

		Headquarters	2012 Revenue (U.S. Dollars)	% Rev Change from 2011	% Projected Change for 2013	FT/PT Employees	Comm/ Res/ Gov Mix
101	Cleary Bros. Landscape	Danville, Calif.	\$12,100,000	3%	12%	170/165	85/5/10
102	Hermes Landscaping*	Lenexa, Kan.	\$12,000,000	0%	NR	NR	NR
	Odyssey Landscaping*	Lodi, Calif.	\$12,000,000	71%	NR	NR	NR
	ProGrass	Wilsonville, Ore.	\$12,000,000	0%	8%	190/0	40/60/0
	Cornerstone Solutions Group*	Dade City, Fla.	\$12,000,000	-48%	NR	NR	NR
106	Basnight Land & Lawn*	Chesapeake, Va.	\$11,500,000	3%	NR	NR	NR
107	John Mini Distinctive Landscapes	Congers, N.Y.	\$11,304,000	30%	11%	72/35	95/5/0
108	North American Lawn & Landscape	Charlotte, N.C.	\$11,200,000	-1%	12%	200/0	90/8/2
109	Blondies Treehouse	Mamaroneck, N.Y.	\$11,000,000	10%	9%	95/35	70/30/0
110	The Spencer Co.	Houston	\$10,839,394	9%	-8%	190/5	95/0/5
111	American Landscape Systems	Lewisville, Texas	\$10,839,060	22%	1%	110/0	50/0/50
112	Arteka Cos.	Minneapolis, Minn.	\$10,500,000	5%	5%	110/5	85/5/10
113	Lawn Dawg	Nashua, N.H.	\$10,395,775	26%	16%	123/3	6/94/0
114	The Stockner Group	Rockville, Va.	\$10,300,000	51%	21%	185/45	85/10/5
115	Hoffman Landscapes	Wilton, Conn.	\$10,200,000	1%	8%	100/0	10/88/2
116	Perficut Cos.	Des Moines, Iowa	\$10,150,000	-17%	28%	75/55	80/8/12
117	Schultz Industries	Goldon, Colo.	\$10,132,267	12%	4%	85/69	100/0/0
118	Andre Landscape Service	Azusa, Calif.	\$10,046,000	7%	6%	208/208	85/10/5
119	CoCal Landscape Services	Denver	\$10,000,000	-9%	10%	140/125	65/5/30
	Parker Interior Plantscape	Scotch Plains, N.J.	\$10,000,000	5%	0%	100/10	99/1/0
	Webb Landscape	Bellevue, Idaho	\$10,000,000	25%	10%	120/10	NR
	Becker Landscape Contractors	Indianapolis	\$10,000,000	0%	10%	30/100	87/8/5
	American Civil Constructors	Littleton, Colo.	\$10,000,000	0%	0%	190/50	20/0/80
	Creative Environments Design and Landscape	Tempe, Ariz.	\$10,000,000	0%	0%	60/2	15/85/0
125	Southview Design	Inver Grove Heights, Minn.	\$9,900,000	25%	13%	30/65	6/94/0
126	Carol King Landscape Maintenance	Orlando, Fla.	\$9,450,000	10%	2%	133/38	69/6/25
127	Gardeners' Guild	Richmond, Calif.	\$9,440,000	1%	15%	135/2	75/15/10
128	Santa Rita Landscaping	Tucson, Ariz.	\$9,200,000	67%	24%	118/0	60/30/10
129	Native Land Design	Cedar Park, Texas	\$9,139,535	12%	1%	157/0	95/0/5
130	LegacyScapes	Groveland, Fla.	\$9,100,000	153%	15%	92/0	90/0/10
131	Heron Lawn & Pest Control^	Apopka, Fla.	\$9,046,836	NR	NR	154/0	0/100/0
132	Tree Tech	Foxboro, Mass.	\$9,000,000	6%	4%	85/5	45/45/10
	Kinsella Landscape*	Blue Island, Ill.	\$9,000,000	5%	NR	NR	NR
134	Visionscapes*	Tucker, Ga.	\$8,950,000	6%	NR	NR	NR
135	The Grounds Guys	Waco, Texas	\$8,601,909	260%	249%	9/0	45/50/5
136	The Pattie Group	Novelty, Ohio	\$8,500,000	13%	4%	55/30	11/89/0
137	Ecoscape Solutions Group	Huntersville, N.C.	\$8,476,000	25%	18%	165/2	98/2/0
138	Executive Landscape	Fallbrook, Calif.	\$8,350,000	15%	NR	125/0	75/5/20
139	Joyce Landscaping	Marstons Mills, Mass.	\$7,950,000	4%	8%	105/10	15/85/0
140	NJ Best Lawns Sprinklers & Fencing^	Lakewood, N.J.	\$7,908,750	15%	23%	14/62	5/75/20
141	Coast Landscape Management	Napa, Calif.	\$7,100,000	4%	6%	110/20	65/5/30
142	Grant & Power Landscaping	West Chicago, Ill.	\$7,000,000	-12%	11%	20/80	34/66/0
	Outside Unlimited	Hampstead, Md.	\$7,000,000	17%	14%	80/0	70/15/15
144	Borst Landscape & Design	Allendale, N.J.	\$6,842,000	2%	2%	73/2	20/80/0
145	Eastern Land Management	Stamford, Conn.	\$6,500,000	-3%	15%	20/45	100/0/0
146	Nanak's Landscaping	Deerfield Beach, Fla.	\$6,400,000	25%	16%	100/0	100/0/0
147	Green Lawn Fertilizing^	West Chester, Pa.	\$6,384,000	10%	NR	60/0	10/90/0
148	Pacheco Brothers Gardening	Hayward, Calif.	\$6,100,000	2%	8%	90/10	50/15/35
149	The LaurelRock Co.	Wilton, Conn.	\$5,454,000	21%	12%	11/37	0/100/0
150	Plantscapes	Seattle	\$5,353,128	21%	8%	85/50	90/4/6
			Total: \$7,689,821,749	Avg: 11%	Avg: 11%		



