

As seen on TV

Georgia-based company works against the clock to deliver a dream backyard on 'Yard Crashers.'

By EMILY SCHAPPACHER

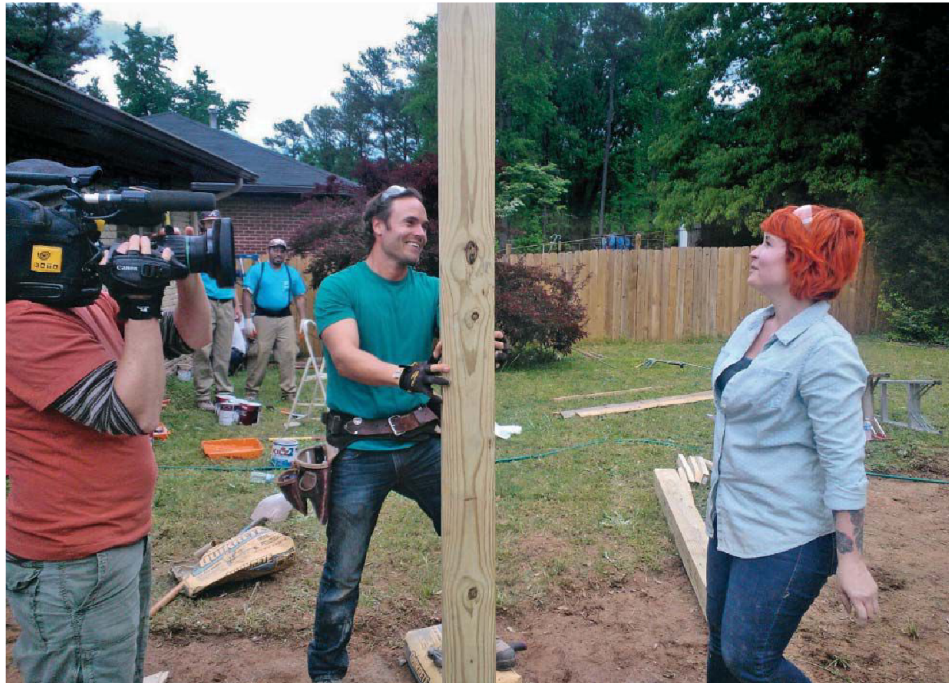
Providing clients the backyard of their dreams is what Oasis Landscapes & Irrigation does best—but doing it in less than 48 hours is a challenge crazy enough only for television. Featured on an episode of the DIY Network's "Yard Crashers," the Oasis crew completed a job that should have taken two to three weeks in less than two days, working against the clock to provide one lucky Atlanta-based couple a customized backyard sanctuary.

"We had no time left over and were all scrambling in the last hour," says Kevin Paulen, president of the Doraville, Ga.-based company. "I think it was a little harder than we expected it to be, but it was every bit as much fun as we thought it would be."

"Yard Crashers" is a landscape renovation show that offers unsuspecting shoppers at home improvement stores the opportunity for professional landscape contractors to renovate their backyards in less than two days. The show's producers contacted Paulen to see if his company was interested in appearing on an episode being filmed in Atlanta last April.

About a month after the initial contact, the producers traveled to Atlanta to interview Paulen and the owners of six other companies to determine which was most qualified for the job. Paulen was notified later the same day that his \$3-million company—which is 80 percent design/build, 20 percent maintenance and serves 90 percent residential clients—had been selected.

"They wanted to make sure we were qualified and capable of pulling off a project in a short period of time and



that we had the skills to do something unique," Paulen says.

Oasis had three months to plan and a \$25,000 budget provided by "Yard Crashers" to work with. Planning ahead, Paulen says, was key to completing the project on time. He and his project manager created a timeline to estimate how long each component of the project would take and worked ahead as much as possible, such as by shaping each piece of stone for the patio and the retaining wall and constructing the water and grill features.

Paulen's team also utilized the time to up the ante on creativity. The homeowner restores classic cars for a living, so Oasis made the water feature and grill out of parts from a 1948 Ford pickup and a 1934 Chevy sedan. The project also included

a decorative redwood sanctuary, privacy plantings, mature trees and blooming annuals.

