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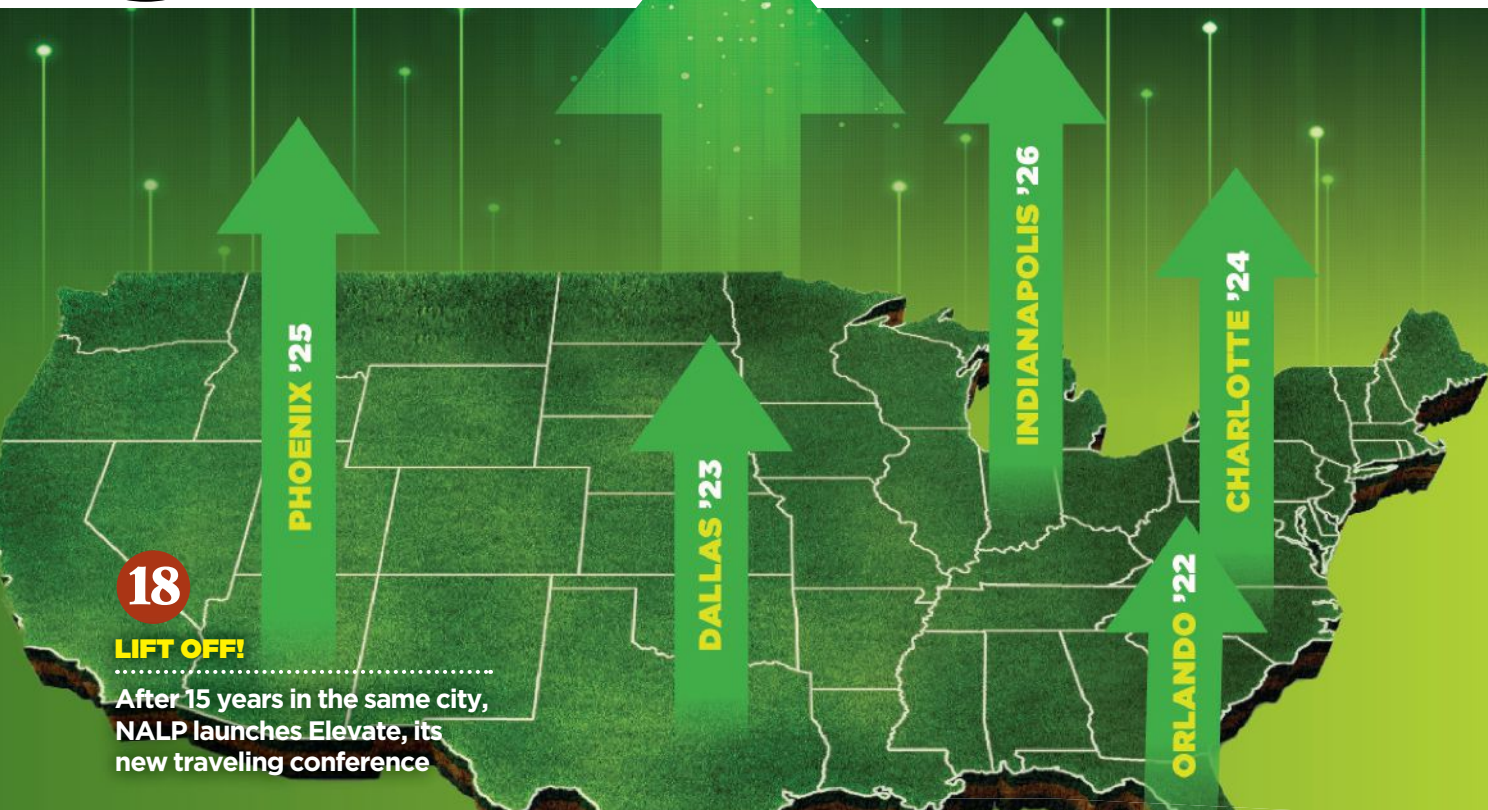
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CONTENTS

AUGUST 2022 • VOL 61, ISSUE 8



18

LIFT OFF!

After 15 years in the same city, NALP launches Elevate, its new traveling conference

TURF + ORNAMENTAL

30 Did You Know

Tips on how to best manage *Pythium* blight

32 Insect ID + Control

How to fight armyworms this fall

MOWING + MAINTENANCE

49 The Big One

Balanced Environments, Northbrook, Ill.

50 Iron Workhorses

Fall cleanup go-to's

52 Brand U

How Isuzu trucks help do more

DESIGN BUILD + INSTALLATION

54 Hardscape Solutions

Goldberg & Rodler, Halesite, N.Y.

56 Installation Solutions

How software shortcuts save designers time

IRRIGATION + WATER MANAGEMENT

58 Irrigation Tech

How Wi-Fi controllers help pros cover more ground

60 Products That Work

Nozzles and heads



These tools help get the job done during fall cleanups (page 50).

SNOW + ICE

62 Snow Strategy

Review your scope of work in snow contracts

91 Business Boosters

Why snow insurance is such a challenge

How to prepare for a potential fall armyworm outbreak this year (page 32).



ON THE COVER: ILLUSTRATIONS: IART101, LEMON_TM/ISTOCK / GETTY IMAGES PLUS/GETTY IMAGES



COLUMNS

4 Seth's Cut
BY SETH JONES

Greg Herring examines how anchoring can affect landscaping businesses (page 94).

94 Grow Your Green
Why anchoring weighs down the profitability of your business
BY GREG HERRING

96 Leadership Advantage
What Atlanta's finest steakhouse teaches us about process
BY KEN THOMAS

98 Business Insider
How to set up your business to successfully retire in place
BY JEFFREY SCOTT

100 Industry Advocate
The lifeblood of our industry
BY BOB MANN

104 Grow with Grunder
Why it's important to keep an eye on your backlog
BY MARTY GRUNDER

IN EVERY ISSUE

6 Editorial Advisory Board Q+A
Integrating tech into your business

8 Need to Know
The latest industry news

92 Five Questions
Bruce Allentuck, president, Allentuck Landscaping Co.

102 Ad Index • Bruce Allentuck talks Renewal & Remembrance (page 92).

103 Classifieds



Share your stories!

Does your operation use humates, have a software solution that's made your operation more efficient or offer a unique solution to meet your customers' needs? We want to hear about it! Share these and more with Editor Christina Herrick at cherrick@northcoastmedia.net.



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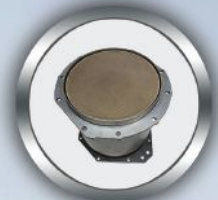
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The true value of being present

I was heading south, driving down I-35 from Kansas to Texas. As I passed by Fort Worth, the thermometer on the dashboard read 113 degrees. Ouch! Appropriate that I was heading to a meeting dubbed “Ignite.”

Ignite is the annual conference for Aspire software users. More than 700 industry professionals rolled into San Antonio to attend the meeting. There were dozens of seminars, like “Operations management: Daily habits for success;” “Accounting: Managing inventory without surprises” and “Administration: Training your workforce.”

It was great to connect with many people in the industry and learn from them about their challenges, what they’re forecasting for the future and what they’d like to see from us along that journey.

Before we broke off into those smaller seminars, we were treated to a keynote speech from James Lawrence, the “Iron Cowboy.” Lawrence earned that nickname by completing 50 Ironman races in 50 states in 50 consecutive days. A documentary about his journey, “Iron Cowboy: The story of the 50.50.50” is available online.

Lawrence was there to tell his story and relate his anything-is-possible attitude to the group. Two things he said struck a chord with me. One was his reminder that we didn’t *have* to be there ... so make the most of the opportunity. The other was a story about a time someone told him he wasn’t far from the leader and had a shot at win-

“(James) Lawrence asked the room, at what point in his life and in anyone’s life, did it become acceptable just to finish? Shouldn’t we all be trying to win?”

ning one of those Ironman races. He replied, “I’m not trying to win; I’m just trying to finish.” His colleague scolded him and asked, if you’re not trying to win, what’s the point? Lawrence asked the room, at what point in his life and in anyone’s life, did it become acceptable just to finish? Shouldn’t we all be trying to win?

The Iron Cowboy isn’t the only endurance athlete that’s caused me to think about the way we do things recently. I was in a Zoom call with Bruce Allentuck, president of Allentuck Landscaping Co. I wanted to talk to Bruce about the recent Renewal & Remembrance event in Washington D.C., and also the upcoming inaugural Elevate conference, both hosted by the National Association of Landscape Professionals.

It was during the course of the conversation that I learned that Allentuck is also an endurance athlete (see our interview in this month’s 5 Questions on page 92.) It was interesting to hear how he doesn’t consider himself a top-tier athlete, even though he’s run more than 100 races. “Whatever I put in is what I get out,” he said.

While we talked about next month’s Elevate, he said something that reminded me of the Iron Cowboy. He reinforced that these aren’t events he has to attend ... but meetings he’s grateful to attend.

“These gathering of our colleagues are so huge, I learn so much from other people,” Bruce told me. “Just getting to talk to someone in a bar or a coffee shop or a hallway — that’s how I’ve learned the most about how to run my business and how to be a leader. That’s the true value. The classes, the seminars are awesome, but the chance to mingle ... there’s nothing that anybody won’t share with you at these meetings, and that’s huge. I don’t think it’s like that in every industry.”

This month’s cover story, written by Editor Christina Herrick, is about how the Elevate conference came to be. The story begins on page 18. In these next few months, we *get* to attend our first Elevate in Orlando and then our first Equip Expo in Louisville in October. We’ll have other events, like that Ignite event, or any of the events our respected columnists host. We’ll attend and cover as many of these events as we can because we think these meetings of industry leaders are vital to the growth of the industry.

Like the Iron Cowboy said in San Antonio, it’s not that we *have* to attend. We *get* to attend. 🍷



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

What's the best way for pros to integrate new technology into their businesses?



“We have gotten burned by trusting the salesperson, so find real-life users. Ask the company for referrals independent from the company's sales consultant.”

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“Take your time to choose the right solution and then go all-in with your team to fully use and integrate the tech into your business.”

“Get buy-in early from your leaders. They will do a better job selling the new technology to the team than you ever could.”



“Technology should closely follow business strategy — not the other way around. Technology, when partnered with a compelling strategy, creates a competitive advantage, but only if you double down on implementation.”

“Just go cold turkey. Go all in. You will struggle for a while, but in that struggle, you will learn and conquer. It also helps to have a great leader who understands workflow and people.”



“Ensure any new technology is championed by leadership, not viewed as optional.”



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Members of the LandscapeHub team came to R.P. Marzilli in search of new ideas.



R.P. MARZILLI'S CULTURE A HIGHLIGHT OF NALP FIELD TRIP

BY JOEY CICCOLINI | LM DIGITAL MEDIA SPECIALIST

Creating a strong company culture is something most companies strive for, but accomplishing it is easier said than done.

It's safe to say with a group full of passionate team members and a projected \$59 million in 2022 sales, R.P. Marzilli — host of the National Association of Landscape Professionals' Field Trip on June 23-24 — has cracked the code.

R.P. Marzilli came in at No. 45 on the 2022 LM150 list with more than \$54 million in sales and 39 percent revenue growth.

More than 200 guests visited R.P. Marzilli in Medway, Mass. Led by Frank Mariani, CEO of Mariani Landscape, and Marty Grunder, CEO of Grunder Landscaping Co. and The Grow Group, guests received an up-close look at the company's operations.

Throughout the tour, visitors observed the genuine enjoyment R.P. Marzilli employees seemed to have for their jobs. During a recap of the site visit, Grunder echoed what many attendees said: "I was so impressed with the attitudes; everyone feels appreciated. You can't fake that."

AN IMPRESSIVE OPERATION

Bob Marzilli said the team always looks to improve the company's culture with new ideas, such as the recent addition

of a company newsletter. The newsletter features an employee of the month.

The company's new facility offers areas for employees to enjoy, including a garden where team members can grow their own plants throughout the year.

A CLIENT-FIRST APPROACH

In addition to putting a strong emphasis on company culture and ensuring team members remain passionate about their work, R.P. Marzilli also focuses on customer needs.

Team members presented different phases of projects and how the company's streamlined operations have proven successful. They also discussed what to do when projects don't go according to plan. Marzilli shared one of his mantras with the group: "(Clients) never remember how you start; they remember how you finish," Marzilli said.

The "just say yes" approach is a winning formula at Marzilli, represented by the company's strong revenue. It's not an approach of just "say yes and wing it," said the company's Vice President of Operations, Rick Wing. The company gives its employees a road map to success.

Wing said the company has never missed a deadline.

"Our whole business is built on relationships," Wing said, "If you want to be here you have to be involved."

You oughta know about this

A Winters, Calif., landscaping company got a lot of attention after singer Alanis Morissette, best known for her '90s singles "You Oughta Know," "Ironic," and "You Learn," responded to a tweet that included a photo of an Alanis Landscaping trailer and a reference to her most famous song. Morissette's response went viral, with more than 26,000 retweets and nearly 260,000 likes in three days.

Jhony Alanis, owner of Alanis Landscaping, told KXTV Sacramento that while he was unfamiliar with Morissette's music, a client called him about the tweet.

"One client did call me, telling me that I was famous, and then sent me the tweet," he told KXTV. "When I saw it, I was in shock."

Alanis says he hopes this newfound fame for Alanis Landscaping turns into more clients for his maintenance, lawn care and tree service business.

"Hopefully, this is important, and we get a lot more people calling us," he told KXTV. "We want our company to continue to grow."



PHOTOS: LM STAFF (LANDSCAPE HUB); TWITTER

THE FUTURE IS GREEN

P2 REDEFINING THE LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

P4 CARVING A PATH FOR CARBON NEUTRALITY

P6 THE FUTURE IS HERE

P7 BRINGING BATTERY TO THE FOREFRONT

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REDEFINING THE LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

Greenworks strives to give a new definition to productivity and innovation in the green industry

Since its official inception as Greenworks in 2004, the company and its employees seek to innovate the green industry. What began as a passion project for Greenworks Founder Yin Chen has turned into an industry-leading company in sustainable battery-powered equipment.

Tony Marchese, senior vice president of Greenworks Commercial, spent most of his career in the outdoor power equipment sector, with his eye on Greenworks for many years. One of the biggest factors that stood out to him before joining the company was the company's work with lithium batteries and how the founder revolutionized the outdoor power equipment industry.

"Lithium is a smart choice and you can do a lot of

things with it. It really started the growth and revolution of the industry," Marchese says. "We're 20 years young, some competitors are over 300 years. But all we do is rechargeable products. We eat, breathe and sleep rechargeable products here at Greenworks, and that's why we are the leaders in the industry. That's why we continue to innovate."



TONY MARCHESE

What started initially with a line of lawn and hedge trimmers evolved into a company with three different divisions, all with thousands of products available, according to Klaus Hahn, president of Greenworks North America.

"The sheer breadth of products having different battery platforms, ranging from 24V, 40V, 60V, and 80V in the consumer space and then 48V and 82V in the commercial space makes the difference for us," Hahn explains. "Having a very broad range of offerings to the different user segments, depending on home sizes, yard sizes and also the lifestyle of our customers is imperative."

As Greenworks develops its products, the goal is always the same: to meet or exceed the performance the customers were getting from gasoline-powered products. By combining industry-leading knowledge with new innovations, Greenworks has managed to not only stay on top



of the industry but continue to lead and outperform each business group.

“As the company has grown, it has grown into three different business groups. One of the business groups is the mass retail, e-commerce and a commercial professional business group,” Marchese explains. “We provide different products into each segment that properly fit into the customers’ needs within that segment, we don’t simply rebadge products that we might sell to a mass retail partner and say that it can also just go to a professional landscaper whose expectation is to run six days a week from dawn to dusk making tall grass short. It allowed us to completely tailor the right product to the customer.”

Hahn explained that during the initial growth of the company, the company introduced several new products almost every year, each one revolutionizing each respective market. This trend set Greenworks up for success year after year, continuing to build upon the success and reliability of the previous product.

“In 2007, the 20V platform was launched. In 2009, Greenworks as a brand was created and in 2011 Greenworks Globe Group started development of a 40V lawnmower,” says Hahn. “This was the first walk-behind product. In 2012 the whole range of 40V products was launched. Rapid development after 2015 the 80V platform was launched and a year later the 60V platform was launched. In 2017, Greenworks got into the ride-on equipment so the first 82V zero-turn commercial ride-on mower was launched on the market. This was a marketable industry first, so Greenworks is a pioneer in this category. A year later followed robotic lawn mowers, for the consumer and professional market.”

