, and deep deck for heavy-duty mowing. See the new BlackHawk HP online or at your local Dixie Chopper dealer today.

[dixiechopper.com](http://dixiechopper.com) | 765.246.7737



## NEW STUFF



## 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](http://LandscapeManagement.net/tag/product-news).

**1. FC 91 EDGER**

**COMPANY:** Stihl

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

Powered by a low-emission engine and 710 cc fuel tank, Stihl's latest line of Stihl edgers are designed to run 30 percent longer than predecessors. Highlights include a curved flex shaft for durability, a mud flap-style debris deflector to minimize clogging, the IntelliCarb compensating carburetor to maintain RPM if the air filter clogs and an adjustable depth wheel for precision. Multifunction control handles and a simplified three-step start procedure make the machine easier to use, the company says.

**2. 200 SERIES COMPACT TRACK LOADERS**

**COMPANY:** New Holland

**URL:** [NewHolland.com/NA](http://NewHolland.com/NA)

New Holland launched a low-profile undercarriage design on its 200-series Compact Track loaders. Highlights of the update include track frame upgrades to models C227, C232 and C238 that hold up better under New Holland's strain testing. The improved yoke-to-frame engagement will produce less noise and result in improved track alignment and easier clean out, the company says.

**3. 600-GALLON RIG AND 300-GALLON COMPACT UNIT**

**COMPANY:** Graham Spray Equipment

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

Graham Spray Equipment's compact 600-gallon spray rig and 300-gallon compact unit is designed for businesses that don't need the capacity and features of Graham's full-scale units, the company says. The 600-gallon spray rig, including the spray equipment and Isuzu truck, retails for \$49,900. The 300-gallon compact unit, which fits a three-quarter ton pickup truck and includes wheel-well cutouts, retails for \$6,775.



# IMPROVE YOUR CUSTOMERS CURB APPEAL



## Dithiopyr 2L

Contains 23% Dithiopyr for pre-emergent and early post-emergent weed control.

- Pretreat lawns and turfgrass now, with Dithiopyr 2L will help keep them beautiful and weed-free during the spring and summer months.
- Dithiopyr 2L is an easy-to-use, non-staining, liquid formulation for outstanding pre-emergent control of crabgrass and small seeded broadleaf weeds.
- Provides early post-emergent control of crabgrass.
- No root pruning for excellent performance and complete weed control.

Call 800-242-5562  
[www.quali-pro.com](http://www.quali-pro.com)



## QUALI-PRO



Innovation you can apply.

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



## SAFETYWATCH

### USE A SNOW BLOWER PROPERLY

There are a few important things to know about using a snow blower:

- Carefully manage where the snow discharges by controlling the direction of the discharge chute and angle of the deflector. Be sure to adjust them as you approach unwanted targets.
- The blower can pick up anything from the surface it's cleaning, including rocks, pet chains and electrical cords. This is a common hazard, and you must be vigilant.
- The force of the snow or other objects coming from the chute can damage valuable things like the paint on a car. It can break a window or injure a person. Never allow the discharged snow to strike anything other than the ground or an existing snow pile. Even allowing the discharged snow

to cover a brick wall, for example, appears careless. It's not appropriate to do so.

- To make the blower propel itself, simply engage the paddles by collapsing the paddle control bar against the main handle.
- If you tilt the blower handle slightly forward, the snow blower will begin moving forward. You can now begin clearing snow.

#### WATCH AND LEARN

Visit [LandscapeManagement.net/SafetyWatch](http://LandscapeManagement.net/SafetyWatch) to view a video about proper snow blower use, and use it as a training tool for your team.

SOURCE: Greenius



## WE NEED YOU TO MOW, TRIM AND PLOW FOR THEM....

### Project EverGreen Programs Benefit America's Veterans and Active-Duty Military Personnel



GreenCare for Troops and SnowCare for Troops are in need of volunteers in all states to help provide basic lawn care, landscape and snow removal services – and peace of mind – to military families and disabled or wounded veterans.



#### How To Get Involved?

Register to be a volunteer at [www.ProjectEverGreen.org](http://www.ProjectEverGreen.org)  
Contact Project EverGreen's Ki Matsko at 888.611.2955 or [info@projectevergreen.org](mailto:info@projectevergreen.org)



# PROFIT CENTERS

IDEAS AND  
STRATEGIES  
TO KEEP YOUR  
DIVISIONS IN  
THE BLACK

TURF+  
ORNAMENTAL CARE

MOWING+LANDSCAPE  
MAINTENANCE

DESIGN/BUILD+  
INSTALLATION

IRRIGATION+  
WATER MANAGEMENT

## EASY DOES IT

Technology has made  
installing water features  
a simpler service for  
landscape contractors  
to provide.

➤ PAGE 24



# They've seen it all

Our expert panelists weigh in on the biggest mistakes they see in each of their areas of specialization. **BY DILLON STEWART**

**A** novice lawn care operator is likely going to struggle, even with some basic training. It takes years of practice to become an expert at anything. While you might be the best turf manager on the block, there's likely another area where you're weak. That's why we held a panel discussion with experts on public affairs, mergers and acquisitions and more at the *Landscape Management Lawn Care Forum* Nov. 15-17 in Orlando, Fla. Meet our panel of experts and find out the biggest mistake you're probably making in each area of expertise.

**KAREN REARDON**, vice president of public affairs, Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE)

**Area of expertise:** pesticide and fertilizer policy and issues

**What she does:** Reardon advocates for the needs of the lawn care industry and fights regulatory decisions that could have a negative impact on the industry, such as pesticide or fertilizer bans. "I work for you to make sure you have the inputs—regardless if those are organic, synthetic or anything else—you need to get work done for your customers," she says.

**The biggest mistake people make in her area of expertise:** Not showing up.

"If you're not telling your story in the policy arena and the regulatory arena, especially in your state, someone else is filling that void and sharing information about you that could affect your business, your livelihood, your family and your customers. There is that (thought), 'I'll let someone else—I'll let my competitor—take care of this.' You have to get up and go, because the world is run by those who show up."



**PHIL HARWOOD**, managing partner, Pro-Motion Consulting

**Area of expertise:** leadership, strategic planning

**What he does:** Along with his firm of consultants, Harwood helps companies develop leadership skills among their managers, devise core values-based cultures and build processes and systems to build stronger teams, retain and recruit employees. "The mission of my team is to develop people, teams and organizations into high-performing people, teams and organizations," he says.

**The biggest mistake people make in his area of expertise:** Putting too much focus on recruiting and not enough on retention.

"I'm not saying we don't need to recruit—that's a given. But we also have to look in the mirror and look at our companies and say, 'Where are we not attractive? How are we losing people? Why can't we attract the stars?' If you took your car into a dealership, they're going to perform a 38-point inspection and give you a report on everything about your

*Continued on page 20*



**EXPERTISE**  
Experts in various fields share advice at the 2016 Lawn Care Forum in Orlando, Fla.

## NEWSPEED

### ANUVIA TAPS DISTRIBUTOR

The Andersons Plant Nutrient group was named a new distributor of Anuvia Plant

Nutrients product GreenTRX 16-1-2-17S-3Fe for turf. The slow-release products are 16 percent organic and

come in three sizes: granular 250 SGN, intermediate 140 SGN and elite 80 SGN size granules.

### NEW RIDING AERATOR

Turfco introduced the TurnAer XT8 stand-on

aerator. The machine's Auto-Depth Control lets operators set tine

depth up to 5 in. The aerator is equipped with a 22-hp Briggs & Stratton engine with a cyclonic air filter. It hits speeds up to 7 mph and has a 30-in. aerating width.







## YOU COULD LOSE HALF YOUR CUSTOMERS TO DANDELIONS.

Up to 50 percent\* of customers who call to complain about dandelions cancel their service. Protect their lawns, and your business, with Defendor® specialty herbicide. It works when nothing else does. Apply Defendor in early spring or late fall to stop dandelions, clover and other broadleaf weeds before they cost you a client. That way, the next time your phone rings, you'll be saying hello to more business. Learn more at [www.FewerCallbacks.com](http://www.FewerCallbacks.com).

# Defendor®

SPECIALTY HERBICIDE

\*Jefferson Davis, 2012

\*Trademark of The Dow Chemical Company ("Dow") or an affiliated company of Dow  
State restrictions on the sale and use of Defendor apply. Consult the label before  
purchase or use for full details. Always read and follow label directions.

©2015 Dow AgroSciences LLC T38-900-003-A(10/15) BR DATOTURF5061



**Dow AgroSciences**

*Solutions for the Growing World*

*Continued from page 18*

car. We need to do a similar analysis within our own walls to say, 'How do we get better? How do we move the needle from an eight to a nine? How do we improve?'"

