



# LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

REAL-WORLD SOLUTIONS™

## Twice the work, half the workers

A hot market meets  
a chilly labor pool





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Pre-production model shown. Specifications, features and available options subject to change. \*Not available for sale in California.







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# KIOTI TAKES ON TURF CARE



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"Our teams put in a lot of time and research to ensure these mowers provide an exceptional experience and great value to our customers," says Peter Dong-Kyun Kim, president and CEO of Daedong-USA, Inc. Kioti Tractor Division. "We are thrilled to expand the Kioti offering with these ZXR and ZXC."

## FEATURES AND DETAILS OF KIOTI'S ZTR LINEUP

With superior value and reliability as the cornerstones of manufacturing, the Kioti ZTRs are packed with premium features and ready for years of performance. Engines range from 21- to 27-horsepower, with six models for professionals and six for property owners and hobby farmers alike. Standard notch blades housed in a

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"All aspects of these mowers were built with the operator in mind — from easy-to-reach controls and an ergonomically designed seating position to a digital control panel with keyless start and simple dial-type deck height adjustments," says Joel Hicks, senior product development manager.

Tackle your toughest turf today in a Kioti ZTR mower. To learn more about Kioti's ZTR lineup, contact your local Kioti dealership.



# TRACTOR





# CONTENTS

OCTOBER 2021 • VOL 60, ISSUE 10

## TWICE THE WORK, HALF THE WORKERS

A hot market meets  
a chilly labor pool

16



## TURF + ORNAMENTAL

### 25 Tipsheet

The top 12 things to remember  
when managing chinch bugs

### 28 Protect Your Turf

The best ways to treat dollar spot

### 30 Insect ID + Control

Why 2021 had the worst outbreak  
of fall armyworms in 30 years

### 32 Fertile Ground

How adding humates can make  
for healthier turf

### 34 Business Boosters

Lawn care operators discuss plant  
growth regulators

What's next for  
fall armyworms  
(page 30).



## MOWING + MAINTENANCE

### 36 The Big One

Lawn Management Co., Houston

### 38 How To

Tips for safely mowing steep slopes

### 40 Rev Your Engine

The inside scoop on advances  
in engine technologies

### 42 Maintain Your Edge

Making the most of utility vehicles

## DESIGN BUILD + INSTALLATION

### 44 Hardscape Solutions

Lotus Gardenscapes,  
Dexter, Mich.

### 46 Business Boosters

A look at virtual design services and  
how they can benefit contractors

### 48 Installation Iron

Advice for choosing the best type  
of chain for the job at hand



### 49 Products That Work

A peek at the latest  
paver products

• An irrigation  
project in  
St. Louis  
• (page 50).

## IRRIGATION + WATER MANAGEMENT

### 50 Water World

Professional Irrigation Systems,  
St. Louis

### 52 Business Boosters

Irrigation pros share how software  
helped execute big projects

ON THE COVER: CHRIS ALUKA BERRY, ALUKASTORIES.COM





## COLUMNS

### 6 Seth's Cut

BY SETH JONES

### 126 Industry Advocate

Why the green industry needs your help

BY BOB MANN

### 127 Kehoe's Playbook

More secrets to a \$3 million account manager

BY KEVIN KEHOE

### 128 Business Insider

The perks behind a second-in-command

BY JEFFREY SCOTT

### 132 Grow with Grunder

How investing in your team pays dividends

BY MARTY GRUNDER

Be an advocate for the green industry (page 126).

## IN EVERY ISSUE

### 10 LM Gallery

The faces and places the LM team has encountered recently

### 12 Need to Know

The latest news from around the industry

### 124 Five Questions

Mike Prokopchak, president, Walnut Hill Landscape Co.

### 125 A Look Back

How the labor issue is nothing new

### 130 Ad Index

### 131 Classifieds

See Mike Prokopchak's story (page 124).



## [ BE FEATURED ] Calling all sources

Do you have an interesting story to share when it comes to smart irrigation, biologicals or battery-powered equipment? We'd love to hear them! Email your ideas to LM Editor Christina Herrick at [cherrick@northcoastmedia.net](mailto:cherrick@northcoastmedia.net), and you just may be featured in the November issue of LM.

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## Keeping great workers is the GOALLLL!

**Y**ou may have noticed over the last few months that the team at LM has been making regular requests to our readers, sprinkled around the magazine and on social media, asking for you to reach out with any advice or success stories when it comes to hiring and keeping quality workers. We've known for months that we wanted to focus on labor in this issue, a front-of-mind topic with so many of our readers because of its many challenges. We hoped to provide some insight for those looking for innovative approaches to meet that challenge.

I'll be honest: Our efforts didn't quite lead to the phones ringing off the hooks. And, we anticipated as much. So, internally we had an editor's agreement: Whenever you have a source on the phone, whether you're talking chinch bugs (page 25) or trenchers (page 48), work in a question about their local labor pool and find out if they have any success stories they can share.

When the labor topic was brought up, most of the responses were long sighs followed by expressions of total frustration. It stings a little when you hear a company is turning away work based on a lack of dependable labor, though I'm sure it stings even more for the company. Reputations and bottom lines both depend on being able to hire and retain quality employees.

What were some of the interesting techniques and methods we heard? One of my favorites was when I spoke with Mike Prokopchak, president of

**“Mike has been successful in retaining employees since he started his company in 2006. His first employee is still with him, and he's had 11 people celebrate 10-year anniversaries.”**

Annapolis, Md.-based Walnut Hill Landscape Co. for this month's Five Questions interview (I encourage you to check out our interview way back on page 124, especially question four). Mike has been successful in retaining employees since he started his company in 2006. His first employee is still with him, and he's had 11 people celebrate 10-year anniversaries.

One of his secrets: a soccer field.

“My backyard is a soccer field where the guys play every day after work,” Mike told me. “It was 95 degrees here yesterday, 100-percent humidity, and after work, there were 20 people playing soccer!”

Imagine what access to a private first-class soccer field does for his crew's morale each day. Walnut Hill is changing locations, upgrading its space and getting a new shop. Mike realized the significance of that soccer field and already built a first-class soccer pitch at the company's new location. He joked with me that they've considered challenging other landscape companies to come play a match, and maybe the pristine field might lure them to switch teams.

This month's labor story eventually came together. (Prokopchak's soccer pitch didn't make the story but hey, it made it here!) You can find, “Twice the work, half the workers,” penned by Editor Christina Herrick, on page 16. In the story, you'll find a diverse group of sources discussing this problem and some possible solutions.

A shoutout to the company featured on the cover, Plants Creative in Scottsdale, Ga. The photo shoot we arranged with Pam Dooley, president, was for general labor shots as well as another labor-saver: The crew was installing a Husqvarna Automower on a customer's property. Robotic or autonomous mowers isn't something we touched on in this issue, but we'll write on that topic in a future issue. Maybe that's the answer?

“There's no silver bullet. We're going to have to try different things,” Andrew Bray, vice president of government relations for the NALP, told us. “What works in California might not work in Florida. I think you need to be smart and adapt to your environment and your community.”

Maybe there is no silver bullet when it comes to competing for workers in a tight labor market, but I'll go back to the soccer field at Walnut Hill and what I hear most often from readers: It's about treating people right.

“We have a good group of guys; we're like a family,” Prokopchak told me. “To see the smiles on their faces is pretty neat, it's exciting.” 🙌





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# EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD



## MORE ONLINE

See more great advice and complete answers from our Editorial Advisory Board in the online version of this feature at [LandscapeManagement.net](http://LandscapeManagement.net).

## What solutions can landscapers use to help crack the labor issue?

“Continue to advertise online for your openings. Do research to find out what phase or keywords might work to attract the right people.”



### Landscape Professionals

**Richard Bare**  
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**Marty Grunder**  
The Grow Group  
Dayton, Ohio

**Phil Harwood**  
Grow the Bench  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

**Kevin Kehoe**  
3PG Consulting  
Laguna, Calif.

**Jeffrey Scott**  
Jeffrey Scott Consulting  
New Orleans, La.



“Money talks in this market. We have raised our pay rates, doubled our referral bonus and offered significant sign-on bonuses. Improving our onboarding and training programs have also helped provide a better employee experience from day one.”



“Focus more on retention than recruitment. Those employees who are retained because they’re happy will also become your best recruiters out in the market.”



“Closely analyze where your best people come from, find out why they stay and do more of that.”



“Make larger investments in professional development leading to long-term careers in our industry.”



“Pay what the market will bear on labor, cleanse the bad customers, grow slower and raise prices.”



**OUR MISSION:** *Landscape Management* shares a comprehensive mix of content designed to stimulate growth and take our readers to their next level.





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# LM GALLERY

Check out a few of the places where the **LM** team made its rounds recently

**1 Ready to roll** National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) Field Trip hosts Frank Mariani (center), CEO of Mariani Landscape, and Marty Grunder, president and CEO of Grunder Landscaping Co. and The Grow Group, welcome **LM** Editor Christina Herrick to an action-packed day and a half.

**2 Three's company** Bob Grover (left), NALP incoming president, with Ruppert Landscape CEO Craig Ruppert (center) and Director of Corporate Culture and Training Mike Monde (right) while NALP toured Ruppert's Laytonsville, Md., headquarters.

**3 In the field** Bruce Allentuck, owner of Allentuck Landscaping (left), and Nicholas DiBenedetto, president of ND Landscape Services (right), show Herrick the ropes at her first NALP Field Trip.

**4 All smiles** **LM** Managing Editor Sarah Webb snagged a selfie with Jeffrey Scott at his 2021 Summer Growth Summit event in St. Louis. The two agreed that it was nice to be traveling to and participating in in-person events once more.

**5 Seeing red** **LM** Publisher and Cleveland Browns fan Bill Roddy dared to enter Arrowhead Stadium to see the Kansas City Chiefs take on his Browns. Joining him are his Chiefs fan friends Sam Wineinger, SipcamAgro USA, **LM** Editor-in-Chief Seth Jones and Sean Lipford. The Chiefs may have won the game 33-29, but the real winner that day was Bill's T-shirt, mashing up the iconic leg lamp from *A Christmas Story* movie (filmed in Cleveland) with the Cleveland Browns.

1



2



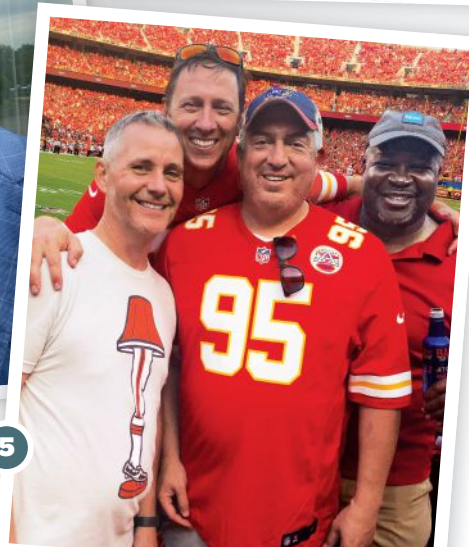
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5



PHOTOS: LM STAFF



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## Jeffrey Scott's Summer Growth Summit encourages companies to stay nimble

BY SARAH WEBB | LM MANAGING EDITOR

**L**andscape Management hit the road again to attend Jeffrey Scott's Summer Growth Summit, held Aug. 31 to Sept. 1 in St. Louis. The event encouraged more than 150 attendees to nurture an entrepreneurial spirit and keep up with the changing landscape.

"We bounced forward into a new type of normal, and we have to stay nimble. We're in the middle of change, and we have to keep changing as well," Scott said. "You have to stay hungry and be sure to not fall asleep at the wheel."

Throughout the two-day conference, industry giants, including Kurt Bland, president of Bland Landscaping in Apex, N.C., and Todd Pugh, founder of Enviroscapes in Louisville, Ohio, shared their experiences with attendees. LanDesign executives spoke about their areas of operation.

The session topics included creating a platform for managing and inspiring



future growth of people, systems and divisions; increasing profitability through efficiency; optimizing the use of time as a leader; building leadership teams to prepare for succession; employing a growth mindset to overcome future challenges; and more.

The conference also included a two-facility tour at LanDesign, a multi-million-dollar company serving the St. Louis area.


The company now includes four facets: LanDesign, LanDesign Plus, Automatic Rain and a newly purchased septic sector company.

LanDesign owner George Tucker discussed the firm's beginnings, how he broke away from his parents' company to strike out on his own and how he put the

necessary people, including CEO Brent Pollard, in place to help the operation run smoothly.

"I knew I had to get out of my own way," Tucker said about hiring Pollard. "I'm not the best person to be the CEO of my company because that's not what my passion is. There are plenty of people who will help take you to the next level."

COO Charley Branham added to the conversation by discussing the development of general managers into company leaders.

"One of the toughest things is that these guys have come from working in the business to working on the business," Branham said. "But, as the speed of the general manager (goes,) so goes the staff." 

**Todd Pugh of Enviroscapes and Jeffrey Scott talk labor solutions.**



**Summer Growth Summit attendees visited LanDesign's facilities.**

PHOTOS: LM STAFF



# Lawn care industry rallies around colleague affected by Hurricane Ida

BY ROBERT SCHOENBERGER | LM SENIOR EDITOR

**“A**ny suggestions or creative ideas of how to get rid of 250-plus bags of flooded grass seed?”

It's not a question any landscape company operator wants to ask, but that's where Dan Lyster, owner of DTL Total Turf Care, found himself after the remnants of Hurricane Ida flooded his shop in Downingtown, Pa.

With lost seed, damaged equipment, a ruined shop and office areas, DTL needed help, so Lyster set up a GoFundMe page and shared some of his challenges on the Professional Lawn Care Applicators group on Facebook.

In less than a week, he'd raised more than \$8,000 toward his \$10,000

goal with many of the donations coming from colleagues and competitors. Dealers and vendors have helped him find seed and equipment.

Insurance will cover some of the damage, but Lyster said he exceeded his policy's coverage on inventory with his huge seed orders this year — the most he's ever ordered. Plus, seed prices have gone up since he bought his inventory, and insurance doesn't cover the difference between what he paid and what it will cost to replace inventory.

Dustin McGehee, co-owner of Stinger Equipment, said he heard that Lyster's shop had been underwater from the Facebook group.

“We don't have a relationship with Dan, but I knew he ran our equipment,” McGehee said. “They were asking for technical assistance for how to get their units up and running.”

Fixing flooded aerators, if possible, can be time-consuming, so McGehee pulled a Quad-Aer 3000 demo unit and shipped it to Pennsylvania, telling Lyster to keep it as a loaner until he gets his equipment and insurance issues sorted.

“It's the oldest, crustiest one in the fleet, so it took some time for us to get it up to standard,” McGehee said. “We thought it was a small thing we could do to help out.” 🙏

## Ruppert Landscape shares update following explosion

A propane explosion at Ruppert Landscape in Laytonsville, Md., on Sept. 7 injured three people, including one taken to a hospital by helicopter, a Montgomery County Fire & Rescue spokesman said, as reported by *Bethesda Magazine*.

The explosion happened in a building at 23601 Laytonsville Road around 7:45 a.m. Police and fire units were on the scene within minutes, and the campus was evacuated pending further investigation and inspection. One building was severely damaged in the explosion.

Thanks to his quick thinking, Bill Law, Ruppert Landscape's facility manager, alerted employees at the company's Allnutt House office building to a gas leak that led to the explosion.

President Phil Key said in a video update that Law smelled gas in the Allnutt House and communicated to employees around 7:05 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 7, to vacate

the facility. Law and a technician from the propane company went to work to address the leak in the building.

Three people were treated for injuries, two of whom were taken to the hospital. The technician was treated at the hospital and released. Law is currently in stable condition.

Ruppert Landscape is still assessing the cause of the explosion.

The Allnutt House was deemed structurally unsound and demolished. Ruppert said the plan is to rebuild a home similar to the original.

“We're putting energy now into figuring out how to do that and trying to make it happen quickly,” CEO Craig Ruppert said.

Ruppert thanked employees and Key for leading the response

to the crisis. “A lot of people worked long hours the last 48 hours in every department here in corporate and really went above and beyond to get the job done,” Ruppert said. “Thank you for all your support and all your expressions of sympathy and good luck that have flowed through over the last 48 hours.”

**A propane explosion occurred at a Ruppert Landscape facility.**





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A blue tracked loader with a front bucket is shown working on a dirt and rock site. The loader is positioned on the left side of the frame, with its bucket raised and dumping a load of dirt and rocks. The ground is uneven, with patches of brown soil and scattered rocks. The background shows more of the same terrain, with some sparse green vegetation visible in the upper right corner.

# TWICE THE WORK, HALF THE WORKERS

A hot market meets  
a chilly labor pool

BY CHRISTINA HERRICK | LM EDITOR





PHOTO: CHRIS ALUKA BERRY

#### OUTTA GAS

Landscapers say the nonstop demand for work and the lack of workers is like a sports car out of gas.

**T**he difficulty of finding and keeping good employees is nothing new to the landscaping industry. Nicholas DiBenedetto, president of ND Landscape Services in Georgetown, Mass., remembers always looking for the next employee for his business since its inception about 40 years ago.

"I don't recall not needing to hire anybody, although there's always a few downturns in the economy," he says. "I've always observed who would be available with high skills."

DiBenedetto says he's proud to have employees who have been with his commercial landscape management, design/build and snow and ice management business 12-plus, 25-plus and even 35-plus years. And while many landscaping companies have longtime employees like DiBenedetto's company does, many companies struggle to fill key roles. Experts say now is the time to look to alternative sources for your next new hire.

#### A PORSCHE WITHOUT GAS

For Seabreeze Property Services in Portland, Maine, this past year and a half has been a time of increased

*Continued on page 20*

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## COVER STORY >>

*Continued from page 17*

demand and growth. CEO Josh Flynn estimates his primarily commercial landscape maintenance, design/build, lawn care and snow and ice management company is about 35 percent larger than it was pre-COVID-19 and now employs about 70 people. He says he's noticed a diverse pool of applicants, including people coming from the hospitality and restaurant industries. And yet, he says the labor market is just as tight as when he started with the company about five years ago as a supervisor.

"You hear stories of 'Back in 2008, 2009, we had a stack of applicants, and you could have picked whoever you wanted to,'" he says, adding that those days are now a distant memory. "It's just as tight as it was in 2019 and just as difficult. It's compounded by the fact that there's so much opportunity that we want to seize."

Flynn says his company stopped selling projects about two and a half months ago because he can't source enough employees to keep up with the demand. One of his sales representatives likens this current state for the industry to a Porsche without gas.



**Andrew Bray**

"It's tough to say no to new work," Flynn says. "We've stopped selling now for probably about two and a half months. That's incredibly unusual."

Andrew Bray, vice president of government relations with the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP), says the global pandemic exacerbated an already tight labor market. Before the pandemic, the unemployment rate was under 4 percent. Workers were already opting for year-round employment, fewer manual labor jobs and air-conditioning in fast-food restaurants and big-box stores.

"Now, a pandemic happens, and I think everybody is feeling that crunch," he says.

Brian McCabe, financial adviser with Savage and Associates and co-owner of McCabe Outdoor Power, an equipment dealer in Grand Rapids, Ohio, says this labor crunch has hit his dealership.

"We've lost sales. A guy's like, 'I'm going to take four zero-turns this spring.' But then says, 'You know what? I'm actually good because I have to hand away accounts this year because I don't have enough help.'"

This isn't going to change any time soon, says Kara Youngblood, founding attorney of Youngblood & Associates, an immigration law firm that focuses on the green industry.

"There's just no workforce that they can count on being there on a daily basis," she says.



**Brian McCabe**



» **Landscape Management** interviewed multiple experts about what they advise their peers do given the hot market alongside a chilly labor pool.

**ADVICE: Charge more for services and pay employees more**

Flynn says he's looked at historical numbers at Seabreeze Property Services in Portland, Maine, and it's high time the industry takes a hard look at what it charges for services.

"I think for a very long time, most folks have probably been getting away with paying between \$11 and \$14 an hour," he says. "In our market, that's not a cost-of-living wage."

Flynn said he's increased wages by 10 percent since April 2021. He says his business is also significantly raising prices to account for the higher wages.

"You have to do these things in order to keep growing and moving forward," he says. "The machines don't move unless there's somebody in them."

**ADVICE: Keep them year-round**

Flynn said Seabreeze Property Services transitioned from guaranteeing workers a certain amount of hours

throughout the winter into a new winter program that guarantees a full-time paycheck — including overtime and differential pay — regardless of weather. Instead of having employees report to the shop to clean trucks over and over, last winter, a group of employees from different divisions and branches worked at the Good Shepherd Food Bank in Auburn, Maine.

"We did a pilot group of five to six folks every week, depending on the weather, and they go for a full day," he says. "Why not give back to the community in some small way? At the end of the season last year, they had prepared enough boxes of food for 37,000 meals for the state of Maine. That's only five or six people ... we have 70."

Flynn says Good Shepherd indicated the need for more help, and there are several food bank branches close to Seabreeze branches.

"It's weather-dependent, but I'd like to at least double what we did last year," he says. "It's all wrapped into how we're trying to think about winter employment and financial security for our employees and what's more worth their time."



Josh Flynn

*Continued on page 22*

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## COVER STORY »

*Continued from page 21*

### **ADVICE: Appeal to the next generation**

Each new generation entering the workforce has a reputation that precedes it. This is true with Generation Z. Working in the green industry could be a natural fit for this generation, which is known to be passionate about the environment and concerned with climate change.

Bray says this is an opportunity for the industry to tout the benefits of landscaping and the green industry as a whole to attract these new workers.

"Studies show that this younger generation feels this tremendous amount of social responsibility," Bray says. "There's some really cool stuff out there we're doing that is not just mowing the grass. There are ways to shape landscapes and improve them by putting in certain plants. And there's some real critical thinking involved. Those are some things that are very appealing to many in this younger generation."

Bray says landscaping companies should use the opportunity to visit high schools and job fairs and target the messaging to the benefits of the industry, which is exactly what DiBenedetto did recently. He spoke to a group of high schoolers in his hometown about the true cost of a college degree and the opportunities within the green industry. He compared the path of a college grad with \$200,000 in student loan debt with a high school grad who works for a landscaping company after graduation. By the time the college student graduates, the high schooler would be earning \$65,000 a year, while the college graduate starts with a low-paying job.

"I remember the instructor telling me that he was just amazed when I started to put the numbers on the whiteboard," DiBenedetto says.



**Nick DiBenedetto**

### **ADVICE: Consider H-2B**

Youngblood's company, Youngblood & Associates, helps landscaping and other green industry businesses navigate the tricky application process for the H-2B program. She sees temporary H-2B workers as an important role in the industry.



**Kara Youngblood**

"I think that nonimmigrant (H-2B) workers are going to be the future of manual labor in this country," she says.

She recommends business owners start thinking now about where they see their business going and how they're going to source the labor.



"You have to plan ahead in the same way that you've got to plan ahead to make sure your materials are at the job site at a particular time," she says.

Youngblood recommends taking the steps now to apply to the 2023 H-2B labor pool with an experienced filer who knows the green industry as it takes time to file the necessary paperwork with the Department of Labor.

"Don't wait until the end of the season to start looking for someone to file for you for the spring," she says. "That's just not an adequate amount of time to prepare for the season."

