

Autumn 1997 is not the time to coast. Put the spurs to your lawn/landscape business. You can get in weeks of production. How much depends a lot on the weather. Hopefully, you will cover expenses for the year earlier rather than later this fall so you can make the profit you'd budgeted for. If you didn't add to the worth of your business this year, consider:

- 1) fixing what's wrong within your company (Job costing? Labor costs? Quality of service?);
- 2) offering service or product that's distinguishable from competitors;
- 3) working for somebody else. This isn't a put down. If you're not making it running your own business, why put up with the stress and strain?

There's nothing wrong with drawing a pay check from somebody who can make things happen.

But, if you're an owner, today, in the fall of 1997, is when your business should be paying you back for all the 60-hour weeks. The lean times.

The sleepless nights.

The building boom that's been going on for four or five years continues. Several of you have told me that building contractors in your markets are busy and are picking and choosing their jobs.

But there's another reason why you should be optimistic, at least in the short term. It's called demographics.

Many of your best customers (and your best prospects) are Baby Boomers. They've been working for 20, 25, maybe 30 years. Both husband and wife have been working.

They have money. They may not be millionaires, but the house is paid for and so are the cars. The kids are grown. Although Boomers look toward retirement with some anxiety, they have accumulated assets like homes, properties, pensions.

Autumn '97, time to buckle on your spurs



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Some are discovering that they have more money than they realized. That's because their parents are dying, leaving behind homes, cars, savings accounts, insurance.

This earlier generation saved "for a rainy day." That's understandable. After all it experienced The Great Depression and a worldwide war. It treasured security. This generation is fading fast.

Boomers don't view security with the same reverence as their parents. Why should they? They spend money more freely.

Thanks to Boomers your company should be doing pretty good this year, and, if you can rev up production these final few months of '97, you can squeeze out an even better year. (Don't forget to reward your employees for their extra effort.)

If this has been a disappointing season, there's time yet to revive your business. Start this winter while the economy is still relatively strong. **LM**

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