

In the future more than half the landscape construction work in the U.S. may be done by design/ build companies, according to the latest Weeds Trees & Turfindustry

This prediction is based on three findings. First, more than 60 percent of landscape architects polled are in favor of the design/ build concept. Second, commercial/industrial work is considered the most recession-proof and preferred part of construction by both architects and contractors. Small contractors, who have done designs for residential work, are improving their design capabilities to reach the commercial/ industrial market. Third, architects desire greater control over both construction and maintenance of their designs.

Surprisingly, the contractors surveyed are decreasing the amount of maintenance work they do for more construction and design work. Increased competition in maintenance may be part of the reason. The contractors recognize the excellent potential of maintenance services but they have actually moved away from maintenance, according to the dollar volume of work they do in design, construction, and mainte-

Architects are already heavily involved in the commercial/ industrial sector. They prefer working as a consultant to the property owner over working for the general contractor or a subcontractor (that would include landscape contractors). More than two-thirds offer follow-up inspection and maintenance guidelines for an additional fee. Working with the contractor before, during, and after installation is their only way to assure their design is carried out as intended.

It was evident from the survey results that nearly a third of the architects want to stay away from the construction end of the business and concentrate on consulting governmental agencies in

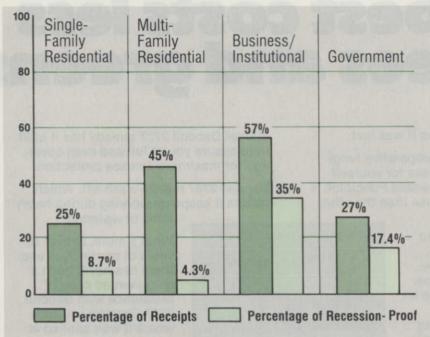
land use and other large institutions. They don't want the hassle of scheduling work crews, financing materials, and dealing with Mother Nature first hand. These are much the same reasons why building architects resist construction management.

The need for contractor and architect to work together is agreed. Yet it seems that contractors and architects are far apart in certain beliefs, particularly education. While landscape architects are strongly in favor of licensing, which requires a degree, more than two-thirds of the landscape contractors surveved do not look for a college degree when hiring their foremen or middle managers.

The attitude of learning the business from the ground up is firmly entrenched in the minds of contractors. They are willing to pay young managers \$12,000 to \$18,000 if they have solid on-thejob experience.

Contractors recognize the

Types of Work by Percentage of Gross Receipts. Architects



advantages of college-trained people. "They tend to be good at decision-making and have good insight to problems when they arise," one contractor said. "On the other hand, they are not always willing to work every task or area, and at times seem more interested in salary or advancement than learning the work." Leadership, initiation, and understanding instructions are three other benefits of college grads listed by contractors.

No amount of education will make up for a lack of experience in the minds of contractors. "We find it takes one year to 18 months to get a new hire up to speed," another contractor said. "The best indicator of a good college grad is his willingness to do "all" types of work, to get dirty, and to be adept

with equipment."

Contractors say the potential for design work is satisfactory but that the potential for construction is greater. The architects sur-



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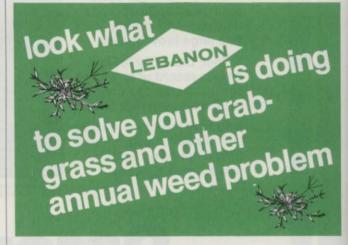


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Circle No. 156 on Reader Inquiry Card

Potential for Business, Contractors

	POTENTIAL		
	Great	Satisfactory	Poor
DESIGN	21.2%	54.5%	15%
CONSTRUCTION	54.5%	42.4%	3%
MAINTENANCE	51.5%	30.3%	6%

veyed predict design work to grow by 15 percent in 1984, 9.5 percent in 1985, 9.8 percent in 1986, and 12.3 percent in 1987. These are averages. Some architects expect business to grow more than 30 percent per year for the next four years. Others forecast reductions of 10 to 30 percent.