#### **ADVICE: Focus on recruitment**

Flynn says Seabreeze Property Services prides itself on a quick turnaround on job applications. A human resources manager focuses entirely on recruitment.

"If you apply to our company and you're prequalified, then chances are you're going to get a screening phone

#### **NEXT GENERATION**

Experts say the green industry can be very attractive to Gen Z candidates. Target your messaging to attract these potential employees.



interview within the next day or two and then an in-person interview the following day after that," he says.

Flynn likens job applications to impulse buying. "You don't want somebody to apply and then sit there and apply to a bunch of other places," he says. "You have to be quick, and you have to be diligent."

*Continued on page 24*

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*Continued from page 23*

His company uses Paylocity HR and payroll software to move candidates through the process to ensure a quick and streamlined hiring process. He says quick offers also keep potential hires interested.

"Just like selling, it's an everyday thing," he says. "We want to make it as easy to buy from us as possible, and you want to make it as easy as possible for someone to apply and get hired. It doesn't need to be an arduous process."

### **ADVICE: Get active**

In 2019, Bray says the landscaping industry applied for 75,000 H-2B workers, half of all applications. The U.S. Department of Labor caps the H-2B program at 66,000 visas but allows for supplemental visas of anywhere between 10,000 and 30,000 workers.

"We know that the 66,000 cap is not representative of actual demand," he says. "We've been trying to fix this problem for nearly two decades. I know people are frustrated. But remember, each of the last five years with the exception of COVID, we've gotten additional visas."

In June, the House introduced a stand-alone bill to put returning worker exemptions back into the H-2B program.

### **QUICK HIRE**

Experts say one way to keep candidates interested is to process job applications quickly for qualified applicants.



Bray is also optimistic there could be more immigration reforms coming, but he says the landscaping industry needs to speak up.

"We need to activate our grassroots network in a way that we have never done before," he says.

Organizing a short meeting with a congressional district office to talk about the labor issue could make a big difference, Bray says. Or more simply, use templates NALP has created to reach out to elected officials and share your story.


"It's about building that relationship with their elected official, letting them know how important this issue is to them," he says. 

PHOTO: CHRIS ALUKA BERRY



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## TIPSHEET

# Top 12 things to remember when managing chinch bugs

Follow these tips to properly identify and treat this small pest **BY LAUREN DOWDLE | CONTRIBUTOR**



**W**hen customers call to report brown areas of turf, they expect a lawn care operator (LCO) to properly identify and treat the problem. One possible culprit that can lead to that type of lawn damage is the chinch bug.

Chinch bugs can be found across the country in grasses like zoysiagrass, Bermudagrass, bluegrass and St. Augustinegrass. The pest itself is small — about 1/6 inch long as an adult — but it's capable of inflicting turf damage.

Not only does the pest extract the nutrients from the leaf blade, but a chinch bug's saliva also has toxins in it. That shuts down the vascular tissue in the blades, causing the grass to turn yellow or brown, says Jeff Kolbe, business consultant/manager of technical education with Spring-Green Lawn Care.

To prevent and treat for this pest, it's important LCOs follow the top 12 tips for properly managing chinch bugs.

## DO

**1 Train technicians to properly identify chinch bugs.** Because of their small size, chinch bugs are relatively difficult to find. The best place to look for them is in the space between the damaged and undamaged turf. Kolbe encourages LCOs to rake their fingers through the turf to bring the pests to the surface.

"You've got to get down and really look close at the turf to properly identify the problem," Kolbe says. "In the past, people would cut off both ends of a coffee can and push it in the ground, making a seal around the bottom. Then,

they would fill it up with water, causing the chinch bugs to float up to the top so they could see them."

## 2 Know the chinch bug life cycle.

"The best time to treat for chinch bugs is in the summer when the nymph stage is active," says Rakim Turnipseed, Ph.D., product development manager, insecticides, FMC. "Depending on locality, this period could be anywhere between June and September."

## 3 Rotate modes of action.

"LCOs should not rely on using the same insecticide group or class to manage chinch bug populations," Turnipseed says. "Chinch bugs are known to be resistant to pyrethroids, so proper rotation is important."

## 4 Keep the lawn aerated.

Aeration reduces thatch, a chinch bug habitat, says Ben Hamza, Ph.D., product development associate director, FMC.

## 5 Look at warmer areas.

"Chinch bug damage will sometimes first appear in parts of the lawn that heat up more than the rest of the lawn, like the turf next to an asphalt driveway," Kolbe says.

## 6 Focus on health.

Overall, LCOs can reduce the possibility of damage by focusing on the health of the turf.

"LCOs should practice proper management of water, fertility and thatch, and rotating between insecticide groups and classes will help to manage chinch bug numbers," Turnipseed says.

## DON'T

## 7 Mow turf too short.

"They like tightly mown turf," Kolbe says. "Mowing at the recommended height for the turf variety in the lawn is a great way to reduce stresses on the grass."

Kolbe says proper height will vary depending on the type of turf, but mowing

shorter than recommended will cause the turf stress and make it more susceptible to pests.

**8 Wait to treat.** "Don't delay your insect control application once you accurately identified their presence," Hamza says. "Damaged turf is lost and requires renovation."

Also, chinch bugs can have two to three generations if left untreated, which leads to more damage, Kolbe says.

## 9 Misidentify pests.

Chinch bugs can be confused with big-eyed bugs, which are natural predators of the pest. Aside from their larger eyes, big-eyed bugs are gray-brown and speckled. Chinch bugs are typically black and white.


## 10 Allow the lawn to get too dry or too wet.

"Chinch bugs like dry and hot conditions, and excessive watering can promote thatch buildup, so too much or too little watering can facilitate chinch bug populations," Turnipseed says.

## 11 Think the absence of visible chinch bug damage means no activity.

Scout for the pest beyond the damaged area. "They may be present but at too low of a threshold count to cause damage yet," Hamza says.

## 12 Confuse brown areas of grass with lack of coverage from an irrigation system.

Check the spots for a chinch bug presence to confirm. 

**THE WHO'S WHO OF INSECTS**  
Properly ID chinch bugs (left) from big-eyed bugs (right) for the best control.

Dowdle is a freelance writer based in Birmingham, Ala.



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## PROTECT YOUR TURF

# How to be on the money with dollar spot control

Experts share the best ways to prevent and treat this turf disease

BY CHRISTINA HERRICK | LM EDITOR

**D**ollar spot is a fungus that can strike cool-season and warm-season turf. Here to share the best cultural controls and techniques to prevent dollar spot is Aaron Hathaway, technical services manager for Nufarm; Brian Aynardi, Ph.D., Northeast research scientist for PBI-Gordon Corp.; and Matt Giese, M.S., technical services manager for Syngenta.

### DOLLAR SPOT PREVENTION FUNGICIDE APPLICATION TIPS:

**BA:** Lawn care operators (LCOs) should monitor weather conditions when warmer day and nighttime temperatures with high relative humidity are prevalent. Also, utilization of the Smith-Kerns dollar spot model

would be a valuable tool for LCOs in determining proper application timing.

**MG:** Proper timing for a preventive application means applying the fungicide prior to disease development and long before actual symptoms are observed.

**AH:** LCOs can make these applications when average temperatures are consistently at or above 55 degrees F. A turf manager can then choose to make subsequent applications on a scheduled basis (e.g., every four weeks) or scout and apply again when the disease is observed.

**BA:** Making timely fungicide applications when environmental conditions are conducive for disease development reduces unessential fungicide applications.

**MG:** Preventive applications also have the benefit of greater effectiveness since they work when the infestation is small and not in its advanced stages that typically require higher fungicide rates to achieve the same level of disease control.

**AH:** LCOs should use preventive fungicide applications for dollar spot control on properties where any disease or blemish cannot be tolerated. Preventive fungicide applications may be warranted for LCOs who manage many accounts as well.

### CURATIVE FUNGICIDE APPLICATION TIPS:

**BA:** Curative applications for dollar spot won't make the symptoms go away overnight. The fungicide needs time to stop the fungus from infecting the host plant and allow the plant time to recover.

**MG:** Combination fungicides with azoxystrobin and propiconazole provide dollar spot control as well as protection from multiple other diseases.

**AH:** Dollar spot can be especially damaging in the fall when days are warm and nights are cooler, which result in heavy dew that lingers into the morning. In the fall, the angle of the sun becomes more severe and doesn't dry the leaves as quickly. Scout for dollar spot on fine fescue, bluegrass and, to a lesser degree, in cool-season lawns such as ryegrass.

**BA:** Active ingredient isofetamid is an excellent fungicide labeled for residential and commercial turf for control of dollar spot.

**MG:** Having a disease control plan before the season will provide some structure initially, but your plan should be flexible to allow for inevitable adjustments as the season progresses.

**AH:** Fungicides do not last forever in or on turfgrass plants as they break down and are mowed off continually and must be reapplied to reduce the pathogen.



Aaron Hathaway

### CULTURAL CONTROL TIPS:


**BA:** Cultural control options should be considered year-round and implemented well before dollar spot is observed, or environmental conditions become conducive for disease to develop.

**MG:** Irrigating turfgrass need and timing irrigation cycles to occur before sunrise or in the early afternoon will encourage dry foliage and reduce disease occurrence.

**AH:** LCOs should always be paying attention to the health of the turf stand they are managing. LCOs should look for and address stresses on each lawn, whether it is dull mower blades, a broken irrigation head or grub damage.

**BA:** Cultural controls for reducing dollar spot severity include increasing nitrogen fertility, improving airflow by pruning trees and shrubs, allowing for more sunlight to reduce free leaf moisture and using resistant cultivars.

**MG:** Proper mowing height and alleviating soil compaction are important factors for helping turfgrass withstand stresses. Communicating this information to homeowners is an important step.

**AH:** Dollar spot is always more severe in nitrogen-deficient lawns. Providing adequate nitrogen helps the turf grow out of symptoms and maintain growth even when lighter infections occur. 



Matt Giese



Brian Aynardi



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## INSECT ID + CONTROL

# How fall armyworms ravaged turf in the Midwest and Northeast

**Turf experts call 2021 the worst outbreak in at least 30 years**

BY ROBERT SCHOENBERGER | LM SENIOR EDITOR

**A** turf pest more associated with the Deep South and Mid-Atlantic attacked lawns in the Upper Midwest and Northeast. Fall armyworms, likely carried by summer storms, damaged turf in unlikely locations and Extension agents as far west as Iowa warned residents of possible outbreaks.

"This year it is a monstrous outbreak," says Curtis Young, Ph.D., an Ohio State University Extension educator.

Mark Conklin, owner of TeamTurf in Erie, Pa., took the outbreak personally.

"My own lawn got hit. It was one of the early ones," Conklin says. "It was a new lawn, just this spring, and it looked rough. It's coming back, but it's not to where it was. There are some patches that aren't coming back."

Conklin adds that in his 32 years of providing lawn care in Pennsylvania, he's never encountered a fall armyworm and has been amazed at how quickly they decimated lawns.

Maddie Hester, office administrator for Grounds Services in Waterville, Ohio, near the Michigan and Indiana state lines, says the outbreak has been extreme in Ohio, especially along the Maumee River that runs through Toledo.

"We're seeing it everywhere — not in Michigan so much, and we service a lot of homes up there — but definitely around Toledo and south," Hester says.

Young says Ohio typically sees minor problems from the pest, but fall armyworms hit more areas this year.

"The whole state of Ohio seems to be experiencing a major outbreak of the fall armyworm, from south to north and east to west," Young says.

## TREATMENT AND WHAT'S NEXT

TeamTurf treated lawns in Northeast Pennsylvania with bifenthrin and told homeowners to keep damaged lawns watered on warm, sunny days as fall armyworms attack leaves, not roots. So, healthy lawns with deeply rooted grass should recover. Conklin says the extra damage at his house is likely due to the tender age of his grass.

Lawn care companies also reached out to customers to inform them about the problem, give them warning signs to



Typically a southern pest, the fall armyworm marched northward to the Northeast and the Upper Midwest this year.

watch for and encourage them to contact them at the first sign of infestation.

Most customers are pretty understanding about why their lawns are being attacked, Conklin says.

"It's everywhere, so they know it's not one company that didn't do something," he says.

Several landscaping companies say pretreating lawns with chlorantraniliprole — which they typically use for grubs — prevented fall armyworm damage. Syngenta Communications Lead Mark LaFleur says the chemical can provide months of protection when applied early, but its use is not as common in the North.

"Preventive solutions are always the best," LaFleur says. He adds that Syngenta has launched smaller packages, making chlorantraniliprole more affordable to smaller companies.

Conklin says he may add chlorantraniliprole for spring lawn treatments if it looks like fall armyworm outbreaks are going to become common in Pennsylvania.

"We're going to have to sit down at the end of the season and figure out next year," Conklin says. "This may be a once-in-a-50-year thing, or it could be every year. We're going to have to figure that out."

Young says entomologists will keep an eye out for fall armyworms in northern climates in 2022 but says the outbreak may not repeat itself. Armyworms can't overwinter in cold climates. The first frost of the year will likely kill caterpillars, larvae and any adult moths.

He blames a larger-than-normal outbreak in the South this year and an active storm season that brought many adult caterpillars north for the Midwestern and Northeastern outbreak. Future northern outbreaks would again depend on weather and growing conditions in the South. 🍷



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## FERTILE GROUND

### How humates help your turf

Experts share why adding humates to a lawn care program can create healthier, hardier turf

BY EMILY SCHAPPACHER | CONTRIBUTOR

**W**hile many lawn care operators (LCOs) use a mix of humates somewhere in their program, these products can still

cause some confusion in the industry, says John Perry, CEO and founder of Greene County Fertilizer Co., a manufacturer and supplier of soil amending fertilizers in Greensboro, Ga. “Humates, in general, is a wide term, and there is a lot that falls into this category,” he says. “If LCOs

are not using humates now, it’s likely they will be in the future as they become more widely adopted, so clearing up the mystery behind them is a good thing.”



John Perry

#### HOW HUMATES WORK

Experts say humates, a major organic portion of soil, peat and coal, contain humic and folic acids, which act as natural soil conditioners and work to stimulate microbial activity.

“With humates, LCOs can expect healthier turf that stays greener longer and has increased resistance against environmental stress,” says Ben Pease, turfgrass agronomist for The Andersons Plant Nutrient Group, a formulator and distributor of plant nutrient products headquartered in Maumee, Ohio. “All of this leads to overall improved turfgrass health. LCOs will see healthier, better-looking turf that results in fewer callbacks and problems.”

Because humates work to enhance the efficiency of other applied nutrients, LCOs can eventually expect to use less product to achieve the same or better results. Pease says product trials show LCOs who use humates for two seasons can achieve the same turf color and quality using 25 percent less nitrogen. As fertilizer prices continue to rise, using less of these products can save LCOs

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**Ben Pease**

money. Using less fertilizer is also beneficial in areas with restrictions on fertilizer use and may appeal to eco-minded customers.

“Using humates won’t necessarily decrease the amount of times LCOs have to come out to a property, but it can decrease the amount of product they have to use per application,” Pease says. “Many customers are also now more concerned with their nutrient footprint, so if LCOs can communicate to them that they can use less product and achieve the same results, that can be a nice selling tool.”

#### HOW TO USE HUMATES

Humates are available as stand-alone products in liquid and granular forms. LCOs can apply humates using standard

spreaders or sprayers. They also can be found in many existing fertilizers, which Pease says is the most common way LCOs incorporate humates into their programs. Applying two products in one application saves time. While humates used to be difficult to use, Pease says technology has improved the products over the past few years.

“There are still some products that are not well engineered — some are still dusty and irregular, which makes them hard to spread and solubilize,” Pease says. “But things have come a long way in the past few years. The benefits of humates are increasing because the technology has improved.”

For LCOs looking to incorporate humates into their programs, Pease says the best time to apply them is in the spring or fall while overseeding or aerating. Product

distributors can provide LCOs access to technical sheets and product samples. Industry conferences and trade shows are also good sources of information. Pease recommends that LCOs always purchase their humic products from companies that are part of the Humic Products Trade Association (HPTA), an organization that sets standards for certifying humic products.

“Because humic products are not regulated by the FDA or any other agencies, the HPTA works to ensure that humic products are of good quality and are what they say they are,” Pease says. “It’s good to buy from manufacturers that are part of this trade group because you know you’re getting something of a certain quality and consistency.”

Schappacher is a freelance writer based in Cleveland.



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## BUSINESS BOOSTERS

# Talk the talk (of PGRs)

**Lawn care operators say plant growth regulators allow weeks between mowing and pruning trips, cutting labor costs** BY SARAH WEBB | LM MANAGING EDITOR

For the past several years, Lawns of Dallas in Texas has focused on plant growth regulator (PGR) use as a way to save on labor, according to Giuseppe Baldi, irrigation and chemical manager for the company, which serves half residential and half commercial clients.

When the company uses PGRs on turf, it can go about three weeks without having to mow; on groundcover and shrubs, the result is two to eight months of reduced growth and therefore, less pruning.

"That not only saves labor, but it also gives crews the ability to focus on some other tasks on the landscape like detail work," Baldi says. "It also puts us in a position where we're consuming less fuel and requiring less maintenance on our equipment because we're using it less."

When it comes to applying PGRs on turf, Baldi says they're most beneficial if a company operates on a contract basis.

"A lot of companies will simply charge \$40 or \$50 each time they mow, so it's not in their interest to use PGRs to reduce growth and to not mow. But, for a company like ours that does everything on a contract basis, it's all-inclusive, and it makes a lot of sense for us to do it that way," Baldi says.

Joel Butler, branch manager for the Dallas West branch of LandCare, also sees the labor-saving benefits behind PGRs.

"Labor is always a challenge in landscaping, so you're always looking for a way to achieve the same result in a more predictable way," Butler says. "Product is usually available, whereas labor can be something that's harder to recruit

and staff depending on the year. PGRs have come to be a win-win for us as far as what we want to achieve."

LandCare started using PGR products about five years ago. The company mostly applies the products to the shrubs it maintains.

Butler cautions that the best way to achieve labor savings using PGRs on shrubs is to separate the mowing and pruning operations within a company versus employing full-service crews.

"If you have full-service crews, it's going to be a little bit harder to achieve the labor savings, because it would be harder to see the pruning hours pulled out," Butler says. By separating these tasks and using PGRs, LandCare has seen a 75 percent reduction in hours spent pruning.

## THE RUNDOWN

To get clients on board with PGR use, Baldi says Lawns of Dallas technicians discuss the pros of using them.

"With the clients, we talk about the benefits they're going to get: a more consistent manicured look, healthier plants and less noise they'll hear on the property," Baldi says. "However, know that in some cases, people think they should get a discount if you're not having to mow the lawn. They don't understand that's why we're able to do a lot of the other things that sometimes get skipped."

Touting the positive benefits has worked for LandCare as well, Butler says.

"Most of our clients are most interested in what the site looks like, and they don't care how we achieve that result," Butler says. "They see the year-round healthy look that you can achieve with PGRs, and that's what they're interested in." 📍



### LABOR SAVER

Some lawn care operators use PGRs to mow less, which, in turn, helps save on labor.



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## THE BIG ONE

### A healing sanctuary

**LOCATION** Houston

**COMPANY** Lawn Management Co.

**DETAILS** MD Anderson is one of the foremost cancer hospitals in the world. Patients come from all over to seek treatment at the hospital.

Lawn Management Co. has maintained the 300-acre campus for 11 years. The gardens are used by cancer patients receiving treatment, their family members and staff members. There is one on-site supervisor and a four-person crew for the North Campus, which encompasses the main garden. The South Campus has a five-person crew.

“We work with MD Anderson on creating a beautiful environment that encourages patients to have a better perspective, outlook and energy, and we like to uphold MD Anderson’s standards by providing the services we do,” says Brittany Weber, landscape consultant for Lawn Management Co. “We don’t just rush through and mow, blow and go. We pay attention to the details and make sure we use plant science knowledge to take care of the plants there.”

The company uses only organic materials and battery-operated equipment, Weber says.

“Because MD Anderson is an all-organic site, we learn about the plant science and integrate that into our practice so we give them the best plant treatments that we can,” she says.

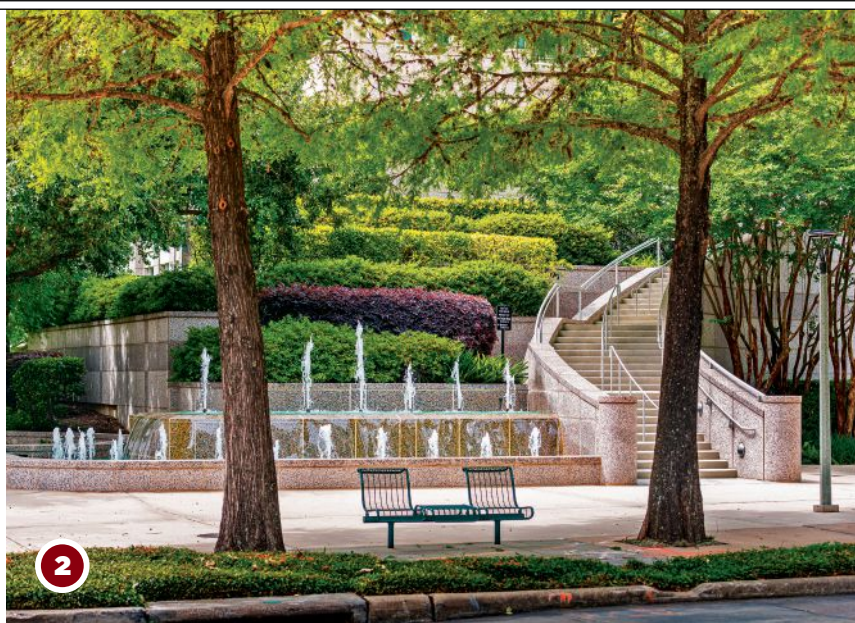
The project earned Lawn Management Co. a Silver Award from the 2020 National Association of Landscape Professionals’ Awards of Excellence program.

*See more photos from this project at [LandscapeManagement.net/thebigone](https://LandscapeManagement.net/thebigone).*



PHOTOS: BRYAN MALLOCH





**Captions |** 1. The seasonal color at MD Anderson is designed, installed and maintained using organic amendments only.

2. Lawn Management Co. maintains a tiered landscape behind the MD Anderson fountain. The plants within this tiered landscape that are not hedged are azaleas. 3. This section of the Dorothy Hudson garden is called the Chrysalis Project because the plants are installed and maintained with butterflies in mind.

4. MD Anderson Cancer Center's patients come from all over the world to receive treatment. Lawn Management Co. maintains the landscapes around this building, including this space known as the Well of Life. The Well of Life is a relaxing and rejuvenating space with a shaded garden. 5. The plant pallet in this perennial installation consists of rudbeckia, coreopsis and various salvias. The company strives to install and maintain pockets of pollinator gardens intertwined within the landscapes. This area is along a sidewalk that leads to the main building of the hospital.

6. The healing gardens of MD Anderson encourage direct interaction between patients and nature. The rose gardens have more than 300 roses that are planted and maintained by the team.