Runs his own **business**.

Doesn't **need** fancy gadgets.

Just something to keep him **mowing**.

Z915B

RAUL, LANDSCAPER

Meet the Z900 B Series

Forget the bells and whistles. Get something you can count on: the Z900 B Series mowers from John Deere. But just because this mower is affordably priced, doesn't mean it's cheaply made. Truth is the Z915B comes with more features and quality Deere components than any other zero turn we've offered in this class. Like a larger fuel tank. Professional grade seat. Superb weight distribution. And larger tires for a smooth ride.

When a mower like this has all the basics, you can basically do anything. Ask your local John Deere dealer about Z900 B Series mower today.



JohnDeere.com/MowPro

THINK



Whether your company's goal is to make this list someday (or stay on it)—or to remain the same size and improve other metrics, there is good reason to think big. Think: Benchmarks. Ideas. Growth strategies. That's what you'll find in issue's *LM150* report on the Green Industry's largest companies and the accompanying stories.

Benchmarks

The industry's top 150 revenue-generating firms logged a combined \$7,689,821,749 in 2012 annual revenue—up 2 percent from last year's list totaling \$7,543,372,333 in 2011 annual revenue. Notably, this is the first year since 2009, when *LM*

began tallying a list of the largest 150 firms, that there's no billion-dollar company ranked. TruGreen reported revenue of \$979,100,000 for 2012, down 11 percent from the previous year.

Seventy-three percent of companies experienced revenue growth in 2012 vs. 2011; 9 percent reported no growth and 17 percent reported a revenue decrease. The ones that shrunk? Many of them are snow market firms that experienced the pains of the 2012 winter that wasn't. (Two percent were unknown or the data couldn't

be compared). Overall, *LM150* companies averaged an 11 percent growth rate from 2011 to 2012.

See the full list in the gatefold section of this supplement for individual company figures (or check out the index on page S21 to easily locate a specific company).

BE ON THE 2014 LIST

Should your company be on the *LM150* list? If so, please contact Editor Marisa Palmieri at mpalmieri@northcoastmedia.net to be notified in early 2014 when the submission period opens. We encourage companies with \$5 million-plus in annual revenue to apply.