Layoffs were widespread the past three years with 49 percent of the contractors. Nearly a fourth of the contractors shifted construction crewmembers to other types of work to keep them on the payroll during the recession.

A fourth of the contractors said their work never slowed. Half said business is picking up and the future is bright. More than 20 percent, however, indicated local economic conditions were holding them back indefinitely.

Forty-four percent of the contractors said they are now buying equipment which they put off buying the past three years. Thatmeans everyone except the con-

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tractors held back by local conditions are buying as normal.

Architects say they do regularly recommend contractors for their work. The most important things they look for in a contractor are the quality of workmanship, following directions, understanding and accepting the purpose of the landscape plan, finishing all the work on schedule, and honest bidding. The architects want contractors to discuss substitutions and quality of plant material with them without fighting the plan.

Contractors deny that substitutions are a major problem but doubt if architects check with local nurseries before specifying plants. They also feel nurseries should share the risk of a guarantee with them more than they do. More than half the contractors said they would consider lowering the installed price of material if they received a one-year maintenance contract following installation.

Type of Work by Percentage of Gross Receipts, Contractors

	1981	1982	1983	
DESIGN	13.7%	15.6%	19.4%	
CONSTRUCTION	44.8%	47%	50.6%	
MAINTENANCE	52.7%	49.1%	50.6%	

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LANDSCAPENT MANAGEMENT

Courting Success

"Growing people," a commitment to quality and delivering what the client wants are specialties of the Brickman group -- one of the largest design/build, maintenance companies in the nation.

by Maureen Hrehocik, managing editor

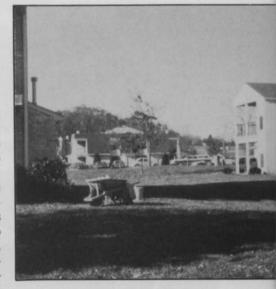
Dick Brickman makes success seem so easy.

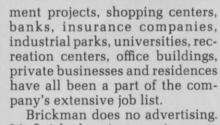
Like an athlete in training, his companies, Brickman Industries and the Theodore Brickman Co., continually reach for the best -- in recruiting, training, management and motivation of their people and excellence in all phases of their work.

"Some teams play offense, some defense. We do both," says Brickman, 52, president and chief executive officer of the Brickman

Simply, Brickman's statement sums up the corporate philosophy of one of the major success stories in the design/build, maintenance business. Brickman Industries, the maintenance portion of the business, and the Theodore Brickman Co., the design/build portion, forming the Brickman group, is the largest company of its kind in the country.

Dollar volume for 1983 is expected to be around \$14 million. Next year, the company hopes to do \$16 million. Brickman also owns the 40-acre Maple Leaf Nursery in Long Grove, IL. It supplies to Brickman jobs only. The Brickman corporate client list includes AT&T, Allied Corporation, Arco Chemicals, Bell Labs, Exxon, McDonalds Corp. and Rustoleum. Condominium and apart-





Brickman does no advertising. It's finished projects are its greatest public relations tool.

And while Dick Brickman is proud of the projects his company has worked on, it is in the company's people where the greatest investment has been made.

"We can only grow as quickly as we can grow people," says Brickman, sitting in his newest branch office in Langhorne, PA, right outside of Philadelphia.

"We look to long-term tenure of our employees and because of this we have very low turnover. We want to grow for financial reasons,



John Mickle, left, marketing and sales manager for the East territory, Don Synnestvedt, operations manager of Brickman Industries, and Dick Brickman, president and chief executive officer of the Brickman group.



A condominum development in Lancaster, PA, before and after the Brickman group designed and executed the landscaping.

but equally important to us is growing to satisfy the creative needs of our employees."

Teamwork

Intensive training programs, continuing education on the enrichment and graduate levels, and regular discussion sessions with employees and supervisors are some of Brickman's ways of investing in his people.

"As chief executive officer, it's my job to be the main company cheerleader and set the motivational tone. Everyone has his own style. I'm not a speech-giver. I believe in more personal contact. I have a dedicated, sincere interest

in our people."