### SHAUN KANARY, director of marketing, Weed Pro

**Area of Expertise:** digital marketing

**What he does:** On top of his work with Weed Pro, Kanary teaches digital marketing at Baldwin Wallace University in Berea, Ohio, and is director of marketing for Kuno Creative, a digital marketing agency in Avon, Ohio. "If you take your yearly spend on pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, 25 percent is probably wasted. The first thing I do is audit a company's yearly PPC spending and tell you where you're wasting that 25 percent."

**The biggest mistake people make in his area of expertise:** A lack of attention to detail in digital marketing.

"A lot of people in this industry say, 'I've got a guy for that. He or she is younger. He or she understands it. I don't need to understand it.' Like in our industry, we all see those people out there who just throw a spreader in the back of their truck and say, 'Hey I'm a lawn care expert now.' It's very easy to call yourself a digital marketing expert. You need to try to understand it because there's a lot of wasted spend in digital advertising. Someone who doesn't know what they're doing could be wasting a lot of your money."



### RON EDMONDS, president, Principium Group

**Area of expertise:** mergers and acquisitions

**What he does:** Edmonds' company's main role is to represent buyers and sellers of landscape companies during mergers and acquisitions. It also works with companies to develop short-term or, ideally, long-term acquisition strategies. "The average client I have is 61 years old and they're in a hurry to sell the business to fund their retirement," Edmonds says. "I love to have the opportunity to sit down and talk with people about what their exit strategy is 10 years before they plan on retiring."

**The biggest mistake people make in his area of expertise:** Building a business that revolves around one person.

"One of the things I ask people is, 'Can you imagine somebody other than you running your business?' Almost everybody says, 'No, not really. I built it this way, and it's my baby.' What I have




to tell them, unfortunately, is if you can't imagine somebody else running your business, nobody else can either. So, you're not going to be the target for achieving the wealth on the back end. Take the steps and systemize your business so that you can free your business from its dependence on you. A mistake that a lot of people in this industry make is letting their business revolve around them without developing those systems."

### DAN GORDON, managing member, Turfbooks

**Area of expertise:** accounting, finances, management information systems

**What he does:** Gordon owns Turfbooks, a firm of CPAs and accountants that cater to the lawn care industry. The firm helps companies file tax reports, handle government audits and other back office accounting work, often using cloud-based software, like QuickBooks. "What's really neat about what we have is if you added the annual volume of all our clients it's over \$500 million, so the information, ratios and cost data that we have is not just an answer to surveys but real data based on what we did," he says. "We're fairly quantitative."

**The biggest mistake people make in his area of expertise:** Not using a management information system to manage accounting.

"As you grow your business, you need management information systems. It's easy to go out and push a spreader, hire another guy, keep track of your accounts receivable and things like that. But when you want to scale it to 50 people or 500 people, how do you get there? How do you create the management information systems and the reporting systems that allow you, as a manager, to look at things and understand how your business is doing real quickly, without having to dig into it. It's all about how you set up your business and knowing what is going into your accounting system so you can look out into the industry, by looking at things like the Operating Cost Study in the September issue of *LM*, and see how you compare." 



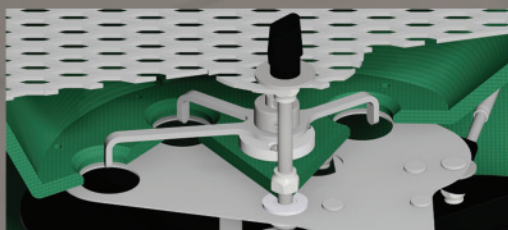
Next year, the Lawn Care Forum is evolving into the *LM* Growth Summit, which will expand to feature tracks for the mowing+landscape maintenance and design/build+installation crowds. The two-day event held in November will bring together the industry's brightest minds for networking, educational opportunities and some fun! Visit [LandscapeManagement.net/GrowthSummit](http://LandscapeManagement.net/GrowthSummit) for more details.



# 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](http://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](http://permagreen.com)



## MOWING+LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

# Process for productivity

Weekly landscape maintenance checklists help crews do their jobs consistently and efficiently. BY EMILY SCHAPPACHER

**W**hile all clients' properties are different, the way they're serviced should be the same every time. At least that's the mantra at U.S. Lawns. The \$170-million commercial grounds care franchise business headquartered in Orlando, Fla., stresses the importance of its weekly "job sequencing" process, which is a checklist maintenance crews use when they arrive at a property to ensure the job is done consistently and efficiently.

"It's a procedure designed to drive consistent service," says Brandon Moxam, director of brand development for U.S. Lawns. "It's about consistently delivering what we have promised to the customer and properly defining the expectation for our crews to deliver on that promise."

The company's job sequencing process begins with a map of each property to help create a clear picture for crews. The customer reviews the process during the first site visit, and it's communicated to crew leaders during training sessions. U.S. Lawns also keeps the checklist inside each truck so it can be referenced at any time. Moxam says the checklist has to be something simple that crews can understand and follow regardless of their experience level.

"We may have new crew members come on board throughout the season or have different crews pick up jobs because of scheduling issues," he says. "We have the process documented and kept accessible on the truck so anyone can do the job at any given time."

For the process to be effective, Moxam says crews also should review it before the start of each workday. He adds that the steps can also help improve processes and procedures in other areas of the business.

"There is productivity gained through this," Moxam says. "And the more productive our crews are, the more profitable the business is."

U.S. Lawns crews adhere to the following steps during weekly commercial maintenance visits:

**CHECKLIST**  
A "job sequencing" checklist ensures landscape maintenance crews perform consistently.

**✓ Ensure** the truck is parked in an appropriate area.

**✓ Determine** where the irrigation controllers are located. "Controllers are not always visible from the outside and may be located inside the building for secure access," Moxam says.



Along with consistency, checklists drive productivity and profitability.

Brandon Moxam





## NEWSFEED

### YAMAHA STAKES CLAIM IN LANDSCAPE MARKET

Yamaha Motor Corp. USA's Outdoor Power Equipment division acquired Subaru Industrial Power Products. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. Yamaha will gain the technology for three products in the EH Series V-Twin Overhead Valve multi-purpose engine family: EH65, EH72 and EH65V. The engines are used in large generators and large mowing machinery. This is Yamaha's second big move into the lawn and landscape market. In October, the manufacturer released a new line of V-Twin EFI engines designed for the lawn and garden market. The MX775V-EFI, MX800V-EFI and MX825V-EFI were introduced as an option in Gravely's Pro-Turn 200 and 400 lines of zero-turn mowers.

### CONSOLIDATION IN MAINE

Chenmark Capital Management, a firm that acquires small and mid-sized businesses, purchased Piscataqua Landscaping & Tree Service, based in Eliot, Maine, Fosters.com reports. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. Chenmark, based in Portland, Maine, also acquired Seabreeze Property Services in late 2015. Piscataqua, founded by Booth Hemingway in 1979, does about \$9 million in annual revenue.

### U.S. LAWN'S INDUCTS 3 TO HALL OF FAME

U.S. Lawns franchisees Chris Seaborne and Tim Harrell and company President Ken Hutcheson were inducted into the U.S. Lawns Hall of Fame. Hall of Fame members are individuals who exemplify the mission and vision of U.S. Lawns.

✓ **Identify** potential safety hazards on the property, such as holes or other trip hazards and broken tree branches or low-hanging limbs. "We want to reduce liability issues and ensure we're creating a safe environment for our crews, our customers and our customers' customers," Moxam says.

✓ **Note** high-priority areas. "These are areas the customer has indicated are important to them, such as the entrance to a building or another high-traffic area," Moxam says. "This information is uncovered during the sales process."

✓ **Designate** each crew member to a specific task.

✓ **Review** necessary equipment and ensure the right items are on the truck.

✓ **Determine** the order of the tasks to be performed. "This is where you have a great opportunity to pick up efficiencies on the job site," Moxam says.

✓ **Begin** with detail work, such as debris removal and weed control. "Once guys get on the equipment, it's difficult to get them to slow down and do the detail work because they just want to get to the next job site." 🍷

Schappacher is a freelance writer based in Cleveland.



**COMPLETE LINE OF COMMERCIAL  
SPREADERS AND SPRAYERS**

GROUNDLOGICINC.COM | 877.423.4340

# Dive in

Technology and the growing popularity of small, pondless fountains have made water features easy for contractors to install and even easier for homeowners to maintain.

BY EMILY SCHAPPACHER

**B**rian Helfrich has worked with ponds and water features for the past 20 years and can't remember a time they've been as popular as they are right now. What used to be a large, costly undertaking—for both landscape contractors and their clients—is now a luxury attainable by most homeowners, regardless of their space or budget.

Technological advancements have made ponds and water features easy for contractors to install and even easier for homeowners to maintain.

Helfrich, vice president of construction for Aquascape, a manufacturer of water gardens and water features headquartered in St. Charles, Ill., doesn't see things slowing down any time soon.

"In the past, you used to need a lot of money, space and time to take on this hobby," Helfrich says of water gardening.