Marchese says the breadth of product offerings sets Greenworks apart.

“You will not find in any other industry a company that



KLAUS HAHN

“LITHIUM IS A SMART CHOICE AND YOU CAN DO A LOT OF THINGS WITH IT. IT REALLY STARTED THE GROWTH AND REVOLUTION OF THE INDUSTRY.”

MARCHESE




has as many quality products under one brand,” Marchese adds. “For instance, I have handheld products, but I also have commercial walk-behind mowers and snow blowers. I have commercial stand on zero-turns and commercial ride-on zero-turns. I even have commercial utility vehicles. No one under one brand has as many products as Greenworks.”

While Greenworks continues to grow, Hahn points out the two main pillars of its business: consumer and commercial products, have never changed, but in fact grown, all while maintaining the vision of “Life, powered by Greenworks.”

“Whether they are a first-time home-buyer or a mature customer who has purchased their third or fourth home, we want to be a partner for all customers and create lifetime value around this platform,” says Hahn. “That includes products for lawn and garden, power tools, recreational lifestyle, cleaning, indoor and outdoor and power systems. We want to make it easy for our customers with one or two battery platforms to power their entire lifestyle and create a better experience than they had before with either gas-powered or corded products.”

Hahn says the company’s focus on commercial customers is the same: help them achieve higher productivity so they spend more time on lawn care and less on equipment maintenance.

“For our commercial customers, it’s all about productivity so cordless technology compared to gas-powered equipment offers a huge advantage,” Hahn says. “There is the ability to work faster and more effectively, there’s less fatigue so less fatigue leads to higher productivity. Cordless offers so many opportunities at various levels and so we are able to enable our customers to manage their business better and achieve better results from cordless technology.”

At the end of the day, Hahn says the main goal of Greenworks is simple: “to be able to do things better, faster, easier, more conveniently and help our customers enjoy what they are doing.” 

CARVING A PATH FOR CARBON NEUTRALITY

How BrightView Landscapes uses Greenworks products to stay on the company's sustainability target

For many landscape professionals, a passion for the environment is a driving factor in how they developed the business. For BrightView Landscapes in Blue Bell, Pa., sustainability is constantly at the forefront of conversations. From implementing hybrid vehicles to recycling, the team at BrightView believes in doing whatever they can to ensure the future of the planet is a brighter one, beginning with lessening the company's carbon footprint.

With this philosophy in mind, BrightView set the goal of being 90 percent carbon-neutral by 2035. Although it seems like a large undertaking, Holger Arnold, vice president of operational excellence, knows the company's first step is the biggest, and often requires many moving parts to fully gain neutrality.

"We have a roadmap for sustainability," Arnold says. "We're planting many trees, we're cleaning up the yards, we're making our landscapes healthier and stronger so that we are pulling carbon out of the air. Going cordless or battery-operated was a priority and also no-brainer to getting us to our carbon neutrality objectives. We've been working with

companies like Greenworks to get us to that point."

As BrightView continued to pursue carbon neutrality, the company looked into products and companies that had goals that closely supported the company's goals.

"As we reviewed the battery-powered space, we believe that Greenworks more closely addressed our overall needs," says Arnold. "They collaborated with us to understand our challenges and goals, and they even went so far as to make some design changes on specific equipment to improve user ease, address safety, and increase the longevity and enhance the performance of their product."

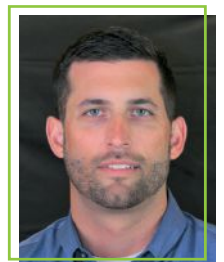
Changing technology for a changing space

Electric equipment was not the only thing that drew BrightView to Greenworks. As technology continues to evolve, Marc Fisher, vice president of operations for BrightView's seasonal division, said he is proud to see the company following the evolution of advancements in the green industry. Fisher says BrightView partners with brands like Greenworks to ensure that technicians and clients recognize the company's efforts to stay at the forefront of new technology.

"We're going to continue to see benefits that we're not even thinking about right now," Fisher says. "For example the two-cycle equipment that we use is pretty loud, and there are noise ordinances in cities, states and counties that are mandating two-cycle equipment no longer be used, so this battery technology is going to be necessary. Just the amount of noise, the decibels that are produced are a lot less in the battery-operated products, so we're seeing that benefit immediately — both for the communities around the property and the employees operating the equipment. And when you're working a long day in the heat,



HOLGER ARNOLD



MARC FISHER



those engines get pretty hot. Obviously, there's also the pollutant part of it as well, so I think from an employee satisfaction standpoint, it's a much nicer product to use during the day."

Fisher says the transition from gas-powered to electric was a significant change. Luckily, he says the team at BrightView handled the shift well thanks to constant communication with an emphasis on training and highlighting the overall benefit this change would have on the industry.

"When you think about the decades of experience our teams have, they've used pretty much the same tools that entire time.

We had to overcommunicate in the beginning about why we're doing it, why it's better for the environment," Fisher explains. "In transitioning, not every tool works in every operational team, so we needed to really think about where to implement the changes first. We wanted to ensure a successful transition, and we wanted to get early feedback to help us optimize future rollouts."

Fisher also says Greenworks trained team members on safety and proper use to get the most efficient production from the new tools.

"We're in a constant state of improvement, getting the feedback from the team on a consistent basis so we know what's working, what's not working and passing that feedback on to Greenworks so they can improve the product for us," says Fisher.

As the team continued rolling out the new Greenworks products, Fisher says team members gave positive reviews. The products have held up well, and the technicians continue with service without having to worry about gas levels or the environmental impact of gas-powered equipment.

A push for sustainability


During the transition from gas-powered to battery-powered and electric equipment, the team at BrightView referenced the company's roadmap for sustainability to



ensure the team meets its goals.

"We're trying to move very quickly. This means taking a look at all aspects of the emissions," Arnold says. "It's not just about the CO2 cycle, everything is on the table. Everything is going to be prioritized and tackled at some point. I think we're in a unique time where the climate and even the transition to electric and other new technologies will be a positive change. We're probably at the time right now where Ford was at the turn of the century between the Model T and the horse and the blacksmith. It's a great opportunity for us right now, and we're happy that we're leading in that effort."

As one of the top landscape companies in the country — No. 1 on the 2022 LM150 list — BrightView aims to be at the forefront of the industry by following industry trends that align with the company's sustainability initiative.

"I can tell you it's exciting to investigate so many new products and work with various manufacturers in developing products that meet our changing needs," says Fisher. "We're not only testing, but helping to create new technologies that are not just specific to the landscape industry, but have a much wider application as they move forward and become mainstream in the marketplace. In order to achieve that, we want to work with like-minded companies and suppliers; Greenworks falls into that category." 

THE FUTURE IS HERE

Will Parsley shares the reasons Carswell Distributing chose to bring the future to its customers with Greenworks Products

For Will Parsley, president of Carswell Distributing in Winston-Salem, N.C., the company means more to him than just a job. Started in 1948 by Parsley's grandfather, Carswell Distributing has been in the outdoor power equipment industry since the 1950s, dedicated to helping independent lawn and garden dealers thrive.

"As a business, we are 100 percent committed to outdoor power equipment, that's just what we do. So, it's all about going to those customers and seeing how we can best serve them and drive their success, how we can find the right products to bring to them to position them for long term success," Parsley explains. "That's part of what brought us to Greenworks. Seeing that Greenworks was a real outlet for solving commercial battery demand that was coming in that category. They had a commitment to independent OPE dealers and so do we."

When Parsley first recognized battery-powered equipment in the commercial outdoor power equipment industry, he says he and his team were a bit apprehensive about the power behind these tools.

"About 5 years ago, two or three weeks before GIE, I was sitting with our sales team and we were talking about where products are going, what's going to happen in commercial products, and we started talking about battery," says Parsley. "We had a general consensus that the torque required to mow and the batteries that were available would be weight prohibitive and expense prohibitive to do commercial mowing for at least the next 5 to 7 years."

While at that GIE, Parsley stopped at the Greenworks booth to look at the company's commercial zero-turn mowers. Once



WILL PARSLEY

"THE COMMITMENT TO BEING THE HIGHEST PERFORMING PRODUCT IN EACH CATEGORY IS SOMETHING THAT IS REALLY EXCITING ABOUT GREENWORKS. ITS ATTRACTING COMMERCIAL PEOPLE WHO ARE LOOKING TO MAKE WHOLESALE CHANGES."


PARSLEY

powered up, he was shocked by what he saw.

"They started talking about specs and turned it on and drove it forward and backward right there in their booth and it made no noise. They said it's going to mow 14 acres and will cost this much. I immediately called up our guys and said we were totally wrong about battery timing. It's not 5-7 years away, it's here right now."

As the industry recovers and transforms following the pandemic, Parsley has noticed three major demand drivers for commercial battery-powered tools: 1) User desire for easy maintenance, especially with occasional-use tools, like pole saws or chainsaws. 2) Landscaper response to a noise or emissions mandate from government or client. 3) Early-adopter commercial landscapers seeking competitive differentiation and fuel savings. He says these catalysts for change have increased the interest in battery-powered equipment, causing dealers to come to Carswell Distributing requesting more Greenworks demonstrations.

"The commitment to manufacturing the highest performing product in each category is something that is really exciting about Greenworks. It's attracting commercial people who are looking to convert their whole crew to battery," explains Parsley.

For those looking to make the switch to battery, Parsley offers this suggestion: clearly identify what you want to accomplish with battery tools. Is it reducing noise and emissions, increasing safety, decreasing maintenance expense, differentiating your service? Knowing this goal will help you choose the right products for demo and testing. 

BRINGING BATTERY TO THE FOREFRONT

James River Equipment works with Greenworks to ensure both residential and commercial customers can experience battery power

The history of James River Equipment in Virginia dates back to the 1920s, bringing with it a legacy of helping customers find the correct piece of equipment that will solve their landscaping problems. That's what originally drew Michael Board to apply to James River. Board still works at James River — 19 years later — now as the director of marketing.

With more than 40 dealership locations, changing the way business is done in the company can be a rather large undertaking. But when Board noticed that many big box stores started selling battery-powered equipment, he saw an opportunity to add this offering at James River.

"Beginning to work with Greenworks was sort of my brainchild," says Board. "I noticed that in all the big box stores I frequented for personal use, I was seeing less and less gas-powered homeowner equipment. That really got me thinking and digging and researching. In that process, I sort of stumbled onto Greenworks. The more I investigated and researched them, the more I felt like their corporate footprint and what they were trying to do from an industry perspective really aligned well with us and our

footprint geographically."


Board knew battery-powered equipment was the next step for the company, offering new products to both the commercial customer and the residential homeowner.

"We encompass and try to sell to both a residential market customer, so a quarter-acre push mower or walk-behind mower customer all the way through to complete commercial cutters, professional landscape cutters, with multiple crews," Board explains. "It really is a wide customer base."

Board says the sales team at James River notice a common reaction from customers who buy Greenworks equipment: the surprise customers express when using Greenworks products. Both residential and commercial customers comment on how quiet their new outdoor power equipment is.

"Noise maybe the single biggest driver of these so far, the electric is much quieter than the gas-powered version or the diesel-powered versions," says Board.

This partnership between James River and Greenworks helps customers identify the perfect product for the job. After learning of the customer's goals — whether that be time management, capability, comfortability or noise control — the sales team at James River uses their in-depth knowledge of the product line at Greenworks to assist the customer with the perfect Greenworks products to exceed all goals.

"We want to serve anyone who is out there to cut grass in any way, that's kind of our general practice and business model," Board says. "So far, quite frankly, the entire product line has really sold quite well, we're very happy with our decision with the Greenworks products." 



MICHAEL BOARD

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-Scott Lamon, Tynic Landscaping, Southwick, Mass.

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LEVELING UP

As National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) readies for its inaugural Elevate event, board members give an inside look at what's planned and why the organization ended its partnership with OPEI

BY CHRISTINA HERRICK | *LM* EDITOR

When National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) CEO Britt Wood took the stage at Landscapes in October 2021, those in the crowd could feel a change in the air. Wood announced that NALP would take its annual conference on the road and in a new direction, naming the new event Elevate. With this announcement, NALP would leave its partnership of 15 years with the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS) and GIE+Expo.

"After 15 years in Louisville, our members and attendees wanted a change. So, we've created an experience that will educate and inspire lawn care and landscape contractors from across the U.S.," Wood told the crowd at Landscapes.

Next month, NALP will host its first Elevate Conference and Expo at the Gaylord Palms Resort and Conference Center in Orlando. The event will move to different locations every year.

Wood and several NALP board members gave *Landscape Management* an inside look at this event. Board members say attendees can expect new elements unique to Elevate, but also popular features of previous NALP events, as well as those from NALP's predecessor associations: Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA), Professional Lawn Care Network (PLCAA) and the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET).

MAKING A MOVE

Incoming NALP president Mike Bogan, CEO of LandCare in Frederick, Md., (No. 12



Mike Bogan

on the 2022 LM150 list), says feedback from NALP members was a big part of the decision to make a change.

"What we learned from talking to our members is that they wanted a variety of destinations to attend this event," he says. "And if you look at what we did prior to that partnership, we moved our show around the country and, when we did that, we got more of a variety of participants based on those that found the geographic location (of the event) appealing."

Another driver, Bogan says, was ownership of the annual conference.

"We didn't view it as something that we just wanted to be a part of," he says. "We viewed it as something that we wanted to be our signature event — our biggest event of the year — our annual conference."

Bob Grover, outgoing NALP president and owner of Pacific Landscape Management in Hillsboro, Ore. (No. 70 on the 2022 LM150 list), says when the latest contract renewal with OPEI came up about three years ago, the board took a long look at the partnership and the direction members wanted the event to go in.

"After long deliberations, we said we really want to be able to go around the country more, we want to be able to get a smaller show, we want to be able to have the show at the hotel and not get on a bus, and we want to get back to doing facility tours," he says.

And while the partnership with OPEI, created in 2006, was lucrative for the organization, Grover said the board knew it was time to make a change.

Continued on page 20

Industry support

A longtime supporter of the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP), John Deere's Chase Tew said it was important for his company to participate in Elevate and highlight the future of NALP and the green industry. The team at John Deere looks forward to connecting with attendees.

"All the new changes are exciting," says Tew, product line manager of B2B mowing at John Deere. "This is now the event of the 'where the green industry is going' vs. 'where it's been in the past.'"

Stephanie Schwenke, market manager for turf with Syngenta, echoes Tew's remarks and says the team at Syngenta looks forward to highlighting the future of the green industry.



Stephanie Schwenke

"We're excited that Elevate will provide opportunities for connecting with peers and connecting with new ideas and technology," she says. "We are thankful for everything the National Association of Landscape Professionals does for its members and are proud to support this new venue that will bring the community of lawn care professionals together."



LEVELING UP

THE START OF SOMETHING NEW
Britt Wood, CEO of NALP, introduced the organization's new event last year. Wood said this new event, held in different cities every year, was a response to member feedback.



Continued from page 19

“We won’t produce the same revenue with our own show, at least early on, as we would with this combined show that was highly profitable to us,” he says. “We made the decision to do the right thing, even though it was going to be a financial challenge and strain. I’m proud to be part of that decision.”

Grover said the board members looked at the departure from the OPEI partnership as a chance to build NALP’s annual conference for the future.

“We also took this opportunity to say let’s re-imagine that conference, trade show and education based on the feedback we received from our members,” he says. “Being in 100 percent control of our show allows us to listen to and react to our members, which is what we have done with our new show format.”

IT’S ALL IN THE NAME

NALP board member Claire Goldman, owner of R&R Landscaping in Auburn, Ala., says the goal for this event is in the name itself. The board wants to help new and established industry professionals not only elevate their careers but also their businesses.

“We’re elevating what was Landscapes into a new conference, we’re thinking outside the box, and we’re bringing something new and different,” she says. “The focus for NALP has been to elevate professionalism in the industry, and we are excited to get some feedback from our members about their Elevate experience.”

