

An (Intra) Net Gain for Landscapes Unlimited

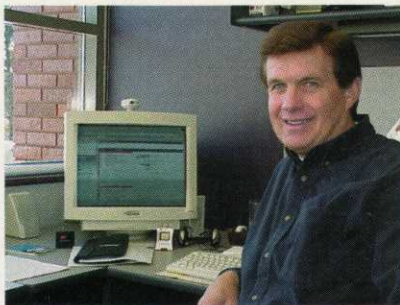
By Larry Aylward, Editor

C. David Rolfe looks as at home behind his cutting-edge computer as Jeff Gordon does behind the steering wheel of a suped-up race car. You can tell that Rolfe is enjoying his job as chief information officer of Lincoln, Neb.-based Landscapes Unlimited.

Rolfe is the brains behind the golf course building company's intranet site, which has worked like a charm for the company the last two years.

"We're taking the Web site to our clients as a service," says Rolfe, who has 25 years of experience in the technology industry in addition to a passion for golf. "It's a quick and easy method of communication."

Brad Schmidt, vice president of operations for Landscapes Unlimited, says the company's CEO, Bill Kubly, demands that building projects be finished on time and within budget without sacrificing quality. Schmidt says Rolfe and the intranet play a vital role in fulfilling Kubly's mission.



C. David Rolfe is the man behind Landscapes Unlimited's enlightening intranet site.

"If we provide more real-time information, we can make better decisions as we go along," Schmidt says.

The company's intranet functions as a daily report. Landscapes Unlimited construction superintendents can take digital photographs and download them to the site so clients can view them. The superintendents also have laptop computers to write reports and post them on the site. "As a course moves through construction, [a client] can see the progress on a daily basis," Schmidt says.

Schmidt recalls the first project — a Tom Fazio track in Barbados — that

used the company's intranet technology. Fazio was in North Carolina, the golf course owner was in Ireland and Landscapes Unlimited was in Lincoln. But all three could simultaneously review reports and photographs of the project on the intranet.

"If Fazio wanted to know about a bunker on a course, the superintendent in Barbados would take digital photos of that bunker and download them," Schmidt says. "Then Fazio could see them within 15 minutes."

Rolfe says it's important to keep technology simple for construction superintendents so they spend most of their time on courses, not on computers.

"They don't have to be tech-savvy," Rolfe says. "We use technology in the most simple form we can find to make it easy for them."

No one is saying that the intranet can replace the real thing, however.

"We still have to go to the construction sites," Schmidt says. "But the intranet allows us to participate in a visual sense more often."

Quotable

"It was a grueling experience. I think I pulled every muscle in my legs, and I could barely walk for three days. But it was well worth it, and I'd definitely do it again."

— Mark Phelps, assistant pro at Portage CC in Akron, Ohio, on golfing 300 holes in one day to raise \$17,000 for Akron Children's Hospital.

"Rabbit shooters and rabbit killers weren't good enough for them, so

we started calling them pest controllers."

— Eddie Adams, head greenskeeper of St. Andrews, talking about changing titles for some of his crew members.

"All George Bush had to tell Al Gore was the Rule 2-4 was in effect."

— David Finney, certified superintendent of Virginia National GC, referring to the rule of golf that prevents players from rescinding concessions.

"It has been a good run."

— Agronomist Stan Zontek, who celebrates his 30th anniversary with USGA this month.