

AS I SEE IT...



Do you want what you need?

Magazine editors, politicians and trade association executives: all must deal with constituencies—no easy task in any case.

One of the knotty questions groups like these must eventually answer is, "Do we give our constituents what they want or what they need?" From an editor's standpoint, our magazine likes to give its readers everything they want, and then hope there's room left to squeeze in some of what they need. This is exactly what the trade associations have found out.

"One important fact that we have learned the hard way is that you cannot make people interested," says ALCA (landscape association) executive director Debra Dennis. "They have to decide they are interested in something for themselves."

Part of what we're referring to here is the ability of an association to lobby for its membership. The green industry, for instance, would do well to counter anti-pesticide lobbying with an effort of its own. But—because there is no immediate, tangible return on effort—most lawn care and landscape companies could care less whether their interests are represented in Washington, D.C.

And this attitude, we at the magazine have found, by and large parallels readership patterns: write an article about how a reader can influence his congressman and he'll flip right past it.

"We don't have a lobbyist and, given the attitude of the members, I don't see that in the future," notes Dennis.

The PLCAA (lawn care association) three years ago increased membership fees to address legislative issues and was immediately tanked (that's "tanked," not "thanked") by some smaller members.

"We spent \$350,000 on issues management," recalls current president Rick Steinau. "That was a clear...horrible...message that the association is for large companies. We've covered the national issues, but we haven't attended to member services.

"If I had my druthers, we'd have worked diligently at an insurance program that would knock your socks off. It would offer the smaller companies an immediate return on investment. In effect, it would be a 'no-brainer,' and we need some of those to get the smaller companies into our fold."

Neither trade associations nor trade magazines can be all things to all people. (Neither can politicians, for that matter.) But we'll continue to try.

All the trade associations ask is a chance to help you do business more efficiently and more profitably. You've chosen to receive our magazine. How about giving a trade association a try, too?

Jerry Roche, executive editor

LM

EDITORIAL STAFF

Jerry Roche, Executive Editor
Will Perry, Managing Editor
Terry McIver, Associate Editor
Office: 7500 Old Oak Blvd.
Cleveland, OH 44130
(216) 243-8100
FAX (216) 826-2832

MARKETING STAFF

Jon Miducki, Associate Publisher
Bob Earley, Group Vice President
Office: 7500 Old Oak Blvd.
Cleveland, OH 44130
(216) 243-8100
FAX (216) 826-2832

Dick Gore, E. Coast Representative
Office: 3475 Lenox Rd. N.E.
Suite 665
Atlanta, GA 30326
(404) 233-1817
FAX (404) 261-7022

Robert Mierow, W. Coast Representative
Office: 1515 NW 51st Street
Seattle, WA 98107
(206) 783-0549
FAX (206) 784-5545

Tom Greney, Senior Vice-President
Office: 111 East Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 938-2317
FAX (312) 938-4850

SUPPORT STAFF

Carol Peterson, Production Mgr.
Connie Freeland, Prod. Supervisor
Lynn Williams, Graphic Design
Jackie Eisenmann, Circulation Super.
Bonnie DeFoe, Directory Coordinator
Gail Parenteau, Reader Service Mgr.
Office: 120 West Second St.
Duluth, MN 55802
(218) 723-9200
FAX (218) 723-9223

David Komitau, Graphics Coordinator
Ted Matthews, Promotion Director
Office: 7500 Old Oak Blvd.
Cleveland, OH 44130
(216) 243-8100

LEHLE
COMMUNICATIONS

Richard Swank, Chairman; Robert L. Edgell, Vice Chairman; Richard Moeller, President; Lars Fladmark, Executive Vice President; Arland Hirman, Vice President/Treasurer; Thomas Greney, Senior Vice President; Ezra Pincus, Senior Vice President; Joe Bilderbach, Vice President; James Gherna, Vice President; George Glenn, Vice President; Harry Ramaley, Vice President.