

More sophisticated business management, more efficient technology, and division of labor take landscaping into a new generation.

Second Generation Landscaping

by Bruce F. Shank, executive editor, and Ron Hall, assistant editor

The landscape business is entering a new generation. Large landscape management corporations have set a pace and level of sophistication which smaller companies are following. This transformation, gradual during the 60's and 70's, has now reached the majority of the market.

The nursery market, foundation of all landscape markets, is primarily a product market in a business world where service is king. As a result, the landscape market is figuratively being turned on its head, for both exterior and interior landscape markets.

Design, construction, and maintenance services far outvalue the plant material used in a landscape. Furthermore, design and construction are one-time business propositions, whereas maintenance is continuous.

While construction firms expanded into maintenance and design, landscape architects avoided maintenance and construction. The majority of companies labelled design/build today were previously on the construction and maintenance end rather than the design end.

Landscape architects, who often voice concern over the installation of their designs by contractors, are apparently more worried about the responsibilities involved in construction and maintenance than installation by others.

The long-feared fly-by-nighter is less a threat today because his level of



Front-mounted rotary greatly increases productivity of mowing crews. This new Deere F930, and its sister walk-behind mower, were designed by the company specifically for the professional landscape market.

sophistication is noticeably less than leading companies. The groundskeeper is fading into extinction as the landscape manager takes his place.

Division of labor and specialization, both signs of higher level business, are in place in new generation firms. Companies dependent upon one person for both business and technical expertise can't keep up with the volume or efficiency of firms using modern technology and business practices.

Most of the advancement has taken place in the maintenance end of the business. More than half the landscape contractors who were primarily construction in the early 70's now have maintenance divisions. More than 80% also offer design services as well.

Colleges are changing to meet the needs of the modern landscape business, adding business and marketing courses to their horticulture and agronomy programs. Junior colleges find a growing demand for their landscape graduates. Many companies hire graduates of business colleges for business and marketing positions and then educate them to the technical part of the market.

It appears division of labor is resulting in landscape companies hiring graduates of two-year colleges to be technicians and graduates of business schools for upper management.

"We have seen good improvement in educational programs for the industry," says Rod Keppel, Arbor Heights Nursery, Webster, NY. "I think public relations and management are important. The technical knowledge seems to be there."

"I see the two-year schools carrying the ball," says Ray Gustin of Gustin Gardens, Gaithersburg, MD. "The two-year technical colleges seem to be really training more of a technician."

"Landscape contractors will have

to have a better understanding of money, particularly with interest rates the way they are," says Dave Pinkus, president of North Haven Gardens in Dallas, TX. "They have to have a better understanding of business and business practices."

Contractors like J. C. Patrick of Proscap, Baton Rouge, LA, want to go beyond maintenance to 'total exterior management'. "Once we get an account," Patrick says, "we want to take care of everything having to do with the exterior."

Most of Pro-Scape's growth came from design/build work in 1984. Patrick is optimistic because he expects a new Jack Nicklaus development in Baton Rouge to attract more companies to his area and to raise standards of construction and maintenance.

DiSanto Companies in Cleveland, OH, takes Patrick's thought a step further, offering exterior and interior landscape design, construction, and maintenance. President George DiSanto maintains separate divisions for exterior and interior work, but often finds out about new inte-

Companies dependent upon one person for both business and technical expertise can't keep up.

rior work when bidding exterior landscape projects. The interior landscape market in the U.S. has been estimated to have sales of \$400 million in 1984.

David Burnley, Contra Costa Landscaping Inc., Martinez, CA, said his company has gotten more into maintenance the past four to five years due mainly to a building slump. Today, Burnley sees construction and maintenance of the many business parks being built in his area as his future strength.

Maintenance does have its drawbacks, says Greg Boykin, of Boyko Maintenance in Wilson, NC. "If I'm going to follow the installation contractor or another maintenance company, I want to make sure he's done a good job in the first place. If you don't

look the job over closely at first, all kinds of problems pop up. Boykin says he prefers to design and build a landscape, then put in a proposal for the maintenance.