We analyze data from the Green Industry's largest 150 firms. Plus, 13 ideas any size company can implement to boost revenue and profits. BY **MARISA PALMIERI**

COMBINED 2012 *LM150* REVENUE

\$7,689,821,749

COMBINED 2011 *LM150* REVENUE

\$7,543,372,333

↑ = +2%

Ideas & Growth Strategies

Starting on page S8, we've culled some of the best revenue- and profit-improvement tactics from companies on the list to spread the wealth of good ideas.

Looking to rev up training? See page S14 for The Pattie Group's expansive program, or check out page S18 to see how Yard-Nique has trained

its way through a tough time. Does your team need to reconnect with clients? Terracare (page S17) and Mission Landscape Cos. are doing just that (page S12). Need to boost the bottom line? American Landscape Systems has found one solution (page S8), as has Southern Botanical—see page S14.

Methodology

LM sought submissions from companies online, in print, in direct email requests and through phone calls from February through May. Companies submitted their details via an online form. *LM* editors compiled the results and, where applicable, removed non-typical Green Industry revenue sources from the total reported by the company.

We estimated revenue for firms the editors couldn't reach from the 2012 projected revenue data they submitted last year. Additionally, *LM* editors calculated the figures for growth rates, service segment revenue charts and customer mix revenue charts (pages S4-S6) from the data companies submitted. **LM**



Top 25

The LM150's leaders in client mix and service segment.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Companies that did not report customer mix and service segment data may not be included on these lists. LM staff calculated dollar amounts for Top 25 lists from reported data.

COMMERCIAL

1	ValleyCrest Landscape Cos.	\$880,000,000
2	U.S. Lawns	\$128,450,000
3	Ferrandino & Son	\$71,000,000
4	Ruppert Landscape	\$68,196,060
5	Merit Service Solutions (formerly Lipinski Outdoor Services)	\$52,300,000
6	Clintar Landscape Management	\$51,300,000
7	Mainscape	\$49,300,000
8	Acres Group	\$36,631,837
9	Bartlett Tree Experts	\$36,600,000
10	OneSource Landscape & Golf Services	\$36,000,000
11	Environmental Earthscapes	\$35,600,000
12	Lucas Tree Expert Co.	\$33,060,000
13	Mission Landscape Cos.	\$27,582,460
14	Gothic Grounds Management	\$25,534,976
15	Cagwin & Dorward	\$24,560,000
16	The Greenery	\$24,080,000
17	McFall and Berry Landscape Management	\$22,932,000
18	The Bruce Co. of Wisconsin	\$22,720,000
19	ISS Grounds Control	\$22,100,000
20	Christy Webber Landscapes	\$22,010,000
21	Clean Scapes	\$21,560,000
22	Russell Landscape Group	\$21,535,430
23	Girard Environmental Services	\$20,900,000
24	Landscape Concepts Management	\$20,700,000
25	Bemus Landscape	\$20,273,000

RESIDENTIAL

1	Scotts Lawn Service	\$298,265,300
2	Bartlett Tree Experts	\$137,250,000
3	Weed Man	\$107,002,520
4	Lawn Doctor	\$89,389,462
5	SavATree	\$61,440,000
6	Massey Services^	\$45,006,367
7	Naturalawn of America	\$41,354,315
8	Spring-Green	\$35,432,670
9	Mariani Landscape	\$31,500,000
10	Chalet	\$23,700,000
11	Ryan Lawn & Tree	\$22,242,738
12	McHale Landscape Design	\$21,000,000
13	Scott Byron & Co.	\$19,448,000
14	Lambert's	\$17,894,250
15	Denison Landscaping	\$17,740,000
16	Naturescape	\$15,588,168
17	Meadows Farms	\$15,035,000
18	Swingle Lawn, Tree & Landscape Care	\$14,983,456
19	Designs By Sundown	\$12,150,000
20	Garden Design (formerly Metroplex Garden Design Landscaping)	\$12,000,000
21	Senske Lawn & Tree Care^	\$11,642,400
22	D. Schumacher Landscaping	\$10,500,000
23	TBG Landscape	\$9,880,000
24	Lawn Dawg	\$9,772,028
25	Southern Botanical	\$9,432,167

