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ONLINENOV

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MORE ON ESOPS (FROM COVER STORY):

- >> Dig into the first chapter of *The ESOP Coach*, authored by Kelly Finnell.
- Is your company financially apt for an ESOP? See an example feasibility analysis from CCG Advisors.
- Peruse some of Mission Landscape's ESOP newsletters.
- >> View a roster of experts to assemble to create an ESOP.

PLUS:

- Norman Goldenberg opines on why big firms get a bad rap and the No. 1 hurdle in lawn care (from page 48).
- Get role and salary benchmarks from LandOpt for a \$1 million company (from page 25).

SEEN ON TWITTER

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@ASOMTitusville: RT DYK? A single grass plant can have more than 300 miles of roots? #LawnCareMonth pic.twitter.com/dWby6nqEe0

@777Collins: "@LandscapeMgmt: When do you disclose design fees? @jshilan weighs in. buff.ly/1myixjF" upfront. #always

@GravelyMowers: RT "In its sales workshop, @Ariens warns students: 'If you don't like to hear no, sales is not for you. Shrug it off, keep chugging.'" #PLANETSCD



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Facebook Feature

What new piece of equipment, product or service are you implementing this year?

- **>> Adam Linnemann:** Five new propane-powered John Deere mowers. First in Southern Illinois to make the switch.
- >> Eddie Susshine: Incorporating food production into traditional flowerbeds.
- **>> Jeff Grizzle:** We replaced one of our John Deere 2653s with a Toro Reelmaster 3100. We are very satisfied with that choice.







EDITOR'SNOTE

MARISA PALMIERI EDITOR

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'That's not my job'

his column's headline is a phrase I've cringed at since my first experience as a manager. For several years, starting at age 17, I supervised a staff of about 10 other teenagers at a time as a Dairy Queen shift manager.

I'd started working there three years earlier. It was my first job and, as such, it was my introductory experience with customer service (don't mess with someone's special Blizzard requests), quality control (I bet I can still make a perfect "Q" on top of a soft-serve cone) and slackers. What do you expect? It's a bunch of teens working at their first jobs. Some of them are going to be loafers.

When I graduated from "table girl" to ice-cream maker/cake decorator to manager of my peers, I amassed a list of employee/co-worker pet peeves, of which I'm sure you have your own.

The statement "That's not my job" quickly climbed to the top of mine.

I thought of my DQ days and that phrase in particular three times recently.

1. The first was when I read *Landscape Management* blogger and Green Industry consultant Phil Harwood's blog post, "High Performance: The absolute best way to find good people" (buff.ly/ImstQdp).

"Most organizations are made up of some good people, some not-so-good people and a few great people," Harwood says. "I'm sure you know who's who in your organization. It's usually obvious." Harwood is right, and, of course, that was true of an ice cream shop staffed primarily by teenyboppers. The point is not only did the owner and managers know "who's who," but

the employees knew, too. And there was nothing more demotivating for the good and great employees than to be scheduled alongside those with the "that's not my job" attitude. They dragged everyone down. The quicker we weeded out those kids, the better it was for everyone.

2. The second time I thought about my least favorite phrase was just as the *Landscape Management* editorial team was mulling over design mock-ups for this magazine's cover. We had a slew of options featuring stock art illustrations, but we weren't satisfied with them and it was too late to commission a freelance photographer to do a photo shoot.

What to do?

We realized a co-worker lives within 30 miles of Ryan Lawn & Tree, one of the firms featured in our cover story, "Ownership pride." And this colleague—Seth Jones, editor-in-chief of our sister brand *Golfdom*—just so happens to be great behind a camera, although that's patently *not* his job.

After one phone call Seth was not only on board to take photos for us but was genuinely enthusiastic about it. Forty-eight hours later we had in our hands the photo you see on the cover—and about 200 others to choose from. Suffice it to say, we owe him one. How's that for "that's not my job?"

3. Finally, after reading and rereading this month's cover story, I can imagine there's probably nothing better about working at a company with an employee stock ownership plan than the absence of the "that's not my job" mentality. When everyone's an owner, everything is everyone's job.

Landscape Management

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NEWSWIEWS

GREEN INDUSTRY EVENTS, TRENDS AND TIPS

2014 PLANET SCD creates friendly competition in Colorado

BY **SARAH PFLEDDERER**

heir wardrobes wavered from business casual to school spirit fanatical, which perhaps was a reflection of the students' differing outlooks on the event—one being that they were there to nab employment, and the other that they were attending with hopes to crush the competition.

Garb aside, the 800 students who attended the 38th annual Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) Student Career Days (SCD), held March 20-23 at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colo., had a devotion to the Green Industry. This fact was evident when the mass of students, comprised of 65 colleges and two high school FFA chapters, partook in the cheer contest at the opening ceremony.

Verses such as "Pour some soil on me" and "Who you gonna call?...Plantscapers!" bounced off the auditorium walls as horns, cowbells, guitars, harmonicas and drums added some accompaniment to the chants. But it was Iowa State University that received the first competitive award, the \$1,000 best cheer award from John Deere, for its remix to Sir Mix-A-Lot's lyrics "I like big butts," singing "I like big plants."

Students geared up for most of the competitive events March 20, attending workshops on their respective competitions or interests. Topics ranged from leadership to arboriculture and backhoe operation, to name a few, and those were held as part of the Career Development Series (CDS). The more CDS events students attended, the greater the opportunity for them to receive the CDS award at the closing ceremony March 23.

Also held at SCD was a PLANET Academic Excellence Foundation (AEF) ceremony on March 20, where scholarships, starting at \$1,000, were presenting to students from AEF ambassador companies. The presentation of the \$3,000 President's Scholarship rounded out the event. It was awarded to Jamie Helbig of Cincinnati State Technical and Community College.

It was the next morning, March 21, when SCD attendees piled into Fort Collins' Lincoln Center Theater for the opening ceremony. In addition to the cheer competition, Glenn Jacobsen, PLANET president and president of Jacobsen Landscape Design & Construction, unveiled the creation of the PLANET New Graduate membership. The membership offers discounts on training materials, a free resume-posting service and PLANET member rebates within the Green Industry.



The \$75 enrollment fee was knocked down to \$50 for students who enrolled at SCD, Jacobsen said.

Eric Schneider of Hunter hosts an irrigation workshop at SCD.

Also unveiled at the ceremony was the winner of the Husqvarna T-shirt design contest. The honor went to Amy Openshaw of Brigham Young University-Idaho (BYU-Idaho).

Midmorning, students were shuttled back to campus for a career fair, in which nearly 75 companies set up booths for—a 44 percent increase over last year. Additionally, the number of SCD sponsors nearly doubled this year.

And while the sun shined throughout the week, snow swung into Fort Collins just in time for the competitive events March 22. Landscape companies and manufacturer attendees sponsored the 28 events, which hit on job components such as compact excavator operation, irrigation troubleshooting, small engine repair and plant problem diagnosis.

BYU-Provo took first place in the overall competitive events, winning \$5,000 from STIHL. BYU-Idaho followed up in second, and Michigan State University stood in third. In the overall results for individual students, Hayden Angelotta of Cuyahoga Community College topped the list; Matt Case of Alamance Community College settled into second; and Jeff Elshoff of Michigan State University came in third.

The 2015 SCD will be held at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, N.C.

Visit buff.ly/1pGrm8v for an overview of the Come Alive Outside Design Challenge, which select schools participated in the day before SCD.



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BESTPRACTICES

BRUCE WILSON

The author, of the Wilson-Oyler Group, is a 30-year industry veteran. Reach him at bwilson@wilson-oyler.com.

Don't unravel under spring pressure

pring comes every year, and with it a seasonal surge that brings stress to landscape contracting businesses. No matter how much companies prepare for the inevitable, operations may unravel under pressure. Work teams and managers become overwhelmed.

In less disciplined organizations, spring makes everyone a firefighter. Some companies never escape the spiral. Overtime gets out of control, but employees love it, get used to it and don't want to give it up.

The worst part is it happens so fast. By the time you see the financial impact of reactive behaviors, it's too late to do anything about it. It's like getting blown out in the first half of a football game. It's often difficult, if not impossible, to reverse course.

If spring has your company stressed and reducing operational effectiveness, here are 10 best practices to move your organization permanently away from firefighting mode.

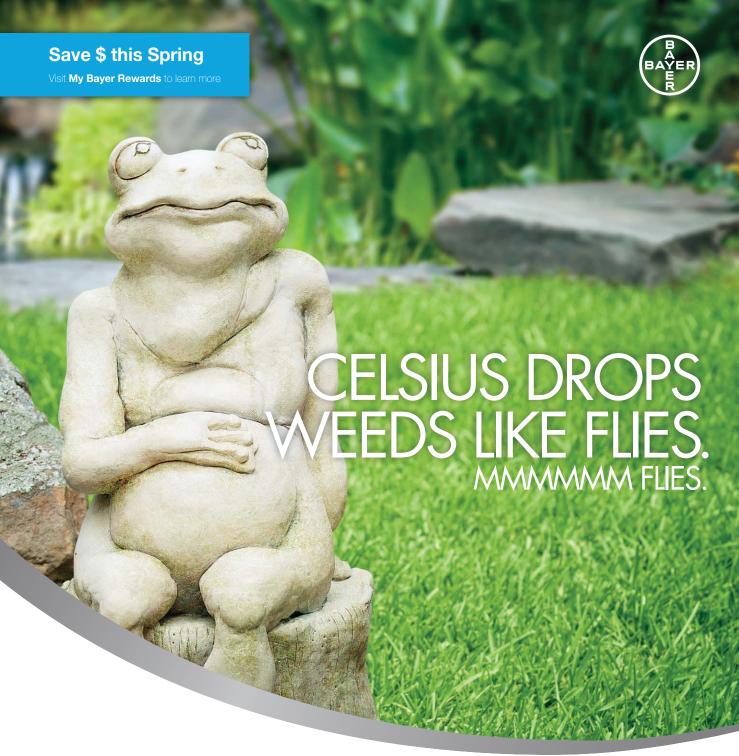
1. Understand the difference between routine and nonroutine work. Routine is weekly maintenance, while nonroutine includes things like post-winter cleanups, mulching, color plantings, etc. Nonroutine things, if allowed to pile up, lead to overtime problems. Therefore they should be scheduled so they don't overlap. Try to avoid pulling nonroutine work from teams assigned

When you start falling behind, don't be afraid to ask for help. Senior managers are there to help you be successful.

to routine maintenance. It may cause them to get behind.

- 2. With routine maintenance, be careful not to let the routine get broken.
- **3.** Supervisors should observe work crews and make sure they are sequencing jobs properly, not performing work that does not need to be done and/or wasting hours. Work crews are habit based and often do tasks out of custom, such as edging when it's not needed.
- 4. String trimmers are time wasters. Workers tend to over-detail jobs. Crews shouldn't trim an area until they mow it. That way they only have to trim what the mowers do not reach. If they trim first, they over compensate to make sure they've trimmed enough.
- **5.** If your crews are scheduled to work in inclement weather make sure scheduled tasks can be done effectively in the rain.
- **6.** Delegate. Look at your to-do list and look for tasks that can be done by others.
- **7.** Slower can be faster. Sometimes you go so fast trying to keep up that you lose sight of the big picture. Prioritize so you don't miss what's important.
- 8. Important, not urgent, things usually have the most impact on your company. Look at a problem to understand why it occurred and what you can do to prevent it from happening again. If you discover a disproportionate amount of urgent tasks, it could require a process change or training to regain equilibrium.
- **9.** Rely on your team. When you start falling behind, don't be afraid to ask for help. Senior managers are there to help you be successful.
- **10.** Monitor your progress and benchmark it. This will help you look for signs of trouble and avoid a downward spiral.

