

# GREEN INDUSTRY NEWS

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## LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

### CONFERENCES

# Service the customer, and profits necessarily follow

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — In dealing with your customers, you should heed the advice of twisted-tongued baseball sage Yogi Berra: "If people don't want to come out to the ballpark, nobody'll stop 'em."

Best-selling author Michael LeBoeuf provided that and other wisdom as keynote speaker at Green Industry Expo '90 here last month.

He told a full house at the Nashville Convention Center the five best ways to keep customers coming back:

- by far, the most important is to **be reliable**;
- people pay dearly for peace of mind, so **be credible**;
- use tangibles to **be attractive**;
- when customers want service, they want it now, so **be responsive**; and
- **be empathetic**: treat customers the way they want to be treated.

"A typical business hears from only four percent of its dissatisfied customers, (but) a customer who complains is your best friend," LeBoeuf noted. He added that complainers

point out areas of needed improvement, give you a second chance, and offer you a wonderful opportunity to earn their loyalty.

Next year's Expo will have a tough act to follow, judging by comments from some of the more than 3,000 participants.

A sell-out for the Professional Lawn Care Association, Associated Landscape Contractors, and Professional Grounds Management Society, Expo '90 featured more than 250 exhibits and numerous educational sessions.

### Special announcements

On the news front, Expo '90 featured important industry-related announcements.

James Brooks, who ended a 7½-year reign as PLCAA executive director and executive vice president, was named *Lawn Care Industry* magazine's "Man of the Year" by LCI publisher Jon Miducki. And Vince Patterozzi of ServiceMaster was named "Landscape Manager of the Year" by *LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT* magazine and the PGMS.



LeBoeuf: Complainers are a business's best friends.

Brooks, who was also given an honorary lifetime membership in the PLCAA, noted: "I've enjoyed my tenure. We've had good times; we've had some tough times. But I've always known we'd pull together, and we did. I thank you forever.

"(For now), I'm going to rest up a little bit. There are lots of opportunities out there, some in the green industry. I'll turn up again in this industry."

The manufacturers of specialty pesticides announced the formation of

Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE), to address issues facing the green industry on the regulatory and safety fronts.

The PLCAA announced it has entered into a labeling agreement with K-Mart. K-Mart stores will support the association's new "Grasscycling" campaign by incorporating the program's logo, slogan and environmental message on package labeling for K-Mart's line of Super K-Gro Lawn and Garden products (see related stories).

### Three-in-one works

Expo '90 was a trial run for the three-association concept, and there were few problems reported.

"It was a huge success," said Sandy Marting, the PLCAA's director of public relations. "Everybody loved the show and educational programs, and exhibitors were very happy," said Marting. "Everyone's looking forward to next year."

Debra Dennis, executive director of ALCA, reported an ALCA/PGMS attendance of 528, "more than double the attendance at

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# PLCAA and Kmart join hands to promote environmental awareness to Americans

last year's St. Louis show. And we did receive quite a number of new memberships on site."

Added Alan Shulder, executive director of the PGMS, "It was an idea whose time had come five years ago."

Reported problems were few. ALCA registration at a separate locale was inconvenient, but sources say next year all three groups' events will be held in a main convention center.

Smaller exhibitors, according to Shulder, said the exhibit floor should have been open longer than the scheduled 10 hours. □

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) announced here that Kmart Corp. will support the association's national environmental awareness campaign, "Grasscycling: Today's Turf, Tomorrow's Earth."

The 4,000-store retail chain will incorporate the program's logo, slogan, and environmental message on package labels for Kmart's

line of Super K-Gro lawn and garden products. Scheduled to appear early in the 1991 merchandising season, the new labeling will be included on all packaged items of Kmart household plant products, liquid and granular fertilizers, and insecticides.

"We are pleased to be including the PLCAA's Grasscycling identifiers on our lawn care products," says William L. Chilcutt,

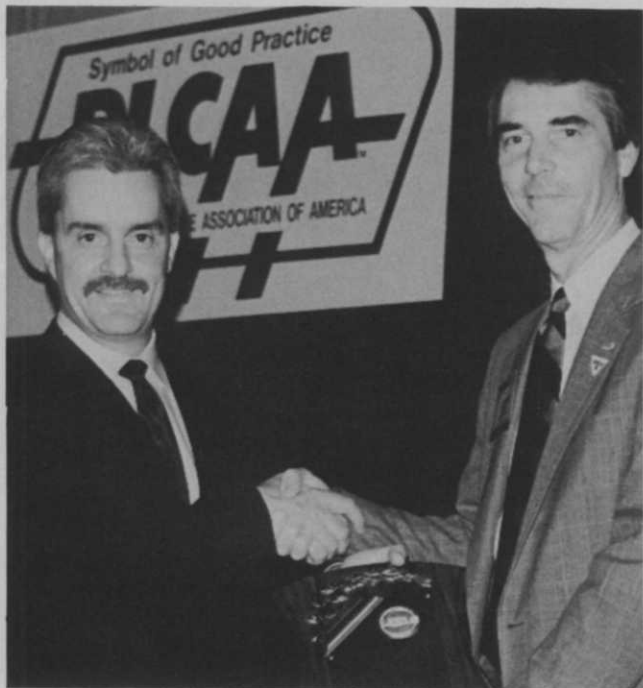
Kmart buyer for horticulture and decorative flowers. "Kmart's environmental program focuses on the solid waste stream, and the PLCAA's program fits in nicely with our overall environmental mission of a healthier environment for America."

The campaign's goal is to urge homeowners to leave grass clippings on the ground while mowing. The

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A packed room of landscape managers sits enthralled during an educational session at Expo '90 in Nashville



James Brooks (right) accepts the *Lawn Care Industry* "Man of the Year" award from LCI's publisher, Jon Miducki



Vince Patterozzi (left) gets his "Landscape Manager of the Year" award from current PGMS president Ted Shull