"But with advancements in technology and availability, you can fit a water feature in virtually any space on any budget. There is truly something for everybody."

Kip Northrup, president of Blue Thumb, a manufacturer of water feature equipment and supplies based in Saginaw, Mich., agrees that trends in water features are moving toward units that are easier to install and maintain. This movement includes the growing segment of fountains and pondless waterfalls, which provide the beauty and aesthetic of a waterfall without the maintenance of a pond. Northrup has seen a 30 percent increase in sales of fountains over the past three years, and he says colorful vase fountains and natural stone fountains are especially popular among homeowners.

"Consumers are still very interested in water features but want something easier to maintain—fountains are the best fit for that," Northrup says. "Landscape professionals generally

are comfortable installing fountains because they are easy and profitable."

In terms of aesthetics, industry experts say trends are moving toward water features that have an organic look. Homeowners want water features that closely resemble ponds and waterfalls as they appear in nature and completely hide the liner, pump and filters.

"Homeowners want a natural look created using stone and other elements indigenous to the area they live," Northrup says. "This helps the feature blend into their existing landscape and appear as if it's always been there."

*Continued on page 26*



### A WIN-WIN INSTALLATION

Water features are now designed to be more affordable for homeowners and easier to install for contractors.



Brian Helfrich

## NEWSFEED

### KIOTI ADDS ATTACHMENTS

Kioti Tractor expanded its landscape implementation offering to include 275 imple-

ments and accessories that are compatible with Kioti's tractor models. The new line consists of 19 product

families, which offer new rotary cutters, finish mowers, tillers, landscape rakes, snow blowers and more.

### LINKED LARGE-FRAMES

John Deere made its

JDLINK available as a factory-installed option on all new John Deere large-frame G-Series skid-steers and compact track loaders. The system lets users remotely perform di-








agnostics, safety and efficiency checks. It also improves security, monitors fuel and assists with online part ordering. New models feature a three-year subscription.



# 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 Apr. 10, 2017—expires 11:59 p.m. CT. Some exclusions apply. Visit [zoro.com/rules\\_restrictions](http://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**

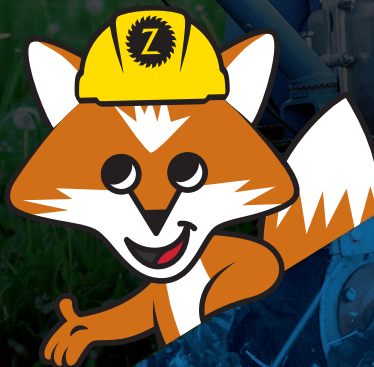
▼▼ **AND RECEIVE**

**20% OFF**

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

**TOOLKIT32**

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



**zoro.com**



**Shop now at**

**ZORO**  
ZORO.COM

© 2016 Zoro, Inc.



## DESIGN/BUILD+INSTALLATION

**AU NATUREL**  
Water features are trending toward natural looks that incorporate indigenous elements.



*Continued from page 24*

Helfrich agrees. Generally, he sees more formal, elaborate features installed in commercial settings to help create a “wow” factor.

“Homeowners, particularly in the Midwest, spend so much money on their backyards because, after the ridiculous winters, they just want to enjoy their outdoor space,” he says. “Also, people are working more and are spending more time at home, so they want to turn their backyard into a sort of getaway.”

While industry trends are important, says Jeff Peterman, landscape construction manager at the full-service landscape firm Michael Hatcher & Associates in Olive Branch, Miss., it’s important to consider the customer’s aesthetic when building a water feature. The \$8.7-million company, which has been installing ponds and water features since 1986, provides 55 percent construction services to a 42 percent residential, 58 percent commercial clientele and 45 percent maintenance services to a 30 percent residential, 70 percent commercial clientele.



Jeff Peterman

“It is part of our job to find out what type of feature is best suited for the customers’ taste,” Peterman says. “Do they want to reproduce a piece of nature in their yard or do they want something a little more man-made? Either way, we want to incorporate that vision.”

Since the company began installing ponds and water features, Peterman says nearly everything—including the building materials, the pump technology and the installation techniques—has changed. In recent years, the company has been installing more pondless and self-contained water features, which eliminate a potential hazard for children

and pets, as well as a large portion of the maintenance. For customers who still prefer a pond, the company is building larger ponds with elaborate waterfalls and stream paths, Peterman says. Many of these projects have a single focal point, such as a boulder or an urn that spills water into an underground basin.

“While the rigid ponds and even smaller liner ponds were popular and easy for the average homeowner to build, today’s ponds require a little more technical knowledge, especially when using exterior filters and ultraviolet lights,” he says. “We still love to use as many natural materials as possible, and this requires some extremely heavy lifting and some inventive plumbing, such as when core-drilling the entire length of 2- or 3-ton boulder.”

### MORE EFFICIENT, CHEAPER TO OPERATE

Technology is making ponds and water features more energy efficient and less expensive to operate, Helfrich says. Pump longevity has improved significantly in recent years, with these parts now lasting five to seven years, instead of one or two. Improvements in filter systems have reduced maintenance, and there are even automatic feeders that can take care of hungry fish. Helfrich predicts that the day homeowners can control their water features using their smartphones is not too far in the future.

“Just like everything else, technology will drive the evolution of water features,” he says. “We are always thinking of what we can do differently to make it easier for people to enjoy their ponds. It should be something they can just come home and look at.”

Peterman says the availability of these specialized water feature components and equipment is one of the biggest changes he’s seen in the industry.

“Twenty-five years ago everything was either preformed or homemade and rigged to work—there wasn’t anyone making pressurized filters or

snorkels or AquaBlox,” he says. “Today, companies make everything we need, including exterior pressurized filters that sit below ground, ways to access pumps that are on the bottom of a customer’s feature, remote-control pumps and ways to support entire stone surfaces to ensure that a customer’s body of water is completely out of view.”

Helfrich says resources abound for contractors looking to add pond and water feature installation to their service offerings. Most manufacturers offer hands-on classes, videos and other online resources to teach installation techniques. While installing ponds takes skill and some artistic vision, Helfrich says fountains and pondless features can be installed in half a day by “two guys without an artistic bone in their body.” They also can be a great way to bring in additional revenue with a high profit margin.

“In the past contractors haven’t wanted to get into building ponds because of the headaches associated with them,” Helfrich says. “In the last few years we have realized that and, as much as we want to make it easy for the consumer to maintain, we also want to make it easy for the contractor to install.” 

Schappacher is a freelance writer based in Cleveland.



# Fleet Intelligence

## For Your Landscape Business



## VEHICLE & ASSET TRACKING SOLUTIONS

Call today to find out what makes **GPS Insight** different from every other GPS tracking company -or- visit our website to see how we will **make your job easier.**

**877-477-2690** **GPSINSIGHT.COM**



GPS Insight works with landscape businesses that have fleets of vehicles and other mobile assets to solve your unique business challenges through increased revenue, reduced costs, and reduced risk.



## IRRIGATION+WATER MANAGEMENT

# Show time

**Irrigation Show sees attendance bump with trip to Las Vegas.** BY MARISA PALMIERI

Last month, more than 3,100 irrigation professionals attended the 2016 Irrigation Show in Las Vegas—a 14 percent increase over 2015. And those numbers don't include registrants from the National Groundwater Association, which was co-located with the Irrigation Show, nearly doubling the size of the show floor.

The general session on Dec. 8 took the shape of a morning talk show this year. Irrigation Association (IA) President Jay Robbins, president of Irrigation-Mart, and IA CEO Deborah Hamlin honored the following recipients of 2016 IA awards:

- Crawford Reid Memorial Award: Andrii Gogolev, TerraTarsa;
- Industry Achievement Award: Inge Bisconer, The Toro Co.;
- National Water and Energy Conservation Award: Texas Alliance for Water Conservation;
- Partner of the Year Award: Irrigation Training and Research Center; and
- Person of the Year Award: Richard Allen, PhD., University of Idaho Kimberly Research and Extension Center.

Robbins and Hamlin also presented elements of the association's new strategic plan, such as a new focus on workforce development.

### NEW PRODUCT CONTEST

IA leaders also announced the winners of the New Product Contest. The annual contest highlights products introduced to the market

in the last year in agriculture, landscape and specialty categories.

Each entry is judged by a panel of industry experts on "changed for the better" qualities, increased water efficiency, ease of use, cost benefits, time savings and design quality. The winners relevant to landscape, irrigation and lighting contractors include:



### ON THE FLOOR

The 2016 Irrigation Show saw an increase in attendees and exhibitors over the previous year.

### 1 LANDSCAPE IRRIGATION

**Winner: Hydro-Rain**

**Product Name: Hydro-Rain HRC 400 B-hyve Pro Wi-Fi Controller with Smart Meter Link**

This SWAT-tested and EPA WaterSense-labeled controller offers an integrated irrigation audit tool. The Smart Meter Link gives customers water usage reports to help them make better water-saving decisions.