"The network goes over your plan and lets you know if you bit off more than you can chew," Paulen says. "But if you're going to do something like this, make sure it's planned well and do as much in advance as you can. Also, don't get too overzealous—keep your goals realistic."

CHALLENGES, COSTS ARISE

Despite being organized, unexpected challenges still arose. One of the most difficult parts was working around the film crew, Paulen says. His staff members repeatedly had to stop what

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TUNE IN

"Backyard Hot Rods" is slated to air on DIY Network March 12 at 10:30 a.m. EST and March 29 at 5 p.m. EST.





Kevin Paulen estimates his team's participation in the show cost the company \$20,000 to \$30,000 in lost time and labor. Oasis had three months to prep for the two-day project.



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they were doing for the film crew to capture structured footage, such as the program's host showing the homeowners how to build a retaining wall. They also had to work until almost midnight on the first day, so part of the job was done under spotlights.

Another downfall for Paulen was the revenue lost as a result of the time and manpower dedicated to the show.

He estimates the time spent planning the project, preparing structures and materials in advance as well as having all 25 of his guys working on the show for two days during peak season cost him \$20,000 to \$30,000 in lost time and labor. While he's glad he had the opportunity

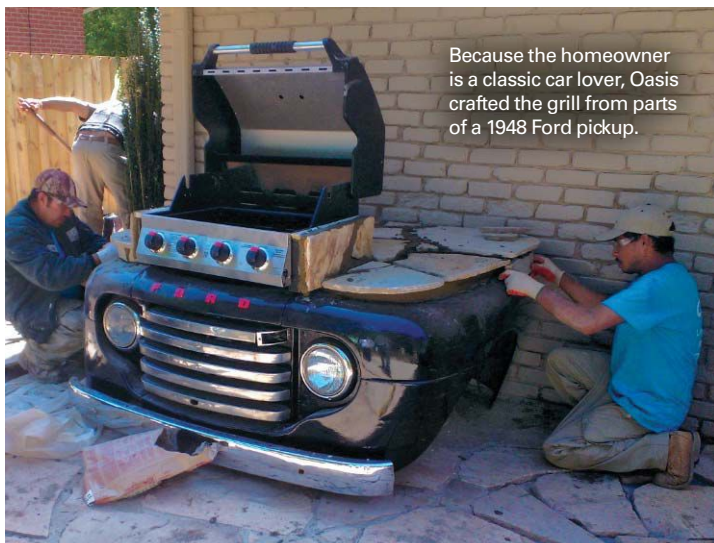
to be part of the project, Paulen says he doesn't imagine he would do it again.

"The highlight was seeing how excited the homeowners were when we were done—they were absolutely blown away," Paulen says. "It was fun to do, but I don't see a benefit to doing a second one."

The episode, "Backyard Hot Rods," aired twice on Sept. 2 on the DIY Network. It's slated to air again this spring, but Paulen says it will take at least a year for the episode to start syndicating. So far, he hasn't seen many tangible benefits from the experience, but the company utilizes an "As Seen on 'Yard Crashers'" logo on its website, marketing materials and client newsletters, and has the full-length episode posted on its website. Paulen hopes it soon will pay off as a marketing tool. For now, he says, it's an addition to Oasis's long list of accomplishments and accolades.

"I think it gives us more credibility," Paulen says. "People love to hear you were on TV. You're seen as the expert. And after 25 years in business, it was something we hadn't done."

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



Because the homeowner is a classic car lover, Oasis crafted the grill from parts of a 1948 Ford pickup.

The Ticker:

DESIGN/BUILD

DAP Products rolled out a new construction adhesive: DAP Smart-Bond, which may be applied to dimensional and treated lumber, natural and synthetic stone, painted surfaces and more.

JCB expanded its North American dealer network with the addition of **JCB of Miami**, formerly **E.R. Truck Equipment Corp.**

The dealership offers wheel loaders, backhoes and more, plus a parts department and full-service maintenance team.



For its work at a private residence in Newport Beach, Calif., **Richard Cohen Landscape & Construction** was deemed best of show at the **California Landscape Contractors Association Trophy Awards**.