7. The MD Anderson Prairie is a hidden gem within the bustling Houston medical center. The company maintains the lively prairies, bordering mulch rings, lush zoysia lawns, winding pathways and the surrounding landscape. To assist the integrity of the prairies, the company keeps a close eye on the development of native plants through the growing season and mechanically removes invasive plants. The prairies provide food, shelter and water to pollinators, birds, amphibians and mammals.



## HOW TO

# How to safely mow steep slopes

Focus on safety, not speed, and prioritize traction as hill grades climb when using articulating tractors

BY ROBERT SCHOENBERGER | LM SENIOR EDITOR

**M**owing slopes can be dangerous and difficult, but a little bit of planning can keep crews safe. *Landscape Management* recently spoke with Steiner Turf Regional Manager Sam Williamson about using traction-focused articulated tractors as cutting grades climb.

**LM: HOW STEEP DOES A HILL ANGLE NEED TO BE BEFORE YOU START WORRYING ABOUT SLIDING OR FLIPPING A MOWER?**

**SAM WILLIAMSON:** It's hard to say. I get that question a lot. What's the degree of the slope? Has it rained in the past 48 hours? What type of soil is it? If I'm down in Florida where I've got a lot of sand. Sand allows for pretty good grip as long as it's firm and compacted enough that I'm not just spinning my tires.

It's really hard to put a number on it. There are too many things that go into the traction you're going to get. A lot of times, I tell people don't drop the attachment, don't start mowing. Just drive up on the hill and park sideways for a minute and watch the slope meter.

If it goes up to 25 degrees, then there's not anything on that hill that we can't handle. If you're getting around

30 degrees, you may need to change your angle of approach.

Worst case scenario—mow up and down. It's slower, but it's safe. Getting into the 45-degree slopes or higher, use a winch and remote-control unit. You don't want an operator sitting on a machine at those extreme angles.

**LM: WHAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING EQUIPMENT FOR SLOPE MOWING?**

**SW:** What sticks to the hill the best? You can think about that in terms of center of gravity being lower. You can think of it in terms of tire traction touching the ground. You can think about it in terms of weight.

The heavier the equipment is, generally the more leeway you have. If you look at a highway overpass, it's going to have a slope that's just ridiculous. The way they made that is with an excavator and a bulldozer. A bulldozer is umpteen tons, and it can hold a slope like nobody's business because it's so heavy.

When an engineer is designing a zero-turn mower or something lighter like that, he's not really thinking about mowing on slopes. He's thinking, "I want to be quick, I want a clean quality of cut, and I want to get the job done and keep my operator comfortable and safe."

When you're thinking about slopes, speed is an aspect of it, but it's not nearly as big of an aspect as getting the job done safely.



**KEEP IT SAFE**  
Sam Williamson says mowing up and down on a slope can be the safest approach.

**LM: WHAT ARE SOME THINGS OPERATORS SHOULD ALWAYS DO WHEN MOWING SLOPES?**


**SW:** Always have your seatbelt on. Always have your rollover protection structure up. Always wear ear and eye protection.

And, just go slow. Mother Nature does not play nice, and if it's something you only mow once or twice a year, there could be something there that would cause you to lose traction or dip a tire. Also, if it's roadsides, there's no telling what people have thrown or what could have fallen off of a truck.

Just take your time; it's not worth rushing through it.

**LM: HOW SHOULD COMPANIES TRAIN WORKERS ON SLOPE-MOWING EQUIPMENT SUCH AS TRACTORS?**

**SW:** You have to know the limits of the machine and how the machine is designed to be run. You want to know when to run high range, when to run low range, how to use hydraulic weight transfer.

Start out on flat ground. Get used to working on an articulated machine. Then, go up the hill and drive around a bit. Get a feel for what the machine's like. After that, you can drop your attachment and try mowing. 



Sam Williamson



A vibrant, surreal landscape featuring a man in a brown shirt and tan pants driving a yellow riding lawn mower with a Progressive logo. He has his arms raised in a celebratory gesture. The background is a lush green field with rolling hills and a two-story house. Several large, green topiary dinosaurs are scattered throughout the scene. In the sky, two lawnmowers with wings are flying. In the foreground, a garden gnome is watering a bush with a hose. A yellow pickup truck with 'LUKE'S' written on it is parked nearby. The overall scene is bright and cheerful, with a clear blue sky and scattered clouds.

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## REV YOUR ENGINE

# More power, more torque, smaller size

Advances in engine technologies are pushing gasoline models closer to diesel power levels in new mowers

BY ROBERT SCHOENBERGER | LM SENIOR EDITOR



High-horsepower engines allow landscape pros to complete more work with fewer people.

**M**aking more powerful mower engines isn't about macho posturing, it's about addressing the landscaping industry's chronic labor shortages, says Carissa Gingras, senior director of marketing at Briggs & Stratton.

"More power lets you cut more and cut faster with fewer people," says Gingras, adding that higher-horsepower engines allow larger decks, faster movement and more cutting power — all things that improve efficiency for crews.

Briggs & Stratton and other engine manufacturers have been boosting power while keeping engines the same size for several years, and it's a trend that experts say should continue.

### BOOSTING PRODUCTIVITY

Gary Childress, senior manager at Honda Power Equipment, says increasing horsepower in his company's mowers in 2018 and 2019 improved cut quality and speed.

"(The mower) is more productive, but it also just had a better feel to it,"

Childress says. "It's just that much easier to knock the grass down."

Jeff Coad, Briggs & Stratton's vice president of marketing, says about 25 percent of the engines used in mowers now use electronic fuel injection (EFI), the same basic technology used in most cars and trucks. By regulating fuel use electronically, engines can boost power while using less fuel.

"EFI makes the engine much more efficient. When you couple that with electronic throttle control, you're controlling the entire fuel and power system," Coad adds. "You're talking better performance, better blade-tip speed and higher fuel efficiency. We've seen a huge shift into EFI in the past five years."

Gingras says the downside is that most mower technicians are more familiar with carbureted engines, so switching to EFI models requires training or sending units to dealers for maintenance.

She expects the bulk of the market to stick with carbureted engines for several years, but the trend toward EFI continues,

## BATTERY CHALLENGES

Gary Childress, senior manager at Honda Power Equipment, says battery-powered equipment has overtaken gasoline-powered tools for Honda's consumer market, mostly because of handheld products such as string trimmers. Electric mowers are gaining strength in that market rapidly as well.

On the commercial side, though, he sees several obstacles to going electric, the biggest being range. A consumer electric lawn mower may have enough battery power to finish one lawn, but mowing several would require multiple battery packs or the ability to quickly recharge.

"Then, there's the interchangeability question," Childress says. Many landscaping companies mix and match their equipment — for example, a Wright zero-turn mower, a John Deere walk-behind and a Husqvarna string trimmer. One gas can could power all of those — but with batteries?


"You become a captive customer ... We're going to sell you not only the stand-on mower, we're going to sell the push mower to you and the trimmer and the backpack blower," Childress says. "I've already got enough frustration to figure out if it's charged or not, but now I've got to figure out if I got the right brand of batteries."

Briggs & Stratton Marketing Manager Jeff Coad adds that challenges exist for electric machines, but regulations will make using diesel increasingly more difficult, and he expects some companies to turn to battery power for future units.

"We're getting a lot of interest in how to electrify things as big as a skid-steer," Coad says.

especially with larger equipment such as ride-on and zero-turn mowers.

Coad adds that regulations are also favoring more powerful gasoline engines. Federal emissions rules have made it harder to use small diesel engines in many applications, so mower producers have asked for better gasoline models to replace them.

"The question is how much we can overlap the diesel side on power levels," Coad says. "We're doing it at the 40-horsepower level, but we're at our ceiling. I don't see us going deep into that diesel power range because we can't provide that level of power." 





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## MAINTAIN YOUR EDGE

# Make the most of your UTVs

**A massive aftermarket makes it easy to customize utility vehicles**

**BY ROBERT SCHOENBERGER**  
**LM SENIOR EDITOR**

**W**hat's your favorite accessory to get the most from your utility terrain vehicle (UTV)? Locking toolboxes? Salt spreaders? High-powered lights?

Turns out, the typical answer is a bit more basic — a roof.

"It's really a great addition," says Dennis Klein, director of grounds for the Texas Rangers. He has dump beds and other features on his Kubota RTV-X1140 UTVs, but that roof is critical.

"We go back and forth, and the shade you get is really important," Klein says.

James Crouch, senior product manager for UTVs at Bobcat, says a massive and growing aftermarket industry makes outfitting a utility vehicle simple.

"Just look at work trucks. Pretty much any feature you can add to a truck these days, you can get that on a UTV," Crouch says.

And while users can order custom light kits, spraying equipment or winches, the biggest productivity boosters are much simpler. A roof and windshield, Crouch says, gives users the ability to maneuver around job sites in extremely hot or rainy conditions. They're basic features, but very effective.

"The weather doesn't wait on anyone, so that little bit of protection makes you more productive," Crouch says.

### CARGO SPACE IS KEY

Klein says the most common job for his UTV is moving dirt. So, other than lighting and the roof, he avoids adding



too many accessories because he doesn't want to fill the bed with storage boxes or dividers that could make dirt hauling harder.

Maureen McCormack, market manager for John Deere Gator Utility Vehicles, says Klein's experience is pretty typical. While some customers will add lots of features, most need a box or a bed — anything that reduces storage capacity isn't welcome.

"The versatility of a UTV is its greatest value," McCormack says. So, the company isn't likely to offer products that limit cargo space or hinder ground clearance (sorry low-rider fans).

Popular options on Gators include locking toolboxes, cargo-box lift kits and cargo box side extensions that allow operators to haul landscape timbers and other bulky items.

### COMFORT CRUCIAL

At Bobcat, Crouch says flexibility is king for UTVs, but comfort is a close second.

"Now, what's really getting a lot more popular is a cab — full doors, roll-down windows, tip-up front glass. They're really turning these things into a pickup

truck," Crouch says, adding that about 30 percent of Bobcats sold recently have full cabs, and many of those buyers also opted for heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems. "It's just like a tractor or an excavator. Once you've gone to a full cab with HVAC, you're never going to want to go back."

It can be a pricy option. Curtis Industries HVAC systems for UTVs cost about \$3,400, although smaller, less expensive options are available.

Crouch says manufacturers offer many options for UTV users, but he adds that a lot of the interesting accessories are coming from aftermarket providers who have adapted features developed for pickups.

"(Manufacturers) are just trying to provide a good base machine and let the aftermarket go nuts," Crouch says. "Integrated cameras to be able to see in front of you and behind you — those are popular now. You can very easily find a converter in the aftermarket to plug just about anything into a UTV." 📷

**IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS**  
Experts say simple aftermarket items like a roof on UTVs boost productivity.

PHOTO: BOBCAT



# FUTURE BUSINESS GROWS IN SILENCE

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## HARDSCAPE SOLUTIONS

### Old meets new

**LOCATION** Ann Arbor, Mich.

**COMPANY** Lotus Gardenscapes

**DETAILS** This project is a new build on a historic site overlooking the Huron River. Designers Traven Pelletier and Nicole Lloyd of Lotus Gardenscapes created a landscape with clean lines that incorporates existing fieldstone retaining walls on the property. Other details include Michigan natural stone, guillotined limestone walls and steps and custom Corten steel retaining walls.

Lloyd says the large 3.5-by-3.5-foot Rosetta Miros concrete pavers at the back of the house create an amazing visual, but installing them was challenging.

“Everything panned out perfectly, but it took a lot of planning,” Lloyd says.

The site was the location of one of the first homes in Ann Arbor’s Barton Hills neighborhood. The owner wanted a minimalist, modern landscape.

Lotus Gardenscapes added prairie dropseed and boxwood plantings, a custom Canadian limestone fire pit and Corten steel planters. Lotus Gardenscapes’ staff welder fabricated the Corten planters and walls. Challenges included incorporating the existing fieldstone into a modern design and designing a way to diffuse the weight of the stair-step design over the home’s septic line. A Bobcat E45 compact excavator, Kubota KX040-4 mini-excavator and more equipment helped execute the project.

Lotus Gardenscapes won a Silver Award in the 2020 National Association of Landscape Professionals’ Awards of Excellence program.

*See more photos from this project at [LandscapeManagement.net/hardscapesolutions](https://www.LandscapeManagement.net/hardscapesolutions).*



PHOTOS: JEEHEON CHO (1-2, 5-7); LOTUS GARDENSCAPES (3-4)





**Captions |** 1. The clean and contemporary design of the backyard incorporates elements of both the modern home and the site's original, historic fieldstone retaining walls. 2. For the front of the home, the client wanted a minimalist approach to plantings. 3. The home was a historical site with exiting fieldstone retaining walls. Designers incorporated the modern style of the home with the formal design of the retaining wall. 4. The upper seating area. 5. Lotus Gardenscapes incorporated the home's existing foundation wall in the design. 6. An aerial view from the Huron River, looking toward the backyard. 7. The tiered patio provides breathtaking views of the Huron River from every area of the backyard.



## BUSINESS BOOSTERS

# Online design

## A look at virtual design services and how they can benefit contractors

BY SARAH WEBB  
LM MANAGING EDITOR

**A**re you seeing ads pop up on social media for virtual design services like Yardzen and Tilly? Let's dive in to see how these services work, and whether you should consider them to be your competition or possible partners.

"Acting as a design team extension, we've been a way for smaller landscape companies who don't have a full staff or a full designer on staff to offer their clients great designs," says Blythe Yost, CEO and landscape architect at Tilly. "We've also helped larger companies with their overflow accounts as well. About 71 percent of our (homeowner) clients say that they would have either postponed their project or designed their space themselves. We look at our services as supporting design/build."

Allison Messner, CEO and co-founder of Yardzen, agrees that design services companies are helping raise the bar in the industry, versus competing with existing contractors.

"The best contractor partners for us recognize and appreciate the value of working with Yardzen on the design so they can focus on the build," Messner says. "Additionally, the vast majority of our (homeowner) clients report that they haven't previously, nor would have, used a landscape designer for their project, so in that way, we're growing the market."



### HOW IT WORKS

First, the contractor or homeowner requests a design through the design services company's website. The turnaround time on the design is about one to two weeks, depending on the project and the company, and the completed designs are photo-realistic renderings.

To design a project, design services often request photos, measurements, a site survey and a completed questionnaire about the site.

Tilly and Yardzen vet their designers thoroughly, ensuring they have graduated from accredited landscape design programs, are insured and have proof of past work.

The companies also employ a team of principle designers who are full-time employees of each respective company, in addition to other landscape designers and landscape architects who work on the company's platform as their schedule allows.

With Tilly, a contractor can submit the design on behalf of the client. Tilly for Pros is the name of the platform when a contractor requests a design.

"We ask very pointed questions of the contractors because for our model,

they're the go-between, so we want to make sure we pick up on all the elements in a design," Yost says.


Tilly offers three packages, each at a flat fee: front yard (\$375), backyard (\$525) and full yard (\$775) with design elements on the outside of the house, such as walkways and plant materials. It doesn't tackle projects that are more than an acre.

With Yardzen, the homeowner submits the design request, and Yardzen chooses a contractor in its network that it thinks would work well based on project scope and geographic location.

If the homeowner client is a referral from a contractor in the Yardzen Pro Network, Yardzen ensures they reconnect when it comes time to build. The company also offers its contractors a referral bonus for every design client they refer.

Yardzen's fees are based on lot size and the work the homeowner wants to do. One plan deals with planting, another with planting and hardscape design and a third with planting, hardscape design and home exterior services, such as paint, roofing and new doors and windows. The design plans start at \$649 and scale up based on lot size and whether the exterior design is included. The finished design is then sent to both the contractor and the homeowner, according to Messner.

"We work with landscape contractors from coast to coast who are in our Pro Network," Messner says. "At the end of the design process, we connect our homeowner clients to contractors to bring those designs to life. A design only gets a client so far,

so we put a lot of energy into nurturing and fostering those partnerships with contractors." 



**PARTNER UP**  
Adam Messner, COO of Yardzen, and Frank Green, owner of FG Pavers and Turf work together on a design.



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## INSTALLATION IRON

# Choose the best chain for the job

Selecting the right cutting chain will keep trenching jobs safe and efficient

BY ROBERT SCHOENBERGER | LM SENIOR EDITOR



**M**ost trenchers will be able to cut a reasonable trench, regardless of the chain used, but picking the right cutting tool for the job allows users to dig the trench faster, clear away spoils efficiently and protect expensive equipment.

*Landscape Management* discussed best practices for chain selection with Ditch Witch Product Marketing Manager Scott McKinley, Little Beaver President Joe Haynes and Vermeer Product Manager Matt Hutchinson. The following are their top tips to match your trencher chain to the job in front of you.

### KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DIGGING THROUGH

**Haynes:** When using a mini trencher with a depth of 12 inches or less, soil testing is not required. However, it's still important to do a visual assessment to understand the soil you will be digging through and to check for any obstacles that might be in the path, such as tree roots. You'll also want to make sure to call 811 at least 48 hours prior to digging to have underground utilities marked.

**McKinley:** There are some contractors who will go as far as collecting soil samples and sending them in for

testing (to) find out what it is that they're going through, but what you really have to know is the hardness of what you're trying to cut through. If you're going into an area you've never gone before, go in and talk to one of the dealership personnel. They see every chain that's coming in and out. They know what's working in the area.

### MATCH THE CHAIN TO THE SOIL

**Hutchinson:** Cupping teeth are designed to efficiently excavate material from the trench, while cutting teeth break up or dislodge solid material. Chain configurations that use cupping teeth are more efficient in loose dirt and sandy soils.

**McKinley:** With medium soils, you can consider combo chains with shark-tooth configurations. It's designed to pick at the soil. A little piece of carbide at the tip breaks up that compacted soil. With hard, rocky soil, you might need an alligator bit. Up North, alligator combo chains are very popular because people are trying to get below the frost line.

It's not about going out and getting the most expensive equipment. It's getting the right equipment for the job you're working on. You could put an alligator bit on for loose, sandy soil, but you're not going to get a very

efficient cut out of it. You're not going to get the performance you're expecting.

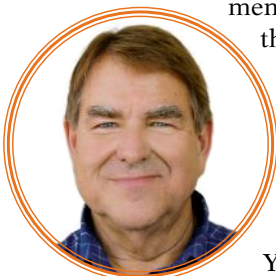
**GET THE SCOOP**  
Knowing soil type and hardness can help determine chain type.

### MAINTAIN YOUR EQUIPMENT

**Haynes:** After every use, check for missing or broken teeth. Using a Kwik-Trench with missing teeth increases the possibility of engine vibration, so it's important to replace any missing teeth before the next use. Clean vertical frame posts and sleeves and be careful when transporting your Kwik-Trench.

**McKinley:** After every job completion, do a visual inspection of the digging chain. Inspect the digging teeth.

Each of the teeth (on a Ditch Witch cutting chain) has tungsten carbide. Once you've worn away the tungsten carbide down to the base steel, it's definitely time to change the tooth out. It could break, but more important than that, it's not going to perform for you as well. 



Joe Haynes



Matt Hutchinson



Scott McKinley



## PRODUCTS THAT WORK

### Pavers



#### DIMENSIONS BY BELGARD

**COMPANY:** Belgard

**URL:** Belgard.com

Dimensions pavers from Belgard deliver crisp, clean lines and a smooth, linear surface to create contemporary designs. Through modular sizing, Dimensions pavers reduce cuts, installation time and waste, while allowing for more creative patterns. Uniform dimensions make them compatible with other paver sizes. Simplified quoting and design capabilities set Dimensions apart by expediting the initial steps of each project. Dimensions pavers are best suited for patios, walkways and pool decks.

#### DISCOVERY COMBO

**COMPANY:** Glow Path Pavers

**URL:** GlowPathPavers.com

Glow Path Pavers use a patented process that infuses nontoxic luminescent material into a paving stone that will glow in the dark continuously for six to eight hours. Discovery Combo by Glow Path Pavers offers simple, utilitarian paver shapes. These pavers are used for a variety of residential and commercial installations including pool decks, walkways, driveways, terraces, patios and more. Discovery Combo is available in four colors, a mix of three sizes and can be installed in many patterns to produce simple or intricate designs.



#### RICHCLIFF PAVERS BY UNILOCK

**COMPANY:**

Unilock

**URL:** Unilock.com

Using Reala technology, Richcliff pavers from Unilock are cast from real stone to produce a multitude of flagstone textures for a random and natural appearance. The raised textured surface catches the sunlight for an aesthetically pleasing look. It also creates a slip-resistant surface, making it an ideal choice for driveways and walkways. With the added assurance of strength and durability from Ultima concrete technology, Richcliff pavers can be used even in the most demanding applications. Richcliff is available in a large rectangle unit, used alone or in combination with the three-stone random bundle for expanded patterning options and a larger-scale look.



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## WATER WORLD

# Protecting cool-season turf

**LOCATION** St. Louis

**COMPANY** Professional Irrigation Systems

**DETAILS** Irrigation companies often get brought into projects after most landscaping has been installed. Jon Lauer, principal of Professional Irrigation Systems, says this St. Louis estate shows the value of bringing water experts in early on.

“We could figure out the install in a logical way,” Lauer says. “We had a long-standing relationship with the landscape architect, so we could collaborate on what they wanted to achieve and figure out how to irrigate it.”

The property includes a 10,000-square-foot home, a smaller wedding venue and acres of cool-season turf. Lauer says St. Louis is in the Transition Zone, with some properties opting for warm-season turf and some opting for cooler varieties.

“With cool-weather turf, you have to irrigate regularly, and with this much turf, conservation becomes very important because of the cost of water,” Lauer says. “To get turf to look like this in St. Louis in the summertime is a huge job.”

So, he opted for Hunter pressure-regulated fixtures and controllers such as Hunter I-20 PRB rotors, 4-inch sprayheads and Pro 12-inch standard nozzles to ensure green grass with minimal water use.

“Budget is always a topic, but in a project like this, the cost of irrigation is a small part of the overall project, so we didn’t get a lot of pushback,” Lauer says, “They’ve been really happy with the results. It makes you look like a rock star when you can control irrigation for such a large area.”



### Captions |

**1.** A 2-acre front lawn highlights the size of the 10,000-square-foot home on the property. Professional Irrigation Systems installed Hunter I-20 PRB rotors throughout the property.

**2.** The home’s front drive uses exposed aggregate to mimic an old-fashioned gravel drive, leading up to islands irrigated with Hunter Pro 12-inch standard nozzles.

**3.** Natural stone retaining walls contain garden areas irrigated by Hunter Pro 12-inch nozzles.

**4.** Turf nestled between the driveway and another retaining wall also use Hunter 4-inch sprayheads.



PHOTOS: JON LAUER, PROFESSIONAL IRRIGATION SYSTEMS



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## BUSINESS BOOSTERS

# How irrigation design software saves the day

Irrigation designers share how design software helped execute noteworthy projects

BY CHRISTINA HERRICK | LM EDITOR

**COMPANY:** Utah West Landscape Design-Build  
**SOFTWARE:** PRO Landscape by Drafix Software

**B**rad Curtis, owner of Utah West Landscape Design-Build, has used PRO Landscape since around 2007 and has been designing irrigation projects for 22 years. Utah West Landscape Design-Build provides landscape design/build and irrigation services for high-end residential clients and commercial projects.