### 2 SPECIALTY-LANDSCAPE

**Winner: MiniTrencher**

**Product Name: GeoRipper**

The GeoRipper is a handheld portable trencher that can cut trenches up to 1.5 inches wide and 27 inches deep. It's ideal for short and hard-to-reach places that are difficult for normal trenchers, saving time and labor.

### 3 LANDSCAPE LIGHTING

**Winner: Illumicare Group Ltd.**

**Product Name: LED MR 16 Single Lens with Replaceable Optics**

Using 85 percent less energy than traditional lamps and lasting 15 times longer, this MR 16 LED single lens lamp has the option of four beam spreads and two color temperatures.

### 4 PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD: LANDSCAPE PRODUCTS

**Winner: Netafim USA**

**Product Name: Techline HCVXR**

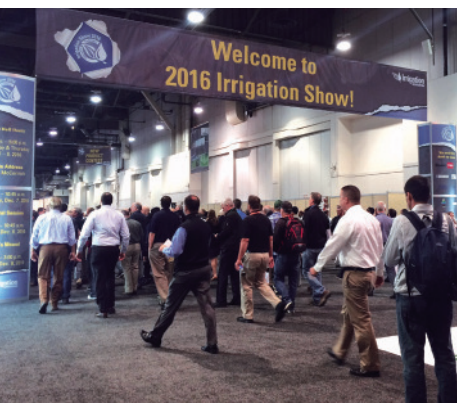
This new dripline that provides root intrusion resistance. The check valve holds back 8.5 feet of water, while the anti-siphon feature protects against debris entering the emitter at system shutdown.

### 5 PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD: LANDSCAPE LIGHTING

**Winner: Sollos Landscape Lighting**

**Product Name: DecoStrand**

A decorative accent strand lighting for indoor and outdoor applications, the string lighting is 52 feet long with 25 medium base sockets with more than 60 lamp options available.







## NEWS-FEED

### HUNTER INTRODUCES ICC2

Hunter released its ICC2 commercial controller. ICC2 builds on its predecessor with an increased station count, a large backlit display and enhanced surge protection. It comes in a plastic cabinet version with 38 stations and a metal cabinet model that can handle up to 54 stations.

### RAIN BIRD LINKS UP

Rain Bird's LNK Wi-Fi Module makes remote access and control available for residential and light-commercial irrigation systems. The LNK Wi-Fi Module plugs into an accessory port on new ESP-Me and ESP-TM2 controllers.



### TORO GOES MOBILE

Toro introduced SMRT Logic and SMRTscape for mobile control. SMRT Logic works with the SMRTscape app to enable mobile wireless control of irrigation and lighting systems using a smartphone, tablet or PC.

## PRODUCT IDEAS ON DECK

A new event at this year's Irrigation Show was the IA Pitcher's Mound, an event modeled after ABC's popular "Shark Tank," where six entrepreneurs had a chance to make a 10-minute pitch to a panel of irrigation experts, including Weathermatic CEO Mike Mason and Hunter Industries President Greg Hunter, and an audience of trade show attendees. Several products were lauded as promising, such as the patent-pending drip tubing decoupling tool by Thomas Deane of LucyCo, which is designed to easily remove tubing from compression-type fittings, reducing labor and allowing the fittings to be reused.



# DIGITAL MARKETING REPORT

## HOW TO GROW

### YOUR AUDIENCE, YOUR REFERRALS AND YOUR BUSINESS.

BY JEFF KORHAN

*Landscape Management, Landscape Digital Institute and I partnered last year to launch the first landscape industry digital marketing survey. We think you'll be interested in the results.*

In addition to showing how landscaping and lawn care companies are using digital marketing now, we'll reveal how industry practices compare with proven digital, social and email marketing practices used by leading organizations and brands.

There is a formula for success. It requires a strategic approach and consistent implementation to accomplish specific business objectives, such as growing your audience, your referrals and your business.

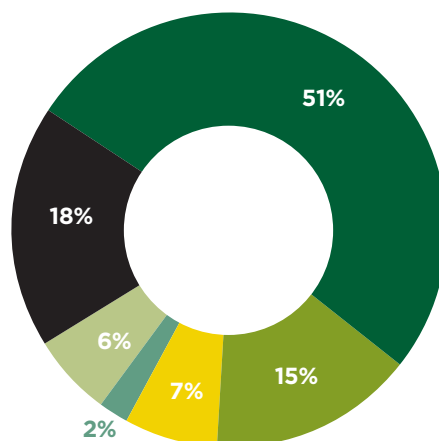
A clear indication that landscape industry companies are embracing digital marketing is their use of websites. Eighty-three percent have a company website, but more significant is that 70 percent have a modern website that's mobile responsive, and many of them are optimized for search and equipped with analytics for tracking.

Respondents named several challenges to the consistent implementation of digital marketing, with lack of time being a leading factor. The data indicate that 68 percent of business owners manage all digital marketing activities. This figure explains why more than half are dedicating only one to five hours per week to it.

Which of the following describes your company's weekly time investment (total of all team members) to its digital marketing, including coordination with any outside help?

- 0 hours
- 1-5 hours
- 6-10 hours
- 11-15 hours
- 16-20 hours
- 20+ hours

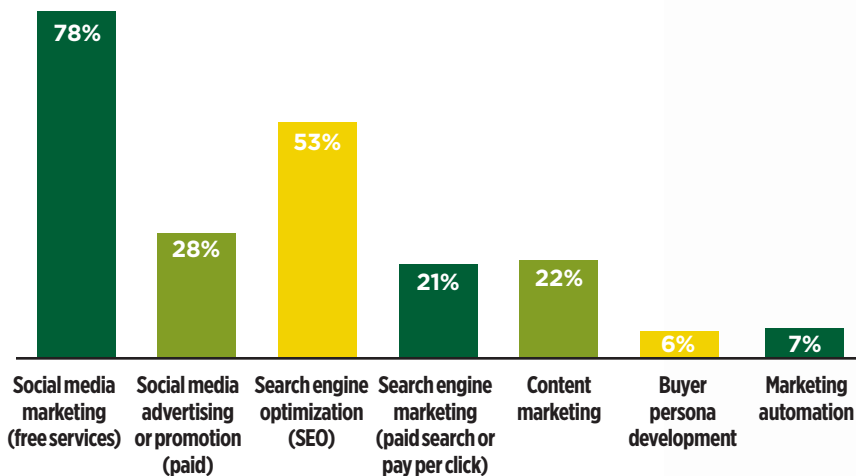
Percentages don't equal 100% due to rounding.



As a result of this constraint, more than half of companies that responded are relying on paid digital marketing practices, including social media advertising, search engine marketing (pay per click) and search engine optimization (SEO) services. But most significant is that only a fraction of companies have a written strategy that guides their expenditures and actions, including the creation of content.



Which of the following digital marketing practices does your company consistently use?



Lacking a strategy is failing to plan, and that often means planning to fail.

It turns out green industry companies are committed to discovering what works with digital marketing. Many prefer digital learning methods, such as webinars and online courses, over more traditional networking and education events. This may suggest time or expense limitations, or most likely an effort to make the most of both valuable resources.

## Methodology and key findings

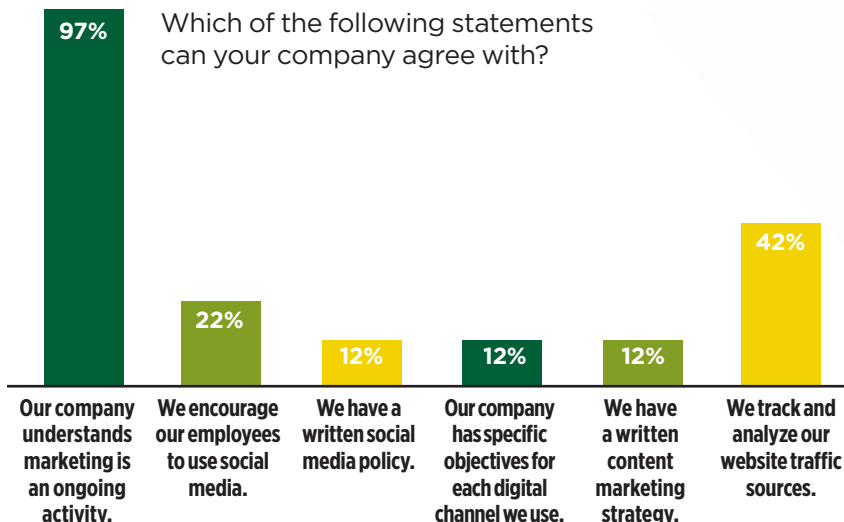
*Landscape Management*, *Landscape Digital Institute* and *landscape industry consultant Jeff Korhan* partnered last year to launch the first landscape industry digital marketing survey, garnering more than a hundred responses.