The key is to take action to improve the situation. If you follow some of these best practices, you will be better able to manage what's always an intense time of year. Start spring right and the rest of the year will be more rewarding.







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THEBENCHMARK

FRANK ROSS

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A year of opportunity

nvariably, all of us sages are queried with: "You've been around the country. You see things. So, what kind of year is 2014 going to be?" Like we know...

We do have opinions, though, and mine is very upbeat. I make it a priority to stay on top of industry benchmarks and information sources, not the least of which are the *The Wall Street Journal*, *Engineering News-Record*, Kiplinger, investment newsletters and the like. Together, with what we experience around the country, I like what I see for us contractors in 2014.

Allow me to bore you with a few statistics:

- Coming out of 2013, commercial building was up 24 percent;
 - > Home values rose 14 percent in 2013;
 - > Housing starts are projected to rival those of 2006;
- ➤ Unemployment hovers between 6.5 percent and 7 percent, with a falling trend; and
- Most economists agree the gross domestic product will grow by nearly 3 percent in 2014.

I'm not ready to say the economy is robust, not quite yet, anyway. We have our challenges. Think of labor shortages, upward pressure on the minimum wage, pricing that has yet to recognize the rising cost of doing business, the Affordable Care Act's company mandate (which takes effect in 2015) and inflation still measures less than 2 percent, which is a sign of a struggling economy

I'm sure, like you, I can flip-flop back and forth on the various bell cows affecting our economy—good, bad, whatever. The point is, for the first time in a long while, 2014 offers a year of opportunity not seen in many years. The winds of advantage are in our favor.

So, how do we handle the challenge? For one thing, we don't sit back and think for a moment good things are going to happen simply because we're nice guys. No. Rather, we enlist the proven, age-old five-step process for success:

> Plan. We need a plan of attack for the year. It could be our vision, our budget or our ideas molded cohesively into a meaningful direction. This plan

will identify the results and will offer step-bystep actions to be accomplished in the journey to achieve the goal.

- > Involve our people. Who are any of us without our people? I would argue our employees are our greatest assets, and without them our goals would simply be a fleeting dream. Deliver our plan to our people. Create assignments. Establish timeliness. Coach. And, hold each one of our team members accountable to fair and measurable goals.
- **Execute.** As the leader of our team, we must lay out a plan for execution: Who will do what, with whom and when? It's a natural process. We set the goals, we issue assignments, we provide the instructions ,and our people will follow our lead.
- > Track. What's a plan without a tracking system to see where we are and to anticipate where we're going at any given moment? If we don't have one, we must create the system to track the results of our vision as we move along. Determine where the faults are so they can be improved and identify the wins so they can be embellished. Celebrate the wins and fix the "owies."
- > Discuss the results and replan. Here's that people thing again. Daily/weekly we want to discuss where we are and the in-course adjustments we wish to make. If a portion of the plan is not working, correct it. If it cannot be corrected, work around it. The critical element is not to lose track of our ultimate goal. I recall the old saying, "It's hard to remember the goal is to drain the swamp when you're up to your ass in alligators." It's cute and says it all: Do not lose focus.

This is the first year in some time where outside forces are minimized. We're in control of our destiny. Oh yes, we will have hurdles to clear, no question, but for the most part those hurdles are in our control. The recipe is simple—plan, involve, execute, track and replan. We all can do this. The opportunity is there for each of us to make 2014 the best year in recent history.

Cartoonist Walt Kelly said it best in a Pogo poster and comic strip. "We have met the enemy and he is us." This is our year to win—make it so!



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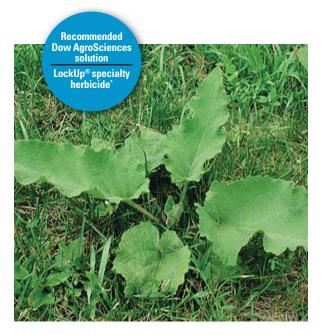
Lippia nodiflora

IDENTIFICATION TIPS

- This mat-forming perennial is commonly found south of the transition zone and along coastal areas.
- > Opposite leaves with small teeth at the outer tip grow on hairy branching stems. Its stem is angular and rigid when rolled between the fingers.
- > Purple to white flowers emerge around the tip of a brown seed stalk, forming a "match head" appearance.
- > Matchweed spreads by seeds and stolons along prostrate stems.

CONTROL TIPS

- > For optimum control, use a selective postemergent herbicide containing triclopyr and clopyralid when matchweed is in the four leaf to flower stage of growth.
- Maintain a healthy lawn by fertilizing and mowing at the proper height and frequency. Healthy grass can outcompete matchweed for light, water and nutrients to reduce the population.
- Matchweed prefers low, moist areas. Improve aeration to prevent infestations.



COMMON BURDOCK

Arctium minus

IDENTIFICATION TIPS

- Also known as wild rhubarb, this biennial weed reproduces by seed.
- > Seedlings emerge in early spring. The light-green, fleshy leaves are oval and slightly notched at the tips.
- In the second year, plants emerge from the root and can grow as tall as 10 feet.
- Adult leaves are triangular and coarsely veined. The upper surface is green and covered with stiff, straight hairs. The lower surface is whitish and woolly.
- > A branched flower stalk

emerges from the center of the rosette. A corolla of rose-purple flowers covered in slender-hooked bracts form at the top of the stalks in late spring to mid-summer.

CONTROL TIPS

- > Postemergent herbicides containing penoxsulam are most effective when applied in the first year during the rosette stage.
- > Hand-pulling or digging can be an effective control method for small infestations if conducted prior to seed production.

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Ownership PRIDE

Many Green Industry business owners overlook the employee stock ownership plan as an exit strategy. Yet some executives look past the ESOP's intricacies for the benefit of their employees, legacies.

BY SARAH PFLEDDERER



Larry Ryan accepts he has an expiration date.

The realistic president of Ryan Lawn & Tree knows he's going to die at some point, as everyone will, and then he'll no longer have a hand in the \$26 million company he founded in Overland Park, Kan., 27 years ago.

But he's found a silver lining to that fact for the company and its 205 employees. It lies in an employee stock ownership plan (ESOP), creating promise for Ryan Lawn & Tree to have an eternal life.

An ESOP introduces a cyclical transfer of ownership in a company whereby sole proprietors, like Ryan, sell their entire shares of a company to employees leading up to their exit from it. Employees, or "employee-owners," then hold a piece of the pie, so to speak, usually until their own retirements, when they also are required to sell back their shares to the company. Hence, the company is fully and always employee-owned.

That perpetuity sways a slice of Green Industry business owners to favor the ESOP over other exit strategies. But the greater part of the industry overlooks it as an option, financial consultants concur, due to the complexity and costliness of starting and maintaining one.

"There are many situations where it is clearly the most feasible exit strategy, but many business owners have the preconception they don't have any money and couldn't make it work," says Ron Edmonds, principal consultant for The Principium Group. "As the story gets told and people understand them, there's a compelling reason for more businesses to consider it."

Understanding it

The ESOP has been around as a viable exit plan since 1974, when Congress passed the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, allowing the ESOP to be managed as a qualified retirement plan under the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Only S and C corporations are eligible for an ESOP, and companies first must undergo a feasibility analysis, usually by an investment banking firm or ESOP consulting firm, to determine whether they're financially qualified to do so. That analysis and the time of attorneys and consultants make up part of the startup costs of an ESOP. For some perspective, David DuBois, president of Mission Landscape in Irvine, Calif., says it cost \$25,000 to start his company's ESOP in 2005.

To ensure a company is financially able to cover the costs, consultants say the rule

25 percent more likely TO STAY IN BUSINESS VERSUS NON-ESOP COMPANIES.

SOURCE: NATIONAL CENTER FOR EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP

of thumb is for a company to be valued between \$5 million to \$10 million when it starts an ESOP, but there are exceptions. Ryan Lawn & Tree, for example, was \$2.5 million when it began its ESOP in 1998.

The ESOP is funded through the creation of an ESOP trust, essentially a piggybank filled with contributions from the company and emptied for employee-owners upon their retirements. And because an ESOP is a qualified retirement plan, tax deductions may be applied to money contributed to and taken from an ESOP trust, like when a company matches contributions to a 401(k).

It's acceptable and common to fund an ESOP trust through a loan. In this case, which is called a leveraged ESOP, the company takes a loan from a bank to then lend to the ESOP trust, making funds immediately available to the proprietor selling shares.

With an unleveraged ESOP, when a company does not take out a bank loan to fund the trust, the proprietor typically receives a promissory note—sort of an "I owe you" from the company—for his or her shares.

Regardless of the form of ESOP, the business still must generate contributions for the ESOP trust. These contributions generally are made annually, which is why profitable, mature companies are apt candidates for the ESOP.

Employees who have been with a company for one year are automatically enrolled in the plan, meaning they own shares in the company—often the percent of shares they own is directly related to the percent of payroll they hold.

"Unlike a 401(k) or some other plans where the employee has to put in some of their own money, there is no requirement in an ESOP that the employee has to contribute anything," says Brian Corbett, managing partner of CCG Advisors. "It's truly a free benefit."

After a vesting period, which may be three to six years, employee-owners may cash in on their shares by retiring or leaving the company. Some companies, however, allow employee-owners to receive dividends during their participation in the ESOP.

Companies are required to have a formal business evaluation every year to guarantee shares are allocated fairly Larry Ryan

and to IRS standards.
That evaluation, along with contributions to the ESOP trust, payments to the trust trustee

and the money to be paid to employee-owners when they exit make up some of the annual expenses to maintain an ESOP.

Ryan Lawn & Tree pays about \$5,000 every year just for its evaluation.

"The downside in an ESOP is when the employees start owning most of it and you start having employee turnover, which you always will," Ryan says. "It becomes very expensive because you have to continually pay them off. It's like paying off the partner every time someone leaves."

4 DEFINING TAX BENEFITS OF THE ESOP

- Under section 1042 of the Internal Revenue Code, if at least 30 percent of a C corporation is ESOP owned the company may defer paying capital gains taxes on the sales proceeds.
- In a leveraged ESOP a company can repay the principal of the bank loan using pre-tax dollars.
- A company may deduct dividends it pays on ESOP stock, so long as those dividends are either passed through to the employees or the ESOP uses them to make principal or interest payments on the loan from the company.
- An S corporation that is 100 percent ESOP owned is not subject to federal income tax.

Visit LandscapeManagement.net for more detailed descriptions of these benefits.



Then again, writing those checks brings the value of an ESOP full circle for Ryan and other original proprietors.

A safety net for employees

"When you actually give up the control and interest of the company, it's kind of humbling," Ryan says. A year from now, he will write a check upward of \$200,000 to a 25-year employee-owner who recently retired from Ryan Lawn & Tree. (There are parameters in the ESOP that allow companies to pay employee-owners over certain amounts of time, generally beginning within one year of their exit and stretched as long as a five years.)