The corporate structure of the company is streamline. Dick Brickman, as president, oversees the entire company and is responsible for planning, major clients and policy-making. His brother, Bob, in Long Grove, is executive vice president. Don Synnestvedt, in Langhorne, is operations manager of Brickman Industries and oversees all four of the company's maintenance divisions. Bruce Hunt in Illinois is operations manager of design/build with a Langhorne and Long Grove division employing 20 landscape architects. On the same level is a finance head and marketing sales

manager, each with an east and west division. Depending on the season, Brickman employs between 200 and 500 people. Each Brickman office, in Long Grove, Langhorne, Morristown, NJ and Laurel, MD, has developed its own, specific training program.

In the maintenance division, employees are given a 28-component test, ranging from job planning to employee relations representing 400 hours of training. The division also has a 40hour winter program.

Behavioral analysis tests are given before promotions and everyone is evaluated semiannually.



"While there is no pass/fail, this type of test gives phenomenal insight into a person," explained Brickman. "Sometimes we've seen the results years later."

For the most part, the company has formulated its own training programs, but has also adapted from corporate training programs such as Perron-Ambrose and Kraft.

Everything from MBA degrees to personal enrichment courses are encouraged -- and financed -by Brickman after an employee has been with the company a year.

"We've never declined a request from an employee for any kind of course," said Brickman.

When hiring, the Brickman group is looking more and more

toward trained managers, people from graduate and specialty schools and strong on the business side.

"Traditionally, the type of person attracted to this field are those who like to make things look healthy and who are more 'artsy.' There aren't too many with a business background."

Brickman said 80 percent of the company's recruiting is done through schools.

The company also plans to formally start "quality circle" groups. In these sessions a trained leader or superintendent meets with employees once a week to hash out company issues as they apply to customers.

"This really gives us a chance

to get our field people involved in the decision-making process," explained Brickman.

At a more basic level, Brickman believes in cross-training his employees to provide the type of service clients need. The designers are taught what goes into maintaining a project and the maintenance group is taught to understand the intent of the design.

Back door

"Our designers are in the field," he says. "In the client's mind we provide a total service, that's why we cross train."

Brickman said design/build used to be considered unprofessional. Now, it is the fastest growing segment of the industry. Profit in this area is no longer a dirty

'With many firms today, design/build is looked upon as a fad," said Brickman. "Some contractors have looked to it to avoid the bidding process." At Brickman, design/build is hardly a fad.

"We look on design/build as a sculpturing process," said Brickman. "The execution is as much a design project as it is at the conceptual stage. We want to control a project until it looks right."

The design philosophy at Brickman keeps in mind the costs of construction and maintenance. The way a design is put together effects the maintenance.

Brickman got into the maintenance end of the business through the proverbial back door.

It was while the company was working on the McDonald's hamburger corporate headquarters in Oakbrook, IL, that the question of maintenance surfaced.

"I remember Fred Turner (of McDonald's) asking me once we completed our work, who was going to take care of it," recalled Brickman. "You can guess what our answer was. That's when we really got started in the maintenance business."

So, in 1977, the company turned its attention to aggressively pursuing just maintenance contracts.

Maintenance, now the foundation of the company's revenues, accounts for 60 percent of business (around \$8 or \$9 million) and Brickman would like to see it become 2/3 of the company's business in the future.

Don Synnestvedt, maintenance operations manager, oversees all four of the company's maintenance operations. Synnestvedt's background has been in the landscaping and nursery business, working with his uncle, Ralph, at Synnestvedt Nurseries in the Chicago area. He has been with Brickman 13 years and is now based in Langhorne, where, with his other duties, is temporarily in charge of the maintenance division there.

Besides the obvious financial

benefits of the division, Brickman says one of the most important things about maintenance is it serves as the "security blanket" for the company's design/build division.

"Because we maintain a project, we can preserve the design integrity our architects have built into each site.