BRINGING BACK THE FAVORITES

While the board intentionally wanted to build a new event with Elevate, it knew a few popular events must be a part of this iteration. The first is facility tours. Before co-locating the Landscapes event in Louisville with GIE+Expo, ALCA and PLCAA hosted tours of a landscaping business local to the conference.

This year, NALP sold out its first half-day behind-the-scenes tour of Massey Services in Orlando (No. 26 on the LM150 list, with \$86 million in 2021 green industry revenue). NALP will offer two additional tours of Orlando-based landscaping operations for those who missed out on registering for the Massey tour.

“It’s going to be a great opportunity to get to see how another businessperson operates their facilities, as well as get an insight into how they’re running their business,” Wood says.

Breakfast with Champions, another longtime staple of the Landscapes event, also returns. Wood says as the NALP board developed the agenda for Elevate’s inaugural event, it was a no-brainer to bring back Breakfast with Champions.

Continued on page 22

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LEVELING UP

FUTURE ELEVATE CONFERENCE DATES AND LOCATIONS:

- **Sep. 10-13, 2023,**
Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center in **Dallas, Texas**
- **Nov. 3-6, 2024,**
Charlotte Convention Center in **Charlotte, N.C.**
- **Nov. 2-5, 2025,**
Phoenix Convention Center in **Phoenix, Ariz.**
- **Nov. 1-4, 2026,**
Indiana Convention Center in **Indianapolis, Ind.**

Continued from page 20

“(It) is one of the most relatable events that we conducted at Landscapes that will continue at Elevate,” he says. “You come in, you have breakfast with somebody who’s a leader in the industry and you talk about a particular topic at the roundtable. Not only do you get to learn from that expert, but you get to learn from your peers.”

WHAT’S NEW

First, expect a smaller trade show floor. Goldman estimates Elevate’s trade show floor to be about 25,000 square feet (for reference, the trade show floor of the GIE+Expo at the Kentucky Education Center is about 675,000 square feet).

“Our hall is going to deliberately be smaller so that you can have more conversations not only with your peers in the landscaping and lawn care profession but also with the suppliers who are bringing in new and innovative products,” Wood says.

Continued on page 24

LOOKING FORWARD TO ORLANDO

With a new event comes anticipation. Those attending Elevate this year share what they’re most looking forward to:

“Watching landscapers take over the Wizarding World of Harry Potter for our closing party is probably one of the most exciting parts for me. I am pretty pumped about that. I told my husband, that’s going to be the most fishing shirts at one time that the Wizarding World of Harry Potter has ever seen.”

— *Claire Goldman, owner of R&R Landscaping*

“What I love most about it is the chance to reconnect with friends from around the country with different companies that are always so open and willing to share the lessons they’ve learned in the

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The Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center in Orlando will host the inaugural Elevate in 2022.



business. Those lessons have contributed to my professional growth significantly. In addition to connecting with old friends, I'm excited about the opportunity to meet new people. That is one of the greatest things that happens here, when you walk down the hall or step into an event or get on the elevator, there's an opportunity to introduce yourself to the person next to you."

— **Mike Bogan, CEO of LandCare**

"We're excited to be able to move around and be able to come to the West Coast occasionally and serve our members." — **Bob Grover, owner of Pacific Landscape Management**

"We are expecting lots of new and exciting technology that is coming to market but also the futuristic concepts about what could be. That's what we are excited to see and be a part of."

— **Chase Tew, product line manager of B2B mowing at John Deere**

"We look forward to meeting professionals at every level to hear about their experiences and ideas. We are also looking forward to the tour with Massey Services, who we know will provide a great experience."

— **Stephanie Schwenke, market manager for turf with Syngenta**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF NALP

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LEVELING UP

Continued from page 22

“Suppliers are bringing their top people because they understand that this is going to be an event for the leaders in the industry. You’re going to get the best and the brightest.”

Also, on the trade show floor will be areas for networking and Campfire Sessions, similar to mini-TED talks on topics including recruitment, retention, safety, leadership and technology.

“We’re going to do smaller, quicker sessions inside the exhibit hall,” says Wood. “These Campfire Sessions allow people who are interested in particular topics to have a conversation. We will have an industry expert host. We’re trying to make it so that you have all these different reasons to really gain

MORE TIME TO CONNECT
Education sessions, organized into different tracks, will be shorter to allow attendees time to network.



different types of knowledge within that exhibit hall.”

Other new elements include a ticketed Family-Feud-style game show fundraiser for the National Association of Landscape Professionals Foundation and a closing party at Universal’s Islands of Adventure.

“If you’ve ever been to an amusement park and you wanted to have it all to yourself, you got this chance to

do it,” Wood says. “We’ll have three rides open.”

Also included are food, drinks and the opportunity to explore the shops at the Wizarding World of Harry Potter.

EDUCATION SESSIONS

Attendees will also choose educational sessions based on different

Continued on page 26

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LEVELING UP

Continued from page 24
 themes: team member experience, operational excellence, business excellence, customer experience and sustainability.

While some sessions will build upon one another,

Goldman says that doesn't mean an attendee needs to stick with one track.



Claire Goldman

"We've been intentional about targeting certain people that we know are really strong in the area or the topic that we'd like for them to speak on," she says. "I think the programming, in general, is going to be something a little different from what we've seen at Landscapes, and that's intentional."

Wood says the board wanted shorter educational sessions to encourage more interaction among attendees.

"This event is designed to bring people together and allow them to learn from each other," he says. "We're shortening the length of the sessions so that they're more focused and condensed, and still give people the opportunity to talk. A lot of times, if you're at a really great event, you'll learn

MAKING CONNECTIONS

NALP board members say the opportunities to meet new people and visit with friends are a major part of the Elevate experience.



more in the breaks than you might even learn at sessions. We just want to afford people the ability to meet people, to network, to talk and to learn and really to grow."

FUTURE OF THE EVENT

NALP will host next year's event from Sept. 10-13, 2023, at the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center in Dallas. The organization will push the event back to November for dates starting in 2024, including Nov. 3-6, 2024, at the Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte, N.C.;

Continued on page 28

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Continued from page 26
Nov. 2-5, 2025, at the Phoenix Convention Center in Phoenix, Ariz.; and Nov. 1-4, 2026, at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis, Ind.

Grover says the board wanted to rotate locations to ensure Elevate hits members across the country. “We’ve decided we’re going to go East, Central, West, East, Central, West,” he says of the order of host regions. “Having the right balance of having the show not drive our conference but support our conference.”



Bob Grover

Bogan says he’s excited to see how this year’s event turns out. He’s noticed how the hard work staff at NALP puts into each of the organization’s events pays off each year.

“Our NALP staff has made a significant improvement to every event that they’ve been responsible for,” he says. “I’m extremely confident that this is going to be equally impressive as an experience for the people that are there.”

He says as attendees at NALP’s National Collegiate Landscape Competition, Leaders Forum and Renewal & Remembrance events saw firsthand, NALP staff continues to innovate the experience for attendees.

“They’ve continually improved these events and made them better and more interesting,” he says. “And it’s really got my expectations set high for Elevate in 2022.” 📍

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This year, John Deere is excited to showcase industry-leading equipment and technology at Elevate booth No. 813. Within the John Deere booth, we will showcase three product categories: zero-turn mowers, stand-on mowers and compact construction equipment.

We will feature the Z930M Zero-Turn Mower in the booth, paired with the industry-favorite tweels and a 60-inch rear discharge deck, which help elevate mower performance and operator efficiency. As a result of its high fuel efficiency and increased horsepower, the Z930M Zero-Turn mower is a durable workhorse on the job.

The powerful commercial-quality 636M QuikTrak™ Stand-On Mower will also be on display, in addition to the nimble and versatile 35G Compact Excavator. The 636M QuikTrak Stand-On Mower features a compact design for easy hauling, as well as a commercial-quality engine for all-day performance. Finally, the 35G Compact Excavator offers professional landscapers reduced tail swing and durable and smooth operation on the job.

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At this year's inaugural Elevate event, Steel Green will exhibit the machines customers know and love, as well as some newer additions.

Familiar favorites include the SG36, SG46 and SG52, which differ in size and capacity. The SG36 holds up to 30 gallons of liquid and 220 pounds of granular product. The SG46 holds up to 50 gallons of liquid and 320 pounds of granular product. The SG52 holds up to 60 gallons of liquid and 320 pounds of granular product.

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DID YOU KNOW

Tips to best manage *Pythium* blight

Experts share how cultural and chemical controls can help LCOs keep this pathogen in check

BY GEORGE KEGODE, PH.D. | CONTRIBUTOR

P*ythium* blight is one of the most common diseases of turfgrass. To prevent it from establishing and spreading, experts say lawn care operators (LCOs) must manage the disease properly. Brian Aynardi, Ph.D., Northeast research scientist for PBI-Gordon, and James Lee, category manager for SiteOne, share chemical and cultural control techniques for LCOs to deploy to best manage *Pythium* blight.

CHEMICAL CONTROL

“There are few effective control options that can provide satisfactory control of *Pythium* blight,” says Aynardi. “Products containing cyazofamid as the active ingredient are the most effective for controlling *Pythium* blight, and a good rotation partner to cyazofamid is the active ingredient mefenoxam or the strobilurin fungicide azoxystrobin.”

Lee says pros should be aware of the environmental conditions that *Pythium* blight favors to best deploy chemical control strategies. In addition, once an area has been infected

by *Pythium* blight, turfgrass managers should develop an annual preventive maintenance program.

“Without a good preventative plan in place, *Pythium* blight can spread and cause damage to turfgrass within 24 to 48 hours and require an immense amount of costly repair work,” he says.

Experts say having a good preventive plan is the best approach. When the conditions are most conducive for *Pythium* blight to occur, pros should apply preventive fungicides. If the prevalent turfgrass is susceptible to *Pythium* blight — such as perennial ryegrass — and the environmental conditions are conducive, it is necessary to apply a preventive fungicide. Conditions such as high leaf moisture and relative humidity greater than 90 percent favor disease development.

“There is no such thing as an acceptable disease level with *Pythium* blight because once the pathogen infects turfgrass, the disease will spread rapidly, resulting in significant turfgrass loss,” Aynardi says.

CULTURAL CONTROLS

Experts say LCOs should have a good understanding of how *Pythium* blight infests to achieve good disease management with cultural practices.

“*Pythium* blight may develop if the pathogen is present in waterlogged soil, air circulation is poor and air temperatures are favorable for the disease,” says Lee.

Pruning nearby trees and bushes will increase the amount of sunlight and air movement, which will reduce the amount of moisture within the turfgrass and prevent disease development.

“Pros should reduce the use of quick-release nitrogen on newly seeded perennial ryegrass during periods when *Pythium* blight is prevalent,” Aynardi says.


Lee adds that in addition to improving air circulation, pros should deploy cultural methods such as ensuring proper drainage, amending soil and changing the grade of the ground’s slope.

WHAT TO AVOID

Not recognizing the onset of *Pythium* blight and how it can be easily spread is a common mistake, says Lee.

“*Pythium* blight mycelium on top of turfgrass will look like loose cotton spread across the turf that can be confused with spider webbing,” he says.

When turfgrass managers mow wet *Pythium* blight-infected turf, tires can spread the disease to other turfgrass areas. LCOs should avoid spreading the pathogen through any form of movement, including water runoff, foot traffic or tire tracks before it is too late.

“Turfgrass managers should be aware that curative applications of fungicide will not provide much benefit when applied to symptomatic or dying turfgrass,” Aynardi says. 

George Kegode, Ph.D., is a consultant and writer specializing in pest and weed management, based in Missouri.



James Lee




A SIGN OF THE TIMES

Early signs of *Pythium* blight include yellowish or brown spots ranging from the size of a quarter up to 6 inches in diameter.



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How to fight armyworms this fall

Pros share the steps to take to be prepared in case of an outbreak this year **BY LAUREN DOWDLE | CONTRIBUTOR**

Fall armyworm outbreaks caught many professionals off guard last year. Whether storms blew adults farther north or other factors played a role in their widespread presence, fall armyworms affected lawn and pest control services across the country.

WEIGH THE PROS AND CONS

Last year was an anomaly in regard to fall armyworm outbreaks for Patrick Beaman, owner of GrassMasters in Wilson, N.C. His company has \$300,000 in annual revenue and provides lawn care services to about 90 percent residential and 10 percent commercial customers.

“Very rarely prior to that have I ever been in a situation where I left the shop and treated multiple clients for armyworms,” he says.

While it can be difficult to distinguish between armyworms and drought damage, Beaman says he looks for birds eating from the turf and moths and runs his hands through brown spots to verify an armyworm infestation.

“They could take out a lawn in two days if there were enough of them. By that time, there’s not a lot of recovery that can be made,” Beaman says. “That makes them hard to work with because you have to figure out if you do a preventive treatment—or if you wait and see.”

Being in the transition zone, Beaman incorporates a variety of products into his premium fescue program—including using Acelepryn (chlorantraniliprole) as a preventive treatment. The insecticide controls grubs and surface insects, which he says allows him to cover

his bases on high-end accounts if a fall armyworm outbreak does occur again.

“Because of the price point, it’s not one you’d add in the tank every time,” Beaman says. “But, the peace of mind it gives you outweighs some of the cost.”

For his other properties, he says he will take more of a reactive approach. He plans to keep an insecticide in his truck for spot treatments, watch for signs of fall armyworms on properties and track if the pest is moving in his direction.

“Once you identify them, the treatment is fairly easy,” Beaman says. “But it might require multiple applications because you’ll get multiple generations before you can eradicate them.”

He also sends clients emails and makes social media posts about what to look for and if there have been nearby reports of fall armyworms. If the outbreaks become a multi-year problem, he says he will re-evaluate if he wants to make a change to his spray program.

EDUCATE CUSTOMERS

GreenWorks Lawn Solutions in Warsaw, Ind., had its first experience with fall armyworms last year, catching the team by

surprise. The company has \$400,000 in annual revenue and provides lawn care, pest control, design/build, landscape maintenance, holiday light installation and snow removal services to about 95 percent residential clients.

Due to the company’s northern location, fall armyworms aren’t common, says Steven Elder, owner and general manager.

It began with a call from a customer on a Friday in late August 2021. Crews discovered and treated the issue immediately—but it soon grew from there.

“By the next Friday, we had received upwards of 100 calls, texts and emails from people who had them in our area,” Elder says. “We stopped all production and went into full armyworm-treatment mode.”

While he thinks the surge of fall armyworms last year is a one-time occurrence, he says it could happen again if the conditions are right. Even if the pests do return, he says populations are easy to combat if taken care of quickly.

“Typically, we do not think about them, and preventing something that has only been here three times in 20 years is economically and environmentally wasteful,” Elder says.

Elder encourages other professionals to educate their customers who had properties affected in previous years. “Post on social media in late summer or early fall on how to check for them,” he says. “Have technicians checking for them in late August.” 📧



Steven Elder



AMBUSHED!
Typically found in the southern part of the U.S., fall armyworm made its way north and took some pros by surprise last year.

Dowdle is a freelance writer based in Birmingham, Ala.

A SUPPLEMENT TO



INNOVATION + TECHNOLOGY GUIDE

Robotic mower how-to **P. IT3**

Arborgold Q+A **P. IT6**

Predicting the future of technology
in the green industry **P. IT8**

Aspire Q+A **P. IT11**

Boss Software Q+A **P. IT13**

Scythe Robotics Q+A **P. IT14**





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ROBOTIC MOWER HOW-TO



Experts share tips for a successful installation process for robotic mowers

BY ROB DIFRANCO | LM ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The idea of installing a robotic mower might seem like a large undertaking that would require a significant amount of technological know-how, but experts say that's not the case.

Landscape Management spoke with Justin Mosley, maintenance sales manager for Plants Creative in Scottsdale, Ga., and Erasto Renteria, account manager for Clean Scapes in Austin, Texas, to gather

their tips for successful site prep and installation for robotic mowers.

GETTING STARTED

Mosley says that before site preparation begins, his first step is to complete a site audit.

“When I walk on site, the first thing I’m looking for is where I can get power,” he says. “Where can I put the charging station? From there, we’re going to look at the slope, the type of turf, and irrigation heads.”

Plants Creative offers landscape design/build, irrigation and maintenance services to a residential clientele in the Atlanta area. The company uses Husqvarna’s X-Line of Automowers, including the 315X, the 430X and the 450X — which has the highest slope capabilities.