Curtis says PRO Landscape allowed his company to transition from hand-drawn irrigation designs to digital designs. This has allowed him to make modifications and pipe size

changes as needed on projects with a click of a button. While Curtis says PRO Landscape has been a tremendous tool for all his projects, one he was subcontracted to design was a 40-acre community with retention ponds, playgrounds and common areas. Curtis says PRO Landscape helped him calculate the points of connection for the civil drawings and the estimated water use for the irrigation system.

"I was able to determine how many points of connection that they needed to prepare for this particular project and supplies for this project."

PRO Landscape also made it easy for Curtis to make modifications as the sizes of parking lots or the park changed. He could pull in the new drawings and cut and paste his mockups over the new designs in either CAD or PDF files and modify the sprinkler systems. PRO Landscape also provided detailed information on head placements, pipe counts and pipe sizing. He said this came in handy because the architectural firm he was working with put the job out for bid.


"Since that project, I've been able to secure more and more projects, because they liked the way it looked," he says.

**SOFTWARE:** Pro Contractor Studio  
**COMPANY:** RPickering Design Service

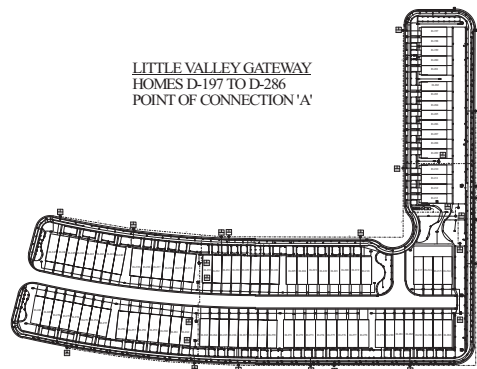
**B**ob Pickering, owner of RPickering Design Service in Dallas, which serves a mix of residential and commercial clients, recently worked on a commercial irrigation project that he says he wouldn't have been able to do without Pro Contractor Studio.

He's been using Pro Contractor Studio since 2008. Pickering says he was able to use the software to calculate the most economical mainline and zones while maintaining proper water pressure for this project in a community shopping center.

For example, a commercial job uses 4-inch sleeves and schedule 40 pipes. For this project, he added a little extra sleeving to be conservative, which alarmed the client who said the extra sleeving cost him an extra \$6 a foot and asked Pickering to create a more economical design. Pickering said he was able to refine the project in about 45 minutes using Pro Contractor Studio and knock several thousand dollars off the cost.

"I saved him a lot of money," he says. "I would not have been able to do that without that program." 

LITTLE VALLEY GATEWAY  
HOMES D-197 TO D-286  
POINT OF CONNECTION 'A'



### ON POINT

Brad Curtis says PRO Landscapes helped him establish the points of connection needed in a 40-acre mixed-use project.





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	PAGE NUMBER		PAGE NUMBER
AMP Lighting .....	54	Nufarm .....	92
Anuvia Plant Nutrients .....	56	Quali-Pro .....	94
Arborjet.....	58	Scag Power Equipment.....	96
Aspire Software .....	60	SmartGate .....	98
ASV Holdings.....	62	Smart Level .....	100
Atlantic-OASE .....	64	Spring-Green Lawn Care .....	102
Cub Cadet.....	66	Steel Green Manufacturing .....	104
DR Power Equipment .....	68	Takeuchi.....	106
Echo .....	70	Turfco.....	108
Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply.....	72	TwinklyPRO .....	110
FX Luminaire.....	74	Vanguard .....	112
Grasshopper .....	76	Voigt Smith Innovation .....	114
Horizon Distributors .....	78	Workhorse Ground Solutions .....	116
Hunter.....	80	Z Turf Equipment.....	118
Hydretain .....	82	Bobcat.....	120
Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show.....	84	Ripagreen .....	121
Minleon USA.....	86	E-Z Trench .....	122
Mulch Mate.....	88	Vermeer .....	123
Natural Alternative.....	90		





## AMP Lighting

### Q+A with Michael L. Caselnova Jr. *Director of Product Development*

#### Why should your business consider offering landscape lighting?

- It's a complementary service to any professional outdoor service such as lawn care, landscaping, irrigation work or any other outdoor professional service.
- It's an excellent source to increase your company revenue. You control your price points and margins.
- Landscape lighting completes any professional outdoor lawn or landscape project.

#### Why should you consider becoming an AMP PRO?

AMP offers factory direct landscape lighting products for professional contractors. We design, manufacture and distribute the most advanced, durable landscape products in the landscape lighting market today.

- **Do you need to be a licensed electrician?** No — AMP products are low voltage (12V) and no certifications or licenses are needed. It is always best to check with local ordinances.
- **No experience needed:** AMP offers a complete online learning center with detailed product and installation videos, articles and documents.

#### Why should your business consider offering AMP professional lighting products?

You will gain access to innovative AMP products, expert support and other valuable resources to support your landscape lighting business. Our service offering includes (not limited to):

- **Factory direct, contractor protected pricing:** Easy ordering, fast shipping and you control the price points to your customers.
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- **UL listings:** Ensure product safety.
- **Lifetime warranty:** AMP offers hassle-free, lifetime warranty protection on our products.
- **Products always in stock:** Providing a competitive edge in the marketplaces.
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## Anuvia Plant Nutrients

**Q+A** with **Chuck Barber**  
*Vice President, Customer Accounts - Specialty*

Now you can choose among three GreenTRX products to fill the gaps economically and effectively from early spring applications through-out summer and into fall and winter. GreenTRX90, GreenTRX75 and GreenTRX60 each contain USDA-certified biobased TRX Technology that returns organic matter to soils for improved soil health and outstanding performance with no filler and no uncoated urea.

GreenTRX feeds soil microbes and reduces nutrients lost through leaching and volatility, and GreenTRX improves air and water quality — all while aesthetically and economically enhancing lawn care.

### Why did Anuvia develop three GreenTRX analyses?

More product options allow lawn care operators to fit various lawn care conditions, climatic seasons and fertility practices.

LCOs get GreenTRX's proven performance, quick green up and extended release using no filler or uncoated urea with the added value of sustainability. You can build an entire fertility program with the three GreenTRX choices.

### What's the right fit for each GreenTRX product?

GreenTRX90 (18-0-4) is our advanced formula utilizing TRX technology combined with a small amount of polycoated urea for better

visibility while spreading. It's ideal to start the season with applications from early spring to early summer and again in the fall to help recover the lawn from seasonal stress. Application rates range from 0.75 lb.-1 lb./N. For a greener green next spring, it's the product for up to eight weeks of feed.

GreenTRX75 (22-0-6) comes with a higher percentage of polycoated urea blended with TRX technology for extended release. Typically, applications are made late spring through summer with a 4 lb.-5 lb. bag/acre rate with the lawn receiving 1 lb.-1.25 lb./N. Use it after spring applications of GreenTRX90 for up to 10-week feed at higher rates.

GreenTRX60 (26-0-7) provides the longest extended feeding for fertilizer blackout periods or for operators who want longer lawn feeding. GreenTRX60 has 40 percent polycoated prills blended with TRX technology to last for extended periods. Apply this product up to 2 lb./N (six bags/acre) for up to 12-week feed.

### Why choose GreenTRX for a year-round fertility program?

Any LCO knows the path for success is to build a complete yearlong fertility program. GreenTRX is not simply nitrogen and potassium. It's



also rich in sulfur — a key nutrient in plant health. Plus, it supplies iron for quick response and deep greening. GreenTRX also adds organic matter back to the soil for a healthier lawn.

### Why is GreenTRX an economical choice?

GreenTRX products contain no uncoated urea and no filler. Every prill in the GreenTRX bag contains nutrients. Before you buy your next bag of fertilizer, ask, does this bag contain filler or uncoated urea?

Most lawn fertilizers contain uncoated urea and filler in the bag. Standard uncoated urea has two distinct pathways for nitrogen loss — volatilizing into the atmosphere or leaching below the roots to contaminate waterways. In typical fertilizers, combined nitrogen loss could be as high as 50 percent. Filler adds weight and takes up space in the bag.

### How does sustainability affect product decisions?

Products like GreenTRX are eco-friendly, better performing, cost-competitive and sustainable. Prior to GreenTRX, those products did not exist or were too expensive.







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## Arborjet



with **Rob Gorden**

*Director of Urban Forestry and  
Business Development*

### How do your products save time and labor?

Over the last several years, we've created several solutions to address the labor shortage, while saving landscape professionals considerable time. The newest addition to the TREE-äge family of tree injection technologies is TREE-äge R10, which features a concentration two and a half times that of competitive products, while moving significantly faster into the tree! Our customers report incredibly fast uptake and dramatically reduced treatment times, all while employing our environmentally sound treatment methods.

Trees with diameters up to 2 feet are being protected in just four minutes! Multiple cities report having saved weeks of time and labor using this product, with great confidence in its multiyear protection. It responds to time and labor challenges when protecting trees, saves cities considerable money and makes arborists and plant health care pros significantly more profitable.

Incorporating Shortstop 2SC, our plant growth regulator, into your

landscape management plans is yet another way to save time and labor, while delivering more vigorous, stress-resistant plants. Importantly, it is now labeled to treat both trees and shrubs, with a broad list of applicable plant species.

Shortstop 2SC promotes root growth while discouraging excessive top growth. The result is thicker, greener leaves, increased drought resistance and an overall improved appearance. Spend less time pruning, cleaning up and disposing of debris. Shortstop 2SC is yet another way Arborjet helps you to save time and money, while delivering the best results for your clients.

### How do your products generate additional revenue for full-service and landscape companies?

We've developed two different highly effective and accurate soil injector systems. They are battery



operated, deliver 100 psi into the soil and can provide precise amounts of nutritional supplements, growth regulators, bark sprays and foliar applications. These systems, the AccuFlo Soil Injector ISD 4-gallon backpack, and the 9-gallon roller cart, our pull-behind version, will recirculate the solution, offer 300-ml doses in 10-ml increments and give super-quiet operation. With fast, fill and inject toggling, they provide the dependability and flexibility of a five-speed application system with the quality and equipment innovation that Arborjet is known for. This is another way that green industry professionals can broaden their service offering and deliver great results, without the added expense of a full, truck-born spray system.

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## Aspire Software

**Q+A** with **Mark Tipton**  
CEO

### How do your products save time?

Too many landscape companies still rely on paper-and-pen systems to function. Even those that have decided to implement software often find themselves tangled in a mess of disjointed solutions and manual processes.

With Aspire Landscape business management software, you won't be held back by this kind of "frankensystem" any longer. Every aspect of your business — from estimating and scheduling to purchasing, invoicing, job costing and more — is centralized in a single location. No more tracking down digital files and handwritten notes or duplicating data entry efforts across platforms. Now, every aspect of your business can be managed from one convenient location.

From the initial estimate all the way to the final invoice, every piece of data you need is right at your fingertips, exactly when you need it — giving you more time to spend on the things that really matter.

### How do your products help generate additional revenue for landscape companies?

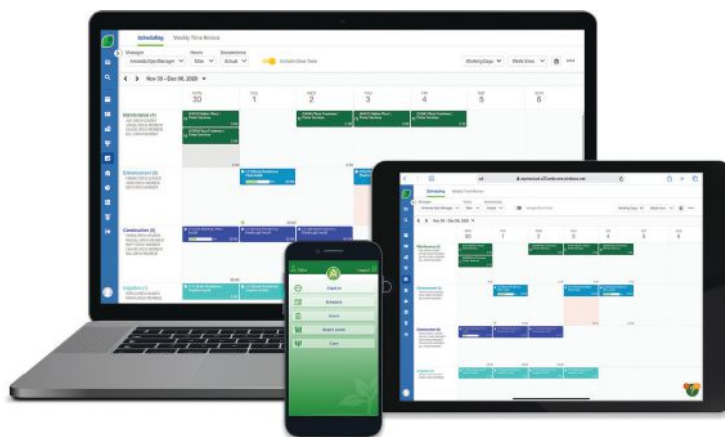
Since Aspire Landscape transforms the way businesses operate, it

doesn't just solve problems in one or two areas of the company. It affects everything from estimating and account management to fieldwork, finance and sales. By increasing your overall efficiency, Aspire Landscape cuts down on hours previously spent hunting for information, duplicating entries or responding to issues caused by inaccurate data. As businesses become more efficient, they're able to do more with less. For Landscape Workshop, for example, this meant

increasing gross margins by 26 percent without the need for any additional back-office staff.

Additionally, Aspire Landscape's robust job costing features allow users to track progress on projects in real time, yielding insights by division, service type, property, manager, crew leader or work ticket. The ability to monitor labor hours and expenses as they're reported allows business owners to identify potential issues — and fix them before it's too late.

With a comprehensive business management platform like Aspire Landscape, you can make informed, proactive decisions that lead to even greater profits — by avoiding unnecessary expenses, identifying unprofitable jobs and creating space for new opportunities.

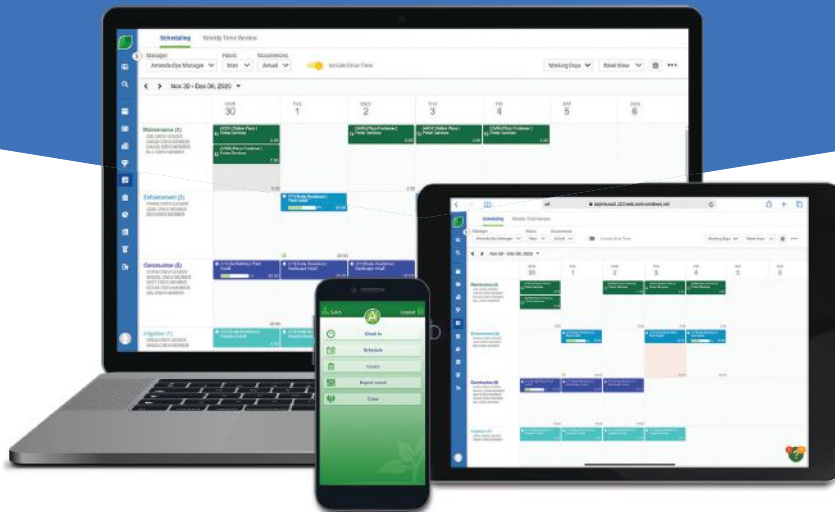


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## ASV Holdings

### Q+A with **Buck Storlie** *Product Line Manager*

#### How do your products save time?

ASV's Posi-Track compact track loaders (CTLs) are some of the fastest in the industry, saving time while traveling across the job site. The speed is even more beneficial when comparing some of our smallest compact track loaders to similarly sized walk-behind or stand-on loaders. Our RT-40, for example, achieves about three times the speed of a walk-behind or stand-on loader.

The innovative Posi-Track undercarriage helps save time with its light footprint and suspension system. Industry-low ground pressures allow you to do more work in more places. Operators can travel on wet ground conditions with a lower risk of getting stuck or damaging turf, allowing them to return to work faster after wet weather. It also can mean less time spent repairing a damaged lawn.

#### How do your products save labor?

Our smallest compact track loaders, the RT-25, RT-40 and RT-50, are the smallest sit-in CTLs in the industry and can often be used to improve productivity on tasks that may otherwise have been

done by hand. Their low ground pressures also allow them to travel in soft conditions and in tight spaces where previously, walking may have been the only option.

All ASV Posi-Track loaders also include convenient maintenance features. It's easy to access the grease zerks, filters and other daily checkpoints, cutting the time spent maintaining the machine and saving on labor. Additionally, the open undercarriage naturally sheds material, meaning you have less to clean out at the end of the day.

#### How do your products save materials or fuel?

Posi-Track compact track loaders can save fuel through their efficient, low-friction designs. The undercarriage is driven by a roller sprocket turning an all-rubber track, providing more efficient operation over a heavier steel-embedded track.

Our track loaders and skid-steers both minimize waste and



improve fuel efficiency with the use of high-capacity cooling systems and large hoses that also improve overall performance.

#### How do your products generate additional revenue for landscape companies?

In addition to improving profits by minimizing wasted fuel and material, ASV offers one of the largest size ranges of compact track loaders in the industry, from the smallest sit-in compact track loaders to some of the most powerful. The smallest compact track loaders allow contractors to complete what otherwise may have been manual work faster. The largest compact track loaders can operate demanding attachments such as mulching heads with ease, improving versatility and opening new job opportunities.





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## Atlantic-OASE

**Q+A** with **Jim Chubb**  
*Director of Product Training*

### How do your products generate revenue?

Water features are high-margin add-on sales that homeowners want. The American Society of Landscape Architects has listed water features in its “most wanted by homeowners” survey for the last 10 years. Atlantic-OASE manufactures cutting-edge products, designed specifically for the landscape contractor, that make building illuminated water features easier, faster, profitable and problem-free, even for first-time installers. Adding the charm of moving water to your portfolio has never been easier or more profitable. The typical return is three to four times wholesale material cost for a few hours of work.

### How do your products save time and labor?

Our Fountain System features a matched suite of products providing everything needed to install illuminated recirculating fountains, no previous experience necessary. Simply choose a 36-inch Fountain Bowl or Basalt Columns; the installation of the matching basin, pump and plumbing kit creates a beautiful water feature in two hours or less, using only simple hand tools.

Our Formal Spillway System lets you take advantage of the boom in hardscapes and outdoor living. Set our self-contained basin in front of any new or existing hardscape wall. Install the matched pump, plumbing and aut-offill in the basin or choose one of our Basin Kits or Bundles with everything needed to create a Formal Spillway masterpiece. We even have detailed step-by-step install videos for the bundles on our YouTube. Install an illuminated Colorfalls, a stainless Spillway or solid brass Spouts in the wall. Hide the basin with the same stone and you're done, usually in half a day or less.

### In what other ways do your products make landscape companies profitable?

Water feature maintenance contracts and servicing are a great add-on for your business. Providing your crew with the right tools allows them to work efficiently and effectively, and we have all



the right tools for the job. Once maintenance contracts are established with your customers, you can also supply them with the water treatments needed directly, which will boost profitability.

For those contractors who feel comfortable with a greater range of projects, Atlantic-OASE also offers Pond-free, Water Garden, Maintenance and Aeration Systems, all equally profitable. Whatever the project, our products deliver the ease of installation, rugged dependability and exemplary tech support you depend on to grow your add-on sales and your bottom line. At Atlantic-OASE, we earn your business by helping you earn more.





Water has never looked  
*so good.*

**OASE BIOTEC  
SCREENMATIC<sup>2</sup>**

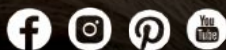
automatically separates debris  
using the self-cleaning screen and  
intelligent cleaning sensor to deposit  
debris into removable tray, combines with  
biological filtration for crystal clear water!



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[www.ATLANTIC-OASE.com](http://www.ATLANTIC-OASE.com)







## Cub Cadet



with **Josh Sooy**

*Segment Director, Professional Equipment, Cub Cadet*

### How do your products save time?

Cub Cadet prides itself on ensuring that our customers have all the power they need to push through tough cutting conditions. The PRO Series is stacked with high performance Kawasaki engines and heavy-duty Parker transmissions to give the operator power to mow efficiently with an excellent cut. Another way we will save time for the commercial cutter in spring 2022 is with our SurePath Auto Steer technology, available on the PRO Z 960 S and 972 S. These semi-autonomous mowers are guided by GPS to minimize overlap — and operator fatigue — while making perfect turns at the push of a button. Based on field tests, the system lets an operator mow on average approximately 12 percent more grass on every pass by minimizing overlap and delivering perfect consistency.

### How do your products save labor?

Time and labor are closely tied together. The more time we can save the operator, the less labor is needed to service all your accounts. Along with time savings, landscaping is a tough job that

can wear out operators. Our SurePath system not only allows an operator to mow more during a day but could have a huge impact on fatigue by minimizing movement and reducing concentration needed to maintain a straight line and minimal overlap.

### How do your products save materials or fuel?

Our SurePath Semi-Autonomous mower reduces run time and mileage needed to complete a job in comparison to our standard lap bar machine with identical specs. This potentially saves fuel and extends the life of the tread on the tires.

### How do your products help generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?

In addition to being able to mow more grass in a given day, the



perfect cut quality produced by SurePath opens opportunities with high-profile properties that want perfectly aligned stripes of consistent width.

### In what other ways do your products make landscape companies profitable?

Turnover is incredibly expensive for a company. Training new operators takes a lot of time for basic operation; pristine cut quality is sometimes learned over years. Our SurePath system levels the field from an experience perspective, allowing new hires to generate peak productivity and exceptional cut quality within minutes.



**Cub Cadet**

# THE CUTTING EDGE OF CUTTING.



PRO SERIES



“

People in my position are always looking for ways to save money and time...SurePath has helped us do that. ”

JASON STEWART  
Brickyard Crossing Golf Course



Want to make your operation up to 12% more efficient?\* You want the innovative PRO Z™ 960 S SP and 972 S SP with all-new SurePath™ Auto Steer technology.

GPS-operated and semi-autonomous mowers that reduce overlap and operator fatigue while making perfect turns at the push of a button. Learn how you can make your business more efficient at [cubcadet.com](http://cubcadet.com).

**Cub Cadet®**

\*SurePath efficiency and savings statistics are intended for illustrative purposes only. The efficiency and savings information presented is mathematically extrapolated from the measured overlap improvements between a Cub Cadet SurePath-equipped commercial zero-turn mower with a 72-inch cutting deck/cut width compared with an otherwise identically equipped Cub Cadet mower with traditional lap bar steering controls operated by a variety of professional landscapers in controlled conditions. The overlap improvements were measured by a third-party testing firm, which also extrapolated those results based on the commercial mowing industry norms and standards they identified. Actual results in the field will vary based on operator preferences, mowing conditions, terrain, site configurations and other factors.

Cub Cadet commercial products are intended for professional use. SurePath functionality is based on market availability. Programs and specs subject to change without notice. © 2021 Cub Cadet





## DR Power Equipment



with **Matt Donohue**

*Vice President Sales, Chore Products*

### How do your products save time and labor?

Professional power done right. Our DR tagline speaks to the core guiding principle behind all our equipment. "Done right" means the job gets done extremely well, and it also gets done efficiently — saving the end user valuable time and labor.

The very first DR product — the DR Trimmer Mower — made it possible for commercial users to trim and mow for long stretches, even all day, without wearing out operators the way handheld equipment does. Today, it's still the fastest and easiest way to trim on commercial properties and along fence lines.

DR Leaf and Lawn Vacuums tow behind any lawn tractor (or ZTR mower) and collect acres of leaves while you mow the grass. (That's two jobs for the price of one!) And the high-capacity collector (up to 321 gallons) can be dumped quickly and easily — so you get back to work with minimal downtime. Self-propelled walk-behind models are also available for working on smaller properties or in tight quarters.

The DR Field and Brush Mower was originally conceived as an alternative to tractor-mounted

brush mowers. It goes places a tractor can't and reclaims overgrown land, flattening thick field grass and slashing through woody materials up to 3 inches in diameter. Big engines (up to 22 hp) provide all the torque you need for the toughest rough area mowing. And our enclosed decks mulch everything that's cut, saving you the trouble of making a second pass to clean up windrows.