"Our getting into maintenance was a stroke of genius," Brickman continued, "because it provides

Brickman believes in cross-training his employees to provide the type of service clients' expect.

us with an insurance for a project. If properly designed and maintained, a project can be an asset that really grows.'

Because of the quality of its work, the company has won many awards, and, according to Brickman, these are the company's best calling cards.

"The area we've really been deficient in is marketing and strategic planning." Brickman said in the Chicago area especially, there are a number of firms copying their work - and cutting prices to

'We've been a little too complacent (in the marketing area)." he said.

That lack of strategic planning, though, hasn't seemed to hobble the company's growth.

In the beginning

Theodore W. Brickman, Dick's father, is the founder of the Brickman group. At 77, he is chairman of the board and still keeps abreast of the company's business. It is Dick, though, who runs the dayto-day affairs. Brickman Sr. was drawn into the horticultural business in Texas. Later he was in charge of the gardens at the Century of Progress International

Exposition in Chicago in the 30s.

In 1939, after working with the Chicago Park System as a horticulturist, he started his own landscape business in Glenview. IL. His business was interrupted in 1941 with the start of World War II and gas rationing. In 1945, Brickman reopened his business. It wasn't until 1957 that Dick Brickman, after getting his degree in landscape architecture from the University of Illinois, joined his father. In 1959, Theodore Brickman Co. was incorporated and moved to Long Grove, Bob Brickman became active in the firm in 1961. With Dick's arrival and that of Bruce Hunt in 1961 (Hunt is currently operations manager of design/build), the company started to evolve away from its "grass cutting" image and into landscaping. "When we first started out in the business, we were mainly in residential,' recalls Brickman. "I got sick of dealing with housewives. We went through a transitional period where we didn't do any residential work.'

A project for Standard Oil was their first major design/build job.

"We got the contract for landscaping all the Oasis gas stops along the Illinois Toll Road," recalled Brickman. "That one job was worth more than we made all year. It scared the hell out of Dad. As it turned out, we did the project, but on a smaller scale.'

Now, most of the company's contracts are in the commercial and institutional areas, although if a major client needs something residential done, Brickman will usually do it.

"We've had some very successful residential projects," he said.

With the company's continued growth, branch offices continue to be a necessity; operations in Langhorne were set up in 1977, in the Washington area in 1980.

"We create branches where it's necessary within the limits of our resources - mainly people resources," said Brickman.

Brickman says he has no plans continued on page 98

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

Riding the Tide

Bill Orr is young and ambitious. His landscape contracting business, Houston Landscape Associates, is steadily growing while many area landscape contracting businesses are falling by the wayside.

by Maureen Hrehocik, managing editor



An entrance to 6363 Woodway, a Houston complex. Containerized plants add softness to well-manicured turf and bedding plants.

Bill Orr, a Houston landscape contractor, was returning home from work one day a few years ago, when he saw Spot, his dalmatian, in the middle of the road, licking the hand of a complete stranger.

He stopped to talk to the man Spot had befriended. As it turned out, the stranger, a developer, had stopped to admire a piece of landscaping Orr had done and Spot had stopped to check-out the stranger.

From that purely chance meeting, Orr and the developer began a business relationship that resulted in about nine projects for

the then-aspiring landscape contractor.

That type of business relationship was important to Bill Orr back in those leaner days.

After quitting a secure position with a Houston landscape design/build firm, Landscape Design Associates, Orr started his own company, Houston Landscape Associates in 1974.

At first, he was partner with two principals from LDA. The plan was that Orr would supply the ideas and brain power and LDA would provide work for Orr from an already-established client list. After six months, though, Orr thought he could handle the business — and the profits — better on his own.

He worked out of his one-bedroom apartment; his drafting table tucked away in a corner. Business-wise, he found that he wasn't an established-enough name to command the type of contracts he needed to stay afloat. That's why any type of help was appreciated, even from his dog. While his profits diminished, his ambition didn't.