"The greatest need of the industry is good foremen who take primary responsibility and get the job done."

—Burnley

Bob Doman of Planned Outdoor Living in Ogden, UT, is finding his business shifting from large residential to commercial. "Although our company has concentrated on large residential accounts, we have gained more commercial accounts recently."

"There was a lot more commercial work than a year ago, maybe 50% more," claims Ray Gustin, Gustin Gardens, Gaithersburg, MD. "But you have to remember, our residential work didn't fall off as much as the commercial during the recession, so it didn't have as far to come back."

Part of good business planning is controlling the customer base. Mike McGuinnis, director of business development for Reinhold Landscaping, Flat Rock, MI, helped that company reduce its dependence on auto-related industries. The Michigan company recently landed a Federal Express account in Memphis, 360 miles from Detroit. The good news is the auto market is booming again, but McGuinnis is still seeking a broader account base.

Still needed

"The Industry has two big needs at the present time," says Burnley of Contra Costa. "The greatest need is for good foremen who can take primary job responsibility and get the job done. Many companies feel that's their biggest limiting factor right now.

"Also, we need to educate property managers and other prospective clients to establish a set of pre-qualifications for their mainte-

nance, says Burnley. They need to look past the initial price in determining which company can meet their needs.

"In the past, property managers have looked at maintenance as a very simple operation that almost anyone can do. They eventually find out they come out way ahead in the long run if they work with an established company with well-trained personnel."

Good management skills are needed more than anything else according to Dorman of Planned Outdoor Living. "There a lot of people in the industry who can read a blueprint and do the technical work. But too often they try to do all themselves instead of delegating responsibility and managing people so that the job is done right and on time. Of course, they have to know how to deal with clients too."

Registration is a solution to fly-by-nighters says Boykin of Boyko. "To be recognized as a registered landscaper in North Carolina, you must first take a test. It separated the men from the boys."

A recent survey by *Western Landscaping* magazine pinpointed nine primary problems facing the landscape industry. They include lack of professionalism, low balling/underbidding, the economy, unqualified personnel, consumer ignorance, government regulations, profitability, shortage of supplies, and competition.

At the same time, the magazine cited ten leading opportunities. They are business diversification, drought tolerant planting, maintenance, water management, drip irrigation, renovation, irrigation consulting, automation/computers, public awareness of profession, and hardscaping.

The most dependable service according to the magazine's readers is maintenance, rated nearly twice as dependable as construction (52.8% to 31.8%).

The new generation of landscape management companies has realized that maintenance is a valuable part of a service company. It also is positioned to take on other services since it now has a business core which can handle nearly any service. This flexibility, coupled with division of labor and efficient technology, is the new foundation of the landscape management market.

WT&T

Four decades of service allow the reins of management to pass smoothly at growing Lied's Nursery near Milwaukee.

Lied's Deep Wisconsin Roots

by Ron Hall, assistant editor

Delmar Lied knows a little bit about putting down roots in the rich but rock-peppered soil of Wisconsin. He knows that with business, as with growing plants, you sink them deep and you nourish them.

Even then, when the seed of the idea flourishes as it has with his Lied's Nursery Co., Inc., you can still be surprised.