"When I sign that check I will smile and say, 'After all the things you did for me, I am so privileged I get to do something back for you," Ryan says.

Beyond financial feasibility, it's that employee-centered mindset that attracts some proprietors to the ESOP

EMPLOYEE OWNERS WERE **four times less likely** To be LAID OFF DURING THE RECENT RECESSION.

SOURCE: NATIONAL CENTER FOR EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP

more than other exit strategies, says Kelly Finnell, president of Executive Financial, an ESOP consulting firm.

Finnell, author of *The ESOP Coach*, says the original owner of an ESOP company generally is a baby boomer (ages 46 to 64) who has retirement in the back of his or her mind. Most ESOP candidates want liquidity, are motivated by tax saving and care about employees, he says.

"A lot of these business owners are thinking of liquidity strategies," Finnell says. "How do they cash in on their life's



Michael Hatcher

work? An ESOP gives them a tax-effective strategy for having that liquidity."

They're also highly proud and confident of their business, he adds.

"This is like sending a kid off to college," Finnell says. "You're glad you've gotten to this point, but still there's some anxiety involved in separating from something you've spent your life building."

Michael Hatcher, for instance, says he's been "coaching" his way out of Memphis, Tenn.-based Michael Hatcher & Associates since it began an ESOP in 2008, when it had been in business about 20 years and was \$10 million in annual revenue.

continued on page 18

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ESOP TERMS TO KNOW

LEVERAGED ESOP: An ESOP whereby the company obtains a loan to then lend to the ESOP trust.

UNLEVERAGED ESOP: An ESOP that utilizes its own profits to fund an ESOP trust, not a loan.

SHARE: A portion of ownership in a company, which, in an ESOP, generally is relative to the percent of payroll held.

ESOPTRUST: The account, which the company contributes to, that holds the money for the ESOP to pay employees for their shares.

VESTING: When, based on tenure of employment, employees acquire an increasing right to their shares.

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continued from page 16

"You have a different mindset in the way the business is run and managed because for it to become successful you have to train (employees) to run it as if you were not here," says the president of the firm. "That takes a stable and motivated management team. You've got to have good operating systems that create accountability."

Hatcher now owns 75 percent of the company, which is made up of 92 employee-owners and does \$8 million in annual revenue—he attributes the revenue dip to a change in service focuses from design/build to maintenance, not to the ESOP. The option of an ESOP came on his radar about a decade ago, when, at \$6 million in annual revenue, he started researching exit strategies. With his team

top of mind, he saw the value in the ESOP.

"We were working close to right about 100 employees, so I felt obligated to create some sort of safety net or continuation plan for that 100 people," he says.

DuBois recalls Mission Landscape being around \$11 million when it started an ESOP in 2005, the same year his father, Wayne DuBois, retired from the company that he founded in 1970. The leveraged ESOP, he says, was put in place to be a retirement plan for his father and a safety net for employees, including him.

The younger DuBois now owns 40 percent of the \$31 million company, David DuBois made up of 560 people. He adds he didn't alter his leadership style much to fit the making of the ESOP.

DuBois always has supervised through incentivizing rather than "holding the whip," he says, and believes there's a greater strength in a team versus a single leader.

"If you get a team of people to pull together with a common goal and common



GREEN INDUSTRY ESOPS

Company	Annual revenue (rounded)	# of employees	
The Davey Tree Expert Co.*	\$714 million	7,382	Kent, Ohio
DLC Resources	\$19 million	295	Phoenix
Lewis Tree Service*	N/A	3,470	West Henrietta, N.Y.
Michael Hatcher & Associates	\$8 million	92	Memphis, Tenn.
Mission Landscape	\$31 million	560	Irvine, Calif.
Gardeners' Guild	\$10 million	135	Richmond, Calif.
The Greenery	\$38 million	550	Hilton Head Island, S.C.
Ryan Lawn & Tree	\$26 million	205	Overland Park, Kan.
Webb Landscape	\$10 million	90	Bellevue, Idaho
Wright Service Corp.*	N/A	2,800	Des Moines, Iowa
Greater Texas Landscapes	\$14 million	125	Austin, Texas
Sunflower Landscaping & Maintenance	N/A	N/A	Delray Beach, Fla.

*Listed as a top 100 employee-owned company by the National Center for Employee Ownership.

interest, that's way stronger than one person can do," DuBois says. "If you get that embedded in the culture of your company, it's a competitive advantage."

Accountability, legacy secured

Mark Palmer is an exemplary employee-owner from an ESOP company. The nursery division director has been with Bellevue, Idaho-based Webb Landscape for 25 years, including the time frame the company transitioned to an ESOP in 2001.

Webb Landscape started its ESOP in 2001.

The original owner, Doug Webb, has since sold all of his shares to the company, making it 100 percent employee-owned. Palmer now owns 3.5 percent.

From an employee-owner view-point, he says one of the largest adjustments with the ESOP is the owner-level accountability he and his colleagues now have for their job performance. Yet, that also creates a pride of ownership, he says.

"It kind of gives you that American dream of owning something," Palmer

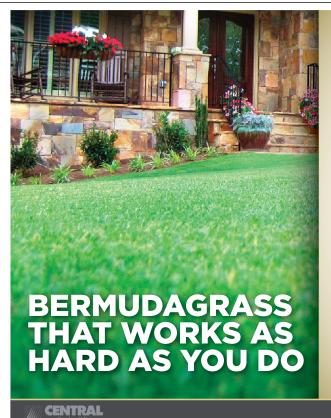
says. "The people who see that opportunity really step up to the plate to impact the business's profitability, (which) impacts their share value."

Mission Landscape makes a point to instill this understanding in its employee-owners.

The company publishes an ESOP newsletter to inform employee-owners on the workings of the ESOP. It also memo-Mark Palmer rializes when stock certificates are bestowed to employee-owners every year after its business evaluation and when dividends are distributed. Plus, it holds an annual "ESOP night" to act as an education forum on and celebration of the ESOP for employee-owners and their families.

EMPLOYEES AT ESOP COMPANIES HAVE 2.5 times greater RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS.

SOURCE: NATIONAL CENTER FOR EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP







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Pennington is a trusted manufacturer and distributor of grass seed since 1945 pennington.com "The drawback and the hardest challenge is educating the (employee) ownership, the people who have never owned a company who don't understand what they have or are getting," DuBois says. He adds the message to relay is: "We're all partners, so every day you, I, everybody around you is adding value or subtracting value. If someone else is doing a good job, they're helping you because it raises a bar."

Once that culture is developed and the value of an ESOP is instilled in employee-

EMPLOYEES AT
EMPLOYEE-OWNED
COMPANIES EARN
5 percent to
12 percent
more IN WAGES.

SOURCE: NATIONAL CENTER FOR EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP

owners, proprietors say retention rises and recruitment becomes easier.

DuBois and Ryan, for example, tout their companies' ESOP status when they recruit, although DuBois admits middle-age prospects latch on more than the younger job candidates.

Being an ESOP has proven to be a selling point in acquisitions, too, for Ryan Lawn & Tree.

In February the company acquired Simply Green Lawn Sprinklers, and Ryan says it has another deal in the works.

The turning point for sellers, Ryan says, is they appreciate their employees can become owners of a company rather than acquired assets.

"We say we're the 'opportunity business," Ryan says. "We want people to feel by being here, we're committed to their success."

By the numbers, the company is offering opportunity and is shaping up to Ryan's philosophy, thanks to its ESOP.

WEB EXTRAS

- A sample ESOP newsletter from Mission Landscape
- An excerpt from Kelly Finnell's book, The ESOP Coach
- An example ESOP feasibility analysis from CCG Advisors
- A roster of experts to assemble to create an ESOP, according to Finnell



Though he's optimistic about sticking around to see himself and his 200-some partners reach the milestone, for Ryan, it's similarly satisfying to know his legacy is secure.

"I'm not trying to exit the company, but the other side of it is I'm not trying to hog the ownership," he says. "If something would happen to me, the employees would win in this deal." LM



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s much as the features and price of a utility vehicle should weigh in on your purchasing decision, the dealer is just as important. Commercial accounts require a dealer that is equipped to deliver commercial-quality service and support throughout the life of the vehicle, not just at the time of sale.

With 13 locations throughout Pennsylvania, Best Line Equipment has been providing equipment rental, sales and service to commercial accounts since 1985. The company's mantra is simple, "Treating customers as business partners fosters a strong relationship."

Best Line Equipment's COO Michael Getz suggests you ask yourself three simple questions before signing on the dotted line.

Will they come to me?

Whether you work for a landscape company or a facility that uses utility vehicles for grounds maintenance, chances are you do not have time to spend visiting multiple dealerships.

"Dealers that are set up to sell and service to commercial accounts understand the demands and time constraints of a jobsite," Getz says. "It is our responsibility to demonstrate how a piece of equipment can benefit their operation, which is a lot harder to do at the dealership."

You would not buy a car before taking it for a test drive, and the same idea should apply to a work utility vehicle. There is no better place to test ride a utility vehicle than at the location it will be used most and by the people who will operate it. Jobsite demoing helps to ensure the vehicle is capable of handling workers' day-to-day tasks.



Do they understand this is how I do my job, not how I have fun?

Utility vehicles are great for recreation, but on the jobsite they are a partner that can significantly impact an operation's bottom line.

"While a recreation user may be slightly inconvenienced by being without their utility vehicle for a couple of days, a work user's livelihood will be impacted if the vehicle is out of commission," Getz says.

Best Line Equipment's manufacturercertified technicians provide on-site service assistance, so should there be any issues, the user can get back to work as soon as possible. The company also offers planned service agreements, tune-up packages and scheduled safety inspections to help customers get the most from their equipment.

How can their vehicle provide me with the biggest ROI?

Getting the most for one's budget is a must for any company. Those dealers who have a commitment to the commercial customer will carry products that can help execute several applications and provide the opportunity for improved productivity.

At its authorized Polaris® dealer locations, Best Line Equipment offers customers a utility vehicle that can haul up to 1,250 pounds of cargo in the pallet-sized rear cargo box, tow up to one ton, and also complete six diverse tasks through a front-end power take-off (PTO) system.

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"With the BRUTUS HDPTO, we can help customers create significant efficiencies in their equipment fleet," Getz says. "Instead of buying a utility vehicle to haul cargo, a snow blower for the winter and a mower for the summer, customers can use one vehicle with multiple attachments to execute several tasks."

The answers to these three simple questions should help indicate whether or not you have found a partner you can rely on long after the ink dries on the dotted line.

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Knowing who to hire and when can be a challenge for landscape business owners. Can you justify a bookkeeper? How about another technician or crew? Or should you bring on a full-time salesperson? And which comes first?

We turned to three consultants and one industry executive for tips and answers.

Why is it so hard for lawn care and landscape firms to know when to add an employee in any capacity?

Tim Smith, LandOpt (TS): In the

Green Industry, we're growing at 8 percent to 10 percent per year, where others in the service industry grow at 1 percent to 2 percent per year. Since we're growing at this rate, we get away with very informal business practices. If others would get as informal as we are, they would be out of business.

Jason Cupp, consultant (JC): Honestly, a lot of companies don't operate from a budget. That's one of most shocking things I see as I look under hoods of companies of all sizes. So, they don't know if they can afford to add someone because they don't know the ROI.