Things have changed. Houston Landscape Associates will do about \$1.6 million in business this year and averaged \$1.5 million each of the previous two years. Contracts have been signed already with buildings that have yet to start construction. The 35-year-old has branched out as 50 percent partner in another satellite company, HLA Construction, whose success potential Orr describes as "like sitting on a powder keg."

A thoroughbred

Houston Landscape Associates has carved a unique niche for itself in the competitive Houston landscape contracting scene. While many landscape contractors are languishing at a dead period in the Houston construction boom, Orr's company, mainly because of the quality of it's work and attitude toward projects, is moving ahead.

"We're riding the tide," Orr

says.

"We have a good sense of taste and we're not a bit bashful about saying to a contractor a change needs to be made," Orr continued. "We're best at more elaborate design plans and projects with more frills, because we pay attention to detail. We're not a mass production-type contractor.

continued on page 60

We've been accused of being too slow, but it pays off in the end."

Orr also said he doesn't believe in bidding low just to get a contract.

'Attitude to me is extremely important," he explained. "We're more interested in making a project a success than in making a profit. I try to price my work high enough to accomodate any changes that may have to be made when we get into it."

That attention to detail and excellence has spawned a very mutually-satisfying relationship with Houston's largest landscape design company, the SWA Group.

Building clientele

Orr shared a client at an office project called Riverway in Houston with SWA. SWA liked what it saw and has used Orr's company frequently since then.

Kevin Shanley, a landscape architect with SWA said, "Bill does very high quality work and that's why we've kept up our rela-

tionship with him.'

Many local contractors credit SWA with changing the landscape design and contracting face of Houston. Their trademark style is literally everywhere in the city park-like atmospheres, inviting people to use the landscape, not just look at it; pedestrian bridges interlocking the scores of highrise office and shopping structures; a softening of what was a very sterile and cold downtown Houston area. In other words, sophistication.

Orr's company has also been involved with Joe Russo, a developer. Together, they have worked on three or four "landmark" projects, according to Orr. He is also responsible and particularly proud of his work at Sage Plaza One, another Houston office complex.

Houston Landscape Associates has done the landscaping for numerous Russo office buildings in downtown Houston, including 7500 San Felipe, 1616 Voss and 6363 Woodway.



Bill F. Orr

"The San Felipe building is the perfect example of what we like to do," said Orr. "Joe Russo believes strongly in what the landscape can do in attracting tenants to buildings.'

The San Felipe building was also Orr's first taste of "hardscaping," fountains, walkways and pedestrian bridge-type constructions and what lead him into a partnership with Joe Schofield, a contractor. HLA Contracting was

'We've been at it for a little less than a year now and it hasn't been easy," Orr commented. "Joe and I have butted heads, but things are falling into place. This company is filling a void in the market."

Orr explained that void through his own company.

"Most of Houston Landscape Associate's competitors haven't figured out how to tackle the hardscape aspect of their work. This left an interesting niche to fill. They usually have to lean on a general contractor to do it. HLA Construction fills that niche. We provide an important convenience to the client.'

Business for HLA Construction is, in Orr's words, "as good as I want it to be."

The company did \$3/4 million in business in '83 and Orr is shooting for \$2 to \$3 million in '84.

The availability of work in this segment of the industry is unbelievable. But, we're going to take it one step at a time.'

Orr and Schofield want to get

involved in recreation centers. but aren't known in that market yet.

"Recreation centers are John's bailiwick," said Orr.

Orr characterizes himself as a cautious businessman.

"I'm responsible for sales for HLA Construction and I've purposely been cautious. I don't want to move too fast and undermine what we already have accomplished with the company.'

Orr said he and his partner also didn't realize the time commitment the new company would demand.

"I'm not a workaholic," Orr admits. "I'll work 16 hours a day if I need to, but not to the point where my family-life suffers."

Art in the landscape

Orr got his B.S. degree in park administration with an emphasis on landscape architecture from Texas Tech in August of '72.

"I dabbled in business courses for a year and did lousy. I took a vear of architecture and did O.K. I took a course in art and did real well and applied it to landscape architecture.'