Survey respondents are a typical cross-section of the industry, with a business mix representing 37% landscape maintenance, 23% design-build or contracting and 14% lawn care.

### Key findings:

- 83%** have a website
- 78%** use social media for marketing
- 67%** use Facebook daily
- 52%** practice email marketing
- 12%** have a written digital marketing strategy
- 6%** have defined their ideal customer

Which of the following statements can your company agree with?





# DIGITAL MARKETING REPORT

## How companies grow their audience with content

The early days of email and social media marketing were like the Wild West. When the prevailing attitude is “anything goes,” you get innovation that leads the industry forward and opportunists that seek to game the system.

The latter soon became known as spamming. Even the Federal Trade Commission got involved to regulate commercial digital marketing practices.

But of course it still goes on, in part because many marketers are either not aware of what works or unwilling to commit to doing the work. There is no question that lack of time is a major contributor to this problem. Nevertheless, although we are at least a full decade into the digital marketing revolution, what was true in the beginning has not changed: Content is king.

In a digital world, content is the air that marketing breathes. You either have it or you will become a casualty of the system. Useful, interesting and entertaining content is what drives all online activities. It's what has made Google and Facebook two of the most successful companies on the planet.

In 2007 the Content Marketing Institute (CMI) defined the term

“content marketing” to describe the practice of creating and distributing valuable, relevant and consistent content (articles, blog posts, videos, social media posts, etc.) to attract and retain a clearly defined audience—and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer actions.

Our survey reveals only 22 percent of landscape industry companies are practicing content marketing, and more than half of them admit to flying blind. That is, they do not have a written content marketing strategy.

The general purpose of content marketing is to create and distribute valuable media that attract and engage a targeted audience the business can serve with its products and services.

It's interesting that what we call content marketing is actually more like traditional selling than marketing. That idea should help landscape companies grasp how content marketing can be used to accomplish their business objectives.

Just as selling professionals guide prospects through a sales process to determine if their firms' solutions are right for them, a content marketing approach to digital marketing also guides the prospective buyer's journey by educating and inspiring them to take actions that are in their best interest.

This is readily accomplished in face-to-face selling situations where the observation of body language and other behavior provides valuable feedback. Accomplishing the same thing with digital marketing requires systems and practices that mirror the methods skilled sales professionals typically use.

Empathy mapping is one method that seeks to understand what prospective buyers are thinking, seeing, feeling and doing at every stage of the journey, beginning with the moment prospects first

click on your website. The question becomes, “What action do we want them to take next and then after that and so on.” These steps should be written down so the process can be studied and refined, just like with a sales process.

In sales and marketing, the advantage goes to the companies that have mapped out the buyer's journey so they can adapt the customer experience for every buyer. This approach requires the development of buyer or audience personas that define prospective customers down to the words they use.

For example, do they say “landscaper” or “landscaping company?”

### WEB EXTRA

Visit [LandscapeManagement.net](http://LandscapeManagement.net) to learn more about empathy mapping and to download a template.





You need to know because these keywords are essential to every content marketing strategy.

Discovering this information requires work. For those willing to take on the challenge, there is a pay-off. Consistently creating and distributing strategic content ultimately attracts and engages a targeted audience. That content can be used to reach your audience without having to pay for the opportunity.

With advertising, when you stop paying everything stops. But digital content lives forever. Its permanence sustains your relationship with the audience that's subscribed to it.

Have you ever wondered why Facebook, Amazon, Google and Apple require you to subscribe to their services?

In addition to collecting data on your behavior, the subscription-based models these wildly successful companies use to give you access to their services creates the right to reach out to you. When you subscribe, you're giving your permission to be interrupted with emails. If those emails provide value, your attention can be converted into profitable sales transactions.

Nearly half of the respondents to our survey do not use email marketing. Did you know email converts at a

rate 40 times greater than any of the social media channels, according to a 2013 McKinsey report?

When you're using social media channels to reach your audience, you're renting that audience because Facebook, LinkedIn and all of the other platforms control the access they give to their users. If you have a Facebook business page, you know this to be true because it's difficult to reach much more than 3 percent of your community without paying for Facebook advertising. That's Facebook's strategy. You need to find yours.

The most common content marketing strategy is to create and distribute content that guides subscribers from where they are now to your "owned"

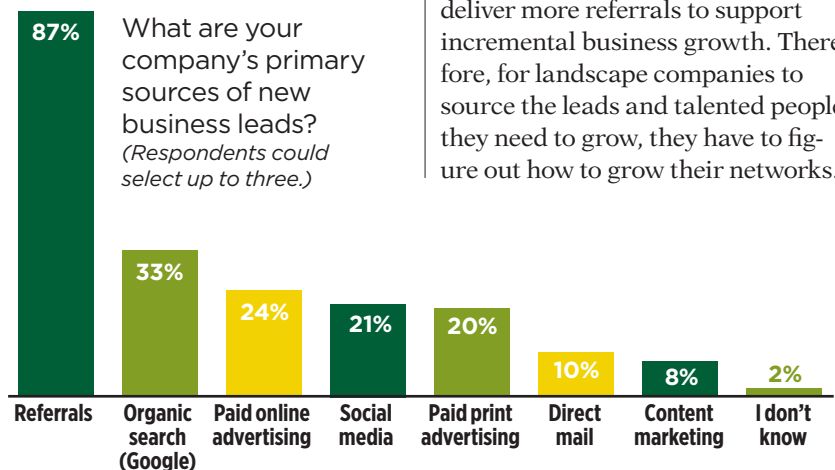
digital marketing assets, including websites, blogs, email, podcasts and more. The objective is to control or "own" the audience.

## Perfect your brand story to grow referrals

The data from our survey reveal landscape industry companies share two universal business growth challenges: attracting talented people and attracting quality leads.

Nearly nine out of 10 respondents report that referrals are their top source of business leads. This isn't surprising because green industry companies are mostly small businesses whose growth is typically driven by a local network of relationships.

At some point, that network becomes tapped out and cannot deliver more referrals to support incremental business growth. Therefore, for landscape companies to source the leads and talented people they need to grow, they have to figure out how to grow their networks.



# THE BUG STOPS HERE

## Zylam® Liquid Kills Emerald Ash Borers FAST!

A bark band application of Zylam Liquid Systemic Insecticide provides exceptional control of EABs and more than 100 insects with low labor and equipment costs, and without damaging the tree.



GordonsProfessional.com



Employee-Owned





“All the paid SEO in the world is not going to do you any good if it doesn’t sit on a foundation of exceptional content that people want to consume. Believe it or not, that foundation is your brand story.”

—JEFF KORHAN

The challenge is that your current network most likely developed organically over time. Maybe you went to high school with people who are now your customers. Unless you plan to go back to high school, you need to find another way to grow your audience.

This task can be difficult because your network relationships are the result of trust you’ve earned, sometimes over long periods of time. People know your story from being associated with you. They understand you, and that’s why they trust you.

In other words, the people in your network get you because, however it happened, they discovered your story. They know what you’re all about and why it’s a pleasure to know and work with you. Now you have to figure out how to convey that understanding to complete strangers. You need to discover how to tell your brand story so they get you, too.

This is the digital marketing challenge that even frustrates successful brands. A 2016 CMI report indicates more than 70 percent of major brands struggle with the same thing.

Your brand story, in a few words, is content marketing. That story educates and inspires people to do business with you because it *stands in* for the distinctive customer experience that your company delivers.

Your story is an ongoing narrative that’s infused with your passion and unique methods for getting beautiful results. You have to capture and consistently communicate your backstory to build a body of work that resonates with future buyers.

What really happens is buyers take your story and make it their

own. They tell themselves a story that validates their buying decision. It’s the same one they’ll tell their friends and neighbors, and that’s how it will grow your audience.

## Content sells a distinctive customer experience

One of the most vital digital marketing success criteria is the understanding that SEO *is* content. The more relevant the content, the easier it is to optimize it. This is what we mean when we say “content is king.” Trying to optimize lousy content is like trying to optimize junk food to make it healthier.

All the paid SEO in the world is not going to do you any good if it doesn’t sit on a foundation of exceptional content that people want to consume. Believe it or not, that foundation is your brand story.

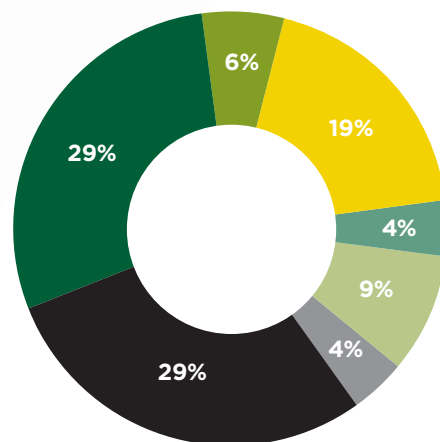
Here’s a secret. There is something about how or why you do what you do that differentiates you from every other landscape company in your market. This is your superpower; it’s something personal that inspires people to action. It may be your knack for getting things done, inventing fresh ideas or simply delivering an enjoyable customer experience.