Mosley is in his sixth season of using Husqvarna’s Automowers, which Plants Creative leaves on-site.

He says property slope can determine the unit needed for the

Continued on page IT4

According to Justin Mosley of Plants Creative, wire must be laid a certain distance from obstacles. For instance, boundary wire must be put four inches away from a flat driveway.



When I walk on site, the first thing I'm looking for is where I can get power. Where can I put the charging station? From there, we're going to look at the slope, the type of turf, and irrigation heads."

JUSTIN MOSLEY,
MAINTENANCE SALES
MANAGER FOR
PLANTS CREATIVE

Continued from page IT3

site. The same is true for turf type. Mosley says a quicker growing turf on a smaller lawn could call for a different unit.

"When you look at the spec sheets on these units, they may say they can handle an acre, but if you have TifTuf Bermuda, and it's going to be growing very fast, you may want to take a step up (in the robotic mower line)," he says.

For mowers that require underground wiring, checking for utilities underground is essential. Mosley says to look out for fiber internet cables because they sit at a similar depth to the robotic mower's boundary and guide wires, meaning they can get in the way of the installation process.

Plants Creative uses Husqvarna's CL400 Cable Layer to complete the wiring on a property.

On larger residential or commercial projects, Mosley says it's important to make sure there is enough wire to cover the property. Plants Creative uses the property measurement service Go iLawn when working on larger properties to help estimate the amount of wire needed.

WIRELESS MOWING

Scythe's M.52 robotic mower does not require underground wiring, but Renteria says the site scouting and preparation are similar.

"There's a little bit of site prep to make sure that there aren't any large items that could get in the way of the robot, like boxes or trash," says Renteria.

Clean Scapes provides maintenance and design/build services. The company was No. 28 on the 2022 LM150 list with \$85 million in reported revenue. Unlike the Husqvarna Automowers, Scythe's M.52 does not stay on any given property; it travels with the Clean Scapes crew.

The M.52 has eight cameras and ultrasonic sensors that detect obstacles and take a course of action to avoid them. If the mower comes across an animal, human or what Scythe calls any other "dynamic obstacles," the machine will stop and turn off its blades, waiting to start again until the path is clear.

If the machine comes across an obstruction that it does not recognize,

it will stop and notify a crew member, asking if the obstruction needs to be moved or if it can mow around it.

Once the site is ready for the mower, setup is simple, Renteria says.

“We get it off the truck, and we turn it on and do the perimeter of the property,” he says. “The mower itself recognizes that perimeter. Once you do the first round, it can do the rest on its own. It automatically starts mowing the property.”

FINISHING TOUCHES

Renteria and Mosley say things don't stop once the wire has been put in the ground or the perimeter has been mowed, however.

In the case of the M.52, Renteria says data management is an important thing to consider.

“You're labeling that property or that section. It's really important to have a good naming culture for it,” he says.

Renteria says it's important for the Clean Scapes team to stay consistent so no matter who operates the mower, the data the mower registers at that property will be consistent. A good naming system should include the property's name and, if it is a multi-mower property, the part of the property that the mower is responsible for.

For Plants Creative and its Husqvarna mowers, final steps include laying down a guide wire, which Mosley calls the “help me get home fast so I can get charged and get back to work” wire. He says the guide wire is typically installed right down the middle of a property.

“Once you get (the boundary and guide wires) in place, you're hooking up the charging station and making sure you have a green light, which signifies you have a solid loop,” he says.

For more from Mosley on how to prep and install a Husqvarna Automower, visit [Landscapemanagement.net](https://www.landscapemanagement.net). 



There's a little bit of site prep to make sure that there aren't any large items that could get in the way of the robot.”

ERASTO RENTERIA,
ACCOUNT MANAGER
FOR CLEAN SCAPES



The futuristic design of Scythe's M.52 turns some heads. Erasto Renteria says to be prepared for passers by to ask about the robotic mower while it works.

INNOVATION + TECHNOLOGY GUIDE



Arborgold Software

Q+A with **Ed Rockhill**
COO

What innovation will you be featuring at Equip Expo?

Arborgold is excited to show off its latest Arborgold 8.0 feature releases and enhancements at Equip Expo. Arborgold 8.0 brings a more modern, user-friendly interface to many areas of Arborgold Cloud and mobile apps.

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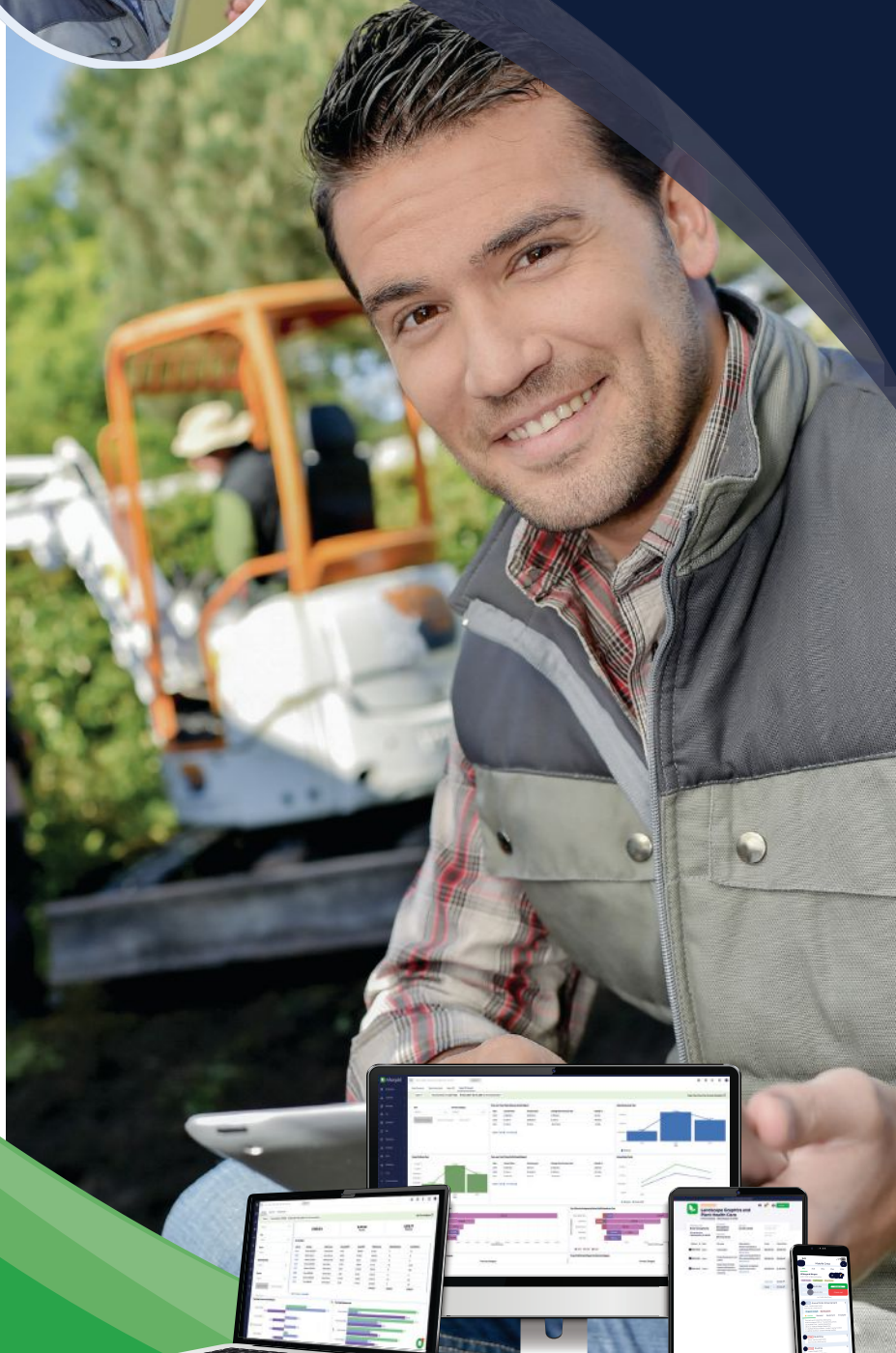
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- Carlos Perez,
Blue Native Landscape & Irrigation



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Scythe's M.52 mower offers automation that could be incredibly valuable in the near future.

Experts share the role they see robotics, battery-powered equipment and more playing in the next five or 10 years in the green industry

BY CHRISTINA HERRICK | LM EDITOR

It's an interesting time for the green industry in 2022. Robotics, battery-powered equipment and new software have the potential to push the industry even more into the future with efficiency gains and optimization.

Michael Mayberry, chief technology officer for Level Green

PHOTO: SCYTHE ROBOTICS

Landscaping in Upper Marlboro, Md., says, “things are moving so quickly that it’s hard to really know what’s going to stick and what’s not going to stick.”



Michael Mayberry

But Mayberry, along with Utkarsh Sharma, CEO of SiteRecon, a software company that automates measurements for project estimation, and Billy Otteman, director of marketing for Scythe Robotics, will attempt to make sense of technology in the coming years during a panel discussion at the 2022 Equip Expo titled “Tomorrow’s tools ... today,” held Wednesday, Oct. 19 from 9-10:30 a.m.

Mayberry, Otteman and Sharma join other industry professionals to predict what advancements will have the biggest impact on green industry operations in the next five and 10 years.

AUTOMATION

Mayberry says most companies already use some form of automation, whether it’s text alerts for services or automatic emails for potential clients. Landscape companies will continue to add more and more automation to streamline processes.

“There’s a lot more automation that can happen and will happen

in the next five years because the technology already exists for that to occur,” he says. “I think 10 years is really the tipping point for robotics. I think in 10 years, robotics will be mainstream.”

Mayberry expects even smaller operations to sell and deploy robotic mowing services to cover more ground and maximize the detail work human employees can do. He predicts that companies will automate enhancement sales and account management, using data pulled from the fleet of robotic mowers and artificial intelligence (AI) to help recognize patterns and potential upselling opportunities on properties. Mayberry says he expects robotic mowers will spot problem trees or limbs, drainage and turf issues.

“That’s where an account manager who’s currently managing \$1 million today, can easily manage \$2 million in 10 years when they’re not having to write those low-hanging proposals,” he says. “They can focus on client connections and the larger install projects that are really going to spruce up a property that a robot can’t do.”



Billy Otteman

Otteman says landscape professionals should expect some big breakthroughs in the next five or 10 years. But it’s important to plan now for a future with robotics.

“The industry is on the brink of some massive and exciting transformation,” he says. “It’s important to start thinking
Continued on page IT10

HOW TO GET STARTED

Michael Mayberry, chief technology officer for Level Green Landscaping in Upper Marlboro, Md., and Billy Otteman, director of marketing for Scythe Robotics, offer tips to introduce technology to your operations.

Otteman suggests companies start small and use trial and error to find out what works and what doesn’t when it comes to technology.

“People tend to be resistant to trying new things for many reasons — they are afraid it won’t work, they aren’t convinced it will be better than their current tools, they’re too busy to dedicate the time to it or they want to see others try it out first,” he says. “But in sticking with the status quo, they can miss out on opportunities for improvement and competitive differentiation. Building a habit of trying new things makes it easier to continually adapt and adopt technologies over time.”

Mayberry says landscape companies should also focus on the return on investment this new technology will bring. Don’t focus on early ROI, he says, as it will take time to learn new processes. The gains in ROI come a few years down the road.

“Focus on years two through five and say, ‘Over time, this is what it’s going to save us over the lifetime of the product, this is what it’s going to cost. But this is how it’s going to pay for itself,’” he says.

He also encourages contractors to not get bogged down in the ROI in dollars saved, either.

“If you can say that you can save your account managers 10 hours a week, and or your account managers in the same amount of work time can manage 25 percent more than they’re currently managing because of the technology, then that’s paying for itself.”



EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHT

Tomorrow's tools ... today

With the challenges of the smaller workforce comes a common need: more advanced tools. Connected devices, robotic equipment, wearable safety gear and water management technology ... this panel showcases what the future holds for the tools we depend on, as well as advancements that are becoming available now.

Moderated by Michael Mayberry, chief technology officer, Level Green

Panelists:

- Ted Rightmire, CEO of HindSite Software
- Norm Bartlett, president, Creative Sensor Technology
- Utkarsh Sharma, CEO of SiteRecon
- Billy Otteman, director of marketing, Scythe Robotics
- Chris Vogtman, director of consumer insight and parts for The Toro Co.

Wednesday, Oct. 19, 9-10:30 a.m.

Continued from page IT9 now about how electric, connected and autonomous equipment will change landscaping operations. How can you increase the tech savviness of your team? Are your facilities equipped with the electrical infrastructure and internet services needed for these products? And are your clients ready to see these advanced technologies deployed on their properties? It's going to be a big shift, so it's not too early to start thinking about implementation."

MORE DATA, MORE INSIGHTS

Sharma says he expects geographic information systems (GIS) tracking and AI to play a bigger role in crew deployment. Operations managers learn more about when and how a crew uses equipment, which will also help inform companies about the need to purchase equipment.

"Location tracking sensors will give real-time insights into crew efficiency, equipment utilization and production rates," he says. "The real efficiency gain lies in tracking every piece of equipment, every crew member. The key piece of the puzzle is AI. It crunches all that data to surface actionable insights. Operations managers can leverage these insights to implement process changes in the job flow and rationalize equipment investments."

Sharma also expects future updates of production software to include GIS data with crew deployment for all accounts. This technology will help streamline internal communication about safety risks, customer requests and any other service issues, he says.

“The key piece of the puzzle is AI. It crunches all that data to surface actionable insights. Operations managers can leverage these insights to implement process changes in the job flow and rationalize equipment investments.”



UTKARSH SHARMA, CEO OF SITERECON

MORE ELECTRIC

As for the type of equipment the industry will be using? Sharma and Mayberry expect battery-powered and electric equipment to become the predominant type of equipment used at job sites within the next five to 10 years.

"I think we'll see a big decline in gas engines over the next five years and a bigger push towards electric," Mayberry says. "10 years out, we'll probably be getting close to mostly electric."

Otteman says battery-powered equipment will open opportunities for landscape business owners to better understand how and when crews use equipment with valuable data. This shift, he says, will continue to grow.

"The shift to electric-powered technologies is happening quickly across industries, the automotive industry is a great one to consider, and electric products are increasing in quality and performance," he says. "Electric equipment will certainly be found in almost every green industry business in the next five years. Clients are demanding it, local governments are requiring it and the planet needs it." 🌱

INNOVATION + TECHNOLOGY GUIDE



Aspire Software

Q+A

with **Bryan Mours**

Vice President of Customer Experience

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When crews are on the job, site audits are a great way for production managers to evaluate work in progress, assess the condition of the property or capture new enhancement and upsell opportunities. These site audits provide a direct line of communication from the team on-site to account managers, who can instantly create detailed estimates for additional work.

It's easy to get lost in the day-to-day operations of your business. But once your eyes are open to how an end-to-end, streamlined software solution can automate many processes to become more efficient and profitable, you will never go back.

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BOSS Software

Q+A with **Mike Cossins**
President and Founder

How has BOSS set the standard for enterprise business management software in the landscape industry?

Enterprise business management software has vast potential for streamlining business processes, uncovering new service opportunities and maximizing the potential productivity — and personal job satisfaction — of every employee. The correct software helps landscape contractors and snow removal professionals extract these benefits.

But it goes beyond the software. It is responsive client support and service that starts during the sales process with in-depth conversations and fit-gap analysis. The one-on-one customer service continues with the onboarding process and throughout the partnership. It's a willingness to listen to contractors and continue to enhance the software that meets their specific needs.

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How does BOSS meet the innovation and technology needs of its customers?

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BOSS prioritizes and maximizes the success of its clients through the BOSS Elevation Team. The team comprises of BOSS super-users with more than 100 years of combined industry experience. The Elevation Team are client advocates who reach out to users and serve as a point of contact for questions and resources for strategies on how to elevate their usage of BOSS.

INNOVATION + TECHNOLOGY GUIDE



Scythe Robotics

Q+A with **Jack Morrison**
Co-Founder and CEO

Scythe M.52 — your fully autonomous commercial mower — is all-electric. How does its battery power perform in the field?