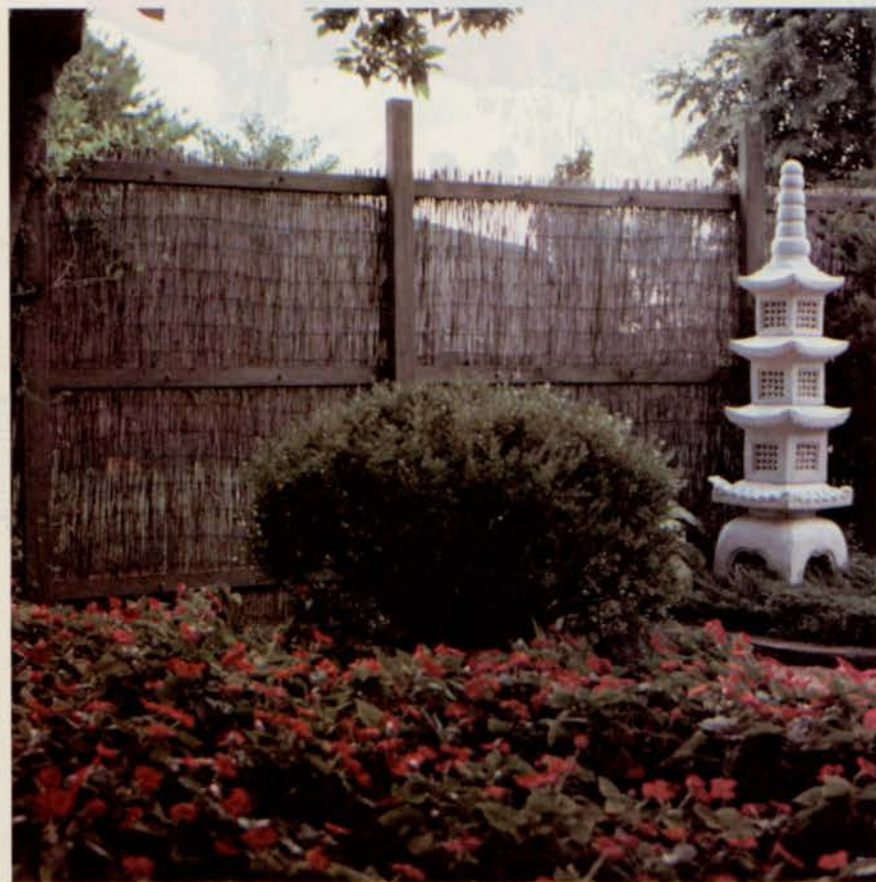
"I would have never thought it would have grown like this," Lied says of the growth of the company he started in 1946 when he and his

brother set about building a small wooden wagon for lawn work.

In the 39 years since, Lied, a vigorous big man with the ruddy, suncreased face of a sailor and a calloused grip that means business in spite of his 70-plus years, has been pretty well rooted to the Wisconsin land.

It's a fascinating land.

When the glaciers retreated for the last time they left a jumble of a mess, scraping away earth here and piling it there so that you don't know what the heck you've got just under the skin of



Japanese garden adjoining Lied's office shows the company believes in what it sells to others.

topsoil; except Lied knows he's got a crumbled mountain of big, round rocks that pop up like mushrooms with each spring thaw. And he knows his trees and shrubs. He also knows people and business.

His one-time, tiny maintenance company can now put 20 work crews on various landscape projects during the growing season.

Sprouting branches

Lied's Nursery is a well known concern in Wisconsin. Based in Sussex, a short drive from Milwaukee, it continues to spread and branch, providing landscape construction and maintenance services in addition to a nursery and a brisk retail store business. Although Delmar Lied is still actively involved in the business, the company has long since passed the point where one man can manage it.

Many of the decisions are now handled by a management team headed by his son, Tom, grandson, Robb, and Rich Skelton, an experienced landscape contractor originally from Youngstown, OH.



One of the Lied's crews completes a major landscape project at a fashionable Wisconsin home.



Rich Skelton, left, confers with Bob Koca in the Lied's Sussex, Wisconsin office.

Tom, with a formal education in horticulture and landscape architecture at Michigan State University and experience gained as a lifelong part of the family business, is the driving force behind the operation now. His son, Robb, 26, gave up a promising career as a public accountant in Dallas to come home as the company's secretary-treasurer. Skelton is the administrative vice president.

"We're beefing up the top management," Tom Lied explains. "We'll be responsible for monitoring the progress of our various divisions and teaching in some areas. Dad wants to slow down and be more of a teacher. He still works a full schedule and has more enthusiasm than most men half his age."

Best not biggest

Although the business has been expanding, the company's management does not pursue growth for growth's sake.