GOVERNMENT

1	Maldonado Nursery & Landscaping	\$13,700,000
2	AAA Landscape	\$10,000,000
3	Terracare Associates	\$9,713,777
4	Urban Farmer	\$9,446,500
5	Bartlett Tree Experts	\$9,150,000
6	Environmental Earthscapes	\$8,900,000
7	Angler Environmental	\$8,042,858
8	American Civil Constructors	\$8,000,000
9	Pierre Sprinkler & Landscape	\$5,940,000
10	Christy Webber Landscapes	\$5,580,000
11	Rotolo Consultants (RCI)	\$5,500,000
12	American Landscape Systems	\$5,419,530
13	Denison Landscaping	\$5,322,000
14	The Greenery	\$5,160,000
15	Stay Green	\$4,588,500
16	Ruppert Landscape	\$4,352,940
17	New Way Landscape & Tree Services	\$4,089,866
18	OneSource Landscape & Golf Services	\$4,000,000
19	Teufel Landscape	\$3,920,000
20	TBG Landscape	\$3,800,000
21	Chapel Valley Landscape Co.	\$3,525,000
22	ISS Grounds Control	\$3,380,000
23	Environmental Management Services,	\$3,150,000
24	Cagwin & Dorward	\$3,070,000
25	CoCal Landscape Services	\$3,000,000

BY MIX

MAINTENANCE

1	U.S. Lawns	\$95,053,000
2	Ferrandino & Son	\$71,000,000
3	Ruppert Landscape	\$41,352,930
4	Mainscape	\$33,031,000
5	The Greenery	\$25,112,000
6	Environmental Earthscapes	\$24,475,000
7	OneSource Landscape & Golf Services	\$24,000,000
8	Mariani Landscape	\$22,750,000
9	Clintar Landscape Management	\$20,520,000
10	Mission Landscape Cos.	\$19,307,722
11	Acres Group	\$19,095,319
12	DLC Resources	\$18,000,000
13	ISS Grounds Control	\$16,900,000
14	James River Grounds Management	\$15,785,000
15	Girard Environmental Services	\$15,466,000
16	Marina Landscape	\$15,090,000
17	Merit Service Solutions (formerly Lipinski Outdoor Services)	\$14,644,000
18	AAA Landscape	\$14,250,000
19	McFall and Berry Landscape Management	\$13,806,000
20	Chapel Valley Landscape Co.	\$12,925,000
21	PROscape	\$11,732,870
22	Integrated Landscape Management	\$11,500,000
23	Greenscapes of Southwest FL	\$10,800,000
24	Christy Webber Landscapes	\$10,230,000
25	ArtisTree Landscape Maintenance & Design	\$10,080,000

DESIGN/BUILD

1	Ruppert Landscape	\$36,999,990
2	Garden Design (formerly Metroplex Garden Design Landscaping)	\$18,000,000
3	McHale Landscape Design	\$17,850,000
4	Christy Webber Landscapes	\$17,050,000
5	Environmental Earthscapes	\$15,575,000
6	U.S. Lawns	\$15,414,000
7	Meadows Farms	\$14,550,000
8	Scott Byron & Co.	\$14,144,000
9	Chalet	\$13,035,000
10	Angler Environmental	\$12,064,288
11	Maldonado Nursery & Landscaping	\$12,056,000
12	Mariani Landscape	\$11,900,000
13	TBG Landscape	\$10,640,000
14	AAA Landscape	\$10,000,000
15	American Civil Constructors	\$10,000,000
16	Creative Environments Design and Landscape	\$10,000,000
17	Rotolo Consultants (RCI)	\$9,900,000
18	Teufel Landscape	\$9,800,000
19	Southview Design	\$9,702,000
20	Southern Botanical	\$9,594,791
21	Designs By Sundown	\$9,450,000
22	Heads Up Landscape Contractors	\$8,949,375
23	Clean Scapes	\$8,800,000
24	OneSource Landscape & Golf Services	\$8,000,000
25	Benchmark Landscape	\$7,878,000