J. Paul Lamarche, JPL Consulting (*JPL*): Actually, what's difficult is the relationship between adding another cost and being unsure of increasing sales. In today's economy, having a

How do you know when it's the right to time to ramp up personnel? We asked a few Green Industry experts for their advice. BY MARISA PALMIERI

lean overhead is paramount to being competitive. Adding another employee can always be done if one realizes that the increase in sales or productivity will warrant the expense.

A classic example is a mid-size firm looking to hire a supervisor for the crews. A very common rule of thumb is the ratio of one supervisor for every five crews.

What are the most difficult hires to know when to make?

Ken Thomas, Envisor Consulting

(KT): When companies start out there are a couple of key hires made first: admin and operations. This nucleus of a three-person team (owner, admin person and operations person) typically can handle around \$1.5 million in a maintenance business to \$2.5 million in a design/build business. After the start-up stages it becomes harder to determine how to build the team.

One of the most important things an owner needs to do is determine what his or her strengths are. Too many times owners try to replicate themselves, but they should be leveraging their strengths and hiring their weaknesses.

TS: Often you have an owner who's starting out at \$200,000 or so, and they're doing everything—sales, drawings, payroll. One of the first team members they hire is a bookkeeper/ office assistant. Finally, they hand over the keys to the kingdom from a business perspective. But often this hire has not been formally recruited; their skills have not been verified. It's not uncommon to hear of office managers who end up stealing. An exhausted owner puts all the responsibility into their lap and the office manager, who has no ownership, risk, passion or vision, takes control of the business.

Take your time in identifying the first office manager you put in place, making sure there are checks and balances and the owner maintains business responsibility.

Also, I don't think it's necessary to put bookkeeping into that role. Outsource it and here's why: A professional bookkeeping service keeps a discipline and separation of church and state. You don't have to be concerned if your books are being done properly and they'll hold you accountable for check requests, etc.

Do you have any good rules of thumb to share? **TS:** Your sales costs for an organization should be roughly 10 percent of your revenue, including salary and marketing. If we're at \$700,000 in revenue, I want to see \$70,000 going toward proactive sales. Even at a \$200,000 company, someone should be fulfilling the role of a proactive salesperson.

For design, the first full-time employee dedicated to the role of designer should be when an organization hits \$3 million or above. Prior to that, align your services with a subcontracted designer. In our world design is a service we provide. The sales professional is the one taking the prospect through the process. When the time is right, they introduce the designer.

JC: On the construction side, if the schedule got to five to six weeks out (when I ran a design/build business), we'd add a crew. We always wanted to be two to four weeks out. I have (consulting) clients with a six-to-eight-week backlog and I'm encouraging them to look at whether they can afford to add a crew. In today's day and age, if you can't deliver on

a job within four to six weeks, clients might go elsewhere.

JPL: A benchmark for a good Management.net for office administrator is 3 perrole and salary benchcent of net sales. I've been in marks from LandOpt for companies where two people a \$1 million company. worked full time to cover \$500,000 in sales and other offices where one person could manage a company twice the size. It's all about competence, direction of management and systems.

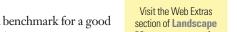
KT: In commercial maintenance, the need for crew foremen is pretty predictable based on volume. Based on your market and your market segment,

each crew will be able to produce a historical average volume of work each year. An average volume level per crew may be \$180,000 to \$220,000, depending on job size and crew size. So for every \$200,000 of new work sold you'll

need a new foreman.

One of the key positions in maintenance is the account manager position. This hire can be directly tied to a volume range or number of clients. These metrics vary in different parts of the country.

A general rule in first-tier landscape markets on the East Coast is that an account manager can handle between \$800,000 and \$1.2 million, depending on the average job size and market density. Based on our sales pipeline and growth goals, we should be prospecting for our next account manager when we are close to these ranges. LM



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Up in the air

A Michigan landscape company uses drones to capture aerial images of large-scale projects.

By EMILY SCHAPPACHER

t was a conundrum that long plagued Tom VerHage, owner of Grand Rapids, Mich.-based Katerberg VerHage Landscaping: How can we get complete, quality photographs of our large-scale projects? The helicopters the company used in the past were cost prohibitive, so VerHage was on the lookout for a cheaper, convenient way to photograph his company's largest projects like university campuses, parks, stadiums and some residences. About three years ago, VerHage finally found an efficient and affordable way to get the shots he wanted with a new-age device called an unmanned aerial system (UAS)—aka a drone.

"We always felt we couldn't do our larger projects justice with just on-the-ground shots," VerHage says. "We used a helicopter in the past and it was very expensive. It didn't make sense. The drones are a great way to do it. It works wonderfully."

Katerberg VerHage works with a company called Hovercams, also based in Grand Rapids, to take low-altitude aerial images of the \$8.4-million company's largest projects using a remote-controlled UAS. With this device, Hovercams is able to provide photos of projects from up to 200 feet in the air. The technology also allows the drone to zoom in on specific details from above, such as a water feature, pool or patio.

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Most recently, Katerberg VerHage built rock walls on three sides of the artificial turf football field at Grand Valley State University (GVSU) in Allendale, Mich., as well as the stadium on the school's practice fields.

Katerberg VerHage used drone photography to capture its project at GVSU.

The drone captured the finished project with high-resolution images of the entire field.

"The photos give us a great view from 100 to 200 feet in the air or right down into specific target areas," VerHage says. "The higher you go, you get a view of the whole project."

VerHage says his company uses the aerial shots mostly as a marketing tool for its 90-percent commercial clientele. But because the company does not pass along a fee to clients for the photos, he says it's selective over which projects are worthy of the Hovercams treatment. Costs ranges from \$150 to \$200 for 10 to 15 photos per session, VerHage says.

"The money goes a long way in getting these pictures taken," he says. "It gives you a good bang for your dollar."

VerHage adds clients seem to enjoy the imagery, too, and many of them end up framing and displaying the photos throughout their buildings.

"Customers are very impressed with the service," VerHage says. "It works really well for them and they like to keep the photos as part of their history."

Another benefit to the drone photography service, VerHage says, is capturing the images is simple. A Katerberg VerHage project manager meets a representative from the photography firm at the project site. After explaining the types of shots and details they are looking for, the rep-who VerHage says has an "architect's eye"operates the drone while taking the photos. The whole process takes less than an hour. Sometimes a project requires two sessions if Katerberg VerHage wants beforeand-after shots.

Schappacher is a freelance writer based in Charlotte, N.C.

The Ticker: DESIGN/BUILD

EP Henry resumes its HeroScaping program in 2014 and broke ground on a new project in Doylestown, Pa.: The Bucks County Global War on Terror Memorial. Since formalizing in 2012, the HeroScaping program has donated more than \$325,000 toward military-related projects and organizations.

Proven Winners added the Kentucky's Governor's Mansion as a Signature Garden location, making it the sixth locale to join the list. Garden designer John Carloftis is heading the grounds renovation.



With April being National Landscape Architecture Month (NLAM), the American Society of Landscape Architects encourages professionals to take to the theme "Career Discovery" by increasing awareness and exposure to the landscape architecture profession. Visit buff. ly/1k0nT2S for a listing of celebratory events in accordance with NLAM.



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MARKETWATCH

Hands-on approach

A Texas irrigation company makes water conservation its top priority. By EMILY SCHAPPACHER

he drought that hit Texas in 2006 was a wake-up call for Patty Sipe, co-owner of Heads Up Sprinkler Co. in Plano.

It was time to look at some aspects of her irrigation business differently. That drought and the ones that have ensued almost every year since have been catalysts for the company to rethink everything through the lens of conservationists and teachers versus a mere service provider, says Sipe.

"It was at that point we started to recognize water waste a lot more preva-

lently," Sipe says. "We have always been water conscious, but the 2006 drought and the ones that have followed really helped raise the public awareness with respect to water."

The \$500,000 company, co-owned by Caryn Walz who founded it 18 years ago, primarily services residential clients, offering irrigation system repair and long-term care services. It also provides irrigation system auditing services for commercial properties—a service it introduced in response to tightened water-use restrictions. Sipe expects this service to

expand in the coming years. That growth isn't necessarily the goal for Heads Up Sprinkler, though, Sipe says. The goal is to save as much water as possible while educating clients about why it's so critical.

"There are 7,000 licensed irrigation techs in North Texas—many of them are just trying to make a dollar and don't care about water conservation," she says. "For us, it's not about making money, it's about saving water."

And save water it has. In 2012, Heads Up Sprinkler won the City of Plano's Environmental Star of Excellence award for saving an estimated 1.2 million gallons of water that year by repairing broken or inefficient irrigation systems and teaching homeowners how to properly manage them. The company continues to save hundreds of thousands of gallons of water each year by providing leak repairs, hydrozoning











Above: Heads

Up Sprinkler

Co. co-owners

Patty Sipe (left) and Caryn Walz focus on saving

water for clients.

irrigation is one

way they do so.

Right: Drip

and station retrofits, improving head layouts, using performance-enhancing nozzles and utilizing drip irrigation "like there's no tomorrow."

EDUCATION IS THE KEY

Sipe says the most important piece of the puzzle is educating the homeowner. Each Heads Up Sprinkler technician is trained to spend as much time with each client as neces-

sary, explaining the issues, listening and answering questions. This method builds trust between the company and the client and helps clients make a connection between the irrigation system controller, or "that thing in their garage," and their water



bill, Sipe says. Once clients see that wasted water equals wasted dollars, they begin to pay more attention.

"We are the connection point between the automatic sprinkler system and the water bill," Sipe says. "When you are the connection, you are more than an irrigation company. You are an information base that can help customers."

Customers typically understand or have the "aha moment" when they see their water bill go from, say, \$300 to \$125, Sipe says.



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IRRIGATION

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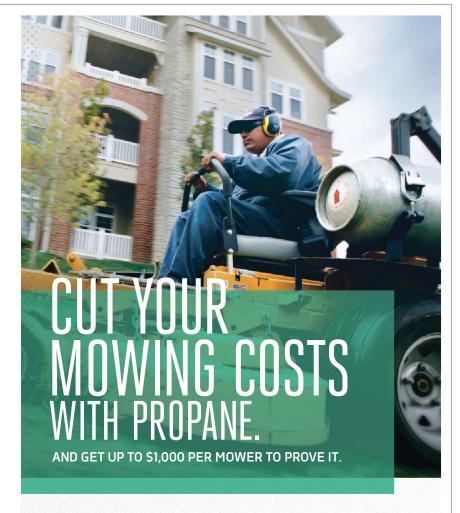
"Whether I spend an hour or an hourand-a-half with a customer, it's all billable, so I don't have to race from one customer to the next," Sipe says. "The customer always wants more knowledge. We take the time we need to take with each one." With that, Sipe recognizes water conservation is a long-standing issue in Texas, which is why she says, now more than ever, it's important to spread the knowledge. Alongside its hands-on approach to repairing irriga-

tion systems and educating clients, Heads Up Sprinkler continues to educate people about water conservation on a larger scale.

For instance, as a member of the Water Efficiency Network of North Texas, Sipe voluntarily teaches water management techniques to homeowners as well as heads of city water management programs—many of whom are required to meet 10-percent conservation goals annually throughout their regions.