### How do your products help generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?

All DR Power Equipment is designed with a compact footprint



that saves valuable space for the commercial user. Whether you aim to save space on the trailer or in the shed, DR equipment is economical. And because it's easy to bring along, DR products have enabled many landscapers to offer additional services that may not be their specialty. For example, DR Stump Grinders are not only compact, but they also cost considerably less than the type of equipment a tree service will use for the same job. So, for the odd stump, landscapers can do it themselves and not deal with renting bigger equipment or subbing the job out. Likewise, a DR Power Grader can take care of smaller grading jobs (driveways, parking areas) without bringing in heavy equipment.





# Do it Right with DR®

## America's Original Field & Brush Mower

- Mow grass up to 8' high
- Cut brush up to 3" thick
- Engines up to 22 HP
- Decks up to 34" wide
- Power steering



★ **USA**  
ENGINEERED AND BUILT

Assembled in the USA using domestic and foreign parts.

[DRfieldbrush.com](http://DRfieldbrush.com)

## World's Most POWERFUL Leaf Vacuum!

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ENGINEERED AND BUILT

Assembled in the USA using domestic and foreign parts.



**EASY**  
1-hand  
dumping!

### Tow-Behind

- Rated #1 in vacuum power
- Huge capacity up to 321 gallons
- Folds flat for storage

### Walk-Behind

- For landscaped or smaller properties
- Easy on/off 8-bushel collector bag
- Self-propelled models available



[DRleafvac.com](http://DRleafvac.com)

## Trim and Mow the EASY Way!



- TRIM fencelines and perimeters
- MOW waist-high grass and weeds
- 5X the power of hand-held trimmers
- Self-propelled models
- Gas- or battery-powered

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## ECHO Q+A with **John Powers** *Director of Product Management*

### How do your products save time?

ECHO products are rooted in innovation; when designing our tools, we focus on durability, power and reliability. Our end user is top of mind when designing our products. Our goal is to have pros work with tools that get the toughest jobs done quickly and efficiently.

### How do your products save labor?

Our X Series models are ECHO's best-in-class products. They are designed with the following three principles in mind: powerful, lightweight, greater productivity. Powerful tools allow the end user to get their jobs done efficiently. Lightweight tools take stress off their bodies when using the equipment, and that combination allows end users to get their work done quickly and comfortably. Our X Series models span across the following categories: blowers, brush-cutters, bed redefiners, chainsaws, edgers, hedge trimmers, Power Pruners, Pro Attachment Series and string trimmers.

### How do your products generate additional revenue for landscape companies?

ECHO helps landscapers add

incremental revenue in a couple ways. First, the performance generates time savings for crews. That, in turn, can allow for additional jobs to be done in the same amount of time for increased revenue. The old adage is alive and well that "time is money," and ECHO can help with providing a pro more time for more jobs.

Secondly, ECHO continues to bring new product segments to market, which allows landscapers to expand their services. Perhaps a mow and blow landscaper starts offering house, deck and sidewalk cleaning with the help of ECHO's new lineup of pressure washers, or they leverage ECHO's recent expanded spreader lineup to add fertilization or snow melt services.

### In what other ways do your products make landscape companies profitable?

First is the performance, which equates to many factors: time savings; best-in-class quality and durable products for less downtime or trips to the service counter; best-in-class oil and fuel,



contributing to less downtime; better ergonomics for health and comfort, reducing the need for medical expenses; sales programs and fleet programs, offering substantial cost savings; and ECHO's unmatched warranty, which can reduce out-of-pocket expenses. This all works together in contributing to increased profitability for the professional landscaper.





**ECHO**

**eFORCE™**  
56V BATTERY SYSTEM

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TO SEE OUR NEW LINEUP!**

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**ECHO-USA.COM**

**ECHO®**





## Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply



with **Larry Giroux**  
*Market Development Manager*

Homeowners are continuing to update their outdoor spaces, which is good news for businesses in the landscape industry. However, supply of products will continue to be a rocky road even into 2022. Apply these four strategies to stay resilient as you navigate product supply disruptions.

### Focus on flexibility

With availability disruptions continuing, make sure you have alternates in mind for each part of your project. Many times, client expectations are more dependent on time frames than product selection, so make sure you fully understand your customer expectations and have a contingency plan should delays occur. Lean on us to help you with current expected lead times.

### Supplier relationship is key

When it comes to upcoming commercial or large residential products, it's important to work closely with your supplier. This allows you to coordinate the core products you'll need for those projects. Communication is critical, and communicating your needs a month in advance is a smart move. Speaking as a supplier, we intend

to have products on hand and ready to ship when you're ready.

### Keep costs up to date and buy early

With rising material costs, it is important to keep your costs up to date; some standard benchmarks you have used in the past may need to be adjusted. This will ensure you are staying profitable and maintaining fiscal health.

By planning ahead and buying early, you can be positioned to better serve your clients. Lean on your local Ewing branch for up-to-date information as well as financing options for upcoming projects.

### Be willing to expand and modify

One of the best ways to increase profitability within your business is to diversify your service offerings with your current clients.



Add landscape lighting installs or outdoor sound to your service offerings. Consider spending a bit more on a fertilizer that lasts longer. It may cost more upfront, but it may require fewer visits and less staffing for the same number of lawns. Offer Smart Controller Retrofits for past customers, or even install water monitoring devices to detect leaks fast.

Having the right inventory in the right place at the right time has been a challenge for green industry professionals. Following these steps can help smooth the way as you provide timelines to your customers and strategize about how to complete projects on schedule. Stay up to date by viewing our Supply Chain Updates hub ([store.ewingirrigation.com/supply-chain-updates](https://store.ewingirrigation.com/supply-chain-updates)) or visit your local Ewing branch today!



# LEAN ON US FOR YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS



**Partnering with Ewing and becoming a ProAdvantage Member can help strengthen your business by providing you access to resources and solutions.**

- The Value Builder System™ - The Value Builder Program through ProAdvantage helps contractors determine the value of their business.
- Synchrony Homeowner Financing – Offering landscape contractor companies options to extend homeowners financing for their projects.
- Ewing Education Webinars – Courses for landscape business on a range of topics from Human Resources to Continued Education Credits/Units.
- ProAdvantage Points – Earn 1 point for every \$1 spent to redeem for gift cards, travel, events, a shopping portal and much more.



Learn more about Ewing and the ProAdvantage Program by going to [EwingIrrigation.com/ProAdvantage](http://EwingIrrigation.com/ProAdvantage) or by scanning this QR code.

  
Irrigation & Landscape Supply

[EwingIrrigation.com](http://EwingIrrigation.com)





## FX Luminaire

### Q+A with Scott Allison

Web Development Manager

#### How do your products save time?

Landscape lighting contractors can simplify the lighting design process, impress customers and close sales faster with the free online My Design tool from FX Luminaire. With My Design, contractors and installers simply take pictures of the site location and import them into the tool. Then, they can drag and drop lighting products over each image and area of the property. Once complete, they will have a complete and accurate parts list and an impressive design proposal. They can also export a high-quality PDF of their design for their clients and a product list for their local distributor. It's that easy!

#### How do your products save labor?

My Design helps users generate a complete parts list quicker and more accurately in a fraction of the time and email it to a distributor from within the tool. My Design also simplifies installation with a detailed PDF for the install crew.

#### How do your products save materials or fuel?

Ensuring that products are



ordered accurately will avoid repeat trips to the distributor branch and eliminate confusion at the counter. My Design allows for detailed reviews, ensuring nothing is missed.

#### How do your products generate additional revenue for landscape companies?

My Design helps contractors and designers close sales faster and build their businesses with more professional presentations. Designs can even be created remotely using a photo of the

property or a screenshot from a map or street view. Those aspects combined save time, labor and allow professionals to wow clients with beautiful proposals.

#### In what other ways do your products make landscape companies profitable?

My Design focuses on an often-overlooked aspect of landscape lighting design — the relationship between the contractor and the customer. It was built to help contractors speed up design and generate stunning design proposals. My Design helps contractors close sales faster while simplifying the design process and enhancing the customer experience.

FXLuminaire

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**GIE+EXPO booth #26056**



## SRP STRIP LIGHTS: Simple. Stylish. Spectacular.

**New SRP Strip Lights** add eye-catching effects to outdoor living spaces in just three easy steps. All you have to do is insert, slide, and snap! The built-in diffuser delivers soft, even lighting without hot spots, and premade cutmarks make customization a breeze.

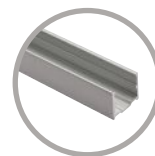
### **Everything you need is included:**



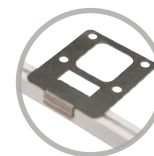
Jumper Cables



End Connectors



Aluminum Sleeve



Hardscape Bracket





## Grasshopper

### Q+A with Mike Simmon

Marketing Specialist

#### How do your products save time?

The Model 337G5 EFI saves time through a combination of engineering and zero-radius maneuverability with ample torque to power through heavier grass in record time. Design-matched transmissions transfer more power to the cutting deck. Extra deep decks discharge clippings while delivering a carpetlike cut.

#### How do your products save labor?

Zero-turn efficiency reduces mowing. Grasshopper's steering design enables precise maneuvering of the 993-cc V-twin EFI-powered mower while staying comfortably in control at faster mowing speeds. Maintenance is simplified with only five grease points and easy access to belts and other items. The use of commercial-grade components extends the service life of the mower.

The ergonomic design of every Grasshopper reduces operator fatigue. Every control is within easy reach. Seats and footrests are ISO-mounted to reduce vibrations. Steering levers adjust to fit nearly every arm length. The standard Premier Suspension (Grammer) seat on the 337G5 EFI provides additional comfort with adjustable

armrests, lumbar support and backrests. It also moves fore and aft and adjusts to the operator's weight. This attention to comfort helps retain employees, reduce turnover and decrease the cost of finding and training new employees.

#### How do your products save materials or fuel?

The Vanguard Big Block EFI engine uses less fuel than comparably sized gasoline engines with no fuel injection. Grasshopper's proprietary CoolTemp Hydro-Max™ hydrostatic fluid decreases oil usage thanks to extended oil change intervals.

#### How do your products generate additional revenue for landscape companies?

With abundant power and torque, mowing jobs are finished faster providing the opportunity to add more



accounts to the weekly schedule. In a wetter-than-normal year, this advantage provided Grasshopper operators with the ability to stay on schedule and power through the heavier, lush grass that many regions experienced.

#### In what other ways do your products make landscape companies profitable?

Grasshopper offers four Max-Torque™ Diesel models that burn, on average, 35 percent less fuel than comparable gasoline- or propane-powered mowers. Averaging 1.0 GPH, our diesel-powered mowers can save 650 gallons over the course of a 1,000-hour mowing season per mower. With abundant power and torque, these diesel mowers finish jobs faster without sacrificing cut quality.



Committed to the Cut.®





**YOU DON'T COMPROMISE.**

# **NEITHER SHOULD YOUR MOWER.**

When your cut is your calling card, you can't compromise. Neither should your mower. With Grasshopper, you get top quality, comfort and durability. And a cut on which you want to put your name.

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Committed to the Cut.®







## Horizon Distributors



with **Nick DiLorenzo**

*Product Manager, Landscape Products*

### How do your products save time and labor?

One of the biggest problems with quick-release fertilizers is they don't last very long — usually only four to six weeks. On the other hand, TurfGro slow-release fertilizers routinely last anywhere from two to four months, some even longer! These fertilizer blends reduce the frequency with which you make applications. Fertilizer doesn't apply itself and labor isn't cheap. With TurfGro slow-release fertilizer, you can cut two to three applications out of your program every year!

### How do your products help reduce fuel and materials?

TurfGro slow-release fertilizer also slows the growth of the turf, resulting in less mowing and maintenance, fewer clippings and fewer trips to the dump. In addition, less mowing means

less wear and tear on your equipment, reducing service expenses and extending the life of your mower. And, of course, fewer applications means fewer bags of fertilizer you'll need to purchase each season.

### How do your products generate additional revenue for landscape companies?

If your crew isn't spending their time on extra fertilizer applications, they can focus on more profitable work like enhancements, but even more important is how satisfied your clients will be with the results. We are focusing on cost reduction here, but one of the main benefits of using slow-release fertilizer is that it

produces steady, healthy growth. Delivering lush, green turf season after season helps retain clients — and gain new ones.







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Horizon has the products you need, when you need them—all under one roof.



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**LANDSCAPE**



**EQUIPMENT**



**OUTDOOR LIVING & LANDSCAPE LIGHTING**

**Step outside your normal scope of work to grow your business and keep up with the competition.**

Low voltage lighting, outdoor kitchens, synthetic turf & hardscaping are all great opportunities for you to improve your profitability and expand your service offering.

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## Hunter Q+A with **Anthony Long** *Hydrawise Product Manager*

### How do your products save time?

Where do we start? Hydrawise looks the same whether you're in the office, on the phone; even your customers look the same. Same pictures, zone names and operation, which provides consistency, and consistency provides ease. This allows for a lot of work to be done at the office: programming controllers before installation, monitoring controllers, making changes for customers from the office. This allows our field staff to focus on getting field work done, while simple tasks can be done efficiently in the office.

### How do your products save labor?

It's not so much about the saving of labor, it's about using the right people for the job. The hardest people to find are good field technicians, so why have them stop work to make a change on the controller or, even worse, have them drive to a customer's house to change the controller program, when this could easily be achieved by someone in the office.

### How do your products save materials or fuel?

Travel. The more we can do by minimizing our vehicle movements

the more we can save in not only fuel, but running costs, capital cost replacement vehicles, etc. A time study carried out by a Hydrawise contractor has found they can reduce their vehicle mileage by 30 percent if all customers use Hydrawise controllers. It is simple; do as much as you can remotely and only go to the site when you must. The customers prefer that too, especially in the new Covid-19 world.

### How do your products help generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?

In order to generate more revenue, you must do more, and with Hydrawise, that's easy. It starts with the sale of the controller, upgrading of the irrigation system and installation of a flow meter: providing continual monitoring of the system, looking for problems informing customers and, most importantly, exceeding their



expectations. Showing the value with monthly reporting, Hydrawise changes your business, making staff more efficient through to customers more appreciative, generating not only sales and repairs, but ongoing monitoring services.

### In what other ways do your products make landscape and lawn care companies profitable?

Saving water, saving labor, saving resources and, most importantly, creating customers that value you and your business. The ultimate profitability improver is improved customers experiences wanting them to provide you more income. That can only occur if you have the right business tools, and Hydrawise is just another tool designed for contractors.

# Hunter®

# SEE WHAT'S NEW *and Earn Rewards in a Fun, Virtual Environment*



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## Hydretain Q+A with **Jim Spindler** *Director of Agronomy, Ecologel Solutions*



### How do Hydretain products save time, labor and materials?

Hydretain products have the unique ability to condense unavailable soil moisture vapor back into plant usable water droplets. By making more water available to plant roots in between irrigation cycles and/or rainfall, Hydretain reduces landscape water use, minimizes droughts stress and improves nutrient uptake — all of which help maintain healthier plants that are less susceptible to pests and diseases.

Water management issues are the root cause of many callbacks and complaints. By maximizing soil water availability, Hydretain reduces watering requirements, delays wilt and minimizes or eliminates localized dry spots. For customers, Hydretain reduces water use and can help save money on utility bills. For landscape and lawn care companies, healthier lawns and landscapes reduce callbacks and complaints.

By improving soil moisture management, Hydretain also improves seed germination, sod establishment and transplant success rates for new installations. Increased water-use efficiency means less hand watering and lower plant replacement costs. Moisture management is also a critical factor in the efficiency of many other lawn care and landscape inputs. Hydretain

works well with beneficial soil microbes, it has shown to increase mycorrhizae colonization and recent university research shows Hydretain increases nutrient uptake.

### How do Hydretain products generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?

Whether looking to provide a service offering for existing customers or gain new customers, Hydretain offers an entirely new revenue stream. Available in both liquid and granular options, it is an environmentally responsible solution that can fit into any program. For lawn maintenance companies looking to expand into plant health care applications, Hydretain products do not require a license for commercial application, making them an ideal place to start. For full-service firms, Hydretain can be sold as an add-on service or marketed as part of an upper-tier option. Offering this unique water management service is a great way to gain a competitive edge and referral business. When treated lawns stay green as the neighbors' lawns begin showing signs of drought stress, the service sells itself!



### How do Hydretain products make landscape and lawn care companies profitable?

In addition to producing new revenue, Hydretain services can increase profitability by improving customer retention, reducing callbacks and minimizing costs. Drought stress is often confused with pest and disease damage. It can also be a precursor as stressed plants are more susceptible to disease and insect infestations. By reducing drought stress, Hydretain will keep customers happier and reduce unnecessary pesticide applications.

### How does the Hydretain Advantage Program support landscape and lawn care companies?

The Hydretain Advantage Program was designed to help landscape and lawn care companies offer Hydretain services without having to invest their time and money developing sales and marketing materials. The program provides free marketing materials, product trainings and referrals through an online directory listing of professional applicators located on the Hydretain website. Last year, the program was upgraded to include a new rewards program, helping applicators earn cash back and rewards for purchases and product promotions.

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**GIE+EXPO booth #264**

**NEW REVENUE OPPORTUNITY!**

# GROW YOUR BUSINESS

**Delay wilt, eliminate dry spots and maintain healthier landscapes with less water using Hydretain.**

Add Hydretain applications to your program to increase revenue, reduce callbacks and gain new customers.

## The Hydretain Advantage Program

Designed to help grow your business without spending your time and money developing sales and marketing materials.

- Free Marketing Materials
- Webinars and Personalized Training
- Online Directory Listing
- Rewards Program

[hydretainadvantage.com](http://hydretainadvantage.com)

**Hydretain**  
ADVANTAGE PROGRAM







## Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show

**Q+A** with **Vanessa A. Finney**  
*Executive Vice President*

### What is most significant about MANTS 2022?

Returning to an in-person show is very important for our exhibitors and attendees. Our virtual MANTS.com Business Hub served its purpose during a very difficult 2021, but there is nothing like doing business face to face. Companies know that MANTS means business, and everyone is looking forward to getting down to business in person once again.

### How does MANTS support landscape and lawn care professionals?

For more than 50 years now, MANTS has facilitated face-to-face conversations and commerce between green industry businesses. The show is 100 percent focused on creating a space where businesses can meet with clients they don't often get to see, debut new and exciting products and write orders for the upcoming season. MANTS starts off the new year and your business on the right foot.

### As you look to the return to face-to-face connections in Baltimore, will any elements from last year become part of your planning?

We continue to plan a full in-person MANTS. We know that our partic-



ipants want to meet in person and connect on the trade show floor, so that remains a top priority, but we also encourage our exhibitors to take advantage of their online MANTS.com business profiles to complement the in-person experience. Attendees everywhere can connect online pre-show to see a company's product offerings, which helps them plan what to see at the show.

### Any changes for 2022?

MANTS is devoted to providing a safe environment for all our exhibitors and attendees. For its part, the Baltimore

Convention Center has been awarded the GBAC STAR accreditation, the gold standard for convention, meeting and hospitality facilities. We are working with the center and all our allied business partners to prepare for whatever guidelines are in place in January and to provide for the safety of our participants, while also providing the best MANTS experience.

### How can people attend MANTS?

MANTS 2022 will return to the Baltimore Convention Center Jan. 5-7, 2022. Registration begins mid-September and goes through Jan. 7. The cost is \$20 before Dec. 1 and \$30 thereafter and on-site. The official MANTS housing bureau will also be open in mid-September. Learn more at MANTS.com.



# MANTS<sup>®</sup> 2022

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# JANUARY 5-7 | BALTIMORE CONVENTION CENTER

As always, MANTS MEANS BUSINESS. It is the one show where buyers know that they can find all the plants, products, and services their business needs. Exhibitors can count on meeting a steady stream of well-qualified current and new customers. And when the business day is over, Baltimore's Inner Harbor area offers a wide variety of hotels, restaurants, and attractions. So make your plans now to attend MANTS.

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On-line Registration is available 24/7 beginning October 1.





## Minleon USA

### Q+A with **Sonia Risicato** *New Product Rep*

#### **How do your products save time?**

The V2+ (Circle Clip) reduces the amount of time it takes to use clips each year. Applying this clip the first time eliminates applying clips year after year for three to four years.

#### **How do your products save labor?**

Saving labor in the Christmas season is easier with the V2+ when removing product from the property. The clips stay attached to the cord. There is no cleanup of partial clips, and it all comes down together. You are reducing time on the installation.

#### **How do your products save materials or fuel?**

When the V2+ is attached, you are not replacing the clips in year two. It is ready to be placed right back on the roof. There is no return visit to clean up broken or left-behind clips on the job site.

#### **How do your products help generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?**

The V2+ clip is part of the Christmas light installation business model. Using or adding this business helps lawn care and landscape companies generate revenues.

#### **In what other ways do your products help save money?**

This product is well built and has been called the “beast of gutter clips.” It is also very well priced, as you will find from your local distribution point.



After our first trial year involving our top customers for redesign and betterment for the product use, our new clip has evolved to the V2+ clip. Reviewed and approved by our patent team, we will stand firm with this design.



# MINLEON USA

— WELCOMES —

## THE 2021 HOLIDAY LIGHTING SEASON



**After 16 Years of quality, this is what you have been receiving:**

- Reliability year after year for over a decade, and in that time we also take into account your concerns. We listen! We have recently provided a connection that is **Corrosion Free, No Lead, No Mercury**. In the USA, we now have a better connection for consistent lighting.
- After 2020 test-marketing, the V2 Thick Shell is here to stay and has been shown to be a successful option for the professional installer, or distribution channel growing into new markets. With over 100 million bulbs in the USA market, our biggest challenge is reminding you that we are *the resource for all your holiday lighting needs!*

*Please contact  
your local distributor.*

**minleonusa.com**







## Mulch Mate

### Q+A with Nick Carlson CEO

#### How do your products save time?

Mulch Mate can unload mulch, stone, sand or topsoil directly into a wheelbarrow, container or loader bucket in three seconds with the press of a joystick. To hand shovel 10 yards of mulch from your truck can take two people 45 minutes. Using the Mulch Mate, this job can be done in 10 minutes or less without putting two guys in the truck. This can save you 50 percent to 80 percent or more, getting the entire crew finished and on to the next job faster. Since Mulch Mate is all electric and self-contained, your crew can pull up to the job and be laying mulch in literally seconds. Mulch Mate is ultraquiet, allowing your crew to start early and finish later in the day without disturbing the neighbors in the community.

#### How do your products save labor?

With Mulch Mate, you no longer have two guys standing around in the truck shoveling. You can do the same job with fewer people or put those guys on the ground, getting the job done even faster. You now need fewer people to do the same job. Material is dispensed directly into the wheelbarrow with a lot less

mess, saving you valuable cleanup time.

#### How do your products save materials or fuel?

Mulch Mate can save in both manners. Since the twin augers fluff and aerate the mulch, you will actually get 20 percent better coverage out of your material. Ten yards of mulch will spread like 12 yards, directly saving you money on each job. Mulch Mate is all electric, so there is no gas, no oil and very low maintenance. Mulch Mate runs on two self-contained, 12-volt batteries that can be recharged right from your truck while driving.