M.52 gets a full day of mowing on a single charge — our latest generation of the mower packs about a third of the battery capacity of a Tesla. We designed the machine to maximize energy efficiency and increase mowing time while maintaining the cut quality that landscape contractors expect.

The mower is engineered for extreme durability, and the battery is no different. We've field-tested it in some of the hottest regions with the toughest terrain, like Texas and Florida. It stands up to the rough handling of daily mowing operations. The battery pack is tightly sealed inside the power-washer-proof machine, protecting it from the dust, dirt and grass clippings that result from a day in the field.

How are maintenance crews adapting to mowing with M.52?

With its familiar stand-on platform and intuitive control panel, M.52 easily fits into maintenance operations. Crew members can learn how to use it over the course of a single



morning. It also fits into existing trucks and trailers like other commercial mowers, so crews don't need to change their routine to start using it.

M.52 is intuitive. It can transform and improve the day-to-day experience for crews. Since it takes care of repetitive mowing, crew members get the opportunity to perform higher value, less physically demanding services. M.52 helps crews meet their productivity goals, which comes with financial incentives at some companies. It also gives them the chance to use cutting-edge technology every day. With all these benefits, crews are excited to mow with M.52.



How does M.52 navigate around a property on its own?

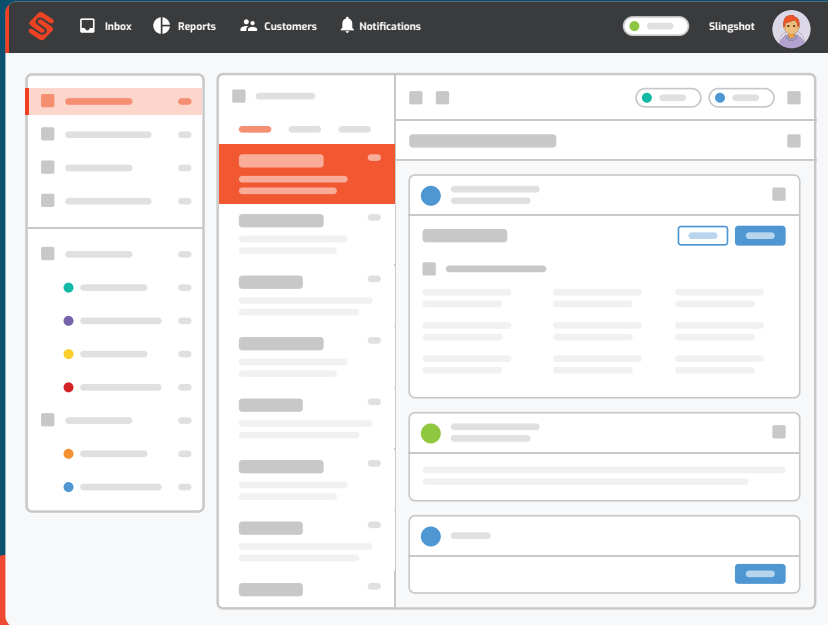
It uses Scythe Sight to see where it's mowing. This is our computer vision technology that uses rich camera data from the mower's advanced sensor system to identify and respond to different obstacles just like a person would. M.52 will mow around trees and poles but stop for pedestrians and animals, starting up again when its path is clear.

M.52 learns more with every mow, so its ability to move around different obstacles continually improves. Scythe Sight will also provide maintenance companies with valuable property information like dry and wet spots, broken sprinkler heads and more so they can offer additional services to their clients.

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THE BIG ONE

Joy of planting

BY CHRISTINA HERRICK | LM EDITOR

LOCATION Northbrook, Ill.

COMPANY Balanced Environments

DETAILS The client reached out to Balanced Environments to work on a few enhancement projects for Covenant Living of Northbrook, a 60-acre retirement community in a suburb of Chicago. The team at Balanced Environments originally completed some small enhancement projects, and the client was so impressed with the work that the team at Balanced Environments were encouraged to bid for the property's maintenance account.

Property management surveys residents annually to ensure the landscape improves or stays consistent with maintenance needs and exceeds expectations. Gayle Kruckenberg, sales director with Balanced Environments, says the team continues to think big with each of the five-year plans created, of which Balanced Environments is on its second.

Kruckenberg says the retirement community plans to add a new building and the team at Balanced Environments will play a major role in the landscape design of that project to ensure the plants selected are appropriate for Northern Illinois and the Chicagoland area. A challenging part of maintaining the property is the requirement that crews be extra cautious around the property's dementia wings. Mowers don't run until around 10 a.m., and crews must be mindful of closing and locking courtyard gates to keep residents safe.

"It takes a team to simply manage and work a property catering to the needs of the graying population," she says. "It takes backing by ownership. It takes a production department that will hear, understand, cooperate and follow the directions of the account manager. It takes enhancement people that are quick, responsive and talented in order to keep up with the flow of ideas coming from a property that large and diverse."

Balanced Environments won a gold award from the National Association of Landscape Professionals' Awards of Excellence program for this project. 🏆

See more photos from this project at LandscapeManagement.net/thebigone.



Captions | **1.** The pond is the focal point of the campus. The Balanced Environments team plants a mix of seasonal color combined with perennial landscape elements to layer color transitions throughout the year. **2.** Building entries receive daily clean-up before the arrival of first shift nursing staff, ensuring pavement and planting areas are presented cleanly and safely. **3.** The management team rotates seasonal color displays three times a year with a minimal winter display. Balanced Environments approaches each season as an opportunity to provide vibrant plants and intense colors to engage the residents.

IRON WORKHORSES

Fall cleanup go-to's

With labor challenges, pros share tools that help get the job done during fall cleanups

BY JONATHAN DELOZIER | LM MANAGING EDITOR

Alex Huber, owner and operator of Platinum Landscape & Design in La Plata, Md., is a long-time user of Mulch Mate trailers. His company offers maintenance and enhancements to a 60-percent commercial and 40-percent residential client base.

“Labor is a hard thing to come by, and Mulch Mate’s equipment allows companies like mine to do these bigger jobs with fewer people,” he says. “It’s been so important for us.”

Huber, Jack Morgan, operations manager for Ultimate Innovations in Honolulu, Hawaii, and Martin Beerman, owner of Beerman Lawn Service in Leawood, Kan., share their go-to tools for fall cleanups.

Once leaves begin to fall, Huber says Mulch Mate equipment typically saves his company roughly one hour of labor a day, adding up to around 400 hours in 2021. Mulch Mate trailers load and unload mulch and debris

into wheelbarrows quickly, with the press of a button.

“Those (hours saved over the year) equaled about \$30,000 in payroll saved for us,” he says. “Guys are running the trailer back and forth instead of having to wheelbarrow it each time. For leaf cleanup, we just put a tarp in the bottom (of the trailer) and go from there. That’s opposed to needing to drag the leaves or blow them all out to the curbside.”

TOOLS TO MAXIMIZE LEAF PICKUP

Relentless leaf fall in Hawaii hasn’t stopped Morgan from staying ahead of the curve.

Morgan says Leaf Burrrito’s reusable lawn debris system is vital in maintaining that success. Crews fill the leaf burrito and roll it up to transport and dump. His company serves clients evenly divided between residential and commercial sites, offering design/build, maintenance, tree services and a plant nursery.

“While it’s generally not at the volume

you see during the fall season, the leaf pickup and maintenance is a 365-day process here,” Morgan says. “We have a few tree species that do an annual drop, but most in Hawaii are just dropping continuously. When looking at our biggest property cleanup jobs, I’d say Leaf Burrrito cuts down on the activity time by about 10 percent.”

Morgan says a highlight of using Leaf Burrrito is the time saved as well as cutting down on materials used. He estimates he’s reduced his bag use by 75 percent.

“You’re going to reduce your time on the handling, gathering and emptying by half at the end of the day,” he says. “You just open that big thing up and dump it out. It’s as simple as that.”

DEPENDABILITY BREEDS LONG-TERM COLLABORATION

Beerman Lawn Service puts Billy Goat leaf vacuums to use for its fall cleanup jobs. Beerman says his full-service lawn maintenance and snow removal company’s 18-hp and 26-hp leaf blowers save time.

“A large part of our fall business is leaf cleanups and we have built three trailers mounted with Billy Goat leaf vacs which allow us to do large volumes of leaf cleanups in shorter time and less labor than loading by hand into trucks,” Beerman says.

He adds his company’s use of Billy Goat product dates to 2008, citing consistent dependability that’s led to product upgrade purchases. He also uses a Billy Goat sod cutter.

“We really could not imagine running our leaf business without the vacuum setup,” he says.

Beerman says upgrading to the 26-hp vacuums in the last two years made a big difference.

“It is even more of a time saver because of how much power and suction the machine provides,” he says. “We have noticed that even wet leaves are able to be vacuumed with this machine.”



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BRAND U

How Isuzu trucks help do more

Jesse Smith, owner and president of Royal Greens, shares how durability and low maintenance are a win-win with Isuzu trucks

**BY JONATHAN DELOZIER
LM MANAGING EDITOR**

The need for versatility led Jesse Smith, owner and president of Royal Greens in Frederick, Md., to acquire a pair of Isuzu trucks five years ago.

Smith says he's never looked back and continues to see the benefits of that decision.

Royal Greens, established in 1996, provides lawn care, pest control and plant health care services to a mostly residential client base. He says his operation at the start focused on granular fertilizer applications, but as he looked to transition to liquid applications, he wanted a vehicle to fit all his needs.

"Before (acquiring Isuzu trucks), we were more of a granular fertilization company," says Smith.

"The equipment for granular materials and the learning curve in training people was getting to be a little too much. So, we wanted to switch to liquid."

After speaking with

Florida Sprayers, an equipment supplier in Tampa, Fla., at a conference, Smith said he saw how the trucks could offer a solution for all facets of his business.

"We got an Isuzu and just kind of fell in love with it," he says. "Then, we



KEEP ON TRUCKIN'

Jesse Smith, owner and president of Royal Greens, a Maryland-based lawn care company, says the company's Isuzu trucks save the operation money on maintenance.

ended up getting the second one about four months later."

Royal Greens will retire the two trucks at the end of the season. Smith says he's already decided to replace them with newer Isuzu models.

"It's going to be Isuzu. There's no question," he says. "The durability has been great. We run the NPR gas version, not the diesel. Fuel economy is always a concern, but if you have a truck with a lot of weight on it, the Isuzu is still going to give you great bang for your buck with the fuel."

LOW MAINTENANCE COSTS

Isuzu NPRs come standard with a 6.6-liter GMPT L8T eight-cylinder engine with a six-speed automatic transmission. The vehicle can reportedly travel 38.6 miles for every gallon of fuel with a combined truck and trailer weight of 18,000 pounds.


Smith says basic preventive maintenance costs for each Isuzu truck typically average just \$200 a year.

"It's stayed right around that level for us this whole time," he says. "We budgeted for a lot more when we first got the truck. So, that's been very nice."

Smith says the extra weight his Isuzu trucks can carry has been an added bonus.

"We can have bigger tanks and more equipment than what we can do with a standard ¾-ton or full-ton pickup truck. It's been a best-case scenario for us."

Smith says his Isuzu trucks are an invaluable tool for his operation.

"These trucks have done everything we've asked them to do, and they continue to do that," Smith says. "We're getting the good mileage, and we're saving by being able to go out and do all these jobs in fewer trips than we used to be able to." 

DID YOU KNOW?

According to Isuzu, the company's first truck arrived in the U.S. at the Port of Jacksonville in Florida on Nov. 10, 1984. This was the KS22 truck with an 87-hp diesel engine mated to a manual transmission.

After two years, the company said Isuzu trucks became the best-selling low cab forward model in America, a trend that has held up to this day.

Since 1984, the company has delivered more than 500,000 Isuzu trucks in North America.



Jesse Smith



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*Jonathan L. Larson, Carl T. Redmond and Daniel A. Potter, SCI. September 2011.

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HARDSCAPE SOLUTIONS

Untapped potential

BY ROB DIFRANCO | LM ASSOCIATE EDITOR

LOCATION Halesite, N.Y.

COMPANY Goldberg & Rodler

DETAILS The previous owners of the property did not maintain or update the existing architecture for nearly 50 years. The landscape featured overgrown vegetation and several large trees, including one that leaned dangerously over the roof and the pool.

“The home and landscape hadn’t been touched since the ’70s,” says Ashley Haugsjaa, design office manager and lead landscape designer at Goldberg & Rodler. “Most of it was unusable. There was a ton of poison ivy and overgrown everything in there.”

Haugsjaa says the build team also found an overgrown dump area at the back of the property littered with tires and debris.

The previous landscape left Goldberg & Rodler with plenty of challenges, including a broken existing patio lifted from the ground by the trees in the backyard.

The property also had issues with standing water, which the company addressed with the help of traditional drains and dry wells. Goldberg & Rodler also installed several plants that absorb water, including inkberry, iris and *Liatris*.

The company built berms around the periphery in the back of the property to stop water from the neighbor’s sloped yard from entering the client’s backyard.

The project earned Goldberg & Rodler a gold award from the 2021 National Association of Landscape Professionals’ Awards of Excellence program. 🏆

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



Captions | **1.** Ensuring the client, who has mobility restrictions, could enjoy the yard and all its amenities was crucial. To take care of that requirement, Goldberg & Rodler added a ramped walkway from the house to the yard. **2.** A smart system controls the lights around the property in the home. The same system controls the spa, pool equipment and fireplace. **3.** The home had no existing drainage system before the redesign began and had several invasive plants that Goldberg & Rodler removed from the site. The existing patio was also small and broken as the trees started lifting the bricks from the ground.



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INSTALLATION SOLUTIONS

How software shortcuts save designers time

Landscape designers share how their favorite software features save them time during the rendering process

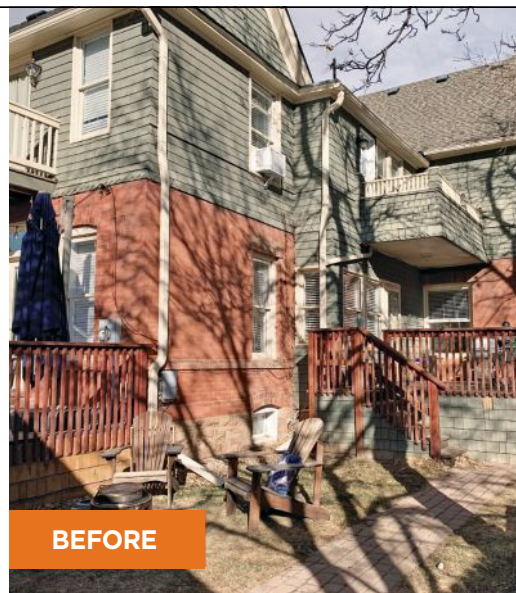
BY JONATHAN DELOZIER | LM MANAGING EDITOR

Cheri Stringer, founder of Gardens of Change in Longmont, Colo., uses Vectorworks Landmark software for her mostly residential design service, citing ample opportunity for customization. Stringer and Errick Harper, owner of Lawn Care Solutions in Shreveport, La., share how landscape design software creates

new paths to efficiency while helping companies meet the specific needs of clients.

“I’m able to customize it to my particular methods, processes and protocols,” Stringer says. “The resource browser lets me create unique symbols for everything; hardscapes, furniture, every single thing.”

Vectorworks has been Stringer’s go-to since 2007 and keeping creations on



file with the software’s resource browser has saved her an immeasurable amount of time.

“I create something once and use it 100 times,” she says. “That’s compared to 20 years ago when you had to do it from scratch every single time. With most programs, they give you a stock set,

PHOTOS: CHERI STRINGER

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MINDS' EYE

Design software, like Vectorworks Landmark, helps designers create and store design features for easy reuse in future projects.

DESIGN RENDERING

and you can customize some of that, but not nearly as customizable as Vectorworks Landmark. It's not even close."

Vectorworks allows users to create light fixtures and the bulb to go inside and customize the lighting fixture down to the color and style. Stringer says this comes in handy for her 2D and 3D modeling.

"It lets you get down to those very fine micro-details, but when it's time for a new design, it's right there waiting for you with just one click if you need it," she says.

NO STEEP LEARNING CURVES

Harper is a 10-year user of PRO Landscape design software. He started using the program at the suggestion of an industry friend.


"He knew I needed a better way to show customers what I was trying to bring to light on their property," says Harper. "It's helped me bring my imagination out instead of just relying on drawings."