"We had to decide what our market was and we came to the conclusion that we couldn't do

everything for everybody," Tom Lied says. "We decided we would spend all of our efforts to be known as the best and none of our efforts to be known as the biggest. The philosophy is great and the ideas are sound, but there are always the tune-ups and moves to keep everything in place. We know we don't have all the answers, but we have capitalized on a number of opportunities and we have grown to a reasonable size."

During the growing season Lied's

Lied's provides landscape construction and management in addition to doing a brisk retail store business.

employs as many as 125 employees (the number drops to about 40 in the winter), filling more than 20 landscape construction and management crews in addition to the personnel needed in the retail store, Leid's Garden Valley, and a handful of man-

agers and other experts such as landscape architects and draftsmen.

The business—which includes the retail store, landscape construction and landscape management divisions, and the nursery—has been so well received it has practically outgrown its Sussex facilities. A second story for office space was added above the retail store a few years back. Design and drafting is done in offices in the remodeled basement. Almost two years ago Lied's purchased a similar business 80 miles to the north in the rural community of Neenah in the Fox Valley.

Lumping all divisions of the company together, Tom Lied says the company did slightly more than \$4 million in business in 1984 with \$1 million from the retail section, \$1 million from landscape management, and about \$2 million from construction.

The company's landscape workload includes a hefty amount of "fussy, custom residential work," Lied says, in addition to simple residential projects and commercial jobs. Lied's handles few blockbuster accounts with the largest this past year being about \$100,000. The smallest jobs tackled by the company cost \$25 and, surprisingly, Tom points out, they get calls for these as well.

"I guess the significance of all the figures is not a great deal, except it involved a whole lot of work," Tom says.

Esthetics important

Lied's approaches both residential and commercial customers with the idea of being "both technically sound as well as esthetically pleasing," Tom Lied explains. "If we favor one over the other we may lean a little to the esthetically pleasing. We believe the plants are there to serve the client and they should be organized and maintained to serve that purpose."

That's the reason a Lied's consultant will never say to a client: "If I lived here I would do it this way," Tom says. "First, it's terribly unimportant how you would want it done. You don't live there. We have to find out how the client wants it done, how the client wants to feel in his garden. We have to know the things that please him."

Selling landscaping to commercial accounts calls for a slightly different approach.

"If we can dramatize to them what a well maintained landscape can do for them in terms of image, if we can

focus the competitive edge they can gain, then we've done them a service," Lied stresses.

Experienced and capable landscaping firms are entitled to the fees they charge, Lied maintains. "We are in an extraordinarily high service industry and we should have a dollar sign attached to this service. We're in a market where we have to generate 12 months income out of an 8½ month time frame. Our clients owe us the 12 months income for assembling the experts and specialized knowledge we've assembled."

What does Tom Lied enjoy most about his role in the Green Industry?

"I enjoy weaving the talent of people together to make things happen, using my talent to please people and to create and accomplish. Of course I like to get the compliment too," he reflects.

It's no secret what the company founder, Delmar, enjoys most either—his nursery stock, chosen and bred for Wisconsin's sometimes harsh weather. A product of Wisconsin and the farm, Delmar is a Thoreau-like mother hen to his 200 acres of

plantlife with species from as far away as Siberia and Korea.

In a sense, Delmar considers the nursery an experiment in living and he relishes the opportunity to get his hands dirty. His convictions are still as hard as the boulders that emerge

"Clients owe us the 12 months of income for assembling the experts and the specialized knowledge we've assembled."

—Tom Lied

each spring and are often used in sculpting a customer's garden.

He doesn't use chemicals in his nursery. He prefers to keep his fields weed free with regular cultivation, a practice, he admits, that creates a tre-

mendous amount of labor but, he believes, results in heartier stock.

"I'm not interested in doing it easier, just doing it right," he says. "By keeping this cultivated we eliminate the weeds and if we don't have weeds we don't have a place for the insects to stay."