"The future of Heads Up Sprinkler is going to include giving a lot more of our time back to the community, teaching more classes and helping the water users of the world use less," Sipe says. "But the focus of what we do has never changed. We work with the homeowners, we fix what's broken and we educate."

Schappacher is a freelance writer based in Charlotte, N.C.

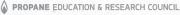


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The Ticker:

IRRIGATION



HydroPoint Data Systems received the Best Savings Impact vendor award from the **Irving Co.** for its positive influence on the company's water savings, primarily through the use of its WeaterTRAK Prosmart controllers.

Ewing promoted **Warren Gorowitz** to
vice president of sustainability. Gorowitz will
head the company's
outreach programs as
well as evolve its
sustainable product mix.



Warren Gorowitz



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New! Oregon PowerNow 40V MAX Cordless Trimmer/Edger

- No more cords, no gas-oil mixing, no warm-up, and no emissions
- Lithium ion battery pack offers long run time, premium cell technology, and constant no-fade power
- Holds a charge in storage for months
- Swift load trimmer head has dual lines for faster cutting
- Flip down guide for precise edging

\$179 ⁰⁰	\$39900
Trimmer/Edger (Tool Only)	Trimmer/Edger K w/2.4 Ah Battery
80184	80185

EAT VALUES. GREAT BRANDS. R



New! Oregon PowerNow 40V MAX Cordless Hedge Trimme

- Lithium ion battery pack offers long run time. premium cell technology, constant no-fade power
- Holds a charge in storage for months
- No gas-oil mixing, no pull cords, no warm-up, no emissions, and it is 4 times quieter than a gas trimmer
- 24" blade has laser-cut precision cutting blades for up to 3/4" cutting capacity

80177	80178 Hedge	80179 Hedge
Hedge Trimmer	Trimmer Kit	Trimmer Kit w/2.4
(Tool Only)	w/1.25 Ah Battery	Ah Battery
\$179 ⁰⁰	\$329 ⁰⁰	\$399 ⁰⁰



40V MAX Cordless Chain Saw

Runs cleaner, quieter, and is free from the hassles of gasoline or cords

■ 40V MAX Lithium Ion Battery holds a charge for months and provides high power

■ 14" bar

■ PowerSharp® System sharpens on the saw, on the job, in seconds

	Chain Saw Kit w/1.25Ah Battery	
\$249 ⁰⁰	\$349 ⁰⁰	\$399 ⁰⁰



4764, 4765, 4766

New! Oregon PowerNow Battery Packs and Chargers

Lithium ion battery pack offers long run time, premium cell technology, constant no-fade power

80171 1.25 Ah	80172 2.4 Ah	80173 C600	80180 C750
Battery Pack	Battery Pack	Battery Charger	Rapid Charger
\$9900	\$149 ⁰⁰	\$ 59 00	\$ 99 00

Repl. 14" Chain

\$3500



4691

New! Lawn Bagg™

- Free-standing
- 4 corner loops for easy lifting and hauling
- Foldable, polypropylene bags are puncture-resistant and will not tear

\$28 ⁵⁰	\$33 ⁵⁰	\$38 ⁵⁰
69185 75 Gallon	69186 135 Gallon	69187 202 Gallon
		(Paris)





8570

75177 Boss S.D.

\$239⁹⁵

New!

Brush Grubber Boss S.D.

- Pull tree stumps up to 8"
- 3.9" Diameter pads
- Heavy duty 1.5" steel

IGHT HERE.



New! Mag-Lok® Tools

33271 #2 Round Point Shovel Head	33273 Flat Spade Head	33272 16-Tine Forged Bow Rake Head
\$25 ⁹⁵	\$27 ²⁵	\$28 ²⁵



New! Mag-Lok® Heavy-Duty Fiberglass Handles

4mm (wall thickness) fiberglass handles

\$ 9725	\$99 25	\$ 9725
28" D-Grip	40" D-Grip	48" Straight
33267	33268	33269



7874

New! Hy-Pro[™] 15-Gallon Professional Fuel Station

- Made of steel and can be used with all types of fuel
- 10' hose with metal nozzle
- Gravity feed tank



New! Work Sharp® Knife and Tool Sharpener

35680	35686 Belt
Work Sharp	Accessory Kit
\$79 ⁹⁵	\$9 95



New! True Temper®
ClogFree Poly Leaf Rake
with Cushion Grip

33858 24"W	33859 30"W
w/11 Tines	w/15 Tines
\$18 ⁵⁰	\$ 21 ⁷⁵



New! Corona® MAX
Diamond Blade Steel Spades

69017	69021
12" Blade, 26"	15" Blade,
D-Grip Handle	54" Handle
\$72 ⁹⁵	\$ 98 ⁹⁵



New! Oregon® SuperTwist® Platinum Gatorline

- Highly flexible co-polymer core
- Resists welding up to 498°F

13353	13355
0.080 Gauge	0.095 Gauge
\$ 52 ²⁵	\$ 44 ⁷⁵



Edgit String Trimmer Attachment

■ Trimming and edging guide for straight shaft trimmers.

80105	80106
for Echo	for Stihl
\$ 61 ⁵⁰	\$72 ²⁵



■ Can be used to test any two-

stroke or four-stroke engine

93037	
\$ 39 ⁹⁵	



New! Oregon® SuperTwist® Platinum Gatorline

- Highly flexible co-polymer core
- Resists welding up to 498°F

13352	13354
0.080 Gauge	0.095 Gauge
\$ 17 ⁵⁰	\$15 ⁵⁰



W.E. Chapps Trimmer **Motor Cover**

■ Proven at sustained highway speeds for open trailers.

- Also keeps dirt, excessive dust and water out of the carburetor.
- Fully adjustable.



TruFuel 50:1 **Engineered Fuel/Oil**

- Ready to use 2-cycle fuel
- Ethanol-free
- Remains fresh for more than 2 years after opening
- Case of six 32 oz. cans



Gasoline Tank Snake™

- Absorbs both free and bound water in ethanol-blended gasoline
- Becomes dark blue when saturated



W.E. Chapps **Backpack Blower Cover**

- Custom fits and protects all backpack blowers
- Waterproof, abrasion- and tear-resistant outer cover



Gas-Powered Backpack Blower

- 25.4 cc Power Boost Vortex[™] Engine.
- 22.3 fl. oz. see-through fuel tank.
- Noise level (ANSI): 65 dB.



21053 Medium 21054 Large 21055 Extra Large

\$45⁹⁵



94154	94155
Without Cord	With Cord
\$ 46 75	\$ 78 25



Elvex® QuieTunes™ 660 Series AM/FM Radio Earmuffs

94130	94120 New!
QuieTunes 660	Rechargeable
\$73 ²⁵	\$ 88 ⁵⁰



21056 Medium 21057 Large 21058 Extra Large



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New! Carhartt® Carbondale™ Safety Glasses

■ Black/Tan Frame

\$7 90	\$8 ⁴⁰	\$8 ⁴⁰
23051	23053	23054
Clear Lens	Gray Lens	Bronze



R10 Dual-Valve N95 **Particulate**

23138 Respirator Box of 10

18⁹⁵



\$ 37 ⁹⁵	\$37 95
23443	23449
Dark Green	Orange



Radians® Altitude **Polarized Safety Glasses**

23244 Black w/ Smoke Lens	23247 Tortoise w/ Brown Lens
\$26 ⁹⁵	\$26 ⁹⁵



New! TURFgrabber Traction Gear

23029 Small 23013 Medium 23014 Large



New! Outdoor Research BugOut Gaiters™

25103 Small 25104 Medium 25112 Large 25114 X-Large



Uvex Stealth® Goggles

23454 Clear,	23456
Anti-Scratch	Gray Lens
\$18 ²⁵	\$15 ⁷⁵



Fiberglass Ironclad Handle **Brush Grubber**

- Handles small tree stumps and brush up to 2" diameter!
- Eight no slip grip teeth per pad
- Spring operated jaws Grip pads

rotate 360°

75175



- 35° angled handle for easy cleaning and digging of trenches
- 13 gauge steel blade
- 48" American ash wood handle

33808 3"	33809 4"
Trenching Shovel	Trenching Shovel
\$21 ²⁵	\$ 21 ²⁵



Spear Head Spade[™]

- 11"H x 9"W High carbon manganese steel blade
- Cushion grip

33886	33887
Spade	Long Handle
\$45 ⁵⁰	\$ 46 ⁹⁵



Ontario Military-Issue Machetes with Hand Guard

Hand guard for protection from thorns, brambles, etc.

33617	33618	33619
12″	18″	22″
\$20 ⁹⁵	\$24 ⁷⁵	\$27 ⁹⁵



New! Gerber Gator Kukri Machete

Ergonomic Gator Grip handle, slip-proof grip, and hefty full tang construction

■ 12-inch blade of corrosionresistant 1050 Steel

33627 Gator Kukri Machete **\$38**⁷⁵



7369

Tool Holder

- 12"Long
- Perfect for storage

Holds four pushbrooms or other tools of similar size

Four pre-drilled holes for installation

94720 Tool Holder \$6⁹⁵



New! UnionTools® Union Select Fiberglass Handle **Bow Rake**

- 15-3/4"W head with 15 teeth, each 3" long
- Steel ferrule
- 48" Textured fiberglass handle

33877 Model 2433200



New! UnionTools® Union Select Fiberglass Handle **Round Point Shovel**

■ 9" x 11-1/2" Heavy-duty blade with Dura-Torque® crimp collar, forward turned 33878 step, and

48" Textured fiberglass handle

open back

Model 2433000

25

ปกion*Tools*® Manufacturer's Warranty 10 Year 4686

New! UnionTools® Union Select Fiberglass Handle Square Point Shovel

■ 9-1/4" x 11-1/2" Heavy-duty blade with Dura-Torque® crimp collar. forward turned 33879

step, and open back ■ 48" Textured

fiberglass handle

Model 2433100



80170 with Fiberglass Poles w/B-Lite Poles \$15095 \$23495



8-1/2" Long

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New! KURO Hori-Hori Soil Knife

33487	33490
KURO	Leather Sheath
\$29 ⁵⁰	\$11 ⁷⁵



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81262	81272
Plastic Handle	Wooden Handle
\$27 ²⁵	\$27 ²⁵



Fanno Pole Saw with 16-1/2" Blade

81023 Fanno Pole Saw \$3495



New! Jameson[®] Barracuda[™] Tri-Cut Pole Saw Blades

81316 13″ Tri-Cut	81318 16″ Tri-Cut
\$15 ⁹⁵	\$ 18 ⁹⁰



Porter-Ferguson Forester Heavy-Duty Brush Cutters

■ 1-1/2" Capacity

79068 Model 0290F

\$103⁵⁰



79100	79101
16 oz. Bottle	One Gallon
\$12 ⁹⁵	\$ 37 95



New! Treekote Pruning Tool and Saw Treatment

81290 11 oz. Aerosol **\$19**50 Prevents the spread of harmful pathogens



New! Ooze Tube® Tree Watering System

\$12 ²⁵	\$16 ⁷⁵
79159	79160
15-Gallon	25-Gallon



Gilmour® 6-Ply Commercial **Duty Water Hoses**

		67742 3/4″ x 100′L
\$36 ⁷⁵	\$ 49 ⁹⁵	\$ 65 ⁹⁵



Ames Reel Easy® **Hose Reel**

- Holds 400' of 5/8" hose.
- Heavy-duty frame, 6' leader hose, chrome handle with cushion grip, and four 10" pneumatic wheels.