LAWN CARE

1	Scotts Lawn Service	\$291,640,000
2	Lawn Doctor	\$89,389,462
3	Massey Services	\$42,606,075
4	Spring-Green	\$37,768,890
5	Ryan Lawn & Tree	\$18,730,726
6	Naturescape	\$14,671,217
7	SavATree	\$11,520,000
8	Lawn Dawg	\$10,083,902
9	Green Lawn Fertilizing	\$6,048,000
10	ProGrass	\$6,000,000
11	Senske Lawn & Tree Care	\$5,832,000
12	Merit Service Solutions (formerly Lipinski Outdoor Services)	\$4,184,000
13	OneSource Landscape & Golf Services	\$4,000,000
14	Swingle Lawn, Tree & Landscape Care	\$3,939,075
15	U.S. Lawns	\$3,853,500
16	Mainscape	\$3,451,000
17	Urban Farmer	\$2,833,950
18	Tree Tech	\$2,700,000
19	Chalet	\$2,370,000
20	Gardeners' Guild	\$2,360,000
21	Acres Group	\$2,338,202
22	Sposato Landscape Co.	\$2,010,000
23	McFall and Berry Landscape Management	\$1,404,000
24	ISS Grounds Control	\$1,300,000
25	Girard Environmental Services	\$1,254,000

IRRIGATION

1	Marina Landscape	\$30,180,000
2	Urban Farmer	\$7,179,340
3	Maldonado Nursery & Landscaping	\$6,302,000
4	Merit Service Solutions (formerly Lipinski Outdoor Services)	\$4,184,000
5	OneSource Landscape & Golf Services	\$4,000,000
6	U.S. Lawns	\$3,853,500
7	American Landscape Systems	\$3,793,671
8	Clean Scapes	\$3,520,000
9	Teufel Landscape	\$3,332,000
11	NJ Best Lawns Sprinklers & Fencing	\$3,330,000
10	LMI Landscapes	\$3,250,000
12	Mainscape	\$2,958,000
13	ISS Grounds Control	\$2,600,000
14	The Stockner Group	\$2,575,000
15	Clintar Landscape Management	\$2,565,000
16	Chapel Valley Landscape Co.	\$2,350,000
17	Environmental Earthscapes	\$2,225,000
18	Rotolo Consultants (RCI)	\$2,200,000
19	Massey Services	\$2,059,443
20	Acres Group	\$1,948,502
21	Santa Rita Landscaping	\$1,840,000
22	North American Lawn & Landscape	\$1,680,000
23	Executive Landscape	\$1,670,000
24	Southern Botanical	\$1,626,236
25	Garden Design (formerly Metroplex Garden Design Landscaping)	\$1,600,000

BY SERVICE SEGMENT



DOUBLE-DIGIT GROWTH SPURT

58 LM150 companies grew 10 percent or more in 2012. Here they are and how six of them continue to grow.

How they do it: In its solid 2012, The LaurelRock Co. added an up-and-coming service line—green walls and green roofs—by partnering with a manufacturer and becoming certified. To gain efficiencies, the company also purchased equipment: a mulch blower and switch-and-go truck, and rewarded employees through a profit-sharing program. With the success of these initiatives, the company plans for continued growth in 2013.

How they do it: To combat increasing fuel costs, Native Land Design is targeting new work strategically around existing clients to build route density and decrease drive time between sites. The company also is purchasing propane-powered and other fuel-efficient equipment.

