



# TURFGRASS MATTERS

March 2014

## The “Vendor’s” Perspective

*“The real value of the GIS is this concentrated and dedicated face to face networking time”*

Each year as we transition between seasons in the golf industry, as we move from one tradeshow into the next, there are certain activities that remind us just how quickly time passes. The annual Golf Industry Show, or GIS, is the most significant of those key ‘off-season’ events for me. Depending on your geography, the timing of this event may or may not mark the beginning of the next golfing season; in the mid-Atlantic it is really up to Mother Nature. Weather aside, the timing of this show is such that most people have mentally transitioned into the new calendar year, and with most other tradeshows behind us, it really

marks the beginning of a new season for vendors supporting the industry.

Aside from the fact that the weather is always nicer at the show than it is in the mid-Atlantic in February, the real value of this time away from the normal routine is that we have an opportunity to see many customers and industry associates in a concentrated period of time. It is valuable time to spend reconnecting with old friends while also developing new relationships. Considering the various modes of communication we have in this ever-changing age of electronics, one might conclude that this show has diminished in value for vendors as technology has altered how we gather and share information. My feeling is that the value of the GIS for vendors has actually risen in this age of digital communication, but not because of it. Before we go back into our routines of emails, texts, e-blasts, Facebook posting and tweeting, we have an opportunity to kick the season off right with some good old fashioned face-to-face networking. When I boil it all down, the real value of the GIS is this concentrated and dedicated face-to-face networking time.

On the tradeshow floor, hundreds of distributors and manu-

facturers eagerly await customers and prospects to stop by their booth so that we can show off what’s new and exciting for the upcoming season. While new product helps attract customers into the booth and we hope that our products become the “talk of the show”, our goal is to engage in conversations with customers. However, if a vendor relies solely on the new product lures, then the GIS may not provide an acceptable return on investment as the number of interactions may be too few.

In order to maximize the value of the GIS, anyone can mitigate the risk of having too few interactions while at the GIS. Value is a relative term and I am certain that some individuals achieve greater value from the GIS than others. Between the tradeshow, association meetings, lunch meetings, and various other events it doesn’t take long to fill up one’s schedule with opportunities to network with customers and

industry associates. The formula is simple – the harder one works preparing for, and then executing a plan for the GIS, the greater the overall value of the show. All it takes is setting some appointments ahead of time and then good time management during the show to ensure several quality customer interactions. We want to know what you expect from us before, during, and after the show, so please allow us the opportunity to understand this ahead of time so that we can prepare to meet those expectations. For any vendor, the GIS is just like most things in life, the more we put into it, the more we get out of it.

So, scheduled appointment or not, whenever you’re passing through a vendor’s booth at the GIS or any other tradeshow for that matter, please allow us the opportunity to understand how we may be able to help you be more productive and successful in the

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