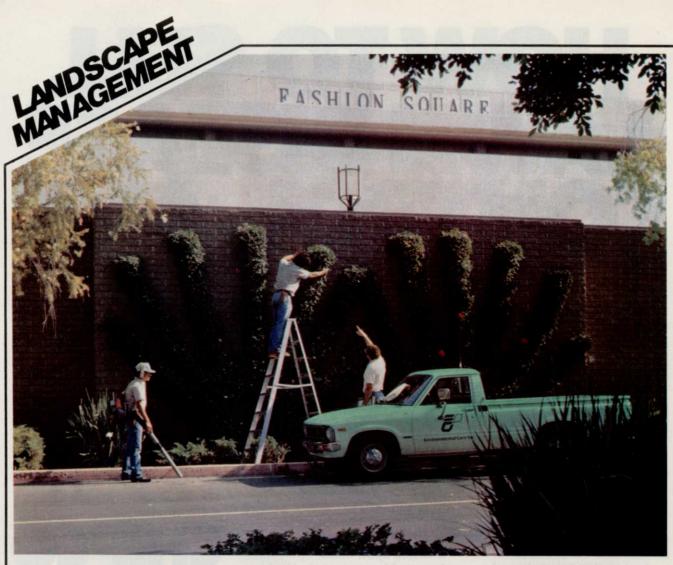
Orr went into landscape contracting for three reasons: he liked it, he knew he could do it, and it was easy. He admits his business sense was learned by the seat of his pants and from consultants he's surrounded himself with who understand him and his com-

"With most of the consultants I've worked with, we have an almost father-son relationship,' said Orr. "I knew I could do the landscape side if I could just get the business side nailed down.

It's people like Warren Purdy and business consultant John Gannon who have congealed the business side of Orr's company.

"Warren realizes that landscape contractors are more doers than thinkers. I searched and searched for an accountant who understood our business and finally found one who does. Same thing with our attorneys. They are the type of people who take a per-

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Environmental Industries Inc. Grows as Fast as Its People Can

Large west coast company avoids publicity and concentrates on building a company around its employees

by Bruce F. Shank, executive editor

The management of Environmental Industries, Calabasas, CA. doesn't seek publicity. Success is something they don't like to flaunt. In fact, many people still think 'the big landscape company in California' is Valley Crest Landscape, it's old name.

'Although we have grown rapidly, we are not motivated by taking over the nursery, construction, or maintenance business," says Bruce Wilson, president of Environmental Care Inc., the maintenance subsidiary. "Our growth is based more on our people and our customers than it is on sales objectives. We try to grow at a rate that provides opportunity for our people without the wheels falling off. Good employees want growth and opportunity. So, we grow at the rate our staff can take on more work." Environmental Industries has grown from \$28 million to \$60 million in sales in five years.

"As a rule, we enter new cities, like Houston and Denver, when one of our California clients asks us to handle facilities there," Wilson states. "We started the

Houston branch when Shell Development Co., a Los Angeles customer, asked us to take over maintenance at its West Hollow Research Center. We took the job and built the Houston branch around the Shell job."

"You can't go into a city and start a branch as if you are Mac-Donalds," Wilson pointed out. "It takes years to get your name to the right people and to be accepted as not being an "out-of-towner".

Behind this seemingly loose style is a finely-tuned machine driven by Burton Sperber, president and chairman. "His philoso-phy," Wilson states, "is to let the branches worry about business and corporate to handle details such as banking, insurance and benefits."

From this service core, branch out four subsidiaries. Environmental Care Inc. is the maintenance branch. There are two landscape construction companies, Valley Crest Landscape Inc. and Western Landscape Construction. Valley Crest is the 35year-old company Sperber built into Environmental Industries. The fourth subsidiary is Valley Crest Tree Co., a nursery operation. The subsidiaries have offices in California, Colorado, Texas, and Arizona with roughly 1,500 employees.

