

From the other side of Earth: Can we talk?



If you take for granted your ability to communicate with those around you, then attending the 6th Annual International Turfgrass Research Conference (ITRC) in Tokyo last month would have been eye-opening. Not only would you have enjoyed papers delivered by the world's preeminent turfgrass researchers, you'd have seen the awesome power of communication working (or, in some cases, not working).

For the first time, the ITRC's host was a nation on the mysterious, often misconceived continent of Asia. Though relative newcomers to turf research, the Asians appeared to pursue turf knowledge as diligently as they have other scientific fields once thought to be the private domain of Western civilization.

Still, the cultural barriers between lands were evident, most notably language. Though translators performed admirably within classroom walls, the informal "corridor conversations" so important in a gathering of this type had a distinct East/West feel—as in East on one side of the corridor and West on the other.

It is apparent that our nations have a long way to go toward fully understanding each other. The blending of our cultures will continue to progress in step with today's global economy. Perhaps the most important element in maintaining positive relations during that progression will be a continued effort to improve communication, to overcome the momentary frustrations many of us may experience.

Perhaps one day landscapers in Okayama and Oklahoma will be equally interested in our Buyers' Guide, presented to you this month. Each will benefit from an easy-to-use, comprehensive listing of the companies that provide the instruments necessary to do a job properly. Until then, we're glad we can bring you the 1989 "North American" Buyers' Guide. Think of it as a way to get your hands on the tools and information you need to beautify wherever it is you call home.

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