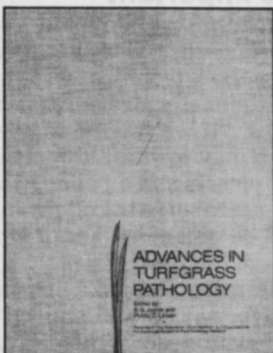
Delmar Lied's hard-won experience is aided by an amazing curiosity in the genetic makeup of plantlife; and the work he has done (and continues to do) with clones and grafting has added significantly to the practical knowledge of plants and their adaptability to conditions in the Midwest.

"My mom and dad taught me soil and a love of soil and I guess I never lost it," he says. Delmar remains the soul of the company and, in some respects, its inspiration, because after 40 years he's about as down-to-earth as that weekend so long ago when he and his brother built a small wagon and went into business on their own.

"My brother had an axle and some hinges off some gates. We started the wagon on a Friday, worked on it that Saturday, and Monday we were in business." **WT&T**

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The future of landscape construction and maintenance is in the hands of a new breed of manager who knows how to deal with people and money, as well as plants.

WANTED: Managers!

by Ron Hall, assistant editor

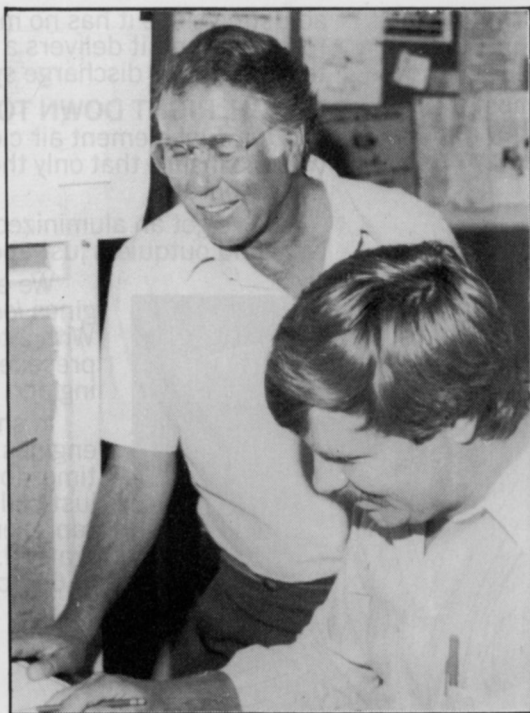
There are no trees on a Monopoly board but there is a wheelbarrow. It's a symbol of the past to veteran Florida landscaper Marvin E. Gross who says the days of the wheelbarrow operator are over; but the profession of landscape contracting/management has yet to see its best days.

The era of the trained manager is at hand, he insists, and the profession is ready to blossom. The key is the influx of young, professionally-trained managers.

Management skills essential

"Laborers, they're easy to find. Managers, good managers, that's what this profession needs. It's difficult to get a good manager," Gross says. "The people in this industry have to be extra knowledgeable about a lot more than just the technical names of the plants. To do a good job they've got to know their soils, they've got to know habitats. They've got to know business and how to manage."

Gross is the owner of Marvin's Garden & Landscape (the name was inspired by the popular Parker Brothers board game) just outside Sarasota, FL. Sun-tanned and laid-back, the mustachioed Gross has carved himself a Garden of Eden, complete with airy bungalow, among the palms and flowering foliage behind his 25-acre tree farm. He laughs when he says you won't find a "Yankee bush" in his bewildering assortment of semi-tropical plantlife, but that doesn't mean you



Gross and Mississippi State University graduate Mike McMurry. Gross has hired several MSU graduates who received the practical training of Bob Calloway.

won't see him north of Tallahassee from time to time. His company tackles landscape construction jobs in the (heaven forbid!) so-called temperate zone as well as major design/build projects in south Florida.

Along the sometimes bumpy path of experience (he'll be marking his 25th year in business soon) he's had to learn—and live with—the capricious whims of nature in a variety of climates. He's had to learn that some varieties of palms "will die if you walk by them with an ice cream" while others can survive even the 1983 Christmas freeze that devastated much of the semi-trop-

ical plantlife north of the Caloosahatchee River. To Gross, who takes pride in the hardy stock he keeps in his wholesale tree farm, "there is a risk involved in about everything you do." Particularly planting.