% revenue change from 2011

1	The Grounds Guys	260%
2	LegacyScapes	153%
3	Odyssey Landscaping	71%
	Maldonado Nursery & Landscaping	71%
5	Santa Rita Landscaping	67%
6	The Stockner Group	51%
7	LMI Landscapes	44%
8	McHale Landscape Design	40%
9	Rotolo Consultants (RCI)	38%
10	Ferrandino & Son	35%
	Designs By Sundown	35%
12	Integrated Landscape Management	33%
13	John Mini Distinctive Landscapes	30%
	Yard-Nique	30%
15	Lawn Dawg	26%
	Dixie Landscape Co.	26%
17	Nanak's Landscaping	25%
	Southview Design	25%
	Ecoscape Solutions Group	25%
	Luke Brothers Landscape Services	25%
	Webb Landscape	25%
22	Gothic Landscape	24%
	Environmental Management Services	24%
24	American Landscape Systems	22%
25	Garden Design (formerly Metroplex Garden Design Landscaping)	21%
	Plantscapes	21%
	The LaurelRock Co.	21%
28	Five Star Landscape	20%
29	EMCOR/USM	19%
30	Pierre Sprinkler & Landscape	18%
31	Outside Unlimited	17%
32	Clean Scapes	16%
	Ryan Lawn & Tree	16%
34	Southern Botanical	15%
	Lucas Tree Expert Co.	15%
	NJ Best Lawns Sprinklers & Fencing	15%
	Executive Landscape	15%
	Cagwin & Dorward	15%
39	Ruppert Landscape	14%
	SavATree	14%
	Mission Landscape Cos.	14%
42	Swingle Lawn, Tree & Landscape Care	13%
	The Pattie Group	13%
44	Schultz Industries	12%
	Pacific Outdoor Living	12%
	The Greenery	12%
	Native Land Design	12%
48	Christy Webber Landscapes	11%
	D. Schumacher Landscaping	11%
50	Carol King Landscape Maintenance	10%
	Complete Landscaping Systems	10%
	Green Lawn Fertilizing	10%
	Blondies Treehouse	10%
	Sposato Landscape Co.	10%
	Naturescape	10%
	Naturalawn of America	10%
	U.S. Lawns	10%
	Bartlett Tree Experts	10%

How they do it: At a growth rate of 260 percent from 2011 to 2012, managing growth is a challenge for The Grounds Guys, which began franchising in the U.S. in 2010 and topped the 100-franchisee mark in 2012. The company plans to continue growing by increasing sales training, staffing up, and continuing communications with the franchise's advisory council members and franchisees at large.

How they do it: Part of Cherry Lake Tree Farm, a diversified agri-business, LegacyScapes has continued to invest in its team and assets. Challenges include the costs and shortage of plant material and difficulty finding laborers. The company mitigates its plant market challenges by educating clients on plant supply pendulum shifts and partnering with suppliers to schedule and plan plant material needs in advance. To combat labor challenges, it shares resources with its sister companies and has begun using the H-2B guest-worker program.

How they do it: Expanding commercial construction and erosion control services has been a boon for NJ Best Lawns Sprinklers & Fencing. The company hopes future profit improvements will come from its efforts to cross train employees and the addition of a full-time accountant to facilitate the accounts receivable process.

How they do it: A quality inspection program has helped pave the way for happier customers and continued growth for The Greenery. Supervisors and managers inspect one another's accounts and report results that are shared and discussed with each account's branch manager and supervisor.

0%
APR
FOR 48
MONTHS

Got **lots** of clients.

Needs mowers with **power**,
but **fuel efficient** too.

Wants a machine that can
save him **time** and **money**.



Z925M

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When you've got a lot to manage, you don't have time for mowers that aren't going to make the most of your time. Sounds like you need to meet the Z900 M Series mowers. They deliver all the power you need, and with available electronic fuel injection, you can turn your mower into a fuel-sipping dynamo. Add a Mulch On Demand™ deck and you are instantly mulching when you need to, and back to side-discharging in the blink of an eye.

If you're looking for efficiency for every mower in your crew, you've just met your match. Ask your local John Deere dealer about the Z900 M Series mower today.



*Offer available through July 31, 2013. Subject to approved installment credit with John Deere Financial. For commercial use only. Up to a 10% down payment may be required. Taxes, freight, setup and delivery charges could increase monthly payment. Other special rates and terms may be available, including financing for consumer use. Available at participating dealers in the US only.

JohnDeere.com/MowPro



*any size company
can learn from*



Joseph Angelone

#1 *Un-subcontracting*

Company: American Landscape Systems

Location: Lewisville, Texas

LM150 rank: 111

Hiring subcontractors can be expensive, and after a decline in profits in 2011 the folks at American Landscape Systems were on a quest to save money.

So in 2012, the company decided to bring in-house all the landscape services it had been shipping out to subcontractors, including chemical applications, hydro-mulch services, mowing and tree services.

The move paid off. Why? Because in 2012 American Landscape Systems was able to recapture 100 percent of the *profits* it previously had lost to subcontracting.