Lawn Care Solutions offers landscape building, irrigation, maintenance, design/build and pest management services to a 70 percent residential and 30 percent commercial base.

Harper points to PRO Landscape's ease of use and customization as prime motivators for sticking with the software for the past decade. He says while it took him a little time to learn the ins and outs of the program, time saved convinced him of the value of sticking with PRO Landscape.

"I never got into drawing too much and this (software) saves you so much time," he says. "The biggest thing is it makes you look much more professional. Even today, not everyone is using this sort of thing for their designs."

Before using PRO Landscape, Harper says a typical job would take about five hours to design.

"When you're talking about a larger home or a larger property with a lot of things going in around it, yes, I'd say it does save you four or five hours doing it this way," he says. "It's just a cool program that's set up to be easy to use and friendly to newcomers." 

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IRRIGATION TECH

Tools to cover more ground

Irrigation contractors explain why Wi-Fi controllers are an excellent fit for your business

BY ROB DIFRANCO | LM ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Jon Lauer remembers the proverbial Stone Age of irrigation controllers. The owner of Professional Irrigation Systems in St. Louis, Mo., and 21-year veteran of the green industry, says until the Wi-Fi controller came around, innovation was sparse.

“(Irrigation controllers have) been a tried-and-true product,” Lauer says. “They try to improve it with longevity or application, but nothing has been developed, especially like a movement like the Wi-Fi controller.”

Nowadays, Wi-Fi and smart controllers are the next best thing. Lauer uses them for his business, which provides irrigation services to primarily residential clientele.

He and Chris Haluch, owner of Haluch’s Landscapes in Hampden, Mass., spoke with *LM* to give their thoughts on why Wi-Fi controllers are a good fit for your business.



Jon Lauer

THE RIGHT FIT

Haluch Landscapes uses mainly K-Rain Wi-Fi controllers, specifically the Pro EX 2.0. Haluch says the controller allows him to manage up to 28 zones for his 95 percent residential and 5 percent commercial clientele.

“They’re very easy to work with, and that’s part of why I made the switch,” Haluch says. “It’s also good because we can, from our office, if a customer has a problem, hop on their controller and troubleshoot. We can fix it instead of going all the way out there, and that’s invaluable.”

Haluch says his team uses a waterproof handheld remote to access the controller when they’re on the property. They also install controllers outside of homes for easy access and inspection.

Like Lauer, Haluch remembers a time when inspecting an irrigation system was a job that required one person in the home and another outside, going from zone to zone to make sure things worked properly.



Chris Haluch



EASE OF USE
Wi-Fi controllers help make the lives of irrigation contractors easier thanks to remote system management.

Professional Irrigation Systems uses Hunter Industries’ Hyrdawise controllers, which Lauer says allows his team to manage properties proactively.

“We can do seasonal adjustments and shutdowns. So, if we get 5 inches of rain during the week, we can shut the system down. It’s advanced in terms of diagnostics. If the customer’s (irrigation in their) front lawn isn’t working, it will notify us,” he says.

It also builds accountability with an audit log, Lauer says. The audit log, which can be accessed through a computer and/or a phone, allows the contractor to go back and look at any changes made to the system in the past.

GET STICKY

Lauer says Wi-Fi controllers have helped his business get “sticky,” which is what Lauer calls retaining customers. He says Wi-Fi controllers, with their many features, helped his company do that.

“All of us are looking for an item that makes a customer sticky to you,” he says. “We’re trying to reduce attrition and keep revenue coming in year after year. (Wi-Fi controllers) allow us to create that extra level of stickiness. It’s a matter of us treating the customer properly.”

Lauer says Wi-Fi controllers help Professional Irrigation Systems meet and exceed expectations — especially for customers who upgrade from traditional controllers because they know the inconveniences of the old models.

HANDLING LARGER PROPERTIES

Wi-Fi controllers might not be an ideal fit for some large-scale commercial properties. Haluch says that

Wi-Fi connection can sometimes be fickle when it needs to reach a controller on the outside of a large building.

“Wi-Fi can sometimes be tough on commercial properties,” he says. “Sometimes the Wi-Fi is coming from the middle of the building, and you can have a hard time getting connected to the controller on the outside. But that’s the only time we’ve ever had any issues.”

LITTLE BY LITTLE WE WENT BIGGER AND

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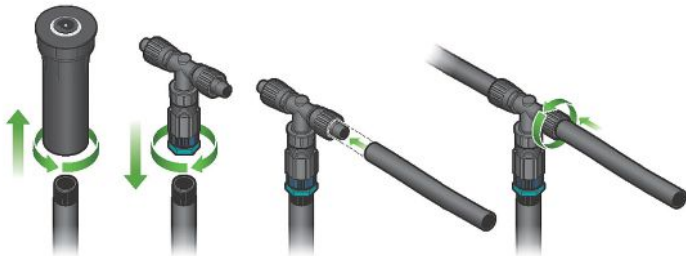


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↑ SPRINKLER TO DRIP CONVERSION KIT

COMPANY: Jain Irrigation
URL: JainsUSA.com

Jain's Sprinkler to Drip Conversion Kit helps to make the conversion to a drip irrigation system easy, according to the company. The kit allows contractors to remove a single pop-up sprinkler to regulate pressure and attach a 17 mm emitter line or 1/2-inch supply tubing.



→ PRO-SPRAY PRS30/40

COMPANY: Hunter Industries
URL: HunterIndustries.com
Hunter Industries' Pro-Spray PRS30 and PRS40 spray bodies save up to 30 percent more water compared to systems without pressure regulation, according to the company. The Pro-Spray's design incorporates interchangeable components. The spray bodies also feature a chemical- and chlorine-resistant co-molded wiper seal and a durable cap.



← R-VAN ROTARY NOZZLES

COMPANY: Rain Bird
URL: RainBird.com

Rain Bird's R-VAN rotary nozzles have a low precipitation rate to reduce run-off and erosion and are available in nine models. All nine share the same matched precipitation rate, so contractors can install any combination of R-VAN nozzles in the same zone. R-VAN nozzles pair well with Rain Bird 1800 Series P-45 spray bodies. A pressure-regulating stem in the spray body reduces excess water pressure to 45 psi, eliminating misting and fogging.



→ PRO-S SPRAYS

COMPANY: K-Rain
URL: KRain.com

K-Rain's Pro-S Sprays 4 and 6 inch models have an optional Stop Flow feature that stops water flow if a nozzle is damaged or removed. K-Rain offers EPA WaterSense certified 30 psi and 40 psi models in states where mandates on pressure regulation are in place. The Pro-S Spray assembly fits into an 1800 spray body for replacement without digging.





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BY PHIL HARWOOD

The author is president and CEO of Pro-Motion Consulting. Reach him at Phil@GrowTheBench.com.

SNOW STRATEGY

Review your scope of work in snow contracts

Contracts for snow and ice management services take different forms across the industry. At one extreme is the simple one-page agreement; at the opposite extreme is an extensive contract containing every imaginable clause and condition. We see this variation in contracts written by both contractors and property owners/management firms.

When reviewing your own contract for snow and ice services, there are some important “scope of work” areas I’d like to highlight. Keep in

mind, contract terms can be negotiable. There is never any harm in attempting to negotiate unfair contract terms before accepting them or walking away if they are not negotiable.

DETAILS MATTER

To begin with, the scope of work section should be accurate and detailed. Make every effort to address potential areas of conflict or disagreement.



Clarify with specificity the areas that otherwise may be ambiguous.

Continued on page 64

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Las Vegas Convention Center | Las Vegas, Nevada



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Turf professionals across the South are calling it the most all-encompassing and easy-to-use herbicide for southern turf available today. Coastal™ can be used safely on all four of the major warm-season turf grasses, and with three active ingredients, it provides superior control of *Poa annua*, crabgrass and other tough weeds with no tank-mixing required. It can be used successfully in a single or sequential application program 6–10 weeks apart. Talk to your Sipcam Agro representative to learn more, or visit sipcamagro.com.



Always read and follow label directions. Coastal is a trademark of Sipcam Agro USA, Inc. ©2021 Sipcam Agro USA, Inc.

SNOW STRATEGY

Continued from page 62

Consider the following questions (not all will apply to every property, but some may):

Are you responsible for dumpster enclosures, cart corrals, gated areas, loading docks, awnings, canopies or anything else unique to the property? If there is a car in the parking lot? How close to the car will you plow? Will you plow between parked vehicles? Are you clearing the snow between the sidewalk and the parking stops? Are you responsible for returning to the property to clear drifting snow hours, or days, after the snow event has ended? Are you responsible for returning to the property to clear snow from a driveway or access road blocked by a municipal snowplow? Are you responsible for public sidewalks?

These are examples of details that you should clarify in your scope of work section.

Clarify expectations for anti-icing and de-icing in this section. Does the contractor have unrestricted

“There is never any harm in attempting to negotiate unfair contract terms.”

decision-making authority? If not, what restrictions apply, and how is liability redistributed? Clarify expectations for both pre-storm and post-storm applications. Specify any requirements for the

type of material, the timing of applications, etc. The goal here and throughout the scope of work section is to avoid surprises during the season.

OTHER THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Many snow and ice management contracts still contain a trigger depth, which implies the scope of work is something less than zero tolerance. In a zero-tolerance contract, the contractor has the discretion to do whatever is needed, based on the weather and time of day. As such, the inclusion of a trigger depth is inconsistent and confusing.

Another consideration is if the client has an expectation for you to inspect the property between storms for refreezing and any action to be taken if needed. Be sure to address this in your scope of work and pricing.

Still another consideration is the location to push the snow. Today, an industry best practice is to designate these snow pile locations on a map and have the customer approve the locations. You can map these locations in cloud-based software programs such as **SnowBidder.com** — a free website for professional snow contractors.

Snow pile locations will vary based on the property. Whenever possible, it is best to leave snow piled in designated areas on top of paved areas, considering the location of drains. Due to the potential for damage to landscaped areas and groundwater contamination, plowing snow or piling snow on landscape or turf areas should only be considered if no other options exist. Melting snow piles should drain into a system designed to collect and process runoff in an environmentally sound way.

Moving snow great distances on properties, relocating snow or hauling snow off the property is generally not part of basic snow plowing. Instead, these are value-added services that require specialized equipment and pricing. Be sure to clarify the expectations for these additional activities in your scope of work section.

Finally, it is important not to refer to “bare pavement” or snow “removal” in your scope of work section unless you mean what you say. While your customer may hope you will catch every snowflake falling out of the sky, this is not generally possible. Your contract should not imply that it is.

A clear and accurate scope of work section may result in a longer contract, but it may also result in a better relationship with your customer.

Now go forth. 🇺🇸



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equip

EXPOSITION

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LOUISVILLE, KY

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EXPOSITION



In 2022, GIE+EXPO becomes Equip Exposition – the proving ground for the industry. It's the one trade show where attendees can test before they invest in new products, new technologies, and new ideas for their business.

After nearly 40 years, it was time to modernize and evolve the show to better reflect what it offers. We've expanded the show schedule, and added new features and programming to improve the experience for you and your team.

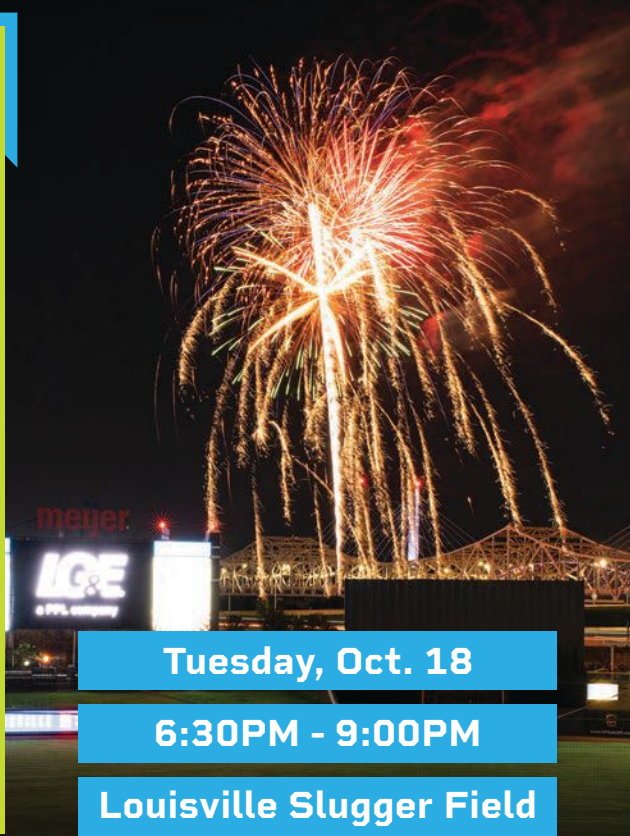


NEW FOR 2022 **TUESDAY NIGHT KICK-OFF**

Join us for food and fireworks at the show's first-ever **Welcome Reception at Louisville Slugger Field.**

Opening Reception Shuttles Provided from the Crowne Plaza, Galt House, Marriott, Omni, and Hyatt Hotels.

Sponsored by Husqvarna and Louisville Tourism



Tuesday, Oct. 18

6:30PM - 9:00PM

Louisville Slugger Field

MULLIGAN'S 5K FUN RUN

Powered by Ariens Co. and the TurfMutt Foundation

Benefiting the Kentucky Humane Society, the event steps off Wednesday at 6:30 a.m. and takes participants across the Ohio River on the city's Big Four pedestrian bridge. Shuttles provided from the Galt House, Marriott, Hyatt, and Omni hotels.



MULLIGAN'S FUN RUN 5K

LOUISVILLE 2022

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www.equipexposition.com

IF YOU NEED IT, IT'S HERE.



SPEND MORE TIME ON THE FLOOR

Landscape professionals get in earlier this year. Trade show doors open at noon Wednesday, Oct. 19.



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INFLUENCER LIVE

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Influencer LIVE combines the largest gathering of industry professionals at Equip Expo and the conversational elements of an interactive podcast into one action-packed space. Influencer LIVE provides attendees with a high energy and engaging atmosphere to hear (and meet) the influential voices that have inspired them to grow and invest in their business.

Hosts: Naylor Taliaferro,
Paul Jamison, and
Caleb Auman



Thursday, Oct. 20

8:00AM - 9:30AM

Event Center

ENERGIZE



Thursday, Oct. 20

2:00PM - 3:30PM

Event Center

Gather with Equip Expo attendees for a candid conversation with contractors working in the field. This motivational discussion will be hosted by some of the industry's leading voices, who will give their first-hand perspective on everything from marketing, hiring, sales, and purchasing.

Hosts: Brian Fullerton,
Mike Andes, Blake Albertson
and Paul Jamison

SOCIAL MEDIA LOUNGE

Sponsored by **EMBO**

The high-energy Social Media Lounge, sponsored by Echo Means Business, gives attendees a chance to recharge and connect with the influencers who are shaping the industry.



GET THE APP



Find the latest show information at your fingertips with the official Equip Exposition app. Download it later this fall to view an interactive trade show map, build your on-site schedule, and keep all your notes in one place.



Sponsored by Husqvarna

www.equipexposition.com

DEMO YARD

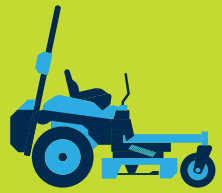


NOW OPEN ALL THREE DAYS

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Admission to the Equip Exposition show floor and outdoor demonstration area is open to adults and children ages 12 and up. Attendees ages 16 and older with a valid driver's license are eligible to operate equipment in the outdoor demonstration area.



OPENING KEYNOTE

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JOHN DEERE



DAVID FEHERLY

David Feherly is a former professional golfer on the European Tour and PGA Tour. He now works as a writer and broadcaster with NBC Sports and Golf Channel. His edgy talk is full of great stories from behind the scenes and an event you don't want to miss.