His enthusiasm for the landscape industry, however, continues to grow. One reason is his son Aaron, a student in the excellent landscape architecture program at Mississippi State University.

"Managers, good managers, that's what this profession needs."

— Gross

Aaron is one of a handful of co-op students at the university. In addition to classroom studies they gain practical experience between terms by working with quality contractors around the nation. Aaron is learning about the real world at Environmental Care in Los Angeles.

Strong ties

The ties between Gross and Mississippi State go deep and have had a major influence on him and his business. It was in 1973 at a seminar in Louisville that Gross met Bob Callaway head of the Landscape Architecture Department at Mississippi State University. In fact, Gross hired Callaway's first graduate as a result of the meeting. Since then he's hired several others right out of the program.

Michael McMurry, vice president and sales director of Marvin's Gar-

dens, is a graduate of MSU as is the company's architectural designer Tidwell and its landscape designer William Vaughan. Gross says if his son, Aaron, returns to the Sarasota business following his formal studies he'll do so as a foreman. He'll have to demonstrate his business abilities just like the others. Rounding out Gross's management team is Michael F. Getzman, manager of the company's Irrigation Division and Mark Anderson, project supervisor.

managers that can manage people and dollars."

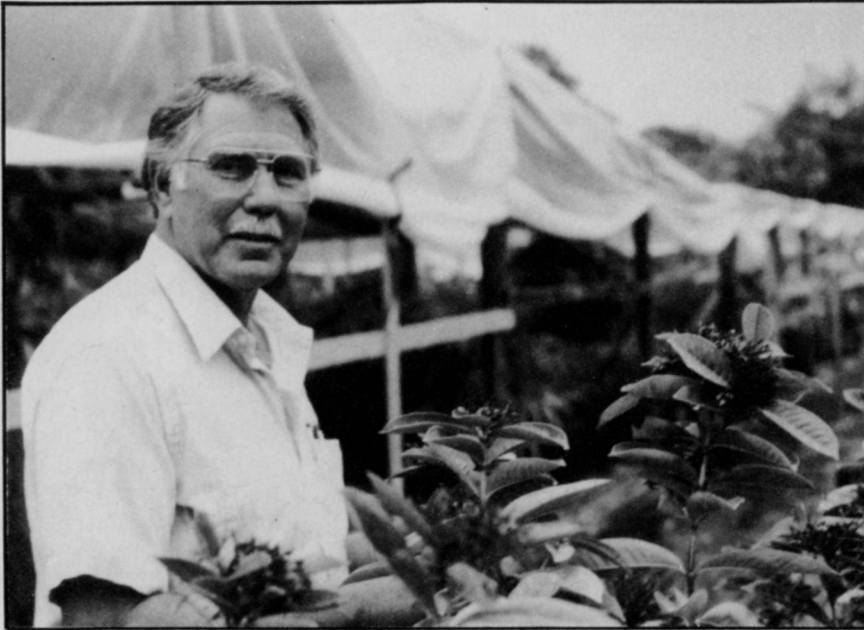
The value of education didn't come to Gross in a blinding flash. Gross left West Virginia for Florida in 1947 chasing a career in animal husbandry and eager to learn more about Brahman cattle. He never left Florida. He did change his plans. In 1956 he acquired a degree in landscape architecture from the University of Florida and within a few years he was in business.

lot of the arts hugging Sarasota Bay where the average annual temperature is a pleasant 73 degrees.

Although fully 75 percent of the dollar value of the work done by Gross's company is commercial, the landscaping of single family resi-

"I'm in competition for the luxury dollar. I'm in competition with the other luxury item salesmen,"

—Gross



Gross pampers 25 acres of semitropical material at his nursery.

Opportunity knocks

MSU's Callaway echoes Gross's enthusiasm about exciting new opportunities in the landscape field where in recent years the demand by respected landscape contracting firms for top-flight graduates has been outdistancing supply.