“At the end of 2011 we looked at how much we spent on subcontractors. It was almost \$1 million,” says American Landscape Systems Vice President Joseph Angelone. “Our goal at the beginning of 2012 was to capture more of the profit of the annual revenue we were performing.”

In looking at its numbers from 2011, American Landscape Systems had to reevaluate its practices. Bringing services in-house enabled the company to establish a stronger presence in the competitive Dallas market.

“Costs are consistently rising, but our prices are decreasing because of how competitive it is,” Angelone

says. “We have to do everything we can now to keep as many of our services in-house as possible.”

In making the transition, the company made an initial investment of \$200,000 in equipment and staff. It trained its workers, hired a licensed applicator and bought chemical application equipment, trucks, trailers and hydromulch equipment.

“To spend \$200,000 in light of the \$1 million we were spending previously, it seemed like the right idea, and it turned out it was,” Angelone says. “And I’ll tell you what, we won’t go back. No more subcontractors on landscaping services. It’s such a bad marketing tactic to have another landscape company on one of your projects.”

It’s much better, he says, to have your own employees—and American has 110 of them year-round—getting face time and interacting with clients.

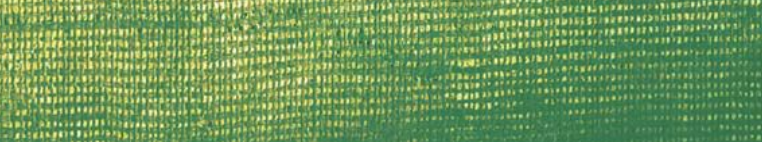
Today, the company pays for minor upkeep on the equipment as well as for the ongoing labor costs, which are only about 20 percent of what they were with subcontractors.

“Now we can capture \$750,000 to \$800,000 more of gross profit than we could before,” Angelone says.

Finding an experienced licensed chemical applicator wasn’t easy, Angelone adds, so the company hired a new person with no experience, sent him through training and built the department around him. “It took four to six months for us to get him ready, but he matched our company style,” Angelone says.

The insourcing delivered, and not only on profits.

“There was better and more consistent communication overall, and we have more knowledge of what’s happening on our properties,” Angelone asserts. “We’ve long been a full-service company. Now we’re a full-service company that’s doing it all on our own.” —Beth Geraci



#2

Moving to a four-day workweek

Company: Clean Scapes

Location: Austin, Texas

LM150 rank: 53

Never underestimate the power of a good motivational seminar.

After attending a GIE+Expo presentation extolling the virtues of the four-day workweek, Ivan Giraldo decided to implement the idea at his company.

“We started pushing it very hard and implementing it in 2008,” says Giraldo, who is president of Austin, Texas-based Clean Scapes.

Five years later, Giraldo is pleased with the results.

Shifting the company’s property-maintenance crews to four-day workweeks has reduced overtime and helped manage steadily creeping fuel prices, Giraldo says.

The shorter workweek has led to a 10 percent reduction in overall labor costs for the company’s property-maintenance division, which employs 130 or so people during the busy season, he says.

Giraldo also has seen a reduction in vehicle wear and tear.

“The less time they’re out on the road, the better,” he says.

Less time on the road also equals less fuel consumption. While Giraldo notes that rising fuel prices have erased any potential savings from the shorter workweek, the company has been able to keep its fuel costs flat—a nice achievement in today’s environment.

There have been a few speed bumps. Hourly crew workers worried that their paychecks would take a big hit from the shorter workweek.

“We had a little bit of pushback from the crew members,” Giraldo says.

They bought in, though, when they saw they still could log 40 hours of work—plus a few hours of overtime—in a four-day span, with the added bonus of an extra day off.

Another concern was getting five days’ worth of work done in four days. However, Giraldo notes that property-maintenance crews have adapted beautifully.

“When you’re doing the work in four days, you need to plan it better,” he says. “The guys just work a little more efficiently, because they know that they have to



finish the job in four days. Even if they would like to work more hours, night will come eventually, and they cannot work anymore.”

Ivan Giraldo (right) and Rigoberto Esparza walk a Clean Scapes account.

Around the same time Clean Scapes shifted to a four-day workweek, the company installed GPS tracking devices on all of its trucks. While Giraldo emphasizes that the company uses the devices to help with time tracking, route selection and job costing—and not as a punitive tool—he acknowledges the mere presence of the GPS devices encourages workers to use their time efficiently.