2938 New! \$195⁰⁰

Agratronix[™] Soil **Compaction Tester**

- Molded housing, rubber hand grips, and a 24" stainless steel rod
- 1/2" tip for firm soil
- 3/4" tip for soft soil



- For all turfgrass areas
- Weatherproof non-corrosive metal
- Readout: 3.5 to 9.0
- Overall Height: 48" Tall



Digital Soil Moisture Meter with 8" Probe

- Features an 8" heavyduty stainless steel probe
- Measures soil moisture content from 0 to 50%
- Data hold and min/max functions
- Water-resistant housing



Soil Sampler

■ One-piece, stainless steel tubular sampler



LaMotte® Model AM-31 **Soil Test Kit**

- Individual modules of chemical test equipment
- Each includes instructions and reagents for 50 tests



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Patented Duckbill earth anchors work like toggle bolts in soil

79122 New!	79124 New!
Holds 3,000 lbs.	Driving Rod
\$1 7 ⁷⁵	\$ 45 ⁵⁰
79135	79133
Holds 1,100 lbs.	Driving Rod
\$40 ⁹⁵	\$9 75



Neutralize Tank Cleaner

- One tablespoon cleans a 3-gallon sprayer
- One pound treats approximately 100 gallons



Series Sprayer

- Features a five-nozzle system
- Accepts TeeJet® nozzles
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13298 2-Gallon Sprayer	13299 3-Gallon Sprayer
\$ 39 ⁷⁵	\$ 47 ⁵⁰



EV-N-SPRED™ S25 Spray-**PRO Mark III Sprayer**

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- 13" Pneumatic stud wheels



SpotOn Sprayer Calibrator

- Readings are shown in GPM. oz./min., or Liter/min.
- Best for flow rates below 1 GPM

14005 SC-1 Calibrator



\$3995

New! SpotOn® Nozzle Cleaner

4609

- Produces a 50 psi air blast to quickly clear plugged nozzles
- Rugged nylon plastic construction
- Works anytime, anywhere and never needs refilling or recharging



New! Fertileeze® Fertilizer Applicator



- With each pump, the wand delivers one tablespoon of fertilizer
- Container holds 750 teaspoons





Solo® Backpack Sprayers

- Adjustable left/right hand-pump
- Fan, cone and straight stream nozzles

13195	13174
4-gal. piston	4-gal. diaphragm
\$ 94 ⁵⁰	\$ 97 ⁵⁰



Shoulder Saver Harness

- Padded, adjustable shoulder straps and padded, adjustable waist
- Adjustable chest strap
- Use with Solo, Chapin, and Field King backpack sprayers



New!

SpotOn® Spray Tip **Pressure Tester**

■ Digital display reads in PSI, Bars, or kPa



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■ Meet the California Air Resources Board (CARB) requirements for portable fuel containers

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93328	93329	93330



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- High-density resin

93141 Funnels **\$4**95



Keeper® Ratchet Tie-Downs

■ HI-TEST[™] Webbing is designed to be extra abrasion resistant for a long and useful life

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1"W x 15'L,	2"W x 27'L with
Pack of 4	Double J Hooks
\$19 ⁷⁵	\$19 ⁵⁰



Ez Gate Trailer Gate Lifter

- Reduces lifting by 90%.
- One Kit works on gates up to 200 lbs.
- Universal 1-hour installation.
- Works on all utility trailers with side rails.



Lockable **Trimmer Rack**

- Long-lasting stainless steel springs and vinyl-coated hooks.
- Holds three trimmers.
- For use on open trailers.



Cooler Rack

- Accommodates most standard size coolers.
- Adjustable straps included.



Backpack **Blower Rack**

- Blower securely mounts on hook with spring latch.
- Rubber strap included.
- For use on open trailers.



3744 **Gas Can** Rack

94704 \$**52**⁹⁵

- Can hold one 5-gallon or two 2.5-gallon rectangular polymer gas cans.
- Strap included for securing load.



3744 **Trimmer Line** Spool **Bracket**

Accommodates one 3 lb. spool of trimmer line (not included).



94706

\$9195



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TECNU® FIRST AID GEL

Antibiotic-free formula with Lidocaine for fast relief



25383 25382 1/16 oz. pcks 2 oz. Tube \$895 **\$3**4 95



Forestry Suppliers Industrial First Aid Kits

Contents meet/exceed requirements of ANSI Standard Z308.1-2003

25223	25222
10-Unit	25-Unit
\$16 ²⁵	\$20 ⁵⁰



Thirst Quencher

■ 21 oz. pack makes 2-1/2 gallons

33969	33634
Lemon-Lime	Orange
\$5 10	\$5 10



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O'Keeffe's® for Healthy Feet

- Promotes the healing of dry, cracked, split skin
- Non-greasy and odorless
- Made in USA



New! Coleman® 100 Max Insect Repellent

- 100% DEET
- Up to 10 hours of protection

25268	25269
1 oz. Pump	4 oz. Pump
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■ Heavy-duty waterless cleanser

33318	33322
50-Count	75-Count
\$ 11 ⁷⁵	\$18 ²⁵



New! Hydro Flask® Tactical Line Insulated Bottles

Keeps cold for 24 hrs., hot for 12

93886 Coyote Brown 93887 Desert Tan 93888 Foliage Green 93889 Nite Ops Black





Graham Bucciantini

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KEY CODE

PHOTO: FLORIDA LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS

More than mowing grass

Relationship building: The driving force behind Michael Lancaster's success as a businessman in the Green Industry. By JON KATZ

verybody can mow grass," says
Michael Lancaster, president of
Florida Landscape Consultants
(FLC). That's why he stresses
the importance of building relationships.

Lancaster, 54, has worked as a sales representative, business owner and consultant for nearly 30 years in the Green Industry. During that time, he's seen how relationship building—with other business associates and with customers—can affect success.

To that end, Lancaster attributes FLC's fast-track growth to the bonds he's formed with customers and colleagues. The Tampa, Fla.-based company is on pace to generate \$4 million in 2014 and \$10 million by 2017. He started the company in 2012.

ROAD TO SUCCESS

Lancaster entered the landscaping and lawn care business in the 1980s. He was

working as a district sales representative for General Foods Corp. when a friend asked him if he'd like a sales position at ChemLawn's commercial business unit in Tampa.

He said yes and took a crash course on agronomy and horticulture. Despite having no experience in the Green Industry, Lancaster quickly became a top sales representative.

In 1991, he decided to start his own commercial landscape business. After five years, Nanak's Landscaping in Tampa purchased it, retaining Lancaster as an independent marketing consultant for nearly 16 years.

Lancaster witnessed firsthand the importance of customer relationships three years ago when ValleyCrest then acquired Nanak's. He was displeased with the direction the company was heading, so he left after about a year to form his own firm with longtime



coworker Beau Bohannon, who was a regional vice president at Nanak's.

Lancaster handles most of the marketing and financial facets of FLC, while Bohancaster (seated) and Beau Bohannon (far left) emphasize career paths at Florida Landscape Consultants.

non is responsible for the operations. The company provides landscape maintenance, tree care, irrigation, design and outdoor lighting services for commercial clients. The duo relied on its experience and reputation to build FLC's client base.

3 KEYSTO BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Green Industry veteran Michael Lancaster offers his top tips for customer loyalty.

Be honest. "I don't promise the moon if can't deliver it. Don't promise clients a weed-free lawn (right away) if they have dead stuff everywhere because they didn't look after their irrigation system or didn't spray chemicals at the right time. Be honest with customers in assessing what their landscape is. I make sure I describe everything I learned during the property evaluation process. Have a good understanding of customer expectations, what you can accomplish based on existing conditions, what your capabilities are and how much it's going to cost."

2 Be reliable. "If we're supposed to be at a customer's property on Tuesday at 9 a.m., we're there every Tuesday at 9 unless there's a rain issue. And even then I still communicate with the customer to let them know when we will be there. Reliability, to me, is to be on time, on schedule all the time. We do that with high degree of success because that's how we operate. A lot of that has to do with planning/scheduling."

Stay in touch. "See the customer often. What I hear all the time from new prospects is that nobody ever comes to see

them to assess their satisfaction, evaluate their needs or check quality to ensure they're getting what you promised them. That's huge. I try to see all of my customers at least once a month. Account managers, department heads and lead men see our customers routinely. Our account managers, who will have no more than three crews, go to the properties each day the crew is there—every job, every day. It's one of the most important characteristics of our company that helps us retain customers and keep satisfaction high. One of my bosses once said, 'If you're not talking to your customers, I guarantee someone else is.'"

MAINTENANCE

MARKETWATCH

REASON FOR CHANGE

Ultimately, it was a clash in management philosophies that led Lancaster to strike out on his own. He says Valley Crest's leadership team redesigned labor budgets, changed account managers and split busi-

ness among various branches. That meant, without an explanation, many customers lost account managers who had worked with them for years. The company lost a lot of business, Lancaster says. That culmination inspired him to go back into business

for himself, bringing along Bohannon, who has many years of operations experience to complement his sales/marketing focus.

"Always work hard to surround yourself with good people," Lancaster says. "Every successful business has a good core group of folks who are like-minded."

Employee empowerment is important for any business that's planning for long-term success, he adds. Account managers must have administrative skills and take ownership of their properties, Lancaster says. He also believes in promoting internally.

"You want your people to understand they have a path to a career," Lancaster says. "Our turnover rate is very low because we invest a lot of time and effort into our employees, and they can sense that. We treat them like they have a career here, and they act like it's a career."

Katz is a freelance writer based in Cleveland.



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The Ticker:

MAINTENANCE

Aftermarket outdoor power equipment parts supplier **Rotary Corp.** joined the **National Hispanic Landscape Alliance** as a supporting member. "Rotary recognizes the growing impact of Hispanic Americans in the landscape industry and supports the efforts of NHLA," said Ed Nelson, president and CEO of Rotary.

Lawn Army expects to license 12 franchise locations in 2014, including one in Miami, pending as of press time. Established in 2011, Lawn Army is a brand of HomeTask, a multi-brand franchisor headquartered in Seattle. Lawn Army currently serves areas in Washington, South

California.

MARKETWATCH

Learning curve

New York lawn care operator creates long-term customers through education.

By EMILY SCHAPPACHER

rian Marcus started his career as a biology teacher. So it's no surprise the owner of Morning Glory Lawncare & Design in Holbrook, N.Y., considers educating clients one of the most important parts of business, an approach that has helped the company expand from eight clients to nearly 150 in just three seasons which also may account for its \$100,000 in annual revenue. It's all about providing information and establishing trust, Marcus says.

"Because of the whole teaching thing I never wanted to be that person who just tries to sell customers on, 'This is what I'm doing," Marcus says. "I really try to explain to each customer the details about the products I use and what's in them, what they're supposed to do and the results they're supposed to produce."

Morning Glory Lawncare & Design, a one-man operation, specializes in lawn care and landscape design, primarily serving residential clients (90 percent) earned through word-of-mouth referrals. All clients have Marcus's personal cell phone number, which they're encouraged to call if there's a concern. And he often makes visits to inspect any problems for free.