"Our students compete financially with any of the other disciplines at the university with the possible exceptions of engineering and computer sciences," Callaway says. "If the student has intelligence, energy, and is mobile the opportunities are there." Callaway, who spent 15 years in the industry before joining academia, says salaries in the \$22,000-\$25,000 range are not unusual for bright professionally-trained managers with a couple of years experience.

"Basically what the industry is looking for today is not a technician," he adds. "It's looking for managers that have an understanding of the practical as well as theoretical aspects of the industry. Industry is looking for

Marvin's Garden and Landscape found a place in the balmy breezes off the Gulf of Mexico where its growth has been hard pressed to keep up with the growth of Florida's Gulf Coast communities. The population of Sarasota County has jumped from 120,000 to 220,000 since 1970. "When I came down here all these towns were small villages," he recalls

The good life

Gross says Sarasota is a place where the quality of life is important. He claims area residents are proud of the beauty of their area and its growing reputation as a major cultural center. Few other American cities of 50,000 can boast an opera house, several professional theaters, and a futuristic performing arts center, the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall.

Add the presence of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art (the official state art museum of Florida) and the quarters of the East Coast Symphony and you've got a powerful

dences remains important to the success of Marvin's Gardens. Some of that work is showcased at beautiful residences on the offshore keys with names like Longboat, Siesta, Bird, St Armand's, Lido, and Casey.

Marvin's Garden & Landscape, Inc. approached \$2 million in business last year.

Competition? Gross doesn't consider others in his trade as competitors.

"In our community there are about four companies that do what we do. We're always bumping heads with each other. All of us have been in a business a number of years. But, I never felt that I've ever been in competition with the other companies," he says.

"I'm in competition for the luxury dollar. I'm in competition with the other luxury item salesmen because if you think about it you really don't need a tree or plant. The more luxury dollars there are to spend, the more we're going to get if we're informed about what we're doing and doing the job right."

Gross puts emphasis on the word "informed". That's the keystone of the landscape construction and management industry now.

"If you're not informed about what you're doing, you're not going to make it. The man with the pickup truck and the wheelbarrow and little professional training just doesn't have the knowledge to gain the customer's trust," he adds.

But to those entering the industry with professional training and enthusiasm the sky is the limit, he insists. "This industry is going to grow forever and forever—just like the bushes," Gross laughs.

WT&T



Bill Boykin, vice-president of Boyco, at IBM Corp.

The Right Place at the Right Time

Greg Boykin knows success takes a combination of knowledge, good employees, hard work and the customer's interest always at heart.

by Maureen Hrehocik, managing editor

Ask Greg Boykin about being in the right place at the right time.

Not that luck has taken the place of hard work for Boyco Landscape and Maintenance, Wilson, NC; but rather the businessman with the Midas touch is also a savvy entrepreneur.

Eleven years ago, the man with the build of a middle linebacker and the disposition of a friendly pup, was doing landscaping work around his father's construction jobs. Today Boykin is president of an over \$1 million company that is one of the most successful landscape maintenance companies in North Carolina.

IBM, Proctor and Gamble, and many of the businesses in Research Triangle Park, NC, right outside of Raleigh, number themselves among his clients.

"I was in the right place at the right time 11 years ago as far as the land-

scape maintenance market goes," he says. "A lot of people think all you need to do is get a rake and a lawnmower and you're in business. It just isn't so."

His business has also just recently become interstate with a contract from the Virginia Electric Company, VEPCO, which he got on a referral from Carolina Telephone and Telegraph, also a well-satisfied Boyco customer.

A strong commitment to quality work, knowledge in his field and a keen interest in the welfare of the people who work for him have melded into a business that's as profitable as it is satisfying for its owner.

The business

The bulk of Boyco's work is landscape management—mowing, pruning, fertilizing and weed control. The com-

pany also installs drainage systems, plants trees, shrubs, does brick and concrete walk work and is even into snow removal. Sixty-two employees are managed by 12 supervisors. Their territories are divided geographically instead of by specialty. There is only one specialty crew—for drainage and brick work.

Boykin's employees are a big part of why his company is special. Some might sniff at Boykin's hiring philosophy.