“Of course everybody knows it’s there, so everybody becomes a little more conscious of how they spend their time,” he says. “If I used to spend an extra 15 or 20 minutes at the 7-Eleven, now I know that I shouldn’t and I can’t because that’s going to be registered on my GPS.” —*Josh Cable*



Ivan Giraldo

Using mobile technology

Company: DLC Resources

Location: Phoenix, Ariz.

LM150 rank: 72

#3

Landscape companies provide the most value when their crews are out in the field—not in the office filing paperwork.

That’s why Phoenix-based DLC Resources equips its managers, foremen and other field personnel with iPhones and iPads, CEO Jeff Penney explains.

“This is about harnessing technology to drive value,” Penney says. “Value to us is: 1). keeping our field managers out of the office and in the field with our clients, and 2). being more in tune with our customers’ needs.”

Since the initial rollout in spring 2012, Penney estimates that 130 field personnel—including foremen,

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Jeff Penney



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mechanics and irrigators—now have iPhones, while some 30 department and field managers have iPads.

Penney points to several examples of how the mobile devices have boosted communication, improved document management and made processes more efficient.

Armed with iPhones, foremen now electronically file their time-cards on Friday afternoons, versus the old method of bringing their paper timecards to the office on Monday mornings.

“So now on Monday mornings, we’re talking about the future with our people,” Penney says. “We’re not talking about the past—that’s already been wrapped up.”

The devices also have changed the dynamic between field personnel and customers.

Each planned community serviced by DLC Resources has access to a customized Web portal, which includes work orders, proposals, weekly schedules, maps and other pertinent information for the landscaper and the client.

Field managers now can connect to the Web portals via an icon on their iPads, giving them access to key project documents that previ-

ously might have been available only in paper form.

“Essentially, everybody is updated on an hourly basis, so [customers’] need for sit-down time with us is less, because we’re not talking about the past, if you will,” Penney says. “And when we do sit down with them, we’re talking about the future—not ‘Here’s what we did.’ That’s already been communicated.”

Among other key benefits, the mobile devices have made it easier to locate underground utilities. Using Google Maps and an iPad app called GIS Pro that harnesses geographic information system technology, field personnel can geolocate underground utilities—or “blue stakes,” as they’re called in some parts of the country—more precisely before excavating.

“It removes the guesswork from the process,” Penney says.

While DLC Resources is reaping the benefits of equipping its field personnel with electronic devices, this is not the company’s first foray into mobile technology. Prior to spring 2012, field managers carried BlackBerrys.

However, the company has found that the Apple devices “are a lot more capable and user-friendly,” Penney says.

“Some of our power users who had iPhones for personal use had to educate us,” Penney says. “They said, ‘Hey, these things are a lot better, and they’ll be better for work.’” —*Josh Cable*

At DLC Resources about 30 managers have iPads and 130 field personnel have iPhones.



Hosting client education sessions

#4

Company: Earthworks

Location: Lillian, Texas

LM150 rank: 95

You don’t have to be a school-teacher to be rewarded for educating others. Just ask the staff at Earthworks. In 2009, Earthworks began educating its commercial clients on drought management and water conservation methods. It found that teaching can be quite profitable.

“When the economy started to tank, our clients wanted to save money, and we saw a move from them to start to do irrigation repairs themselves,” says Earthworks President Chris Lee. “We thought, ‘This could either be a terrible thing or it could be an opportunity for us.’”

To create goodwill, Earthworks decided to talk to its clients and explain to them the right way to make those repairs—not for a fee, just as a courtesy. The result surprised Lee.

“Inadvertently, it started to drive new business our way,” Lee says. “It convinced people that they didn’t have the resources to do these repairs and would have to come up with the money. They didn’t understand that there are miles of pipe and water pressure and electricity. They realized, ‘Wow, there’s a reason people get licensed to do this.’”

Earthworks’ initiative to educate clients on responsible water use took another lucrative turn in 2012, when conversations about water shortages, restrictions and drought became more frequent in Texas, faced as it was with one of the fastest-growing populations in the country.