#### How do your products help generate additional revenue for landscapers and lawn care companies?

Mulch Mate helps save money by allowing you to reduce labor costs and by giving you better coverage by using less material on the job. The biggest way Mulch Mate helps generate additional revenue



is by allowing your company to finish your contract mulching jobs weeks sooner. This will give you multiple weeks more to do more profitable jobs sooner in the season. Companies that use Mulch Mate on stone and dirt jobs see huge time savings as well. Shoveling stone is a miserable job, but with Mulch Mate, you simply press the joystick and fill your wheelbarrow in seconds.

#### In what other ways do your products make landscape and lawn care companies profitable?

Our customers tell us that they have been able to retain their quality employees as well as hire better employees because they have made the job of moving mulch much easier with fewer injuries. You no longer have people jumping in and out of the truck all day. Since most injuries come from jumping out of trucks, Mulch Mate could help save on workers' comp claims as well.







888-776-8524

[www.MulchMateUSA.com](http://www.MulchMateUSA.com)



**DMT TRAILER**



**SWITCH-N-GO**

**DISPENSE MATERIAL 3X FASTER - MULCH - STONE - COMPOST**  
Increase production without hiring. Speed up deliveries by 200%. Mounts on any landscape truck, DMT Trailer and Switch-N-Go or Hooklift container.







## Natural Alternative

**Q+A** with **Victoria Mack**  
*Customer Support Specialist*

### Why Natural Alternative Ice Melt?

Looking for an environmentally friendly product that's safer for pets and not harmful to hardscapes and vegetation? Natural Alternative Ice Melt proudly offers it all! Natural Alternative was developed through its sister company, NaturaLawn of America — the leader in organic-based lawn care — that's focused on raising the bar for safety standards.

### How is Natural Alternative Ice Melt different from other ice melt products?

Other ice melts can be very damaging to soil, vegetation and waterways. Traditional ice melts can heat up to 175 degrees F due to the high concentrations of salt, which can cause severe burns to pets and lawns. Natural Alternative Ice Melt doesn't contain high concentrations of salt, won't get slippery when wet and doesn't leave white residue on floors. Natural Alternative Ice Melt is effective but gentle on concrete and other hardscapes and is biodegradable and nontoxic to fish and pets. Natural Alternative is the safer choice when considering the environment.

### How does Natural Alternative Ice Melt save companies time and money?

Apply Natural Alternative Ice Melt prior to an ice or snow storm — as soon as it comes in contact with moisture, it creates a brine! The brine resists refreezing, preventing ice sheets from forming under the snow. This brine also lowers the freezing point of the ground, saving you time from needing to reapply more ice melt. Natural Alternative is a powerful blend designed to cover more surface area and provide maximum performance results. Our ice melt requires two-thirds less product compared to rock salt. Yes, one of our bags is equivalent to three bags of rock salt.

### How does Natural Alternative Ice Melt help generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?

Using Natural Alternative Ice Melt means more storage space and



happy crew members. By using less product with faster melting power, there will be fewer bags to haul and safer driveways and sidewalks. It's time for fewer repairs to lawns and hardscapes — Natural Alternative Ice Melt is the safer alternative.

When your customers use Natural Alternative Ice Melt, you're helping to protect the work you've completed and the environment. With the demand for products like our safer ice melt, you will generate revenue during the off-season while saving on repair costs come spring. A winter-long increase in revenue that provides your customers with a safer winter sounds like a win to us!



# maximize your **melt** with pet-friendly products



## Ice Melt

- Melts Ice Fast to -16° F
- Resists Thawing & Re-Freezing
- Non-Toxic & Biodegradable
- Safer for Pets, Paws & Fish

## 100% CMA

- LEED Compliant & Chloride-Free
- Less Corrosive Than Tap Water
- No Pitting or Spalling



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115k customers



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states + D.C.



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## Nufarm

### Q+A with **Aaron Hathaway** *Technical Services Manager*



#### How does your product save time?

A mixture of Cheetah® Pro + SureGuard® SC can be applied as directed sprays around desirable plants in landscape beds and can be broadcast-applied in areas where bare ground is desired. This combination saves time for applicators looking to control weeds that are already present and control weeds that are waiting in the soil as seed. One application provides control now and can provide months of control later.

#### How does your product save labor?

Cheetah Pro + SureGuard SC provides synergistic control, which means the combination works better than the addition of each one applied on its own. Cheetah Pro is a nonselective, postemergent herbicide controlling grasses, broadleaves and sedges, and SureGuard SC, although its main function is residual weed control, also helps out with control of weeds that are present at application. These herbicides

team up with two different modes of action to knock out weeds that have already emerged, and SureGuard SC remains as a barrier in the soil to guard against later intruders. This increase in efficacy improves customer satisfaction and prevents callbacks.

#### How does your product save materials or fuel?

One application of Cheetah Pro + SureGuard SC can provide knockdown and residual control of weeds for more than four months. Return trips to control reemerged and/or newly germinated weeds in bare ground areas and landscape beds not only increase costs for materials but also fuel and labor. It is a great advantage to allow herbicides with residual to do so much of the work for you even after you leave the site.

#### How do your products help generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?

Having a plan of attack for weed

control versus reacting to weed encroachment is paramount. A great program for weed control in landscape beds and bare ground areas is a spring-timed and a fall-timed application of Cheetah Pro + SureGuard SC — these timings address summer and winter annual weeds that show up like clockwork with post- and pre-control. Applying this combination at the shoulders of the season can provide seasonlong control of weeds and free up time to cover other sites and/or sell more services.

#### In what other ways do your products make landscape and lawn care companies profitable?

Cheetah Pro + SureGuard SC provides fast control of weeds — injury is prominent within two or three days and they're burned down soon after. As expectations from customers increase, fast control that doesn't leave customers staring at weeds for weeks can reduce callbacks and increase their level of satisfaction. We at Nufarm understand that expectations continue to increase and have worked hard to provide solutions that go the extra mile.



# Nufarm

# EDGE

/// REWARDS PROGRAM

NEW FOR  
**2022**

**GROW YOUR EDGE**, we're delivering an added edge with significantly increased rebates on top-performing premium herbicides. Hurry, best offers are only available through October 31, 2021.

#### INCREASED REBATES

**ESCALADE® 2** // 50% INCREASE

**COOL POWER®** // 50% INCREASE

**HORSEPOWER®** // 50% INCREASE

#### SAVE MORE

**ALOFT® LC SC** // SAVE \$50+ EACH\*

**SEE THE SAVINGS LINEUP**

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\*With Ant, ABW and Grub Volume Bonus

 **Nufarm**  
Grow a better tomorrow





## Quali-Pro

**Q+A** with **Allan Fulcher**  
*Vice President, Sales*

### How do your products or services save landscape or lawn care pros time?

The Quali-Pro portfolio makes it simple for lawn and landscape professionals. Our platform for innovation is branded “combination chemistry,” which is intended to save you time and take the guesswork out of mixing chemistry and loading sprayers.

### How do your products save landscape or lawn care pros labor?

Quali-Pro solutions save labor by reducing the chance of errors. Our labels are simple, and in a lot of cases, our products contain multiple active ingredients, allowing you to control a broad spectrum of weeds, diseases or insects.

### How do your products save landscape or lawn care materials or fuel?

Superior efficacy. Quali-Pro products are tested and proven to perform each and every time. Lawn care and landscape professionals will save on materials and fuel when their product performance-related customer callbacks are eliminated.

### How do your products generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?

When you are using products that work, you trust them. When your customers see the results, they trust you. When your customer trusts you with their lawn or landscape, they will also trust you to solve other problems on their property. Cross-selling is grounded in trust, and with Quali-Pro products, you are set up for success.

### In what other ways do your products make landscape and lawn care companies profitable?

Quali-Pro offers excellent products to control pests, including insects,



weeds and unwanted diseases, along with offering a competitive price. Quali-Pro products will lower your overhead by offering a more competitive price on your basic chemical needs. Along with offering your basic chemical needs, Quali-Pro is continuously working to develop new solutions that save you time, money and increase your bottom line. Come check out our portfolio today!

# QUALI-PRO



August 15th - November 30th

# EARLY ORDER PROGRAM

*Best Deals  
of the Year!*

Quali-Pro is offering special incentives now through November 30th. Take advantage of our Simply Grow Together (SGT) date-tiered program by ordering before October 31st for the biggest rebates.

Submit your rebate online at  
**[simplygrowtogether.com](http://simplygrowtogether.com)**.

**QUALI-PRO**

[quali-pro.com](http://quali-pro.com)





## Scag Power Equipment

**Q+A** with **Chris Frame**  
*President*

### How do your products save time?

Each and every Scag product is built to save the user time by being tough and user-friendly. Ultrastrong construction and components withstand the everyday demands of commercial use, while user-centric design places important controls within easy reach for the operator. Simple, intuitive machine controls paired with zero-turn maneuverability allow the operator to knock out job after job with quickness and precision.

### How do your products save labor?

More productivity per employee means the business owner is paying less overtime or simply needs fewer employees to do a given amount of work. A great example of this in the Scag lineup is with the Windstorm stand-on blower. We've been told by actual users that one Windstorm blower can replace the productivity of four, five or even six employees using backpack blowers doing the same job. Those are some extremely powerful numbers to consider. Now, those extra employees can be deployed to additional jobs during that amount of time, making the company more revenue.



### How do your products save materials or fuel?

We have seen increased demand for more fuel-efficient engines, such as those with electronic fuel injection, so our lineup has seen the addition of more fuel-injected engine offerings in recent years. Not only does increased fuel efficiency shave down fuel expenses, but it also saves time otherwise

spent by having to stop and refuel instead of working.

### How do your products generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?

The Scag Turf Storm stand-on spreader-sprayer provides landscape professionals with an additional revenue stream in lawn chemical application (fertilizer, herbicide, pesticide). This is a highly profitable service that can help the business owner gain more customers by offering a more well-rounded lawn maintenance program.







# GROW.



# MOW.

Since 1983, Scag Power Equipment has built "Simply the Best" lawn mowers money can buy. Today's Scag lineup now includes a spreader/sprayer to help you grow the lushest turf, plus walk-behind and stand-on blowers, along with truck loaders — equipping you from start to finish.



# BLOW.

**SCAG**  
POWER EQUIPMENT

SCAG.com    

Be sure to visit us at GIE+EXPO:  
Indoor Booth 7104 / Outdoor Booth 6008D





## SmartGate Conveyors

**Q+A** with **Jonathan Snyder**  
CEO

### How do your units save time and labor?

Since 2016, SmartGate Conveyors has been eliminating the hand labor to unload landscape materials from off the truck and into a wheelbarrow, cart, container or spreader. It can dispense material out either side and along a blacktop edge or curbside at the press of a button, resulting in ease of spreading and peak efficiency. With the SmartGate Conveyor unloading at a rate of nearly 1 cubic yard per minute, it raises the bar and has set a new pace for placing landscape products. In the time it took to grab the shovel to start handling the product, your wheelbarrow can be full. Our unit speeds up the loading process by three times or more and will totally eliminate the need for climbing onto the truck, reducing the risk of injury and fatigue. This efficiency will free up hardworking team members you already have and allow you to place them in other needed positions of your company and get the job done much quicker.

### How do your units make landscape and lawn care companies more profitable?

Transportation to and from the job

for the crew and their tools is one of the more costly investments a landscape maintenance company has. Small- to medium-sized dump trucks have been the “tool of choice” and serve a major role in this industry. SmartGate Conveyors developed its low-maintenance units to utilize the existing benefits of a dump truck without hindering its original use. It replaces your dump truck tailgate and is only slightly thicker, allowing for normal trailer towing or bulk dump off. Take mulch out in the morning and bring debris back to dump off in the evening. Since the product is gravity fed into the unit by raising the dump, there are no high-maintenance tarp or web floor issues, and it sells at a fraction of the cost of those options. With river rock and other decorative stones becoming a high demand in low-maintenance landscape solutions, our units give an economical alternative to transporting expensive,



specialized equipment to the job site to handle these products, saving travel time and fuel on the road.

With our units capable of handling sand, aggregate, river rock, decorative stone, compost, topsoil and all types of wood and bark mulch, your return on investment can be felt all season long. But, in the event you need to remove the unit, our quick-connect couplers, simple tailgate pivot point and chain pocket system will detach in minutes!

“We expanded our company services,” “experienced huge time savings,” “we became more profitable” and “the unit paid for itself already this year” are just a few of the phrases we hear from our satisfied users. SmartGate Conveyors continues to step into the future with a commitment to develop new, time-saving products and build for a better tomorrow today!





## Cross Conveyor



- **COMPACT DESIGN**

- **ECONOMIC VERSATILITY**

- **ENGINEERED IN INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE**



- **Mulch**
- **Sand**
- **Stone**
- **Topsoil**
- **Compost**

## Dump Trailer



## Rear Discharge



# SmartGate

Press to load...shovel the savings



[www.SmartGateConveyors.com](http://www.SmartGateConveyors.com)







## Smart Level

### Q+A with Mike East Owner

#### How do your products help generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?

Imagine being able to present your customer with a professional image of a finished project before you've even broken ground. Smart Level helps bring those old hand-drawn sketches to life and allows your customers to see the vision you've seen from the very beginning. Smart Level is the only precision construction altimeter on the market that uses this cutting-edge technology to give you the base for a finished design in CAD before you've even started.

#### What is one feature that sets your product apart from its competition and benefits both landscape and lawn care companies?

With the Smart Level system, there is no need for factory calibration or recharges of any kind. Our customers love that they never have to send in their tools for yearly maintenance. We have designed our product so that if for any reason, something does get damaged, it can be repaired on-site, and the job still gets done. Saving you time and money is always our goal.



#### How do your products save time?

Smart Level just launched one of its newest app features called Image Mapping. This feature allows you to document height and distance measurements directly into a photo or drone image in real time, allowing you to accurately record that data in a fraction of the time.

#### How do your products save labor?

Smart Level eliminates the math and is a one-person operation. In the past, we used a standard laser

level that required an additional person, which, in turn, increased our labor costs. Smart Level also eliminates the math of standard laser levels that require additional time calculating math on-site, which, if calculated incorrectly, leads to costly mistakes. Now, with Smart Level, we skip the hassle and get accurate results immediately.

#### How do your products save materials or fuel?

More accurate job bidding means knowing what you need and don't need. Smart Level results in less wasted time over ordering and then returning materials or under ordering and running after materials.



## Advanced 3D Terrain Mapping

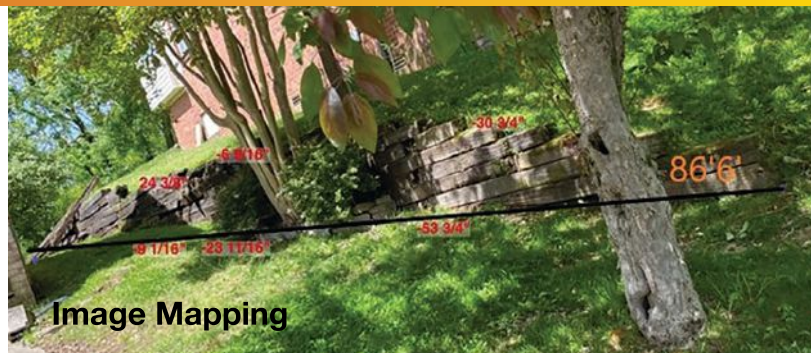


### App Functions Include

- New Image Mapping
- New Android Update
- Continuous Distance Measurement
- % of Slope
- Engineering Scale/Ft above Sea Level
- Range Function
- Compass

## STREAMLINE YOUR BIDDING WITH IMAGE MAPPING

**NEVER NEEDS FACTORY  
CALIBRATION OR RECHARGE**



**Complete package includes HD carrying case, monopod, precision altimeter, and user friendly app.**

**Already have a Smart Level / U-Level? Simply update your app and get all these features for FREE**

\* (3D Terrain Mapping and distance measurement not available in Android)





## Spring-Green Lawn Care

**Q+A** with **James Young**  
*COO of Spring-Green Enterprise*

### How does Spring-Green help its franchise owners profitably plan for growth within their business?

Each fall, franchise owners participate in both peer group and 1:1 business and marketing planning sessions. These sessions are designed to help each owner set annual and long-term strategic goals. This plan is the road map for achieving their goals and is supported by their dedicated business consultant who monitors business and financial performance throughout the year.

### How does Spring-Green Lawn Care support its franchise owners down the path of profitability?

Increasing customer count and revenue is just one part of the support equation. To develop and sustain a healthy bottom line, there is significant focus on material cost to manage results, labor cost and G&A expenses. Beyond the financial nuts and bolts, there is also a team of people supporting the customer experience and, of course, the implementation and proper use of technology to drive additional efficiency.

We Grow Faster Together! Our support model was built with an existing green industry business owner in mind. This means running a Spring-Green business in conjunction with your existing business is possible. With the right plan in place and the support of the Spring-Green team, an owner can achieve their goals of diversification and build a recurring service business without losing focus on their customers.

### What are some additional ways that Spring-Green Lawn Care helps franchise owners maintain a healthy margin?

There are several contributing factors that help drive profitability:

**Low overhead** — Co-Location with existing business.

**National pricing** — Dealing directly with existing distributors while leveraging our national purchasing power and preferred pricing.

**Cost-saving equipment** — Performing multiple services out of one vehicle and leveraging equipment to regulate material usage and the ability to treat only the desired area.

**SPRING-GREEN**  
America's *Neighborhood* Lawn Care Team.



**Our workforce** — One person per vehicle. A licensed and professional field service technician can be proud of their work, their contribution to the environment and the community they serve.

**Software** — Our blend of proprietary and industry-leading software allows for an enhanced customer experience, assists with efficient scheduling, routing and billing.

**Prepaid service** — More than 30 percent of customers utilize prepay payment, a growing trend with millennial homeowners, which limits concerns over outstanding accounts receivable.

**Operational focus** — Having large company-owned locations allows us to help owners better understand how a large operation will look and operate while also serving as our sandbox for testing new ideas to benefit the entire network.



*Diversify with the Spring-Green Stimulus Plan*

# EXPAND YOUR BUSINESS. REDUCE YOUR RISK.

The demand for residential lawn fertilization & weed control, mosquito control, and tree care continues to be on the rise and yields above-average margins. By adding a Spring-Green business to run in conjunction with your existing business, Green Industry owners can diversify their portfolio and add a recession resistant, recurring revenue stream.

*The Spring-Green Stimulus Plan Includes:*

- ✓ **NO INITIAL FEES TO JOIN**
- ✓ **\$25K MARKETING LOAN**  
WITH UP TO 50% LOAN FORGIVENESS
- ✓ **EQUIPMENT FINANCING**

**WANT TO  
KNOW MORE?**



Scan here to find out more  
about our Stimulus Plan  
[www.spring-green.com/stimulus](http://www.spring-green.com/stimulus)

**IN 2020 SPRING-GREEN GREW OVER 11% AND IS PROJECTED TO DO THE SAME OR BETTER IN 2021.**

To learn more about the Spring-Green Stimulus Plan and the benefits of owning a Spring-Green Lawn Care business call **1-800-777-8608** or visit [www.spring-green.com/stimulus](http://www.spring-green.com/stimulus).

Statistics are from the Spring-Green Franchise Disclosure Document (FDD) dated March 2021. For more information, see the FDD. This information is not intended as an offer to sell, or solicitation of an offer to buy, a franchise. It is for informational purposes only. Currently, the following states regulate the offer and sale of a franchise: CA, HI, IL, IN, MD, NY, ND, OR, RI, SD, VA, WA and WI. If you are a resident of one of these states, we will not offer you a franchise unless and until we have complied with applicable pre-sale registration and disclosure requirements in your jurisdiction.





## Steel Green Manufacturing

**Q+A** with **Craig Conyer, Matt Smith, Mike Floyd, Scot Jones and Brent Mills**  
*Founding Partners*

### How does customer feedback influence innovation at Steel Green Manufacturing?

We make it a priority to listen to lawn care operators. Based on customer feedback, we made in-season improvements to our 2021 spreader/sprayers — including offering a 23.5-horsepower Kawasaki engine (the 21-horsepower Vanguard engine is also an option) and increasing the spray capacity to 50 gallons on our midsize model (SG46).

Our new patent-pending hillside stability system is another example of innovation driven by customer feedback. The zero-turn platform offers maximum maneuverability and efficiency for most properties, but it can have challenges with certain terrain. This new option allows the operator to lock and unlock the front caster wheels for added hillside stability.

### How do Steel Green spreader/sprayers make lawn care operators more efficient?

Steel Green machines automatically cut your labor hours in half because they spread granular and spray liquid product simultaneously. Our machines are some of the most

powerful and productive ride-on spreader/sprayers on the market today. Our midsize unit, the SG46, now holds up to 50 gallons of liquid and 320 pounds of granular product, meaning fewer stops to refill. What's more, it still fits through a 48-inch gate.

### How do Steel Green spreader/sprayers save materials?

Our new pressure control system prevents product waste by maintaining the desired spray pressure with the use of an automated ball valve. Operators can easily adjust spray settings, turn a pump on or off or turn an entire section of the boom on or off without pressure spikes, regardless of the number of nozzles being used.

### How do Steel Green spreader/sprayers create new business opportunities for lawn care operators?

With the SG Snowplow attachment, a spreader/sprayer can be transformed into a powerful snow-removing machine. This allows lawn care



operators to maximize their equipment investment and earn revenue during the off-season. When the snow season is over, uninstalling the plow is simple, and applicators can get back to fertilizing in minutes.

Other attachments, like our new seeding rake and aerator attachment (coming soon), create even more opportunities for lawn care operators seeking to grow their service offerings.

With new features that maximize efficiency and eliminate product waste and new attachments for more versatility, Steel Green spreader/sprayers create opportunities for maximizing productivity, providing new service offerings and ultimately generating more profit.





**STEELGREEN**  
MANUFACTURING

**PRODUCTIVE. POWERFUL.  
BUILT TO LAST.**

**NEW AND IMPROVED**

**SG46**

The SG46 zero-turn sprayer/spreader now has a 50-gallon liquid capacity, and it still fits through a 48-inch gate. With all the power and spreading capacity of the largest Steel Green model, the SG46 is perfect for both large commercial properties and smaller residential properties.



[steelgreenmfg.com](http://steelgreenmfg.com)





## Takeuchi

### Q+A with Lee Padgett

*Product Manager*

#### How do your products save time?

Takeuchi products are designed to save both time and labor by increasing efficiency and reducing the number of employees required to do a job. Not only do these machines increase productivity, but also the reduction in staff on the job site often makes for a safer work environment. Compact track loaders and mini excavators are very capable and versatile machines that excel in a wide range of applications. In addition to their ability to shorten the time required for grading and dirt work, standard auxiliary hydraulic circuits allow them to operate a wide variety of hydraulic attachments, greatly increasing their versatility and productivity.

#### How do your products save materials or fuel?

All Takeuchi products meet current EPA emissions regulations. The new Tier 4 final engines are much more efficient, consuming less fuel by providing better fuel combustion through the use of high-pressure common rail fuel systems and turbochargers.



#### How do your products help generate additional revenue for landscape companies?

Auxiliary hydraulics enable our machines to operate a variety of hydraulic attachments, greatly increasing their versatility. Traditionally, compact equipment would be used for simple grading and dirt work applications or with forks to move pallets of sod or brick pavers. Now, with available auxiliary hydraulics, the range of applications these machines are able to perform in has greatly expanded to areas like tree spades for nursery work, power

rakes for soil conditioning, mowers for larger tracts of vegetation and trenchers for irrigation placement. Even off-season applications like snow removal can greatly increase revenue for landscapers.