Wednesday, Oct. 19

11:00AM

Event Center



10

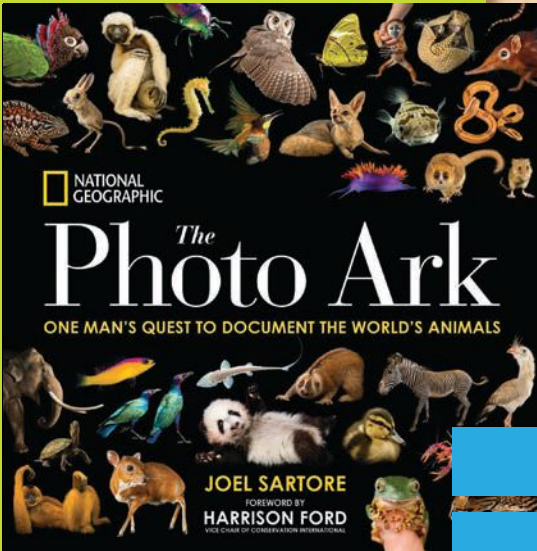
(800) 558-8767

CLOSING KEYNOTE BREAKFAST

Sponsored by **RYOBI**

JOEL SARTORE

Joel Sartore is an award-winning photographer, speaker, author, conservationist, and the 2018 National Geographic Explorer of the Year.



He is a regular contributor to National Geographic Magazine, and an Eagle Scout.

Cost \$15/person

Friday, Oct. 21

7:30AM

Event Center

RYOBI Mower Giveaway

Dealers and landscape professionals are welcome to enter. Visit the RYOBI booth (#1004) during Equip Exposition to enter to win a battery-powered 54-inch RYOBI zero-turn mower. The winner will be announced at the conclusion of the show's closing breakfast.



CONCERT SERIES

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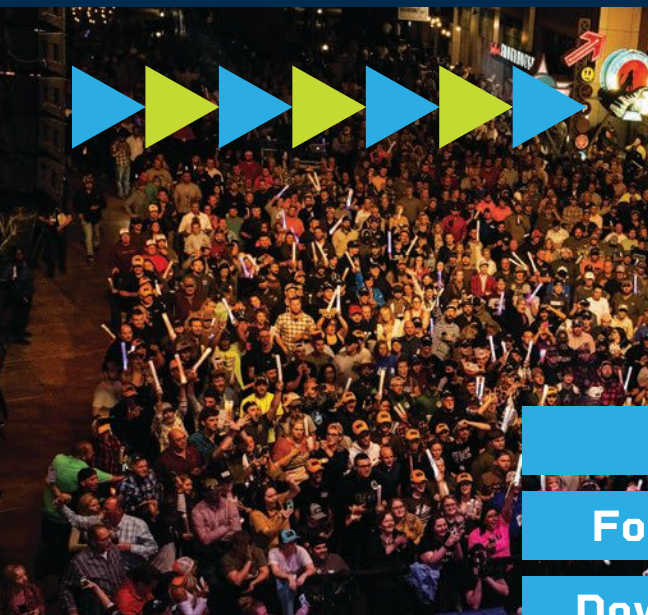
THE CRASHERS

Wednesday, Oct. 19, 8:00PM at Fourth Street Live!



TRACE ADKINS

Thursday, Oct. 20,
8:00PM at Fourth Street Live!



Free Concerts

Fourth Street Live!

Downtown Louisville

LUCKY'S MUTT MADNESS

WHO KNOWS YOUR YARD BEST? YOUR DOG.

Show attendees are welcome to visit the fourth annual Lucky's Mutt Madness in Freedom Hall and adopt a rescue dog.

The event, held in partnership with the Kentucky Humane Society, has found dozens of pups their forever homes since its inception.

Kentucky Humane Society™
Lifelong Friends



Thursday, Oct. 20

11:30AM - 2:00PM

Food Hall

The TurfMutt Foundation has reached more than 70 million students, teachers, and families, and spreads the message that you can save the planet one yard at a time.



SAVING THE PLANET ONE YARD AT A TIME.



UTV TEST TRACK



We've expanded the UTV Test Track, giving you more room to run. Located in the Outdoor Demo Yard, the track lets you compare the latest UTVs and put them through their paces on curves, hills, rocks, bumps, and maybe even a little water and mud.

Attendees 16 or older with a valid driver's license will be able to drive alongside a representative of the manufacturer who can answer all of your product questions – load capacity, features, price, and more!





HARDSCAPE

North America

Equip Expo continues to co-locate with Hardscape North America presented by ICPI-NCMA. All attendees get complimentary access to HNA's indoor exhibits, as well as the Hardscape House and HNA Installer Competition.



Hardscape education is also available by upgrading your Equip trade show registration to include installation demonstrations, workshops focusing on hardscape fundamentals, and an array of other educational opportunities.



EDUCATION



Download our
**EDUCATION
CATALOG**

New in 2022: We've expanded our education opportunities for landscape professionals to broaden their businesses into the latest segments and markets. Build your business with tracks focused on Leadership, Technology, Sales & Profitability, Growing Your Team, Pool and Spa, Landscape Lighting, Tree Care, and Hardscaping.



HARDSCAPE

TRACK EDUCATION
PROVIDED BY



ALL THREE DAYS

Hardscape Demonstration Upgrade - 6 Sessions *Hosted by ICPI-NCMA*

Oct. 19 - 21, 2022 / **Cost: \$85**

Speakers: Gary Ross, Andrew Vear, Joe Raboine, Monroe Porter, Corey Halstead, Frank Bourque, Weston Zimmerman, Corey Halstead, and Donny Duke.

THURSDAY, OCT. 20

Common Hardscaping Business Pitfalls with Frank Bourque *Hosted by ICPI-NCMA*

8:30 AM - 9:45 AM / **Cost: \$65**

Speakers: Frank Bourque

Estimating for Hardscaping Profit and Growth with Weston Zimmerman *Hosted by ICPI-NCMA*

10:30 AM - 11:45 AM / **Cost: \$65**

Speakers: Weston Zimmerman

Plug In Outdoor Lighting to Your Business Offerings *Hosted by the Association of Outdoor Lighting Professionals*

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM / **FREE**

Speakers: Kyle Adamson, CLVLT at Red Oak Outdoor Lighting, and Ryan Jaso at Lighting BOSS

FRIDAY, OCT. 21

Hardscapes and Lighting – A Perfect Match

Hosted by the Association of Outdoor Lighting Professionals

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM / **FREE**

Speakers: Sean Curran, CLVLT at Beautification Through Illumination, and Chris Mitchell, COLD at NiteLites, Inc.



POOL & SPA

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POOL &
HOT TUB
ALLIANCE

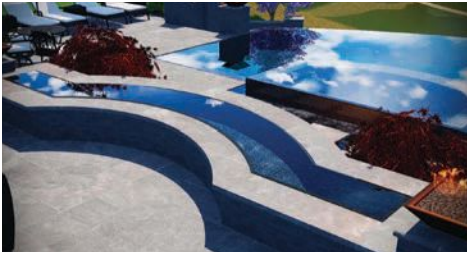


GENESIS
EDUCATE. CERTIFY. CONNECT.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 19

**Defining the Gray Area:
Who Handles What Between a
Designer and an Architect**
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM / **Cost: \$85**
Speakers: Paul John Boulifard and
Jason Brownlee, ASLA

**Pool Design Project Profile – An
Interactive Discussion on Design and
Construction of a Residential Vessel**
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM / **Cost: \$85**
Speakers: Jason Brownlee, ASLA



THURSDAY, OCT. 20

**Incorporating Pool and Hardscape
into Backyard Design Panel Discussion**
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM / **Cost: \$85**
Speakers: Jason Brownlee, ASLA;
Paul John Boulifard, and
Skip Phillips, MCBP

**Dip Your Toes into the World of Pool
Design and Construction**
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM / **Cost: \$85**
Speakers: Skip Phillips, MCBP and
Jason Brownlee, ASLA



SALES & PROFITABILITY

TRACK EDUCATION
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LANDSCAPE
MANAGEMENT

PGMS

THURSDAY, OCT. 20

Sustainable Winter Management (SWiM)®
Hosted by PGMS
8:00 AM - 9:15 AM / **Cost: \$85**
Speaker: Phil Sexton

Influencer LIVE powered by Kohler Engines
Hosted by Equip Exposition
8:00 AM - 9:30 AM / **FREE**
Speakers: Naylor Taliaferro, Paul Jamison, and
Caleb Auman

**Estimating And Bidding For Landscape
Contractors** *Hosted by Landscape Management*
11:15 AM - 12:15 PM / **Cost: \$85**
Speaker: Ken Thomas, COO, The Greenery

Benchmarking For Profit
Hosted by Landscape Management
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM / **Cost: \$85**
Speaker: Jeffrey Scott, President, Jeffrey Scott Consulting

FRIDAY, OCT. 21

The Price Isn't Right
Hosted by Landscape Management
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM / **Cost: \$85**
Speaker: Seth Jones, Editor-in-Chief,
Landscape Management
Panelists: Sam Gembel, Owner, Atlas Outdoor;
Steve Steele, Bruce Wilson & Co.; Phil Harwood,
Managing; Partner, Pro-Motion Consulting; Nada
Duna, COO, Gothic Landscape; Barb Stropko,
Owner, New Desert Gallery

Supply Chain Hacks
Hosted by Landscape Management
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM / **Cost: \$85**
Speakers: Dan Wurgler, Executive Vice President of
Procurement & Operations, Ewing; George Kinkead,
President, Turfco Manufacturing

TECHNOLOGY ◀◀

TRACK EDUCATION
PROVIDED BY



TUESDAY, OCT. 18

Two-Day Remote Pilot Certification

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM / **Cost: \$175**
Speaker: Mark Collins

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 19

Two-Day Remote Pilot Certification

8:00 AM - 3:00 PM / **Cost: \$175**
Speaker: Mark Collins

Tomorrow's Tools ... Today

Presented by Landscape Management
9:00 AM - 10:30 AM / **Cost: \$85**

Speaker: Michael Mayberry,
Moderator: Michael Mayberry, Chief Technical Officer,
Level Green Landscaping
Panelists: Ted Rightmire, CEO, HindSite Software;
Norm Bartlett, President, Creative Sensor Technology



THURSDAY, OCT. 20

Back to Basics: Troubleshooting Your Irrigation System's Electronics

Hosted by PGMS
8:00 AM - 9:15 AM / **Cost: \$85**
Speaker: Brad Jakubowski

The California Equation

Hosted by Equip Exposition
9:15 AM - 10:15 AM / **FREE**
Speakers: Pete Dufau, President,
Dufau Landscape; Sandra Giarde,
Executive Director, California
Landscape Contractors Association;
Brian Helgoe, Founder and CEO,
Monarch Landscape Companies; Evan Moffitt,
Business Development Manager,
SiteOne Landscape Supply; Jack York, Director of
Product Line Development, Ewing
Moderator: Chuck Bowen, Vice President,
Communications and Member Relations, OPEI



ENERGIZE

Hosted by Equip Exposition
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM / **FREE**
Speakers: Brian Fullerton, Mike Andes,
Blake Albertson, and the Paul Jamison

FRIDAY, OCT. 21

Don't Get Zapped! How to Determine the True Cost of Electric

Hosted by PGMS
8:00 AM - 9:15 AM / **Cost: \$85**
Speaker: Brandon Haley



GROW YOUR TEAM

TRACK EDUCATION
PROVIDED BY



WEDNESDAY, OCT. 19

Your Company, Your Culture

Hosted by Landscape Management

12:30 PM - 1:30 PM / **Cost: \$85**

Moderator: Seth Jones, Editor-in-Chief,
Landscape Management

Panelists: Larry Ryan, President, Ryan Lawn &
Tree; Brian Brueggeman, Bruce Wilson & Co.
Ken Thomas, COO, The Greenery; Peter Dufau,
President, Dufau Landscape; Donna Vignocchi,
President, ILT Vignocchi Landscape

30 in 60: Hacks For Help Wanted

Hosted by Landscape Management

1:45 PM - 2:45 PM / **Cost: \$85**

Moderator: Bill Roddy, Publisher,
Landscape Management

Panelists: Taylor Milliken, Milosi,
Owner; Ken Thomas, COO, The Greenery;
Fred Haskett, TrueWinds Consulting; Jim Huston,
President, J.R. Huston Consulting

THURSDAY, OCT. 20

Promoting a Diverse Industry

Hosted by Landscape Management

9:30 AM - 11:00 AM / **Cost: \$85**

Moderator: Christina Herrick, Editor,
Landscape Management

Panelists: Elly Zemerta, Senior Director of Talent,
BrightView; Warren Gorowitz, Director of Corporate
Social Responsibility, Hunter Industries; Darius Lane,
Public Relations Manager, John Deere Ag and
Turf Division; Pam Berrios, Certified Master Bilingual
Trainer and Consultant

FRIDAY, OCT. 21

Let Your Talent Strategy Be a Competitive Advantage

Hosted by PGMS

8:00 AM - 9:15 AM / **Cost: \$85**

Speakers: ShayLynn Ager

LEADERSHIP

TRACK EDUCATION
PROVIDED BY



WEDNESDAY, OCT. 19

Develop Your Second in Command

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM / **Cost: \$85**

Speaker: Jeffrey Scott, President,
Jeffrey Scott Consulting

THURSDAY, OCT. 20

The State of Mergers and Acquisitions in the Landscape Industry

1:45 PM - 2:45 PM / **Cost: \$85**

Moderator: Judy Guido, Chairwoman,
Guido and Associates

Panelists: Ron Edmonds, President, The Principium
Group; Ed Bates, Vice President of Corporate
Development and M&A, BrightView; Palmer Higgins,
CEO, Mainely Grass and Partner, Chenmark

FRIDAY, OCT. 21

Selling Your Business: What Every Operator Needs To Know

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM / **Cost: \$85**

Moderator: Judy Guido, Chairwoman, Guido and
Associates

Panelists: Don Winsett, Vice President of National
Business Development, Davey Tree; Ed Bates, Vice
President of Corporate Development and M&A,
BrightView; James Huston, President, J.R. Huston
Consulting



TREE CARE ◀◀

TRACK EDUCATION
PROVIDED BY



WEDNESDAY, OCT. 19

Safety in the Tree Care Industry

8:45 AM - 10:45 AM / **Cost: \$85**

Speakers: Melissa LeVangie Ingersoll, Bear LeVangie, Rebecca Seibel-Hunt, Emmett Shutts, Alex Julius

Climbing Gear Inspection

12:30 PM - 2:30 PM / **Cost: \$85**

Speakers: Melissa LeVangie Ingersoll, Bear LeVangie, Rebecca Seibel-Hunt, Emmett Shutts, Alex Julius

Safely Tying Into a Tree Before Ascending

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM / **FREE**

Speakers: Melissa LeVangie Ingersoll, Bear LeVangie, Rebecca Seibel-Hunt, Emmett Shutts, Alex Julius

THURSDAY, OCT. 20

Tools of the Trade

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM / **FREE**

Speakers: Melissa LeVangie Ingersoll, Bear LeVangie, Rebecca Seibel-Hunt, Emmett Shutts, Alex Julius

Climbing Systems: What's Best For Me?