When your content sells the experience of what it’s like to work with you and your company, it’s doing its job well. 🍷

Korhan, MBA, is the author of *Built-In Social* and founder of Landscape Digital Institute. He helps organizations create exceptional customer experiences that drive business growth. Download the complete Landscape Industry Digital Marketing Report at [LandscapeDigitalInstitute.com/research](http://LandscapeDigitalInstitute.com/research).

## Takeaways, action items

When we asked respondents to compare their marketing to their peers, we got a surprising response. A segment of marketers consider themselves good, but inconsistent.



How does your company’s marketing compare with its green industry peers?

- Beginner
- Active learner
- Proficient
- Good, but inconsistent
- Good, but old school
- Good, and digital savvy too
- Expert

Anyone will tell you that you cannot be a good spouse or friend if you are inconsistent. That’s something you need to remember with your digital marketing.

The most important thing is showing up as expected. If you can do that for your audience, good things will come your way.

Here are a few suggested actions:

1. Become a student of content marketing.
2. Get a digital marketing strategy that aligns with your business goals.
3. Consistently implement it.
4. Grow your audience to grow your business.
5. Remember to keep it personal. People trust people more than they trust marketing.



# Deliver the granule to the ants.... **NOT YOUR PANTS.**



## TAURUS<sup>®</sup> Trio G

with Verge<sup>™</sup> Technology

**The ONLY Granule on the market containing  
3 Active Ingredients utilizing Combination Chemistry<sup>®</sup>**

- **Fipronil, Bifenthrin, and Lambda-cyhalothrin**, are combined in one uniform granule to deliver **fast** and **long-lasting** fire ant control.
- Verge<sup>™</sup> No-dust formula keeps applicators clean throughout treatment.
- Three proven active ingredients with two modes of action you can count on.
- A broad-spectrum insecticide that reduces callbacks, saving you time and money.
- Up to one year Fire Ant control in a single application.

### Control Solutions, Inc.

Innovation you can apply.



Find Us On  
[www.controlsolutionsinc.com](http://www.controlsolutionsinc.com)  
[www.adama.com](http://www.adama.com)





**GREENWORKS**  
COMMERCIAL



Now available at  
**SiteOne**<sup>™</sup>  
LANDSCAPE SUPPLY

**COMMERCIAL GRADE  
POWER**

*...from a*  
**BATTERY**



**COMMERCIAL  
GRADE POWER**



**FUEL AND  
MAINTENANCE  
SAVINGS**



**CLIENT  
FRIENDLY**



**ECO  
FRIENDLY**

***The Most Powerful  
Cordless Commercial  
Tools on the Market***

Find out more at [www.greenworkscommercial.com](http://www.greenworkscommercial.com)





# BUSINESS INSIDER

PRACTICAL  
ADVICE FOR  
RUNNING A  
PROFITABLE  
COMPANY

BUSINESS BASICS: PEOPLE

LET'S GROW

CASE STUDY: OUR WAY



## B2B BOON?

For contractors targeting commercial clients, LinkedIn's new ad type may be an answer.

 **PAGE 40**



# 10 ways to guarantee your best workers quit



**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](mailto:mkleiman@humetrics.com).

**1 Don't make new hires feel welcome and valued.** Employees are most impressionable during the first 60 days on the job. Every bit of information gathered during this time will either reinforce a new hire's "buying decision" (to take the job) or lead to "new hire's remorse"—especially if he or she is shunted to menial, routine work while you do "important things."

**2 Treat everyone equally.** While this idea may sound good, your employees are not equal. Some are worth more because they produce more results. Some prefer hands-on management, while others would rather take the ball and run with it. The key, then, is not to treat everyone equally—but fairly and with respect.

**3 Enforce dumb rules.** I don't mean enforce *no* rules. I mean don't enforce *dumb* rules. Great employees want to have guidelines and direction, but they don't want to deal with rules that get in the way of doing their jobs or conflict with the company's stated values.

**4 Don't recognize outstanding performance.** Remember Psychology 101: Behavior you want repeated must be recognized and rewarded immediately.

**5 Don't keep your people informed.** If you don't tell them what's up, the rumor mill will. You have to communicate not only the good but also the bad and the ugly.

**6 Don't develop an employee-retention strategy.** Employee retention deserves your attention every day. Make a list of the people you don't want to lose and, next to each name, write down what you're doing or will do to ensure that person stays engaged and on board.

**7 Tolerate mediocrity.** A-players don't want to play with a bunch of C-players and shouldn't have to. They will come to resent carrying the load for any slackers you keep on the payroll.

**8 Don't do employee-retention interviews.** Make sure you don't wait until a great employee is walking off the job to see what you could have done differently to keep that person on board. Find out before you get to that point.

**9 Don't have any fun at work.** Where's the written rule that says work has to be serious? The notion that work cannot be fun is counterproductive. The workplace should be fun. Find ways to make work and/or the work environment more relaxed and enjoyable, and you will have happy employees who look forward to coming to work each day.

**10 Micromanage everything.** Don't squash creativity and innovation by constantly telling employees what to do and exactly how to do it. Tell them why it needs to be done or why their contributions are important. And, above all, ask for input on how things might be done better. 

**TAKE ACTION:** You should work on employee retention every day.







**WORKING  
FAST**



**STAYING  
SAFE**

Husqvarna's XP® chainsaws are constantly tested under harsh conditions that require power, precision and durability. Our engineers balance all that power and speed with low weight and world class ergonomics. Together that generates excellent maneuverability, so that you can work both faster and safer.

*For more information visit [husqvarna.com](http://husqvarna.com)*



# Leveraging LinkedIn's Sponsored InMail



**BY SHAUN KANARY**

The author is director of marketing for Weed Pro in Sheffield Village, Ohio, and adjunct professor of marketing at Baldwin Wallace University.

**O**ne of the most challenging aspects of bidding on commercial work—or learning about those potential projects before RFPs go out—is developing relationships with the right people. It's a combination of networking and relationship management, plus a bit of luck. LinkedIn, the B2B social media network, has always been an effective way to find people to network with; however, it hadn't solved the problem of determining if your contact is the decision maker on the project or automating the process of nurturing those relationships. Until now. LinkedIn's newest advertising tool, Sponsored InMail, takes a step in that direction, allowing you to create custom messages with interactive calls-to-action delivered to an individual's mailbox.

## RIGHT PEOPLE, RIGHT MESSAGE

With LinkedIn Sponsored Advertising, you can choose from a wide variety of different options to target the right people. Geographic targeting is an option, but LinkedIn's B2B nature allows you to target individuals based on company name, industry, job title, job function, seniority and even schools. The more options you use to target your audience, the more relevant your message becomes to your intended audience, and therefore, the better it will perform.

While there is no "sweet spot" for the size of your audience, you'll want to make sure it's big enough to help you achieve your campaign initiatives, while not being so large that it drives up costs. An audience that's too large could result in your message being shown to irrelevant people, causing you to see little return on investment.

But be careful; small audience sizes can drive up the cost per sent email. I try to keep my audience size between 2,000 to 5,000 people when targeting using LinkedIn.

## CUSTOM MESSAGES, CALLS TO ACTION

Another key feature to LinkedIn Sponsored InMail is the ability to create personalized messages on a mass scale. Like an email service, you can customize each message with the recipient's first or last name. However, unlike an email, you can display a colorful, visual ad with your message to entice the reader to take action. Within the message itself, you can use attractive call-to-action buttons to help convert leads into sales opportunities.

The key to leveraging these features within Sponsored InMail is to create a relevant message that speaks directly to the clientele you're targeting. For the best results, the offer must be in line with the level of association you have with your target audience. For example, if you're targeting LinkedIn members who don't know you, your brand or products, a helpful guide or introduction to your services may be the best conversion opportunity. However, if the audience has had some interaction with your brand, a message that promotes a sales opportunity may be effective.


## BUDGETING AND IDEAS FOR AN INMAIL CAMPAIGN

LinkedIn's other ad formats charge on a "cost per click" or "cost per thousand" impressions format. InMail is priced on a "cost per send" basis, meaning you are charged for every InMail successfully delivered to a recipient's inbox.

Keep in mind there are a few rules that affect who receives your InMail. First, it's an "auction" style system that rewards those who bid the most and are most relevant to their target audience. Additionally, every LinkedIn member receives only one Sponsored InMail message every several days. Therefore, you may target a certain number of individuals, but some members of your target audience may not receive your InMail based on the amount you bid and if they have received a Sponsored InMail in the past few days.

The key to developing an effective campaign that reaches the largest share of your audience is leveraging InMail's "cost per send" bid suggestion while running a campaign spread out over several days to ensure majority of your target audience receives it.