#### In what other ways do your products make landscape companies profitable?

Takeuchi's purpose-built design philosophy and outstanding build quality uses all steel construction and model specific components, providing less maintenance and downtime and increasing your productivity and overall profitability. Less time in the shop and more time on job site means more money in the owner's pocket.

**TAKEUCHI**  
*From World First to World Leader*

# BUILT FOR PERFORMANCE

**takeuchi**  
From World First to World Leader



## TB250-2

The TB250-2 has an operating weight of 10,957 lb, a dig depth of 12' 4.8" and max reach of over 20'. The TB250-2 comes equipped with a multifunction monitor, triple flange track rollers, heavy duty blade and a spacious automotive interior that provides all day operator comfort.

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## Turfco Q+A with **Scott Kinhead** *Executive Vice President*

### How do your products make landscape and lawn care companies more profitable?

Our motto is “the beauty of being more productive.” With Turfco, you can create the green space your customers want while making your company more profitable. Here is what one customer told us about our new riding applicator: “After one week, I could see it was a game-changer, but after 205 hours, I knew it was.” He said, “Previously, my best day of revenue on a spreader-sprayer was \$1,200.” With revenue on the T5000 now at \$1,900 per day, he said it produces like a machine and a half. Our goal is to make our landscapers more profitable and able to do more with their current staff. It’s great to hear tangible reports of how the equipment makes an impact.

### How do you come up with your unique innovations and patents?

One of the benefits of being direct is that we work directly with our end users. By listening to our customers, we continually learn what their challenges are, what’s stopping them from growing and what’s interfering with their profitability. A lot of landscapers have more business than

they can handle with the labor shortage. Training new staff, having the current staff be more productive, making equipment easier on them and freeing up your time as an owner is our focus. The T3100 and the T5000 came about because we wanted operators to get up to speed and productive in less than a week. And customers wanted a more stable machine on hills while reducing turf tearing. We start with the problems, and then we come up with the solutions. That’s why we have more than 36 patents in the turf industry.

### How do your products save time?

With a short aeration season, it is critical to get on and off the property quickly, yet do the job right.

The new XT10 offers many time-saving benefits. Our patent-pending Auto-Depth Control ensures a consistent depth all day long. Plus, there is no slowing down for clogging with the powerful engine and new



design with chains outside the aeration area. A big bonus is being able to aerate and seed in one pass with the drop seeder attachment. You can charge for both without having to re-ride the property. Our new T5000 with the boomless design will spray up to 13-feet wide, eliminating the maneuverability challenges of typical spray booms. You can glide past obstacles without slowing down.

### How do your products make staff happy and more productive?

The right equipment does make a difference. Training time on the T3100 and T5000 is very intuitive compared with other equipment, making operators feel confident and productive very quickly. Our XT10 can aerate at 7 mph and at a 30-inch aerating width, delivering up to 2 acres per hour. We continually find ways to bring simple, intuitive, operator-friendly products that make jobs go smoother and better.



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**GIE+EXPO booth #7040 (inside) + #6152D (outside)**

# ***"THE AMOUNT OF MONEY THIS MACHINE PUMPS OUT IS INSANE."***

– Jamie Hageman, Manager, GreenLawn



**THE NEW TURFCO T5000 SPREADER SPRAYER** is the growth machine you've been waiting for. Designed for a wide range of properties, the high-capacity T5000 is fast and nimble, easy to learn, and excels on hills. Add an optional 3-in-1 tank and spray up to 300,000 sq. ft. with one fill. Increase your productivity by up to 29% with an industry-leading 13-ft spray width. Precision steering and patented boomless design lets operators maneuver in tight areas and zoom past obstacles, but won't tear up turf like a zero-turn. Get yours today!

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## TwinklyPRO



with **Brian Schreiner**

*Vice President of Sales and Marketing*

### How do your products save time?

Twinkly PRO saves time on your lighting display by eliminating the need for programmers and/or lighting designers. Projects that would normally take days or weeks to program are done in just seconds with our simple, patented technology. Not to mention the multiseason applications become simple by simply changing color themes on the fly.

### How do your products save labor?

Twinkly PRO is easily installed by ANYONE. No special training is needed. Simply hang your lights, and you're on your way. Our free, easy to use APP makes it possible for everyone to look like a pro, and you can do it all on your smartphone! Additionally by using the product year-round, there is no need to reinstall lights with a different color theme based on the time of year. Leave them up and change the effects and colors as the seasons and request change.

### How do your products save materials or fuel?

Twinkly PRO's energy saving LED lights operate on standard power

outlets and don't require any special electrical considerations. Each controller draws no more than 1-1.7 amps, making even large commercial installations energy efficient.

### How do your products generate additional revenue for landscape companies?

Twinkly PRO's products give your customers a TRUE return on their investment by giving them the option to take down their lights for the holidays and reinstall them on their deck or patio for spring/summer ambiance. Easily change effects and colors to match the seasons and holidays all year long. Multiuse is the name of the game, so you are not stuck with a single-use product.



### In what other ways do your products make landscape companies profitable?

Twinkly PRO adds profitability by giving your customers an interactive experience they can't get with any other lighting system. Create your own designs, set the lights to dance with music, even display text or video! The possibilities are endless with Twinkly PRO. Adding the capabilities of the technology to your portfolio, it opens new markets and customers that want to expand their visibility.

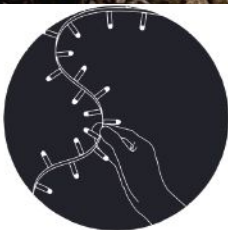
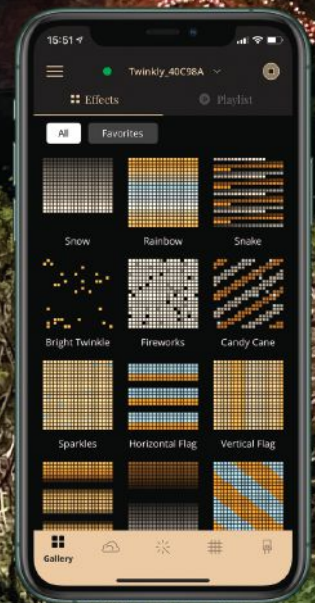






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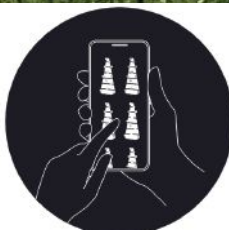
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## Vanguard



with **Tom Billigen**

*Training and Development Manager,  
Briggs & Stratton*

### How do your products save time?

At Briggs & Stratton, we work collaboratively with our customers to truly understand their power application needs and to develop engine and battery innovations that help them work more efficiently. The best way to save time is to reduce downtime. One way to do that is to reduce maintenance needs. We've done just that with the Vanguard Oil Guard system. Oil Guard increases oil maintenance intervals to 500 hours, which means you can spend more time running the equipment.

### How do your products save labor?

The most powerful engine in our lineup, the Vanguard BIG BLOCK 40.0 Gross HP EFI/ETC Engine, is making a big impression on lawn care professionals for its ability to power through tough tasks in less time. EFI/ETC engines also don't have a choke, which simplifies starting and eliminates operator error.

The Oil Guard system is also a significant labor saver because in addition to requiring less frequent oil changes, it also makes oil changes cleaner, easier and faster.

### How do your products save materials or fuel?

The Vanguard EFI engine technology uses signals from the engine sensors to make cycle-by-cycle decisions on how much fuel and spark to provide the engine and when to do it. This process can achieve fuel efficiency gains of up to 25 percent.

The Oil Guard system works by moving oil through an external reservoir, away from engine heat. This, along with a 192-ounce system capacity, minimizes thermal breakdown to extend the life of the oil and protect the engine better. This adds up to a 60 percent oil maintenance cost-savings per unit, per season.

### How do your products generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?

Fuel efficiency gains, ease of operation and consistent performance in all ambient temperatures and elevations add up to big savings for lawn care



and landscape companies that are powered by Vanguard engines.

### In what other ways do your products make landscape and lawn care companies profitable?

We know that running a lawn care business is tough work that requires powerful equipment. We do our part to keep lawn care and landscape companies profitable by providing them with engines that are more durable, require less maintenance and — most importantly — offer more power to keep them working longer and faster.

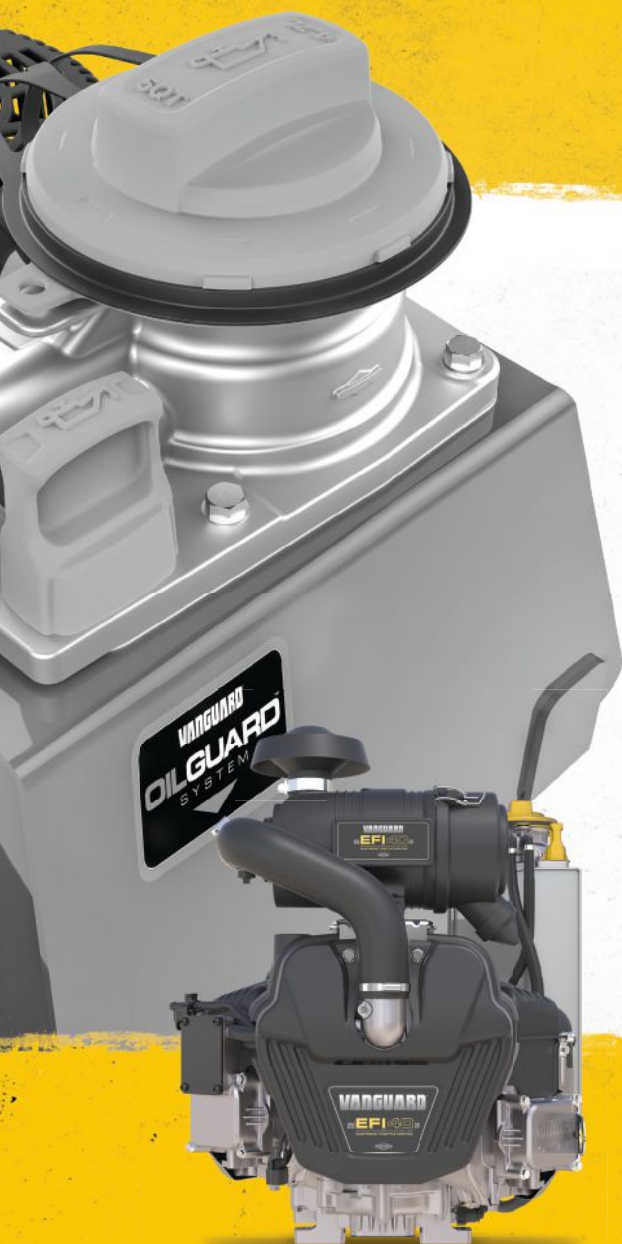
# VANGUARD

# VANGUARD

## INDUSTRY'S ONLY

# 500-HOUR

## OIL CHANGE INTERVAL



### **The VANGUARD® OIL GUARD™ SYSTEM protects your equipment and your profit.**

The Vanguard® Oil Guard™ System keeps your equipment out of the shop and on the ground to make more money. It features a 6-quart capacity located in an external reservoir. This revolutionary innovation extends the life of the oil and better protects the engine — as well as your bottom line. With 500-hour oil change intervals and 80% more efficiency than standard spin-on oil filters, Oil Guard can save you up to 60% on equipment maintenance costs\*.



**Power with Vanguard. Because less downtime = more profit.**

Visit [vanguardpower.com/landscape-innovation](http://vanguardpower.com/landscape-innovation).

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SEE US AT GIE+EXPO  
IN BOOTH 7050

\*Savings calculated reflect a 500-hour season and does not include costs associated with downtime.





## Voigt Smith Innovation

**Q+A** with **Jordan Smith**  
Owner

### How do your products save time?

An open flow three-lane spray boom and plumbing system allow our spray systems to apply liquid product at similar coverage width and speed to conventional salting equipment. Most liquid systems have the rep of being “too slow” at proper application rates. That is not the case with a VSI Legacy Series spray system! Our brine makers produce an industry-leading 5,000-plus gallons of brine per hour.

### How do your products save labor?

In addition to the ability to apply at higher speeds and coverage widths, the labor saved by pre-treating with a liquid sprayer will be substantial with less cleanup and less de-icing needed after plowing. A liquid sprayer will also cover a lot more ground anti-icing than a salt spreader. For example, a 500-gallon spray unit on a typical 1-ton dually truck can cover 12.5 acres, over 500,000 square feet, without refilling the tank.

### How do your products save materials or fuel?

Using liquids for anti-icing and de-icing instead of using conven-

tional rock salt will reduce your salt usage by as much as 60 percent. We have worked with snow operations all over North America, and the results have been consistent across all climate regions.

Even if you only use liquid as a pretreat, salt usage can be cut by as much as 40 percent due to the reduction of snow pack and ice bonded to the pavement after plowing.

Pretreating with liquids also will make your plow operation more efficient as it will allow a cleaner scrape, meaning more traction and faster plow routes for your plow truck and machine operators.

### How do your products help generate additional revenue for snow removal companies?

Pretreating with liquids is a proven way to increase safety for your clients' facilities. This is an easy up-sell, especially once they observe the results that are produced.



Using liquids efficiently and correctly is a major differentiator in most market areas. Our training, education practices and equipment make it easy to implement and use liquids correctly from day one.

### In what other ways do your products make snow removal companies more profitable?

Liquids are much less expensive to apply than granular products and can be applied much more consistently and accurately with a GPS rate control system.

This year, don't let winter be your enemy.

**MAKE IT YOUR PITCH**



## **LIQUID DEICING EQUIPMENT THAT TURN THE TABLES ON MOTHER NATURE**

Top performance is what you need. With VSI Liquid Deicing Equipment, you will have **TOTAL CONTROL** in the most grueling season of the year. Stay ahead of Mother Nature and your competition.

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## WORKHORSE Ground Solutions

**Q+A** with **Max Wunderlich**  
VP, Sales and Marketing

### Why do landscaping/lawn care companies need ground protection?

Your customers care about what their property looks like. Otherwise, they wouldn't be hiring you.

But, your work isn't easy, and it's important to you that your customers feel like you left their property better than you found it.

To achieve that, the property needs to be either:

- Repaired and restored after work is completed.
- Protected beforehand so that damage is minimized and repair work is unnecessary.

Repair work takes time, and your time is money. Sure, you can bake this cost into your scope of work, but wouldn't you rather move on to your next job instead?

So, why not impress your customers by protecting their property from the start and focus on doing what you do best? Leave fixing yards to the "other guys."

### Can't we just use plywood to protect our customers' yards?

Plywood can serve this purpose, and many companies use it. Like anything, it has pros and cons.

Its main pro? It's (relatively) cheap. Its cons? It's *cheap*. It absorbs water. It gets heavy. It warps. It's a pain to store, to move around and to transport. It splinters. It breaks. It must be purchased again. And again. And again.

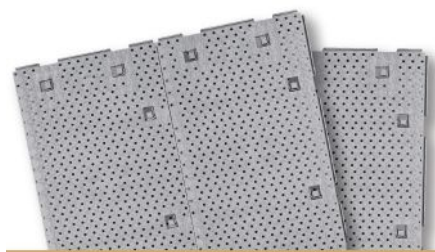
Depending on your location and your average job, plywood can be a costly long-term option that constantly erodes your profit.

So, while plywood is a step up from fixing properties "as a cost of doing business," it leaves much to be desired.

### How can WORKHORSE panels be used to protect the customer's property and the landscaper's bottom line?

Our motto is "Stronger. Faster. Done." Our lightweight panels allow you to show up, put down a professional product that protects your customer's property and get to work.

Made of durable HDPE, they are impervious to weather, meaning you can use them through rain, snow and mud. When you purchase our panels, you get a five-year ground



protection guarantee; however, customers are still putting their panels to work after 15-plus years of sustained use. Imagine the cost savings as plywood continues to fluctuate and your lawns keep getting torn up.

Unlike larger and heavier 4-foot-by-8-foot panels, our 4-foot-by-3.5-foot panels can be easily handled by one person. They securely connect together without any tools or separate pieces. This translates into labor savings — your time is money.

They interlock when stacked for secure transport — each stack only takes up 14 square feet on your trailer, making logistics simple and easy.

Make the investment today so you don't have to keep buying cheap alternatives over and over again. It's simply money down the drain. Get the smarter ground protection.



**PROTECT  
YOUR GROUND.**

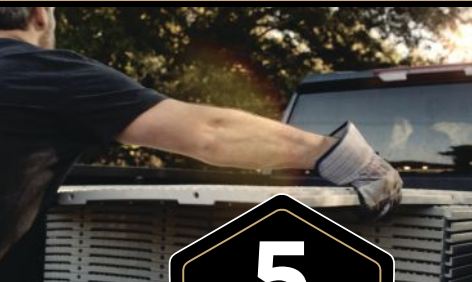
**PROTECT  
YOUR PROFITS.**



**STACKS EASILY**

**NO TOOLS REQUIRED**

**TAKES THE WEIGHT**



The fast, drop-in-place panel system that  
saves you time, money, and lots of headaches.





## Z Turf Equipment

### Q+A with Jonathan Guarneri Product Manager

#### How do your products save time?

Z Turf Equipment products save time by enabling landscape professionals to do more than one job at a time. For example, our Z-Spray spreader-sprayers offer the ability to spread granular material while spraying, so just one pass is needed to perform both operations. Each Z Turf Equipment machine features intuitive, easy-to-use controls, so less time is spent training new employees on how to operate them safely and efficiently.

#### How do your products save labor?

With the ability to simultaneously apply granular and liquid materials, Z-Spray spreader-sprayers maximize the productivity of each team member. The stand-on design of our Z-Spray and Z-Aerate models also reduces operator fatigue, so it's easier for each employee to produce at a consistently high level throughout the day, every day.

#### How do your products save materials and/or fuel?

By performing two jobs at once, Z-Spray spreader-sprayers accomplish more with fewer passes, so less fuel is used to achieve

the desired results. Z-Spray spreader-sprayers are designed to apply materials more accurately, precisely where it's needed, with minimum waste. A digital speedometer is standard on Z-Spray Max, Mid and Junior models. This enables operators to easily monitor and maintain a consistent speed to help ensure they don't over- or under-apply materials.

#### How do your products generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?

Z-Spray spreader-sprayers enable lawn care professionals to perform two revenue-generating services with each pass of the machine. Crews finish jobs faster, which enables them to service more properties



or perform additional services on properties with increased efficiency. The bottom line is increased revenue generating potential.

#### In what other ways do your products make landscape and lawn care companies profitable?

All Z Turf Equipment machines are designed to be durable, easy to service and simple to maintain. Our focus on minimizing the amount of downtime the machines need for service and maintenance means they're ready and available to work a greater percentage of the time. Less downtime equals increased profit potential for our customers.



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**GIE+EXPO booth #7080 (indoor) + #7444D (outdoor)**



# AN INNOVATIVE LINE OF **TURF MANAGEMENT** PRODUCTS



## **PROFITABILITY, PERFORMANCE AND VERSATILITY**

One size doesn't fit all when it comes to commercial sprayers and spreaders, that's why Z Turf Equipment offers a complete line of Z-Spray® units to meet your specific needs. With the ability to apply granular and liquid materials simultaneously or separately, these versatile machines are the ultimate resource for your business during your busiest time of the year. These durable Z-Spray spreader sprayers feature powerful commercial engines and high-grade, corrosive-resistant, stainless-steel components, ensuring your equipment will endure many seasons to come. Z Turf Equipment has also added more than 700 North American dealers, making it easier than ever for customers to get the parts and service support they need to keep their machines running at peak productivity.



## Bobcat Q+A

### How do your products save time?

From the start, Bobcat has been all about accomplishing more in less time. Our company invented the first compact loader in a barn more than 60 years ago, helping a turkey farmer do more work in less time. From that compact and versatile concept, Bobcat helped to revolutionize the way people work on landscapes, construction sites and other demanding worksites.

### How do your products save labor?

Landscapers often work in cramped work environments; Bobcat mini track loaders and new small articulated loaders can travel and work where other machines can't. Their compact size allows them to fit through gates and narrow side yards or over established lawns with less risk of damage. This makes them an ideal replacement for hand tools, such as wheelbarrows and shovels.

### How do your products save materials or fuel?

Fuel efficiency, smart use of materials and reduction of labor are fundamental benefits of using Bobcat equipment, from the small



size of our machines to the balance between machine weight, hydraulic pumps and engine horsepower.

Redesigned Bobcat engines in R-Series loaders, for example, have a new fuel system that helps to capture more usable fuel from every tankful. New Bobcat zero-turn mowers have high-capacity fuel tanks that help operators run longer without refilling. Precision grading systems such as laser-guided attachments, sonic/slope grading system and our 3D control system, can pay for themselves over time with saved fill or concrete and labor.

### How do your products help generate additional revenue for landscape and lawn care companies?

We make more attachments than

any other compact equipment manufacturer, which means you'll find the right tools for hundreds of jobs. And, when you're ready to grow your business, it's easy to add an attachment to increase your capabilities.

Our new Bobcat mower lineup can cut through acres of tough terrain in less time, with cutting deck widths up to 72 inches and speeds of up to 13 miles per hour, depending on the model. Operators can fit more lawns into their limited schedule.

### In what other ways do your products make landscape and lawn care companies profitable?

From the leading cargo capacity of our utility vehicles to the increased lifting capabilities of our new R-Series loaders and MT100 mini track loader to the turf-friendly performance of our small articulated loaders, a Bobcat machine becomes the right tool for every job. That helps you maximize profit.



# Bobcat®

# PROFITABLE PRODUCT\$

SPONSORED CONTENT



## Ripagreen Q+A with Julien Marigot General Manager



### How do your products save time?

Our thermal weeding lances offer the necessary power to provide effective thermal weeding with a low number of passes. The plant is heated to such a temperature that its internal cells die. Also, you can cover a large area with our trolleys, which offer great mobility and access to difficult areas.

### How do your products save labor?

The internal cells of the plant are targeted, so the regrowth of the plant is much slower than with a traditional weeding and the number of passes fewer. Our solutions can be used by several people for max efficiency.



### How do your products save materials or fuel?

Our products use 94 percent forced hot air and only 6 percent gas, offering a short and rigid flame that resists bad weather. Thus, gas consumption is low compared to the power developed. Additionally, our products work very well with biopropane.

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# WEED CONTROL WITHOUT THE USE OF HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS USING 94 % AIR\*



\*AND 6% PROPANE GAS, DATA MAY VARY DEPENDING ON WEATHER CONDITIONS



## E-Z Trench

**Q+A** with **Monty Porter**  
*National Account Manager*

The Bedscaper BE400 is a commercial-grade, landscape edger and trencher from E-Z Trench. In addition to edging natural landscaped beds, there are optional rotors capable of digging a trench 7 inches deep, prepping ground for pavers or digging edges for installing plastic or metal edging. Defining and creating beautiful curved

landscape beds is fast and easy with an E-Z Trench BedScaper.

Landscapers can use the BE400 BedScaper to increase revenue by offering to create new beds, edge existing beds and also

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install wire or pipe with a simple rotor change.