Starting at the bottom

Wilson grew up in Rye, NY, was graduated from Cornell University in 1969, and worked for Starner Tree Service in Harrison, NY, for almost two years. In 1970, he and his wife decided there was no better time to try the "California life" and moved to Los Angeles.

Sperber had just purchased Green Valley Landscape maintenance company from Joe Marsh and formed Environmental Care with Marsh as president. Marsh hired Wilson, started him trimming hedges and mowing turf. Wilson, after working his way up to branch manager, became president of the subsidiary upon Marsh's retirement in 1979.

This 'start at the bottom' policy is still in effect. "It is a disadvantage in recruiting college graduates since they often believe college permits them to skip field work," Wilson muses. "But, they are much more effective later on if they have experienced the type of work they manage."

Keys to growth

Green Valley specialized in municipal and industrial landscape maintenance. Environmental Care has continued that specialization with more emphasis on industrial and multi-family residential. "We are being moved out of municipal work by low bidders," Wilson said. "Public work is very volatile, going out to bid every two to three years. Industrial/commercial work is based more on quality and reliability than low price.'

We are also experiencing an influx of landscape construction companies competing for maintenance work to cover overhead while construction is off. This is cyclical, fortunately, and we'll get our share back when construction picks up again."

"We are not adverse to bidding," Wilson adds. "We make our own subsidiaries bid for work we do. Our biggest problem with bidding in maintenance is most clients don't have specifications. so they are not comparing apples to apples.'

Much of Environmental Industries' success today is based on establishing good relationships with developers and corporate level property managers. "A majority of construction and maintenance is in the hands of a

Headquarters for Environmental Industries in Calabasas, California.



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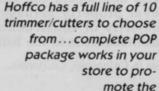
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Bruce Wilson, president of Environmental Care.

few individuals," Wilson points out. "Impress them with performance, fairness, and quality, and you become part of their team. Undoubtedly, there is danger in relying too greatly on a few accounts, so we try to balance each branch with a variety of accounts."

Attracting a variety of accounts requires flexibility. Large construction work is primarily union, so Valley Crest Landscape, run by Burton Sperber, is union. For smaller, more competitive construction work, Western Landscape Construction, run by Stan Colton, is non-union. To supply plant material to its own construction companies, as well as other landscapers, Environmental Industries has Valley Crest Tree Company, run by Burt's brother Stuart.

After the landscape is in and the unions leave the job site, Environmental Care's non-union crews can take over with maintenance. "We don't generally offer separate maintenance services such as weed control or fertilization," says Wilson. "We do it all, pruning, mowing, flower care, tree spraying, everything. We are not a chemical application company. We use chemicals where they are needed and when they save labor. We don't charge extra for chemicals when needed. All problems and needs are taken care of as part of our overall service.' WT&T



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ORR from page 60

sonal interest in what we do. Not too many people understand what we do and that ours is a profession that deals with living things."

Calculated ambitions

Orr keeps his own operation lean. Ed Olson has worked as senior field supervisor and estimator for Orr for about seven years. Linda Crist has taken over about 60 percent of the estimating and does all of the scheduling of material delivery and purchasing. Orr's wife, Diane, is office manager and bookkeeper. There are three foremen in the field, each with five or six laborers. ("We're capable of doubling that capacity overnight," Orr said.) The company owns five pick-up trucks (two are 2-1/2-ton dumps), one Bobcat front-end skid loader with attachments and one 300-gallon spray tank.

"Most of the heavy stuff like grading, hydro-mulching and irrigation, we subcontract out," he said.

His modest office sits on an acre of land on Houston's west side. The backyard is a potpourri of one-of-a-kind plant leftovers, things "we've been too hard-headed to throw away."

Most of Orr's plant material comes from growers in Louisiana, California and Florida. He only grows a few larger containerized trees in the front yard of his office. Orr says his biggest technical problem is the Houston soil condition.

"Everything is clay and lots of bed preparation is necessary which makes it difficult. We are blessed with a good climate, though.