While InMail may not be the perfect solution for every situation, it shows promise for landscape companies. A possible application for InMail is to develop customized messages based on job titles. For example, you can create a message for property managers within a geographic area discussing the benefits of your maintenance program or one sharing the benefits of a sports field aeration for athletic directors.

LinkedIn's new InMail service may be the edge your company is seeking in an ultra-competitive market. Additionally, the precise digital ad features allow you to target people and manage costs efficiently, measuring your return on investment down to the penny. Plus, the ability to create dynamic, customized messages that position your products and services perfectly make this ad platform a tool that just may increase your bottom line. 





**LANDSCAPE  
MANAGEMENT**

# GROWTH SUMMIT

**NEW**

## WHO

- + Decision makers from pre-qualified landscape and lawn care companies with \$500,000-plus in annual revenue

**TURF+  
ORNAMENTAL  
CARE**

**MOWING+  
LANDSCAPE  
MAINTENANCE**

## WHAT

- + Exclusive buyer/seller networking event hosted by *Landscape Management*, featuring education, recreational activities and one-on-one meetings with sponsors
- + Designed to foster relationships, discussions, deals and partnerships

## WHY

- + To help our readers and marketing partners connect with each other and grow their businesses

**DESIGN/BUILD+  
INSTALLATION**

## WHEN

November 2017

## WHERE

Reunion Resort • Orlando, Florida

## HOW DO YOU APPLY?

To see if you qualify, contact *LM* Editor-in-Chief Marisa Palmieri at [mpalmieri@northcoastmedia.net](mailto:mpalmieri@northcoastmedia.net) or 216-706-3764



**CASE STUDY: OUR WAY**

# A co-op experience

Snow & Sons rounds out its staff with co-op students.

**Participating in co-op programs helps one company get ahead of the workforce.**

BY CASEY PAYTON



**C**ooperative education programs—also known as co-ops—can be a great way for students to gain real-life working experience while also receiving their education. And for landscape business owners, who often cite “finding employees” as one of their biggest challenges, a co-op can be a great way to boost your labor force and find potential future hires.

Snow & Sons Tree & Landscaping in Greenfield, Mass., has been working with co-op students for a decade and has found the partnership to be mutually beneficial. Over the last 10 years the company has hired about 15 students for summer employment through co-op programs with two high school horticulture programs.

Abby Gilbert, gardening division manager with Snow & Sons, says a co-op program provides students with the opportunity to see what would be expected of them if they went to work for a company in the landscape industry. Snow & Sons works with horticulture students who are planning to go into landscaping after graduation.

Not surprisingly, some find it wasn't what they had expected. Over the years, several co-op students have decided landscaping wasn't the right career path for them, Gilbert says. But the company doesn't consider that to be a failure. It's better for students to learn what they really want to do

before they've graduated, she says.

The benefits for Snow & Sons include the opportunity to evaluate potential future hires. The company has offered many co-op students jobs at graduation. Six students have ultimately come to work for the company full-time. Others have gone on to start their own businesses. Gilbert says that either way, it's rewarding to be part of these students' journeys into the industry.

It's also been beneficial to have eager-to-work students join the ranks. Gilbert says they're often excited about the opportunity and are hardworking and committed. Students work in lawn maintenance, gardening or on whichever crew fits with their interests.

“We usually start the students out with some training and get them acclimated to what they'll be doing on the crew they're assigned,” Gilbert says. “We have always found the students to be ready to work and excited about trying out some of the things they've been learning about in school. They attend our meetings, get hands-on experience in the field and learn how to run equipment. It's truly the full experience.”

Gilbert says that the biggest commitment to the program is time—primarily training the students. In addition, several employees from the company also sit on the two schools'

co-op advisory boards, which meet several times a year.

Overall, the company believes the time it puts into the program is time well invested. Not only is it rewarding to be a part of these students' futures, but Snow & Sons has benefited from good workers over the years and groomed a few excellent future employees. When so many employers say it's hard to find good employees, this program connects the dots.

“How many students can say they have a job waiting for them when they graduate?” Gilbert says. “And how many employers can say they found a great hire that they already know is a good fit with the company? It's an experience that is beneficial for everyone.”

Payton is a freelance writer based in Philadelphia.

## BUSINESS BREAKDOWN

**COMPANY:** Snow & Sons Tree & Landscaping

**LOCATION:** Greenfield, Mass.

**EMPLOYEES:** 75-plus

**REVENUE:** Not disclosed

**SERVICE MIX:** 70% maintenance; 30% construction and design/build

**CLIENT MIX:** 75% residential; 25% commercial



# Always Looking Out for Issues Affecting Your **BUSINESS**



## **RISE Grassroots Network**

When issues about pesticides and fertilizers pop up in your neck of the woods, you don't have to address them alone. Join the free RISE Grassroots Network at [pestfacts.org/grassroots](http://pestfacts.org/grassroots) or scan the QR code below. Access resources you can use on the local, state and federal levels with customers, neighbors, community leaders and policy makers to communicate the benefits of your

services and the products you use. Keep up-to-date on policy and regulations running the gamut from private and public pesticide property bans to specific restrictions on sales, use and display of fertilizers and pesticides. RISE is a national trade association of pesticide and fertilizer suppliers serving as a resource to help you keep these products in your toolbox and you out of the woods.

[grassroots@pestfacts.org](mailto:grassroots@pestfacts.org) / [pestfacts.org/grassroots](http://pestfacts.org/grassroots) / [DebugTheMyths.com](http://DebugTheMyths.com)

**RISE** Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment®

1156 15th St., N.W. Washington D.C. 20005 (202) 872-3860



## PREEMERGENT HERBICIDES



### ECHELON HERBICIDE

**COMPANY:** FMC

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

With two active ingredients, Echelon herbicide goes beyond conventional crabgrass control to deliver preemergent performance against sedges, according to FMC. Echelon controls weeds from the foliage down and from the root up, with efficacy and long-lasting residual for preemergent crabgrass and *Poa* control. It also controls pre-

emergent and early postemergent goosegrass. Echelon is available as a sprayable application or as a dry application on fertilizer for most cool- and warm-season grasses.



### DIMENSION SPECIALTY HERBICIDE

**COMPANY:** Dow AgroSciences

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

When applied prior to tillering (up to five leaves), Dimension will control preemergent and postemergent crabgrass. It is also effective on more than 45 other grassy and broadleaf weeds. Available in multiple formulations, Dimension won't leave turf, equipment or surroundings stained yellow.



### BARRICADE HERBICIDE

**COMPANY:** Syngenta

**URL:** [GreenTrust365.com](http://GreenTrust365.com)

Barricade herbicide is a long-lasting preemergent herbicide that comes with a guarantee. Its low solubility and volatility means it stays in the weed germination zone and will not break down, even after heavy rain or snow, Syngenta says. Labeled for more than 30 turf weeds, Barricade controls summer annuals with a preemergent application in the spring and winter annuals with a summer or fall application. For annuals such as crabgrass, foxtails, goosegrass and barnyardgrass, a single application can be made as early as January to prevent weeds all season long.

### SPECTICLE FLO

**COMPANY:** Bayer

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

Specticle FLO is a preemergent herbicide that provides warm-season, broad-spectrum control of most major weeds including *Poa annua*, crabgrass and goosegrass. It protects against key grassy weeds plus more than 50 broadleaf weeds, and its long-term residual means fewer applications, Bayer says. Specticle FLO controls weeds at the lowest use rates on the market, requiring up to 40 times less active ingredients than other preemergent solutions, according to the manufacturer.

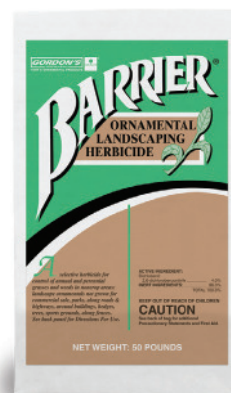


### BARRIER ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPING HERBICIDE

**COMPANY:** PBI-Gordon

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

Barrier provides season-long pre-emergent and postemergent control of listed annual and perennial weeds, including dandelion, crabgrass, ragweed and more. Activated by water, Barrier attaches to soil organic matter and releases the active ingredient, creating a "vapor barrier" in the upper 2 in. of the soil that slowly kills existing shallow-rooted weeds and grasses—and it prevents new growth, PBI-Gordon says. Barrier is formulated for use in established landscape and non-crop settings, such as hospitals, sport facilities, cemeteries, apartment complexes and other institutional settings.





## ➤ ZERO-TURN MOWERS

### EXMARK RADIUS ZERO-TURN MOWER

**COMPANY:** Exmark  
**URL:** Exmark.com

Three series of Radius mowers are available: the E-Series, S-Series and X-Series. They feature a heavy-duty fabricated frame and Exmark's Ultra Cut cutting systems in side- or rear-discharge configurations.