"You're doing the right thing for them and that's what it really comes down to," Marcus says. "I want my customers

The extra steps of being personable and sociable help my customers feel more secure in giving me money to take care of their properties."



-Brian Marcus

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LAWN CARE

MARKETWATCH

for the next 50 years, and I want their kids and their grandkids, too."

PROBLEM/SOLUTION

A challenge Marcus came across time and again was a client's lawn looking unhealthy because of inappropriate watering. He found many homeowners don't know how to operate their irrigation systems and don't realize they need to adjust them to provide their lawns specific amounts of water based on the time of year and the weather patterns. He made it a goal to teach all of his clients how to adjust their sprinkler heads and to educate them about proper watering techniques.

To do so Marcus created custom magnets for less than \$150 that he's provided to each customer for the past three years. These magnets detail how much water a lawn needs based on the temperature and the time of year. The simple and inexpensive marketing tool is an opportunity to educate the homeowner in a



In response to customer confusion over watering techniques, Marcus created magnets outlining how to water based on weather and time.

way that benefits everyone: Marcus has fewer problems to deal with and his clients have better-looking lawns all year.

"It was shocking how many phone calls I got saying, 'Thank you,'" Marcus said. "What wasn't so shocking is that when I'd go back to my clients' houses, most of their problems were fixed."



Marcus knows not every issue can be solved so easily, though. That's where his time and energy come into play. He makes it a point to drive by his customers' homes in between visits to look at their lawns and try to prevent any significant problems before they start. If a customer does call with a concern, Marcus is at their home within two days, preferably at a time when the client also will be there so they can discuss the problem in person and Marcus can answer questions.

Marcus also knows a client's lawn will only look as good as the product used on it. He opts for premium fertilizer, the same type he uses on his own lawn, and shares everything he knows about the product with his clients.

"Forming the bond of trust and honesty has helped expand the business, and the extra steps of being personable and sociable help my customers feel more secure in giving me money to take care of their properties," Marcus says. "Knowing your product and being able to communicate well with customers or possible customers is a big thing.

"It's actually just being a good person and an honest, actual human being—which is what you hope most people in the world are, but it's not always the case," he adds. "That is how I try to run my business." LIM

Schappacher is a freelance writer based in Charlotte, N.C.

The Ticker:

LAWN CARE



With April marking the celebration of National Lawn Care Month, the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) created resources for landscape professionals to share with customers, which are downloadable at buff.ly/1jQH7w9.

In an interview with the *Memphis Business Journal*, **TruGreen** President David Alexander divulged the company's plans post spin-off from **ServiceMaster**, noting this year it will focus on improving internal operations; it intends to make acquisitions in 2015; and it plans to add 100 people to

its Memphis, Tenn., headquarters in the next two years.

Two lawn care companies unveiled they'll be tackling pests this season, with **Lawn Dawg** and **Noon Turf Care** forming new pest control and pest prevention divisions, respectively. Lawn Dawg's service, which is available in Maine, Massachusetts and Albany, N.Y., includes perimeter pest control and mosquito control. Noon Turf Care's division in Marlborough, Mass., offers insect and rodent control, termite treatments and bed bug control.

Total Lawn Care (TLC), located in Indianapolis, won **Holganix's** Roots for You competition with its 13-inch turf root entry. As the victor, TLC received a \$500 cash prize and a \$500 donation made in its name to **PLANET**.

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PROJECTPORTFOLIO

A SCRAPBOOK OF DESIGN/BUILD OVERHAULS

THE MISSION

When an unusually flat site threatened to consume the view of the yard, the homeowners let the design team take some risks—and were rewarded with an outdoor space that's the envy of the neighborhood.

Brian Cossari, ASLA, a landscape architect for Wilton, Conn.-based Hoffman Landscapes, and his team were faced with a daunting challenge: The owners of a stately colonial wanted an outdoor space in which their young family could entertain, relax and play. But the flatness of the landscape presented drainage and wind issues.

To compensate, Cossari manipulated grade elevations to control views from the home while separating different areas for each hardscape element. Excavated material from the pool allowed the team to create raised masonry planters throughout the patio and pool area, without the feeling of being cramped.

"Drainage had to be carefully planned to integrate pitches of existing patio with proposed enhancements," he says.

To complement the large scale of the home, the axis of the pool was brought as far away from the house as possible. "That brought the pool close to a rear yard setback line, so the pool was built slightly more narrow and longer than a traditional pool," Cossari says.

Another unusual feature was the neighbor screen the Hoffman team built, featuring a large footing to withstand the wind sheer of cold Northeastern winters. The fake facade uses New England stone veneer to match the existing stonework on the residence. Its Rumford-style fireplace produces large, showy flames—ideal for chilly evenings outside.





HOFFMAN











THE WORK

- 1 | Something to work with. The builder of this brand-new home constructed egress stairs off the living spaces to a well-built, but simple terrace.
- **2** | **Add-on magic.** The existing terrace (shown in 1) provided a base for the outdoor kitchen and dining area, keeping both on the patio.
- **3** | **Bursts of color.** Planters filled with nepeta, day lilies, phlox, coreopsis, lantana and lavender bring color to the raised beds, providing sweet scents around the yard.
- 4 | Water wonder. A gunite swimming pool was installed with bluestone coping to integrate materials used on the existing builder's patio. The pool patio is quartzite, which blends nicely with existing bluestone—yet is not as hot on bare feet around the pool. Note the pondless waterfall feature behind the two sets of chairs.
- **5** | **Dressed for dinner.** Designer Brian Cossari used biaxial symmetry in the pool layout. The center line of the door access spears through the dining room, pergola, lounging area, pool, spa, waterfall and backdrop berm planting.
- **6** | **Simple symmetry.** The other axis carries the view through the fence arbor, boxwood hedges, pool, living room and pergola, terminating at the outdoor living room and fireplace. Plantings include oak leaf hydrangea, inkberry, dwarf boxwood, viburnum, butterfly bush and roses.
- 7 | Privacy wall. The shutters on this large, fake façade were crafted from recycled barn timbers with iron hinges and shutter dogs. These openings can be cut into doors to provide access to a future pool house, if desired.

Founded in 1987, Wilton, Conn.-based Hoffman Landscapes focuses on design/build, landscaping and property maintenance services throughout New York and Connecticut. Learn more at HoffmanLandscapes.com.



Un-stumped

DECADE AGO CHRIS Lee went out on a limb when he decided to bring all tree services in-house for EarthWorks, located in Lillian, Texas. Now, garnering \$75,000 in annual revenue from the add-on, the president of the \$13 million company has no further reservations. Plus, the stump grinding facet of the service is one of EarthWorks' most-desired services. Clients value it aesthetically and for liability concerns, Lee says.

EarthWorks subbed out its tree services for years but concerns arose due to "lack of control," Lee says. "When we used subs, we constantly had to stay on top of them. At times they would not show up or be late and we were the ones that looked bad. With it in-house we have complete control over scheduling."

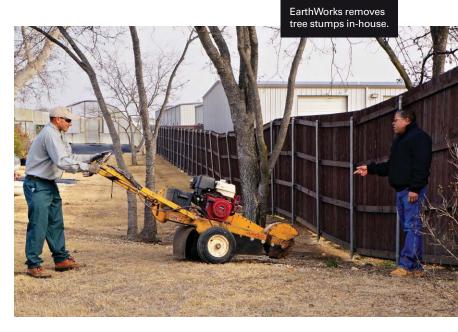
Its current tree service options include installation, trimming/removal and stump grinding. The latter is much needed and profitable, Lee says. "Every tree we remove—unless in a native area—includes stump grinding," he says.

But Lee says the company also found a way to secure some stump grinding gigs beyond its typical tree work. "We have been successful identifying old stumps from previous removals done by previous contractors and relating the liability involved to the client," Lee says. "That typically leads to a quick approval of the job."

Having grinders on hand has been a boon to landscape installation crews, too. Before purchasing the equipment, crews had to remove surface roots from planting areas with axes or mauls, which was time consuming and labor intensive. A grinder makes quick work of this task.

Lee says new stump grinders can be purchased for less than \$6,000. The company purchased a single walk-behind grinder initially and now has three onhand for full-time use.

EarthWorks primarily uses Rayco Mini Work-Force grinders because of the com-



>> SERVICE SNAPSHOT

COMPANY: EarthWorks
LOCATION: Lillian. Texas

WHY STUMP GRINDING?

Initially to supplement tree removals and eliminate the trip hazard associated with stumps, Lee says.

BIGGEST CHALLENGE? "You can cause damage if you aren't careful," Lee says. "There's also quite a bit of maintenance and repair work involved in grinding."

BEST TIP? "(Stump grinding) goes hand-in-hand with tree removal," Lee says. "If you aren't doing much work in the way of tree removals, first investigate how many opportunities there would be to bid/perform this kind of service."

pact size. "We can get them into just about anywhere," Lee says.

Stump grinding pricing differs depending on tree type, size and location, Lee says. Jobs typically range from \$75 to \$250 per stump. A separate two-man stump grinding crew typically conducts the work.

With stump grinding marketed as a component of its overall tree service offerings, Lee says the company most often promotes it to customers during existing tree service jobs, typically from employees identifying a stump and proposing the grinding service to clients while they're on site.

Reflecting on EarthWorks' implementation of the service, Lee says it was a smart business move. If it's something a company has been thinking about and is in the market to do a lot of tree work, he encourages them to go for it. "If other owners are wavering on the decision as I was, I would say, like Nike says, 'Just do it.'"

Payton is a freelance writer with eight years of experience writing about the landscape industry.

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Hemlock woolly adelgid

WEBINAR DESCRIPTION:

Invasive insects are more than a nuisance—they cause significant damage and cost the public, homeowners and commercial property managers billions of dollars for eradication, tree removal and replacement. Learn about the lawn care, landscape and arbor care professionals' roles in managing this tree and ornamental pest problem with this hour-long webinar. It covers the technical side and operations side of combatting invasive pests, such as emerald ash borer, rugose whitefly, hemlock woolly adelgid and others. LM Editor Marisa Palmieri moderates.

PRESENTERS:

TECHNICAL SPEAKER:



James Bethke

University of California Cooperative Extension

Bethke has both a bachelors and masters degree in entomology from the University of California Riverside. He worked in the entomology department for 25 years, concentrating on ornamental plant pest management issues

before becoming the Farm Advisor in Cooperative Extension for floriculture and nursery production. His research emphasizes pest management methods against common ornamental plant pests and insecticide resistance issues. He has been involved in eradication and management of invasive pests and their regulatory effects on nursery and greenhouse production in California.

OPERATIONS SPEAKER:



Rex Bastian, Ph.D. Regional Technical Advisor The Care of Trees/Davey Tree Expert Co.

Bastian joinedThe Care of Trees in January of 1989 after receiving his Ph.D. from Iowa

State University, majoring in entomology. His emphasis is on education and training, public relations and diagnostics. He is an ISA Board Certified Master Arborist and currently serves on the ISA Board Certified Master Arborist Test Committee.