The BE400 makes the landscaping process faster, easier and more professional looking.

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**Digs 2 1/2" Wide  
and 0-13" Deep**



## Vermeer

### Q+A with **Brett Newendorp** *Product Content Manager*

#### **What type of compact equipment should landscape contractors consider?**

For some landscape contractors, a mini skid steer is an ideal tool. For others, a compact articulated loader is a better fit. Both machines help contractors maximize productivity but have unique characteristics that may make them more functional in specific applications.

#### **Where do mini skid steers excel?**

Mini skid steers, like the Vermeer CTX160 mini skid steer, have a compact footprint and offer high lift capacities, making them an ideal machine for working in tight areas or hauling materials in and out of gated areas. The operator can hop on or off the machine to help with labor, which is a common need in many hardscape applications.

#### **Where should compact articulated loaders be used?**

Compact articulated loaders are designed for speed and maneuverability. That makes units like the Vermeer ATX530 compact articulated loader an ideal choice in tight spaces where articulated steering

and a telescopic boom can help a contractor get in and out of a job site. Also, ATXs can also be ideal on projects where the contractor is on the machine all day, hauling or unloading material.

#### **What are some ways these products reduce the need for other equipment on the job?**

All Vermeer mini skid steers and compact articulated loaders are equipped with a universal attachment plate and auxiliary hydraulic connections for interchanging attachments on the job site. This gives landscape contractors the ability to swap from a bucket to a set of forks, as well as a wide range of



other landscaping attachments. They can do more with one machine and reduce the volume of manual labor involved on a project.

#### **How do these machines help contractors work more efficiently?**

Ultimately, both machines are going to help maximize productivity for contractors. Both are going to help minimize labor on the job site. That's the No. 1 thing we hear all the time. Labor is a huge issue, and in many cases, these machines can overcome the challenge of finding and retaining skilled, qualified labor. These machines show up for work every day and perform. Both machines foot the labor bill.





# FIVE QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW BY SETH JONES | LM EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

## Mike Prokopchak

**PRESIDENT, WALNUT HILL LANDSCAPE CO.  
ANNAPOLIS, MD.**

### 1 What do you want to tell me about Walnut Hill Landscape Co.?

We're a high-end residential contractor. I started in the nursery business in high school in the summers and working weekends. Then I took drafting classes in high school and found out you could go to school for landscape architecture or landscape construction. I chose landscape architecture. I went to Temple University and then worked for several firms. I started the business in January 2006. We're very specific in that we're a landscape construction company. We do work with high-end builders.

### 2 What are some industry trends you're seeing in your area?

Similar to right after 9/11 ... 9/11 was one day and everybody hunkered down and spent money on their homes. COVID-19, when it first started, it was, "two weeks ... two more weeks ..." Now, here we are. People are doing the same thing. They're spending money on their houses. They want a pool. Summer kitchens are still hot. Everybody likes fire, so different elements of fire, whether it be a wood-burning fire pit, gas, a fireplace — all those elements are extremely popular. We're a little insulated being here in Annapolis, between D.C. and Baltimore. They don't make any more waterfront, so people are coming in, buying houses, tearing them down and building new. I don't want to say we're recession-proof, but we're doing OK.

### 3 What is something that has made your operation more efficient?

Our new facility is going to make us more efficient. Right now, our trucks are parked on top of each other. We're building a brand-new facility right down the street. Walnut Hill is a 1770s farmhouse, 650 acres originally. We're on 2.5 acres. It's my house, a detached garage with an office, our nursery and our trucks are parked in the back with a barn, basically on an acre. Our new site is 16.5 acres on the water, 4 of which will be for the landscape company and the nursery. We're excited to get going on that. We're getting our shop built now.

### 4 Is there a single day at work that stands out in your mind?

We were the contractor that renovated the Rose Garden at the White House. One morning, the (White House) chief usher calls me and says, 'Can you take a call at 8:30?' I said, 'Yeah.' 8:30 comes and goes, no call, I keep working. It's 11 and I'm driving into D.C. and he calls me back and says, 'Can you take a call from the first lady (Melania Trump)?' I said, 'Sure.' A minute later, she chimes in. She was in New Jersey and just wanted to tell me she was watching the project through her photographer and wished us luck on getting the job done. Getting to meet her and the president was incredible. It doesn't even matter what side of politics you're on, that's the people's house. I got to bring my kids to the grand opening party. The chief usher is there to greet us in the garden, coat and tie. He was with me the night before, working, covered in mud. Now he's just perfect. He looks at my kids, and he points to the Kennedy steps, which is where the president always does his press conferences in the Rose Garden. He says, 'Do you realize the first man to set foot on the moon was standing right here? And your dad has been working on this garden for the past two weeks.' And they both looked at me like, 'Wow.'

### 5 What's the best part of having your job?

I truly love what I do. The satisfaction of seeing a job at the beginning — a brand-new empty blank site or a renovation — seeing the job complete is very satisfying. My favorite part is when the job is over, it's a Friday night and the client is having a party on Saturday night, we're scrambling and I've got a hose and I'm washing everything down. I coil the hose up, put it away, shake the client's hand and say, 'Thank you.' That's gratifying. 🙌

#### BEST ADVICE

"Training ... teach your guys the right way to do things. A couple years ago, I met Marty Grunder, and I immediately took a liking to him. He told me people come and go, but he taught me that training is a big part of what we do and you have to keep doing it."



PHOTO: TONY J PHOTOGRAPHY

# A LOOK BACK

## Labor shortage, nothing new

The labor shortage is nothing new in the green industry, as Cabot L. Jaffee, Ph.D., wrote in this October 1989 article, "It's not just a problem of finding people. It's a problem of selecting and developing good supervisors in order to cut down on turnover and therefore create less need to find new people." As this month's cover story found, landscape companies are unable to book as much work as they would like, due to the lack of people to complete it. In other words, the work is there, but the workers are not. Visit [LandscapeManagement.net](http://LandscapeManagement.net) to view the full October 1989 article about what solutions the green industry came up with then and be sure to check out this month's cover story for a few ideas on how to address labor issues now.



### SOLUTIONS TO THE WORKER SHORTAGE

Improving the American workforce during the next 15 years is critical to economic growth. In fact, to the extent that economic growth depends on an educated workforce, it is estimated that we must upgrade the skills of 10 million American workers by 2004, or by the end of the century if we are to maintain a growth rate of even three percent.

As it is, there is a shortage of skilled workers and high unemployment in many fields up to 15 percent of the workforce now and the year 2000. The rest will be women, minorities and immigrants.

A system U.S. Labor Inc. franchisee has...

Many of these workers who wish to keep their jobs in a shape over the summer. Landscape maintenance is a wonderful way to keep athletes "in-tune" over a summer vacation.

Work study programs are also appropriate, especially when hours are flexible. Our largest franchise is experimenting with working at night on commercial properties with high-powered lights. If it works, some individuals like to work

has been our "High Potential Franchise Program" in which talented high school, college or vocational school graduates are assigned to work for an existing franchise for two years. Money is withdrawn from their salaries and placed in an account for the two years, at the end of the two years, they purchase a franchise themselves. If they withdraw from the program before the two years is up, their money is returned with interest.

Obviously, there are many other ways to create a good workforce for the industry. Speaking at schools, participating in career days, getting involved in community activities—all open up potential sources of workers.

After you find workers, the next step is selecting the ones who are likely to be successful. This is especially important at the franchise or supervisor level as these people significantly affect the turnover rate. U.S. Labor Inc. applies this same philosophy when selecting franchisees.

A good selection test to determine people most likely to be good supervisors will go a long way in decreasing turnover. We recommend to our franchisees, interview applicants carefully and use tests we supply them to help select good supervisors.

Retaining Once you select a potentially good person, offer ongoing support to help him or her do the job better. What we recommend is ongoing supervisory training to employees and how to make sure employees' problems are dealt with fairly and quickly.

When we are competing with fast food companies, service companies and other critics, the importance of reducing turnover is great. We try to create a feeling among our workers that they can move up in the organization and become supervisors themselves.

If at all possible, promote them

not might shift and—

regardless of need—

good persons are carried on

boarded lights. This

best is a new possible

employee.

As a result, people

are more productive

and provide a superior

service.

It is a wonderful

to deal with their

positive way and

well.

A good idea also

is to create a feeling

among our workers

that they can move

up in the organization

and become

supervisors themselves.

If at all possible, promote them

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**BY BOB MANN**

The author is the director of state and local government relations for the National Association of Landscape Professionals. Reach him at [Bob@landscapeprofessionals.org](mailto:Bob@landscapeprofessionals.org).

# The green industry needs your help

**L**ong before I was in government relations, I was part of the professional lawn care industry. And long before that, I worked on my father's golf course.

Fertilizers and pesticides are necessary inputs for golf courses, and their unmistakable aroma was ever-present at my dad's maintenance shop. In the nearly 60 years that he was a superintendent, he never entrusted anyone to do his spraying for him.

Watching him, he seemed like a sort of alchemist mixing various concoctions to keep menaces such as dollar spot and the annual bluegrass weevil at bay. From old school pesticides such as DDT to newer chemistries such as imidacloprid, he used them all. This November, he will turn 84, and he is healthier and more active than many people half his age. An anecdote about the chronic health effects on pesticide applicators? Granted, but my dad is far from the only elderly golf course superintendent that I know.

I recall as a kid being puzzled by the fact that Dad could no longer purchase chlordane, an insecticide he used to combat a wide array of insects. Like DDT, chlordane is one of the chlorinated hydrocarbon

**“We need as much help as we can get to promote all the benefits our industry brings.”**

insecticides that was prized for its efficacy and persistence in the soil. A single application could control white grubs for 15 years or more. Back then, I knew nothing of the recently established U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or environmental policy in general. All I knew was that my dad was worried that there was no effective replacement for chlordane. Indeed, from the time the EPA removed chlordane from the turf and ornamental market in 1978 until the approval of imidacloprid, the first of the new class of neonicotinoid insecticides, in 1994, there was no effective preventive control for subsurface insect pests of turfgrass in cool-season turf.

Being politically active is almost a requirement in the lawn care industry. In many places, environmental activists who despise lawns as wasteful, resource-intensive and an environmental calamity overall work diligently to ban the products that we

use to protect turfgrass from pests. Not content with banning just pesticides, these same activists then turn their attention to fertilizers, conjuring up wild tales of destruction that run counter to the stacks of research to the contrary.

The longer I was in the lawn care industry, the more time I spent wearing a suit and tie, walking through the state capital buildings in New England where I live and work, championing our side. While this may seem like a difficult task, I came to appreciate that all those years dealing with angry customers was excellent training for interacting with politicians.

Over the past four years that I've been with NALP, I've come to understand how the fertilizers and pesticides we use come to market and the rigorous scientific and regulatory gauntlet that must be traversed. It is incredibly complex, but at the same time, it is open, transparent and inclusive. The scientists at the EPA know what they know, but they don't know the lawn care and landscape business. Our job is to educate and share how we use pesticides and use them properly, so when decisions are being made as to whether a product is registered for turf and ornamentals, the EPA has the best available information.

In the coming months, I will be focusing upon topics in government relations that have the potential to affect almost every aspect of our industry. We track and engage on diverse issues, such as a ban on small gasoline engines in California or banning all nonagricultural uses of pesticides in Maine. As I am writing this, the political landscape is quiet, but that never lasts for long. A new legislative season is quickly coming into view, and we need as much help as we can gather to promote all the benefits our industry brings not only to the environment but also to the quality of life of our customers as well. 





BY KEVIN KEHOE

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# More secrets to the \$3M account manager

**T**his is the second column in a series about the commercial landscape account manager (AM) role. In my last column, I made the mathematical case for a more efficient, better paid AM who can manage \$3 million in business.

This goal is important for two reasons: First, you must retain high performers in a diminishing talent pool, and second, because the reduction in overhead that arises from having fewer AMs is key to net profits. These next few columns will focus on the strategies and best practices for developing the \$3 million AM.

You may recall from my last column (found at [Landscapemanagement.net/Kehoes-Playbook-the-Secret-to-a-3M-Account-Manager](https://www.landscapemanagement.net/Kehoes-Playbook-the-Secret-to-a-3M-Account-Manager)) that three factors drive the amount of total revenue any AM can handle.

These factors include:

1. The number of properties they have;
2. The way they allocate their time; and
3. The availability of tools to manage the first two.

## NUMBER OF PROPERTIES UNDER MANAGEMENT

The table above shows the number of properties managed by an average AM, top 10 percent AM and the \$3 million AM. What is really interesting is that the average annual contract size is consistent across the country. That means this statistic is almost a given constraint. We'd all like to have fewer larger properties to manage, but that reality is improbable. This means the \$3 million AM must employ a service approach that treats properties differently, and that a degree of property service must be delegated

elsewhere in your company. I will get into this topic in detail in the next column.

## ALLOCATION OF TIME AMONG CORE ACTIVITIES

This next table shows core activities and time invested. It's important to keep in mind that this table is an estimate based on years of observation versus factual measurements. That said, it's clear that more time needs to be invested in preparation, anticipation, planning and organizing property and customer management approaches. Too many AMs are very busy and very unproductive because they are too reactionary in approach. This is due to a lack of delegation, training and, most critically, business management tools. This fact is frustrating for both the owner and the AM. I will cover this topic in a later column also.

## TOOLS TO MANAGE THE FIRST TWO

The right tools always make the work easier and the quality better. It's foolish to expect great results using inadequate tools. See below for a list of business management tools and technologies that are essential to managing all the work and service details on a property and for executing the work required in each of the core activities


## Properties under management

Group	Average annual contract value	Number of properties
Average AM	\$14,000	65
Top 10 percent AM	\$15,000	105
3M AM	\$16,000	121

at least 25 percent more efficiently. These tools are the game-changers that can drive better property stewardship and AM efficiency in achieving \$3 million in total dollars under management. I will share my thoughts on the best sources and priorities soon.

## ESSENTIAL AM TOOLS

- CRM — contact/property spec list
- Photo/GPS property inventory tagging
- Catalog/renewal presentation
- Site audit tracking
- Issues/request tracking
- Measurement take-off documentation
- Contract proposal management
- Design/CAD
- Service history tracking
- Invoice payment tracking
- Customer portal interface

Please check back for future articles where I'll discuss the details of the strategies and best practices for developing \$3 million account managers. 

## Time allocation of core activities

Core activity	Current allocation	Hours/week	Desired allocation	Hours/week
Site visit/documentation	10%	5	20%	10
Issues/requested management	25%	12.5	20%	10
Planning/budgeting/renewing	10%	5	25%	12.5
Estimating/selling enhancements	20%	10	20%	10
Administration/paper/meetings	20%	10	10%	5
Fire drills	15%	7.5	5%	2.5
Total	100%	50	100%	50



**PART 1**

# 4 ways a second-in-command can grow your business



**BY JEFFREY SCOTT**

The author is owner of Jeffrey Scott Consulting, which helps landscape companies grow and maximize profits. Reach him at [jeff@jeffreyscott.biz](mailto:jeff@jeffreyscott.biz).

**I**t's an inarguable fact that all successful landscape companies develop a team of area leaders, but many successful landscape entrepreneurs also have a secret weapon: a powerful second-in-command (SIC) to help them run the entire business.

Having a second-in-command is a common role employed by many famous entrepreneurs. Steve Jobs' SIC was Tim Cook, who was head of logistics and operations before becoming CEO. He was mostly unknown until Jobs became sick.

Fred Turner served as SIC to Ray Kroc, the innovator behind McDonald's. Turner started as a grill operator and became head of operations under Kroc. To this day, most people have not heard of Fred Turner, even though he eventually became CEO after Kroc stepped down. Being SIC is a critical behind-the-scenes job without fanfare.

There are different reasons to have a SIC. Here are four common roles that one can play in your business.



**1 Implementer:** The main reason for having a SIC is to keep the operations streamlined, successful and operating within budget. The implementer is a tactical position with equal parts organizer, process builder and coach.

For example, Blanchford Landscaping in Bozeman, Mont., recently named Abby Dobson the general manager of the business. Owner Andy Blanchford spends most of his time living abroad for family reasons and needs an implementer who can run the day-to-day operations. If you have a SIC already in place, could you live in another country full time? That is the ultimate test of whether you are an owner of a business or have a job.

**2 Complementer:** The main role of this person is to focus on areas of the business that the owner does not have the time nor the skills for. This role can be combined with the implementer.

For example, as an owner, you may be best at sales management but need someone better at operations. Dave Wright, owner of Wright Landscape Services in Bloomingdale, Ontario, Canada (and president of Landscape Ontario) has a SIC with this exact role. This is a common setup. I have worked with Dave for years, and he is happier and more successful with this key executive at his side.

**3 Successor:** This is a transitory role where the SIC is studying under the owner to take over his or her CEO role. Sometimes the intention is for the successor to buy the

business. Many owners are considering this route; it takes extra care to choose someone who can both run and buy a business.

**4 Mentor:** Sometimes an owner will hire an older, semiretired person to act as both COO and mentor to the owner. It's an odd couple, but it helps the younger owner gain confidence and skills. I know of a second-generation landscape business owner who bought out his father and used this model to help him gain his sea legs.

**Bonus setup, unique arrangements:** George Tucker owner of LanDesign in Moscow Mills, Mo., first hired an outside COO from another industry but realized he was still drawn into some of the day to day of the business. He then hired an outside CEO to run all his lawn, irrigation and landscape companies. Both of these hires were longtime acquaintances of Tucker's. They were both pre-vetted. Now that Tucker has freed up his time, he can focus on his real-estate ventures, new acquisitions and his first love: design sales. The company is growing faster than ever with this new arrangement.

Next month, I will publish part two of this article, where we will take a closer look at the role and responsibilities of the SIC.

Don't miss my talk, "Power Session: Develop A Second in Command — Scale Your Business while Freeing Your time As Owner," at Landscapes in Louisville, Ky., on Oct. 20 at 10 a.m. to learn special tools to get an owner and SIC on the same page.

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## AD INDEX

Albaugh .....	125
AMP Lighting .....	54-55
Anuvia .....	56-57
Arborjet .....	58-59
Aspire Software Co. ....	60-61
ASV .....	62-63
Atlantic-Oase .....	64-65
Bayer CropScience .....	29
Bobcat Co. ....	7, 120
Case Construction .....	47
Cub Cadet .....	66-67
Curtis Industries .....	20
DB Mower .....	129
Dentco .....	32
DR Power Equipment .....	68-69
Earth & Turf .....	129
Echo .....	70-71
Ecologel Solutions .....	82-83
Ewing Irrigation .....	72-73
Exmark .....	26-27
E-Z Trench .....	122
FX Luminaire .....	74-75
Graham Spray Equipment .....	22
Grasshopper Co., The .....	76-77
Greene County Fertilizer Co. ....	CV4
Hillside Planter .....	129
Horizon Distributors .....	78-79
Hunter Industries .....	80-81
Husqvarna .....	43
Idech .....	49
Isuzu .....	35
John Deere .....	14-15
Kioti .....	CV2-2
Kubota Tractor Corp. ....	9
LandOne Takeoff .....	23
Leaf Burrito .....	17
Little Beaver .....	21
MANTS .....	84-85
Minleon USA .....	86-87
Mulch Mate .....	88-89
Naturalawn .....	90-91

Northeast CAT Dealers .....	41*
Nufarm .....	92-93
PRO Landscape by Drafix Software .....	24
Progressive Insurance .....	39
Quali-Pro .....	94-95
Ripagreen .....	121
Scag Power Equipment .....	96-97
SiBore Drill .....	129
SmartGate .....	98-99
Smart Level .....	100-101
Spring-Green .....	102-103
Steel Green Manufacturing .....	104-105
Stihl .....	18-19
Syngenta .....	5
Takeuchi Manufacturing .....	106-107
Three by Berkshire Hathaway .....	11
Toro Co., The .....	51
Turco .....	108-109
Twinkly Pro .....	110-111
Vanguard .....	112-113
Vermeer .....	123, CV3
Voigt Smith Innovation .....	114-115
Workhorse Ground Solutions .....	116-117
Worldlawn Power Equipment .....	52
Youngblood & Associates .....	33
Z Turf Equipment .....	118-119

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# GROW WITH GRUNDER

BY MARTY GRUNDER

The author is president and CEO of Grunder Landscaping Co. and The Grow Group, based in Dayton, Ohio. Reach him at [marty@growgroupinc.com](mailto:marty@growgroupinc.com).



## How investing in your team pays the highest dividends

**I**n September, we toured Ruppert Landscape as part of our annual Field Trip in partnership with the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP), and once again, we got an inside look at a wildly successful landscaping company.

I've noticed a common theme when I speak with the owners and leadership teams of companies that we tour and work with: The most successful companies understand that their people are what sets them apart. Your team is the backbone of your company, and it is the key to your success or your failure.

Never has this been truer than in the last two years. In 2020 and 2021, landscaping companies have seen increased demand from customers while also facing labor shortages. The companies who have excelled are the ones who can find — and keep — the team members to install the jobs they sell. As we close out our busy season, we're already looking ahead to 2022 and planning for what we'll need to do to ensure our team is fully staffed, well trained and ready to work when the year turns over. We have three focuses:

### PROGRESS, NOT PERFECTION

My friend Mike Haynes said at GROW! 2020 in Charlotte that "Nobody shows up to work in the morning thinking, 'Gee, what can I try to mess up today?'" He emphasized that mistakes happen and that we can't take them personally as owners and leaders. We try to avoid making the same mistake twice instead of harping on the fact that it happened.

**“To get ahead in this industry, we need to make our organizations great places where people want to work.”**

We are going to take action in 2022 and not come up with all the reasons why something might not work. Remember, it's "ready, aim, fire." It's not "ready, ready, aim, aim, aim, fire."

Commit to getting better each day but continuing to move forward.

### OWNERSHIP

When mistakes inevitably happen, before we place blame on anyone else, we need to first ask: What did I do or not do that created this result? Great leaders support team members, give their team the benefit of the doubt, invest time in teaching direct reports new skills and praise their team for jobs well done.


The adage that "the fish rots from the head down" applies here. To get ahead in this industry, we need to make our organizations great places where people want to work, and it always starts at the top.

### INDUSTRY EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

In the next few months at Grunder Landscaping Co., we'll be investing in training our leaders. Members of our leadership team were at the NALP Field Trip at Ruppert Landscape last month. They'll also join me at GROW! 2022 in Nashville to teach our own processes to attendees, learn from our tour host, Milosi Landscape, and connect with other landscape professionals who may have new ideas for approaching the problems we do.

They'll update their certifications to ensure they have the horticultural knowledge to properly train our crews, attend local events to network in the community and pass on their knowledge and skills to team members with our own in-house training this winter. We invest in their education and training because it will make them better leaders.

We want to keep growing at Grunder Landscaping, and the only way we'll be able to do that is with a team who understands our goals, is invested in our collective success and has the knowledge, skills and attitude to make it happen. Education is one piece of this, and when paired with a new profit-sharing program, more conversations about career paths and complete transparency with our goals and progress toward them, we think we have a recipe for success.

If you'd like to join us in Nashville for GROW! 2022, we will have a fantastic event, a packed agenda and a behind-the-scenes tour of Milosi Landscape planned. Learn more: <https://www.growgroupinc.com/grow-2022>. 

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