### F60 FLEET SERIES



**COMPANY:** Ferris  
**URL:** FerrisMowers.com

A fixed-frame unit, the Ferris F60 combines a 36-in., 10-gauge fabricated steel mower deck with either a 25-hp Briggs & Stratton Commercial Series engine or a 19-hp Kawasaki FX600V engine. The mower also features the dual commercial Hydro-Gear ZT-3100 transaxles with 7-in. cooling fans for repelling debris.



### Z960M ZTRAK MOWER

**COMPANY:** John Deere Commercial Mowing  
**URL:** JohnDeere.com/commercial

The 31-hp Z960M is available with a 60-in., 60-in. Mulch On Demand or 72-in. deck. Options include dump-from-seat Material Collection System capability, three-way adjustable suspension seats and easy-to-use diagnostics.



### Z400 SERIES

**COMPANY:** Kubota Tractor Corp.

**URL:** Kubota.com  
The Z411KW-48, Z421KW-54 and Z421KWT-60 are all powered by Kawasaki FS gasoline engines and are available with 48-, 54-, or 60-in.

decks, respectively. All three models come equipped with a 6.8-gal. fuel tank. Large, low-profile tires, ergonomic features and Kubota's K-Lift deck height adjustment system are standard.



### ENHANCED Z MASTER LINE

**COMPANY:** The Toro Co.  
**URL:** Toro.com

The Electric Deck Lift Kit is available on select Z Master models—including the 3000, 5000 and 6000 Series. It allows operators to quickly and easily change the deck cutting height by using a foot pedal actuator switch. In addition, the deluxe suspension seat now comes standard on all Z Master 3000 Series mowers.





DON'T GO IT ALONE.  
BE PART OF  
SOMETHING  
BIGGER.  
JOIN US!

800.395.2522 | [bit.ly/landmanmag](http://bit.ly/landmanmag)

## Make Strides

### Power Pro 50 Ultra



4 Stroke Honda engine

All stainless steel construction

120 lb. hopper

4 MPH ground speed

Increased Productivity

LT Rich Products, Inc.

[www.z-spray.com](http://www.z-spray.com)

(877) 482-2040



Turf Pros' #1 Top Dresser

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](http://www.ecolawnapplicator.com)



Mighty-Spikes



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](http://www.mightyspikes.com) • Phone: 1-800-410-7661



Proudly Manufactured In The USA



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 FOR SALE

### FOR SALE: COMPLETE LAWN/LANDSCAPE/ SNOW REMOVAL BUSINESS

#### PRIME LOCATION NORTHERN WEST VIRGINIA

Owner wanting to retire. A premier company with excellent reputation. Over 30 years in business.

A fully staffed efficient experienced team. Approximately 200 weekly/bi weekly commercial and residential accounts. Year round income includes snow removal. Average annual gross sales are 700k - 800k a year with a net income averaging 200k - 225k a year. Sale price 995k includes trucks, lawn, landscape, snow equipment and 2 properties. 1 property includes commercial building. Prime location in Northern West Virginia. Owner will help with transition. Asking 995k. Price is negotiable.

Call 1-681-315-8803.

## AD INDEX

Dixie Chopper.....	13
Dow AgroSciences .....	19
EcoLawn.....	46
GPS Insight.....	27
Graham Spray Equipment.....	5
Greenworks Commercial.....	36
Ground Logic.....	23
Husqvarna.....	39
Irrigation Association.....	Postcard*
John Deere.....	8
Kawasaki Engines.....	3
Koch.....	CV3
Kubota Tractor Corp.....	CV4
L.T. Rich Products.....	46
Mighty-Spikes.....	46
NALP.....	46
PBI-Gordon Corp.....	31-33
PermaGreen Supreme.....	21
PRO Landscape by Drafix Software.....	2
Project Evergreen.....	16
Quali-Pro.....	15, 35
RISE.....	43
Toro.....	CV2
Turfco.....	11
Zoro.....	25

\*denotes regional advertisement

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

## HELP WANTED



### IRRIGATION TECHNICIAN

5151 Pedley Road, Riverside, CA 92509

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](mailto:paulw@fslandscape.com)

Call (909) 851-3763



### TREE TRIMMER

43197 Osgood Rd., Fremont, CA 94539

Large Landscape company is seeking experienced Tree Trimmers. Must have a minimum of 3-5 years of previous experience.

**\$15-\$25/HR**

RESUMES email to: [john@fslandscape.com](mailto:john@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](mailto:search@florasearch.com)

[www.florasearch.com](http://www.florasearch.com)

## Looking to hire?



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

## 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](http://LandscapeManagement.net/BeFeatured) for more information or email your thoughts to LM Editor Marisa Palmieri at [mpalmieri@northcoastmedia.net](mailto: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.



# BACKSTORY

INTERVIEW BY DILLON STEWART



## Ryan Slipka

**GENERAL MANAGER, PARTNER  
SOUTHVIEW DESIGN  
ST. PAUL, MINN.**



Slipka married his high school sweetheart, Mary, 12 years ago. Together, they have a 7-year-old daughter Evelyn, a 5-year-old son Griffin and a 2-year-old son Everett.



Slipka is as a volunteer firefighter for Rosemount Fire Department. "I've been responsible for helping bring six people back to life, so it really puts what's important in life in perspective," he says. "Plus, every little boy's dream is to drive a fire truck."

"I never planned on a career in landscaping. I needed a job, wanted a tan and the football and soccer coaches said to stay in shape over the summer, so it was natural to take a job like that."



"I spend a large amount of my time working on the company culture and helping people on our staff grow their careers, and that's really exciting for me."

### EDUCATION

Rosemount High School  
Rosemount, Minn.  
Class of 1999

University of Mary  
Bismark, N.D.  
Management information  
systems/finance  
Class of 2003

### WORK EXPERIENCE

**1996-1999**

Krech Landscaping  
Laborer/Supervisor  
St. Paul, Minn.

**1999-2004**

Mulligan's Landscaping  
Supervisor  
Northfield, Minn.

**2004-2006**

Southview Design  
Project Manager  
St. Paul, Minn.

**2006-2008**

Production Manager

**2008-2014**

Vice President, Operations/Partner

**2014-2015**

Executive Vice President/Partner

**2016-present**

General Manager/Partner

"I realized there were a lot of good landscapers but not a lot of skilled landscapers with an education in how to run a business."



When he's not fighting fires—literal ones and figurative ones in the office—you can find him coaching youth sports or playing in men's leagues.

"Being able to call on professionals in other industries and ask for outside advice has been a key to our success and my own personal success."

See page 6 for a look at Southview Design's work.

**WORDS OF WISDOM:** "You run a business on cash, you build a business on referrals and you don't have either one of those things without employees." • "As landscapers, we deliver a very emotional purchase. We're not selling a commodity. We're selling a discretionary, emotional purchase, and it's vital we hold that level of excitement throughout the entire process. We can't do that without a great staff and great business plan."





## Customer trust. Business advantages. GAIN BOTH.

To get ahead you need an edge. Consider XCU® slow-release fertilizer. This dual-coated, enhanced efficiency product delivers nutrition for up to 10 weeks per application, saving you time, labor and money. And with the highest nitrogen content and lowest sulfur content of any polymer-coated sulfur coated urea (PCSCU) fertilizer, you can cover more area using less. They won't know the difference, but they'll appreciate it. And that advantage earns trust and grows your business.

Consult with your distributor for more applied advantages, or visit [KochTurf.com/XCU](http://KochTurf.com/XCU).





To be the best at what I do. This is why I do it.

**Z400 Series**



The all-new Z400 Series zero-turn mowers have come to market with your success and bottom line in mind, so you can make the most out of being the best. This all-new machine was designed with lasting durability and endless productivity, making it an economical option both now and for years to come. Add a Kubota Z400 to your fleet today.

**\$0 Down and 0%<sub>A.P.R.</sub> Financing for 36 Months\***

See your local Kubota dealer for details.

*Offer ends 3/31/2017.*



\*\$0 down, 0% A.P.R. financing for up to 36 months on purchases of new Kubota equipment (excluding VS Series) is available to qualified purchasers from participating dealers' in-stock inventory through 3/31/2017. Example: A 36-month monthly installment repayment term at 0% A.P.R. requires 36 payments of \$27.78 per \$1,000 financed. 0% A.P.R. interest is available to customers if no dealer documentation preparation fee is charged. Dealer charge for document preparation fee shall be in accordance with state laws. Inclusion of ineligible equipment may result in a higher blended A.P.R. 0% A.P.R. and low-rate financing may not be available with customer instant rebate offers. Financing is available through Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A., 3401 Del Amo Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503; subject to credit approval. Some exceptions apply. Offer expires 3/31/2017. See us for details on these and other low-rate options or go to [www.kubota.com](http://www.kubota.com) for more information. Optional equipment may be shown.

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



© Kubota Tractor Corporation, 2017