MODERATOR:

Marisa Palmieri, Editor of Landscape Management

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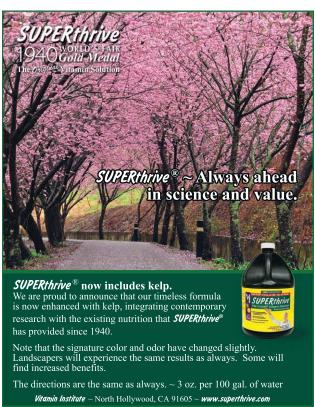
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YOUR GUIDE TO PRODUCT RESEARCH

INSECTICIDES



Triple Crown

Triple Crown is a three-way combination of FMC bifenthrin, FMC zeta-cypermethrin and imidacloprid, offering multiple modes of action on more than 30 above- and below-ground turf and ornamental pests, including ants, grubs, chinch bugs and more. Available in an emulsion-in-water (EW) formulation, it's labeled for broadcast lawn treatments, mound treatments and landscape applications.

FMC Professional Solutions // FMCProSolutions.com



Zylam Liquid/20SG

For control of damaging tree and shrub insects, Zylam Liquid from PBI/Gordon may be delivered via soil drench, soil injection, bark banding or foliar applications. Zylam 20SG controls damaging turfgrass pests, including root- and leaf-feeding insects in turf areas.

PBI/Gordon Corp. // GordonsProfessional.com



CoreTectTree and ShrubTablets

Bayer's tablets contain the active ingredient found in Merit tree and shrub insecticide, plus fertilizer. They can be used when planting or on established plants for controlled-release and long-residual systemic insect control. The tablets' health-promoting properties also make plants stronger, healthier and more resistant to environmental stress, the company says.

Bayer CropScience // BackedByBayer.com

Siesta Insecticide Fire Ant Bait

With the proprietary active ingredient metaflumizone, Siesta delivers fast and longlasting control of native and imported fire ants. It works by affecting the ants' feeding and mobility, ultimately resulting in death. The application flexibility and effectiveness of this product provides reduction in ants and their mounds for several weeks, the company says.

BASF // BetterTurf.BASF.us



Safari

Safari is a systemic insecticide that delivers quick uptake and knockdown of a spectrum of damaging and invasive landscape pests, including whitefly, Hemlock woolly adelgid, emerald ash borer, glassy-winged

sharpshooter, armored and soft scale and more, the company says.

Nufarm // Nufarm.com/us

TREE-äge

TREE-äge insecticide is applied through the Arborjet injection system, which seals the formulation inside the tree. InjectingTREE-äge directly into the tree's vascular system provides quick protection and is effective in controlling insects that feed under the bark, according to the manufacturer. TREE-äge provides up to

two years of control for insects like emerald ash borer and mountain pine beetle.

Arborjet // Arborjet.com



Safari

Acelepryn Insecticide

Acelepryn Insecticide provides season-long grub control in turf as well as control of ornamental insect pests such as leaf-feeding turf caterpillars, aphids and lace bugs, the company says. It can be applied foliarly, injected into the soil or as a bark spray, depending on the target pest. Acelepryn was recently granted a 2(ee) recommendation that expands its use to control Japanese beetle adults, Hemlock wooly adelgid and certain borers.

Syngenta // greencastonline.com



COMPACT EXCAVATORS



301.7D mini hydraulic excavator

The Cat 301.7D Mini Hydraulic Excavator offers a high dig force, competitive dig depth, ergonomic controls, spacious cab and an extending undercarriage and fold out dozer blade for improved versatility, the company says. Additionally, ground-leveling and finishing applications are fast and easy with the dozer float function. Caterpillar // Caterpillar.com



M-Series

A new forward-mount instrumentation system designed for enhanced functionality and improved ergonomics is available for six existing models of Bobcat compact excavators. The new instrumentation system, introduced with the E32, E35, E42, E45, E50, and E55, helps managers better understand and evaluate performance and costs, the company says.

Bobcat // Bobcat.com

8026 CTS

The new 2.7-ton 8026 mini excavator provides a conventional tail swing option that complements the similarly sized JCB 8025 zero tail swing excavator. It also features a three-cylinder, 24-hp engine; a low center of gravity; an easy-clean undercarriage; and a new valve block with 17 percent longer spool stroke.

JCB // JCB.com



EDGE attachments

Three new upgraded EDGE backhoe models (509B, 511B and 611B) have been added to the lineup of excavating attachments for skid-steers and track loaders. These models feature a new mono-block style valve with higher rated spool seals to prevent valve leakage from high back pressure. They also feature Grouser-style stabilizer pads as standard equipment for added stability and control.

CEAttachments // CEAttachments.com



35G

A smaller cousin to John Deere's G-Series excavators, the 35G is designed for landscaping and other applications and offers a 23-hp Final Tier 4 engine, without the need for an after treatment device. The machine features a wider and longer operator's station that provides greater visibility than previous models, the company says.

John Deere // JohnDeere.com



TC20

The 18-hp Terex TC20 compact crawler excavator is designed with a top-mounted boom cylinder to provide maximum protection during operation. The boom is offset to the right, to provide visibility to the operator. A quick-couple bucket adaptor makes it easy for bucket and attachment changes, the company says. The TC20 has an operating weight of 4,455 lbs., a maximum dig depth of 8 ft., 2 in., and a maximum reach of 14 ft., 4 in.

Terex // Terex.com



LMREPORTS

ANNUALS & PERENNIALS



Florific New Guinea impatiens

Florific New Guinea impatiens from Syngenta Flowers are resistant to impatiens downy mildew, making them an alternative to traditional impatiens in the landscape. Florific is available in high-density six packs in lavender, red, white and violet. Large, high-quality flowers sit above the foliage, the company says.

Syngenta Flowers // syngentaflowers.com

2014 AAS Bedding Plant Award Winner

Gaura "Sparkle White" has garnered the 2014 All-America Selections National Award for mixed containers and garden landscapes (see regional winners and more at AASWinners.com). The durable, heat- and drought-tolerant variety is not prone to insects or disease. Hardy to Zone 6, it prefers partial to full sun and has a bushy, mounded habit with 1.75-in. blooms from late spring to frost. It grows 10 in. to 24 in. tall.

Kieft Seed // KieftSeed.com



Panicum virgatum 'Northwind'

The National Garden Bureau reports Panicum virgatum 'Northwind' is the Perennial Plant Association's 2014 Perennial Plant of the Year. Deep roots make this switchgrass species droughttolerant, once established. It thrives in Zones 4 to 10 and full sun, but will tolerate light shade and nearly any soil. Like most ornamental grasses, it's seldom eaten by deer.

Perennial Plant Association // PerennialPlant.org



First Editions Summer Cascade Wisteria Known as Wisteria macrostachya 'Betty Matthews,' this

flowering vine blooms on new growth, covering the plant with deep blue-lavender flowers beginning in June. It thrives in Zones 4 to 8, and reaches a height of 15 in. to 25 ft. In late summer, the plant produces seedpods that add multi-season interest. Minnesota Landscape Arboretum researchers found Summer Cascade to be more reliably cold-hardy than other varieties.

Bailey Nurseries // FirstEditionsPlants.com



SedumTouchdown series

The new Sedum Touchdown series includes 'Touchdown Breeze, 'Touchdown Flame' (pictured), 'Touchdown Jade' and 'Touchdown Teak.' Growing best in Zones 4 to 10, the series was bred to have a vigorous multi-crown habit. Sedum 'Touchdown Flame' has red leaves in the spring, changing to a two-toned red-brown and olive-green in the summer. Terra Nova Nurseries // TerraNovaNurseries.com



Tesselaar's new compact shrub rose series, Sweet Spot, is available in four bloom colors, each punctuated in the center by a deep, saturated hue: Calypso (pinkish red and yellow with red/pink center), Peach (soft peach with red/pink center, pictured), Ruby (ruby pink with red/pink center) and Yellow (golden yellow with



Lilium 'Sunny Morning'

Lilium 'Sunny Morning' is a martagon lily hybrid from Holland's The Lily Co. The 3-ft.-tall stalks are adorned with up to eight downward-facing flowers, each composed of reflexed petalsyellow inside and flecked with cinnamon speckles and an orange/ yellow outside. Unlike most lilies, the martagon hybrids prefer part sun to light shade along with well-drained soils.

Plant Delights Nursery // PlantDelights.com



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Norman Goldenberg,

retired senior vice president of government affairs and industry relations for TruGreen



Who's your mentor? A guy by the name of Charlie Hromada. He was a senior vice president at Terminix. He passed away about 6 years ago. When he retired, I took over his responsibilities in 1997. He was an entomologist and I learned from him a great deal.

What interested you in pests in the first place?

thought I was going to be a dentist. I knew I was going to have to go to school for eight years and Florida didn't have dental school, so I would have had to go out of state. It would have cost a lot to go out of state, and I didn't want to go to school for that long, so I lost

interest. I talked to Chuck Steinmetz, who I'd known since eighth or ninth grade. He was a fraternity brother (at the University of Florida). Before I knew it I was working for pest and lawn care companies. The first company I worked for was Truly Nolan in Miami over a summer break between sophomore and junior years.

What would you say has changed the most in your 50-plus-year career? The advent of technology in the routine business of pest management and lawn care. It's allowed for people to become more productive. Consequently, it leads to greater earnings and greater longevity. It's a win-win for the specialists out there doing the work, the company and the customer who can schedule services online. It's just a whole different business today.

What's next, would you say? I can expect in the next decade or two there will be devices on properties that will alert us when services are needed. Perhaps there will be a device that recognizes lack of magnesium on a palm tree, for example, similar to what's available on the irrigation side.



What do you see as your greatest accomplishment over your career? The involvement I've had in trade associations: National Pest Management Association (NPMA) and PLCAA, which evolved into the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET). I was involved in the (ALCA/PLCAA) merger and have been on the PLANET board ever since. I'm finally coming off the board this month. I've always believed in being able to accomplish more through an association than you can by your-

self. I've always been an advocate of even the smallest businesses getting involved. I also love the way I've seen my friends and colleagues grow their businesses in this industry. It's very rewarding. One thing I've always said in my travels, and which I've done routinely, is I can go almost anywhere in the country and call up a pest or lawn care professional and have lunch with someone. It's a great feeling.

(Editor's note: Goldenberg was given PLANET's Lifetime Leadership Award in late February at Great Escape, pictured above.)

Visit LandscapeManagement.net for Goldenberg's take on why big companies get a bad rap and the No. 1 problem facing the lawn care industry.

YOU RETIRED THIS YEAR FROM SERVICEMASTER. WHAT'S NEXT?

I'm consulting for TruGreen, Terminix and for others. I plan to stay active in both the (pest and lawn care) industries. I'm still subscribing to news services and regulatory sites with industry keywords. I'll alert the people in the states and other industry people and just stay active.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY. I'm

married and I have four kids. who are all married. The youngest will be 35 and oldest will be 48. I have six grandkids.

WHERE'S YOUR FAVORITE VACATION

SPOT? We like going to Europe. We've been over to Greece, on a river cruise on the Danube and spent some time in Istanbul. I have tons of miles on Delta that are just waiting to be used, so you never know. I also like to ski. We usually ski with the grandkids at spring break.

CAN YOU RECOMMEND ANY GOOD

READS? I love to read novels. I read so many legislative things and technical stuff, so I like no-brainers. When I fly I take my iPad to read things like James Patterson thrillers, books by David Baldacci and Michael Donnelly.





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