"We try to hire anybody and everybody," he says proudly. Disadvantaged youth, people in vocational rehabilitation programs and Vietnam vets score high on the list.

"We're willing to train people to do the job right," Boykin says. "We're usually rewarded with employees who are loyal to the company and their jobs."

With the vocational rehabilitation employees, the government helps pay their salary while they're being trained.

Due in large part to his hiring philosophy and for his continued free maintenance of the City of Wilson's athletic fields, Boykin received the highest honor of his life last year, the North Carolina Distinguished Service Award from Lt. Governor James C. Green. "It was certainly one of the



Attention to detail —a Boyco trademark.

highlights of my life," the 34-year-old says in a thick North Carolina accent.

Back to business

Most of the predominant grass in the area is bermudagrass. In the fall and winter it goes dormant producing unsightly brownish-yellow turf. "We usually overseed with rye, but in a lot of cases it just took too long to green-up."

That green-up problem launched Boyco into another area—that of lawn dyeing.

"We offer lawn-dyeing to clients as an option to overseeding. So far they've been very receptive. It's an expensive process, but some of our smaller clients prefer it."

Most of Boyco's clients are 100 acres and above. The company has a few residential accounts, but because of slow payment, Boykin is concentrating his efforts where the



Greg Boykin, president of Boyco.

money is—larger accounts that pay on time.

One of those, Research Triangle Park near Raleigh, is an excellent client, but maintenance-wise, Boykin describes it as "the armpit of the world. It's the absolute worst area to try to get anything to grow in. Being in the transition zone, keeping things green and growing is a never-ending battle."

He overseeds twice a year, in April and October with Kentucky 31, but poor drainage presents another problem.

"The area just doesn't perk," he reports. "It's a beautiful area but it gives us a run for our money."

Being a member of the North Carolina Industrial Council provides Boykin with another marketing tool. He is privy to all new industry moving into North Carolina. Before they even arrive, Boyco literature is sent out explaining the company's services to the prospective new client.

Hot dogs and turf

Boykin graduated from North Carolina State with a degree in landscape design and turf management. He worked with the City of Wilson's landscape planning department after he graduated.

"At \$500 a month I was about to starve to death," he chuckles now.

It was at that point that Boykin started landscaping his father's contracting jobs. Word got around and friends started asking him to do the same. He finally decided to start a business of his own with his brother, Bill, who is now a vice president with the company.

Boykin is a confident, gregarious man who feels just as much at home eating a few hot dogs at the local college hangout as he does driving a sparkling white Mercedes. He stays involved in the community. The city's three athletic fields are maintained free of charge by Boyco.

"I've always been interested in sports and the town I grew up in," he says. "I do it to support good will in the community."

The Rotary, a Monday morning call-in gardening question radio show and a "hacker's game" of golf get what little is left of his free time.

Spending time with his wife and two children, ages two and four, (and another one due next month) is what he enjoys the most.

The future

Boykin says he wants to move into the Richmond, VA, market because he "wants to work with bluegrass." There are also plans down the road to possibly start a branch in the New England area.

"Right now we just want to do what we do well," he says.

"I've seen a lot of good companies go under because of poor management or non-payment. We decided to hang around the companies who will pay their bills.

"Those who do good work will survive," Boykin continues, "those who cut corners will go under."

There have been some, even in Wilson, who see Boykin's success and think they can do the same thing. Wilson is the world's largest tobacco market. Because of that fact, per capita, it has the most millionaires in the U.S.

"Prospective landscape maintenance people come in and see all the big homes and think it'll be easy to become one of them (millionaires), but it takes a lot more than just mowing lawns to be successful."

Boykin is very conscious of professionalism in the business. He's also willing to share whatever knowledge he has to keep the industry "clean."

He is a member of the Professional Grounds Management Society, Professional Lawn Care Association of America and is very "pro" the state licensing test for professional landscapers.

"In this world, you reap what you sow," Boykin concludes. "There's enough business out there that people don't have to cut each other's throats."

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