

Everyone thinks Alan Greenspan's job is so hard, but I don't think so. As chairman of the Federal Reserve, he is one of the most powerful people on the planet. Every time his limo glides up to Capitol Hill, the world's financial communities wait with bated breath and listen for his predictions. All he has to do is *mention* adding more money to the nation's money supply or say he's just *considering* a teeny jump in the Fed's interest rates to banks, and world's financial markets react (or overreact) instantly.

I had the pleasure of touring the Federal Reserve's Washington D.C. headquarters last year with my business school class. We sat through a dull lecture on the Fed's operation, then got to the meat of the tour — the Federal Reserve Board's meeting room. This place was cool. It *reeked* of money.

The large, elegant room has an impressive wooden oval table for about 20 people in the center, plus a gallery for spectators and the press. The walls are decorated with framed collections of United States paper money in editions dating back to the early 1900s, showing denominations as rare as \$10,000 bills.

The tour guides' favorite part is when they flip the switch at the door. This activates pop-up monitors in the table, projection screens and cameras from the ceiling and 20-foot-tall window screens that drop to shut out the light. I liked that show, but the part I loved best was the opportunity to sit in Mr. Greenspan's chair. In the economic world, this is like sitting on the emperor's throne. Each of us took a turn sitting in that chair and each hoped to get some monetary wisdom or even dumb luck from the experience.

The chair I sit in now is a lot different, yet my job is somewhat similar to Mr. Greenspan's. I'm

not sure if any of his vision filtered through to me, but we're doing our part to analyze the industry in this month's cover story — the State of the Industry report. Unlike Alan Greenspan, however, we don't have legions of economists to analyze our industry, forecast its ups or downs and make educated recommendations. When he goes to Capitol Hill, he relies on the work and brains of thousands of experts.

Our job at *Landscape Management* is different, because as our industry's largest firms and our competitors have found out, there are very little "hard data" available. This industry is so young that few government offices keep detailed information about it. Some numbers on the industry's size, revenue potential and buying power become established for lack of any others, then are endlessly repeated as "fact."

That isn't good enough for me. I'm no Alan Greenspan but I do see my role as offering you bona fide information, statistically valid data and educated projections that you can rely on. We've started this process at *LM* with our latest report and will be adding more of our own original research in the near future.

Take a look at this year's overview, which starts on page 23. It's based on our own research, as well as other recent industry figures we trust. We've even added a few projections of our own (which, of course, rely partly on Mr. Greenspan's moves).

Now that I think of it, maybe his job is really difficult. If he makes the wrong recommendation, millions will lose money and he is held responsible. That's one tough position! In our industry, success is defined more by how well you do, not how well we project. And so far, you're doing just fine. **LM**

Sitting in Alan Greenspan's chair



Sue Gibson

SUE GIBSON
Executive Editor