Orr's company is also blessed with a practical and realistic

"I do suffer from blind ambition sometimes. I always knew I could compensate where I failed. But I know my limitations and my reputation is too important to me to go beyond those limits." WT&T

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of expanding farther west than Chicago, but the Florida market is a ripe area. His nursery may also be another area of expansion in the future.

"We don't actively seek branches, but if we see good growth potential, we'll look into it."

Brickman feels competition is healthy and has no concerns about his company ever replacing the smaller landscape businessman.

"There's plenty of room for both," he says. "Just by the nature of how our companies do business, we define our market. Even our equipment is specialized for the type of business we do."

Brickman, a Howard-Price dealer, is proud of the 104-inch bat-wing rotary mower Howard developed and Brickman tested. It will be marketed this spring.

"This machine was created out of a need for this size mower in this market," Brickman said. "We see ourselves getting more and more involved in the development and dealership of equipment in the future."

Brickman's operation in Long Grove is unionized. He says it presents no problem.

"Where we run into a union situation we work with it and deal with the issues up front."

A legacy

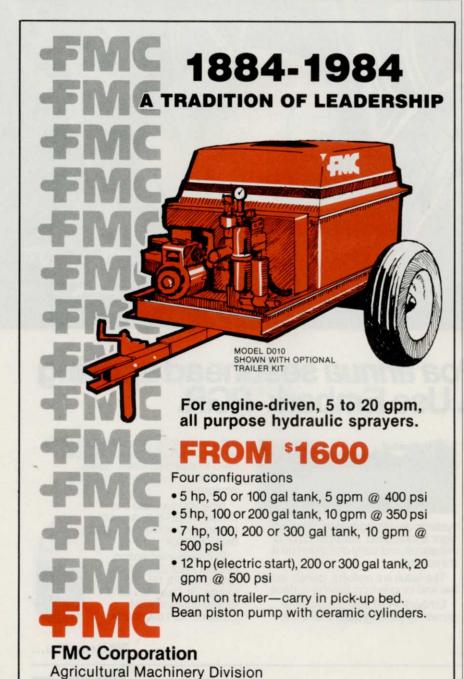
Brickman was raised in Chicago. He and his wife, Sally, recently moved to Bryn Allyn, a northeast Philadelphia suburb, to be close to the Langhorne office. Two of Brickman's sons are following in their dad's and grandfather's footsteps. Steve is a salesman in maintenance operations for the company and Scott is a junior in landscape architecture at Penn State. A daughter, Sue, attends Sweet Briar College and another daughter, Julie, is a high school freshman.

Brickman is a licensed pilot who used to fly the company plane. With business responsibilities, his flying time was cut to a minimum. He still finds time to golf and play tennis. He is on the board of directors and is very active in The New Church, based in Bryn Allyn. He chairs the Associated Landscape Contractors of America's curriculum committee and is a past national president. He serves as treasurer of the Landscape Architecture Foundation.

Much of Dick Brickman's success has to lie with his ability to deal with people, especially his clients.

Not even being referred to as a "landscaper" by a client (which does happen occasionally), can dull his sensitivity to their needs.

"This is a people development business we're in," he said. "It is successful only to the degree it is committed to excellence. We constantly strive to meet the needs of the client. We can't force our ideas on them. The client is spending money to achieve a goal. The process is not important. The end result is.



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"We come out of college with over-inflated ideas of who we are," Brickman continued. "We become so impressed with our own credentials. We must keep in mind the client and his wishes. As I get older, I see more of what the client's view of us is."

Brickman sees a need for more professionalism in the industry, especially in the maintenance area.

"What's happening now is we're seeing outside service companies coming in. In the next ten years, we'll see organizations coming in and contracting national sites with major real estate companies. It's already happening in the janitorial services. Not many landscape firms are up to that type of challenge at present. Within the next 10 years, I see a much greater influence on marketing in landscape architecture. I'm excited about the future. Awareness of us by the public is real. It's up to us (the industry) to decide whether we'll be a leader or a team player."

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