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM / **FREE**

Speakers: Melissa LeVangie Ingersoll, Bear LeVangie, Rebecca Seibel-Hunt, Emmett Shutts, Alex Julius

Working the Tree, Work Positioning, and Changing Tie-In Points

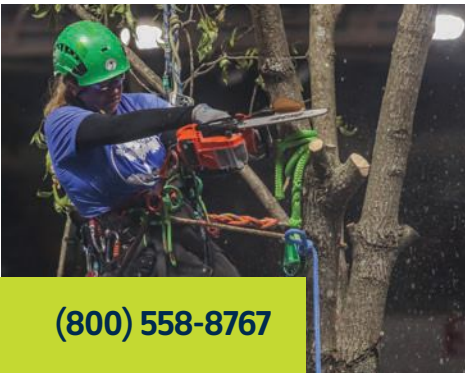
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM / **FREE**

Speakers: Melissa LeVangie Ingersoll, Bear LeVangie, Rebecca Seibel-Hunt, Emmett Shutts, Alex Julius

Fundamentals of Pruning Cuts and the Legacy We Leave

4:00 PM - 4:45 PM / **FREE**

Speakers: Melissa LeVangie Ingersoll, Bear LeVangie, Rebecca Seibel-Hunt, Emmett Shutts, Alex Julius



FRIDAY, OCT. 21

Static vs Dynamic Rigging: What You Need To Know

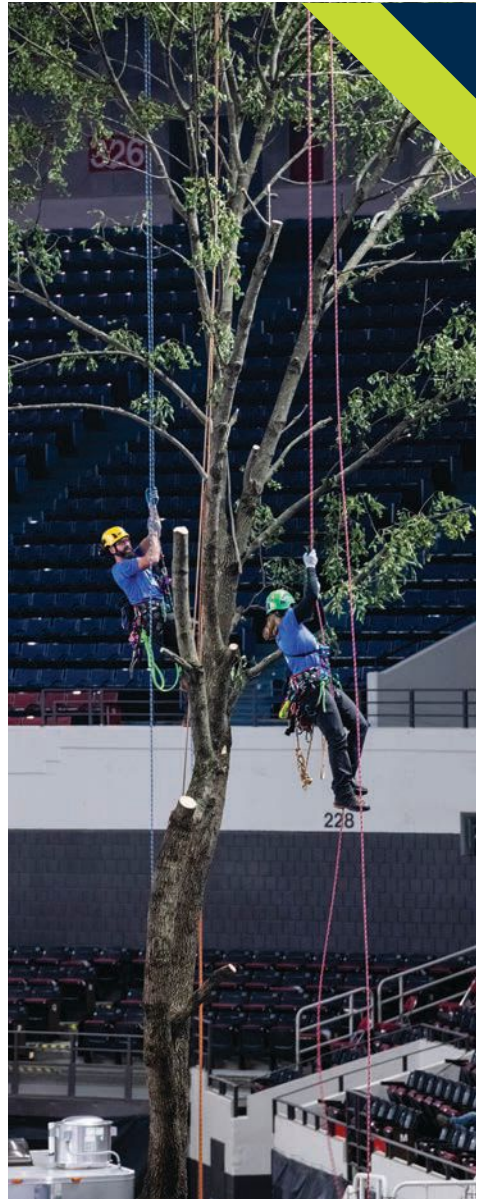
9:30 AM - 10:30 AM / **FREE**

Speakers: Melissa LeVangie Ingersoll, Bear LeVangie, Rebecca Seibel-Hunt, Emmett Shutts, Alex Julius

Tree Removal Techniques Including Positioning, Cutting & Rigging

11:30 AM - 1:30 PM / **FREE**

Speakers: Melissa LeVangie Ingersoll, Bear LeVangie, Rebecca Seibel-Hunt, Emmett Shutts, Alex Julius

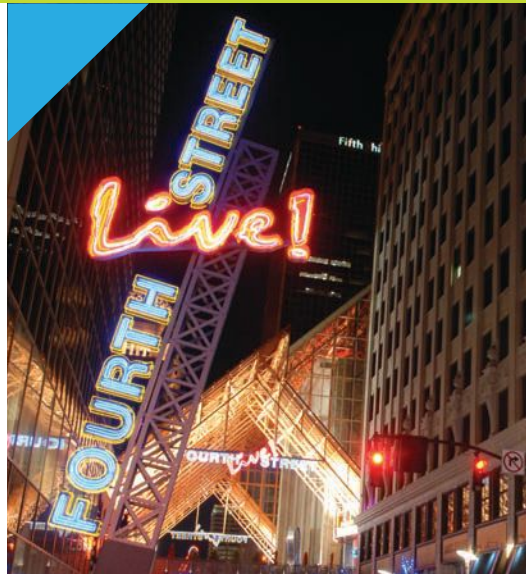


LAND IN LOUISVILLE

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WELCOME TO THE RIVER CITY

As the 16th largest city in the U.S., Louisville is home to over 90 attractions, 17,000 hotel rooms, and 2,500 restaurants. Located on the banks of the Ohio River, Louisville is easily accessible and within a day's drive of nearly half of the nation's population. The Louisville International Airport, only seven minutes from downtown, handles nearly 100 flights per day, and is across the street from the Kentucky Exposition Center.



EASY TO GET TO. EASY TO NAVIGATE.



HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Louisville Tourism provides the lowest available room rates at event hotels. List of rates available at equipexposition.com under Hotel & Travel.

To make reservations by phone, call the Louisville Housing Bureau at (800) 743-3100

SHUTTLE SERVICES

Equip Exposition will run shuttle buses between select hotels and the Kentucky Exposition Center and on the final day to the airport. See shuttle schedule at equipexposition.com/whats-new/shuttle-routes-2022.

AIRLINE DISCOUNTS

American Airlines discount fares are available by contacting their Meeting Services Desk at (800) 433-1790. Use authorization number: A59H2DV

Delta Airlines offers up to a 10% discount on flights. Search flights at www.delta.com/meetings, select 'Book Your Flight,' and use Meeting Code NMVSD. For groups of 10 or more, call (800) 328-1111.

United Airlines offers up to a 10% discount on flights. Search flights at www.united.com/meetingtravel and use Z Code: ZM5T583468, or call United Reservations Meetings at (800) 426-1122.

Southwest Airlines offers 5% off all fares to Louisville. Book starting June 15 and travel Oct. 16-24. Go to www.swabiz.com/flight and use code SWABIZ/SPS CID# 99636972.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

To register online please visit equipexposition.com. After Sept. 30, fees are nonrefundable. See additional trade show policies at equipexposition.com/tradeshows-policies.

Exhibitors, please use this form for your customers only.

Editors/Publishers: please visit equipexposition.com/media-info to fill out the media application for consideration.

REGISTRATION DEADLINES

Early Bird: Register by Sept. 9 for \$20 per person.

Pre-Registration: \$40 per person from Sept. 10 - Oct. 14.

Register at the show for \$80 per person.

Online Registration: www.equipexposition.com

Registrations cannot be taken over the phone.



2022 REGISTRATION FORM

ATTENDEE INFORMATION (ONE FORM REQUIRED PER ATTENDEE)

Admission to the Equip Exposition show floor and outdoor demonstration area is open to adults and children ages 12 and up.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____ Fax: () _____

Country if outside the U.S.: _____

Email Address: _____

REGISTRATION CATEGORY

CHECK ONE THAT DESCRIBES YOUR BUSINESS.

- 17 Manufacturer / Supplier / Media Sales / Agencies*
 - 22 Lawn & Landscape Pro
 - 23 General Contractor
 - 24 Golf Course Super / Equip Mgr
 - 25 Educational Facility
 - 26 Parks & Rec. / Municipality / Cemetery
 - 27 Forest & Land Management
 - 28 Nursery
 - 31 Sports Turf
 - 33 Arborist
 - 34 Hardscape Professional
- *Category #17: Through Sept. 9 – \$350 Per registrant. After Sept. 9 – \$450 Per registrant. Payable to Equip Exposition.

FEATURED EVENTS

EVENT TITLE	TIME	COST	\$
Mulligan's 5K Fun Run	WED 6:30 AM	\$40/per	
Closing Keynote & Breakfast with Joel Sartore	FRI 7:30 AM	\$15/per	
Lunches at Expo: Taste of Kentucky on Wednesday	WED 11 AM - 3 PM	\$23/per	
Lunches at Expo: Southern BBQ on Thursday	THUR 11 AM - 3 PM	\$23/per	
Lunches at Expo: Little Italy on Friday	FRI 11 AM - 1 PM	\$23/per	

LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

CLASS TITLE	TIME	CODE	COST	\$
Two-Day Remote Pilot Certification [Drone Training]	TUE 8AM-4PM & WED 8AM-3PM	147-1 & 147-2	\$175	
Hardscape Demonstrations Upgrade - 6 Sessions	WED - FRI SESSIONS	231	\$85	
Arbor Training: Safety in the Tree Care Industry	WED 8:45AM - 10:45AM	145-1	\$85	
Defining the Gray Area: Who Handles What Between a Designer and an Architect	WED 9AM - 10AM	340-1	\$85	
Tomorrow's Tools ... Today	WED 9AM - 10:30AM	240-1	\$85	
Your Company, Your Culture	WED 12:30PM - 1:30PM	240-2	\$85	
Arbor Training: Climbing Gear Inspection	WED 12:30PM - 2:30PM	145-2	\$85	
30 in 60: Hacks For Help Wanted	WED 1:45PM - 2:45PM	240-3	\$85	
Pool Design Project - An Interactive Discussion on Design/Construction...	WED 2PM - 3PM	340-2	\$85	
Develop Your Second in Command	WED 3PM-4PM	240-4	\$85	
Sustainable Winter Management (SWiM)®	THUR 8AM - 9:15AM	142-1	\$85	
Common Hardscaping Business Pitfalls with Frank Bourque	THUR 8:30AM - 9:45AM	230-1	\$65	
Incorporating Pool and Hardscape into Backyard Design Panel Discussion	THUR 9AM - 10AM	340-3	\$85	
Promoting a Diverse Industry	THUR 9:30AM - 11AM	204-5	\$85	
Estimating for Hardscaping Profit and Growth with Weston Zimmerman	THUR 10:30AM - 11:45AM	230-2	\$65	
Estimating And Bidding For Landscape Contractors	THUR 11:15AM - 12:15PM	240-6	\$85	
The State of Mergers and Acquisitions in the Landscape Industry	THUR 1:45PM - 2:45PM	240-7	\$85	
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Benchmarking For Profit	THUR 3PM - 4PM	240-8	\$85	
Back to Basics: Troubleshooting Your Irrigation System's Electronics	THUR 8AM - 9:15AM	142-2	\$85	
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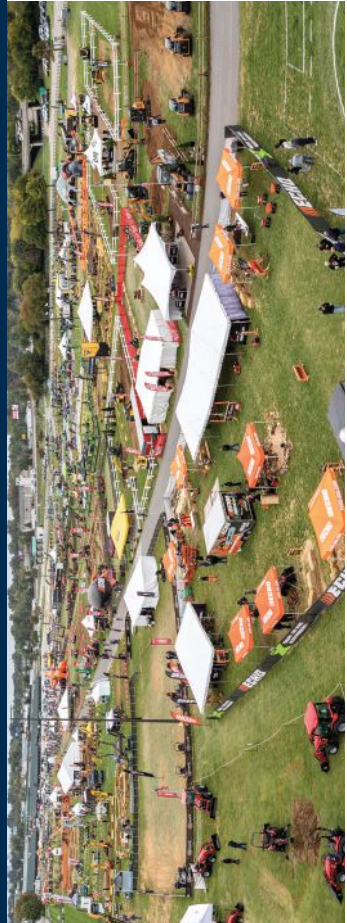
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BUSINESS BOOSTERS

Why snow and ice insurance is such a challenge

Experts say high risk and liability make it tough for companies with snow and ice removal to find and keep coverage

BY CHRISTINA HERRICK | LM EDITOR

Ask Craig Lillis, president and owner of GroundsCare Landscape in Somerville, N.J., if it's been easy for him to secure insurance coverage for the snow and ice removal portion of his business, and he'll tell you it's no walk in the park.

"We struggle just getting one option on the table," he says. "We're a good company. We don't have a lot of claims. We do a lot of safety training. We focus on snow all year long. We do all the right things, and last year, I literally had one option."

GroundsCare Landscape offers primarily commercial design/build, maintenance and irrigation services. Snow and ice removal is also a big portion of the business. Although his business does between \$4 million to \$6 million in snow services annually, liability is high in New Jersey, Lillis says.

"We're paying premiums to the tune of \$200,000 to \$300,000, even if you can get policies," he says.

Jared Perkoski, senior risk adviser with FBinsure in Taunton, Mass., says what Lillis faces is consistent with what he's seen as an insurance agent.

"Over the past few years with litigation, there's been a lot more liability that's been pushed on to the snow contractors. Because of that liability, there's going to be more claims because that liability continues to get pushed down to the person providing the service or their subcontractors," he says, noting those increases in slip-and-fall claims drive insurance premiums higher.

HOW TO AVOID THOSE HIGH PREMIUMS

Perkoski says not all snow and ice service providers will face the issues of high premiums and little choice. It depends on how much of the business is in snow and ice. Some operations can roll snow and ice coverage into the policy for the rest of the business.

"If you have clean loss runs, and if you do not have a history of losses over an extended period of time, that's going to be a check mark in the positive column for you if you're trying to obtain insurance," he says. "If 75 percent or 80 percent of your revenue is coming from your landscaping operations, that's going to be another check mark."

Another key factor is the type of properties the snow and ice management company serves. Big box stores or 24-hour drug stores might make it harder, but not impossible, he points out, because of the possibility of more risk and liability.

"If you're just doing churches, hardware stores, business and office parks, you're likely to get insurance coverage with your existing policy," he says. "It's when the majority of your revenue is derived from snow, you have a couple \$100,000 claims sitting out there and then on top of that, maybe you're doing those high-risk properties, you've got no shot at combining it into your landscape or other policy."

From there, companies will need to look to the excess and surplus market for snow-specific policies, which could mean higher premiums for coverage.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER


Perkoski says contractors need to think about ways to set their snow and ice service apart, such as implementing software to log service visits, tagged with GPS and tied to a weather service. Ensuring employees have Snow and Ice Management Association certifications also helps. Those steps show the insurance underwriter the operation seeks to reduce risk.

"Go out there, get educated, invest in technology, get your employees certified, all that stuff will help you in the long run," he says.

It's also important for owners to consider the expiration date for policies. Perkoski encourages contractors to work with an insurance agent to ensure renewals come at a time that doesn't impact the snow and ice season.

"You don't want to be hit with a renewal of insurance on Jan. 1 because you're going to be halfway through your season," he says.

Perkoski says a large policy jump mid-season could be costly and the contractor would be stuck absorbing that cost, unable to pass that cost on to customers.

"August is kind of like the last date we want to start doing this," he says. "Usually, August is when the landscapers start to put in their snow and ice bids. June or July is kind of the sweet spot. They have a lot of receivables coming in from mowing lawns or doing excavation work, so they have a lot of positive cash flow at that point." 



FIVE QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW BY SETH JONES | LM EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Bruce Allentuck

**PRESIDENT, ALLENTUCK LANDSCAPING CO.
ROCKVILLE, MD.**

1 Tell me about your company, and how did you get into the business?

Our company is celebrating 35 years. We're a residential design/build maintenance company here in Montgomery County, Maryland. We have about 32 staff members and our average tenure for crew leaders is 17 years. It's a great period in our company. I've been in the industry since I was 16. I started out mowing lawns with my best friend. I went and got a degree in landscape design and horticulture from North Carolina State. I was really naïve about the industry; I started the business my junior year of college. My parents' friends and some relatives tried to discourage me from taking this path, but my parents were steadfast in their support. I'm eternally grateful for that because we have a great business and a great life.

2 How was 2022 Renewal & Remembrance?

This is my second stint as chairman of Renewal & Remembrance. I've been involved in it a long time and I plan on staying in it for a long time. This year went fantastic. It was a bigger challenge because we are at two sites: Arlington National Cemetery and the National Mall. Everything went off without a hitch and

that's because we have wonderful people in leadership roles. If you talk to anyone there, they'll concur that it's a great experience in these amazing outdoor green spaces that are so important to our country. I think everybody walked away feeling like they contributed.

3 How big is your family and what do you do for fun?

I have three daughters, all grown, and one grandchild. I've been married 33 years. We're spread out in Dayton (Ohio), Denver and New York City. We talk every single day. We're a real tightknit unit. We try to get together three times a year, if not more. We were just all out in Denver visiting my youngest, Nellie; she is a sports writer out there (covering the Colorado Rockies). We spent every day hiking and running trails, then visiting breweries — we had a blast. My other two daughters are also doing great things with their lives and I am extremely proud of all of them.

4 You mentioned that you are active in sports. What kind of sports?

I'm an ultra-endurance athlete. I have been doing that for 20-some years. I've done Ironmans, marathons and lots of adventure races. I love trail running now. I've done over 100 races. I try to push myself. It's gotten harder as I've gotten older, but I'm hanging in there. I get up around 4 or 4:30 every day. I'm in the pool by 5. I'm a big early morning person; I don't mind hitting trails in the dark. I have the philosophy that I'm not going to be a top-tier athlete — I don't have the physiology for it. Whatever I put in is what I get out, and I just enjoy myself, and strive to do my best.

BEST ADVICE

"It took me a long time to realize this, but it really is all about people. If you take care of your people, they will take care of your customers. If you don't, they won't."



5 Do you have a memorable day at work that stands out?

I don't look for big, huge wins. There are so many little wins to celebrate every day. We have a crew leader development program called "Achieves." We set five people in it every six months. Every other Thursday, they meet for the entire day, and they're trained by our two production managers, cross-trained in everything we do. Watching these future leaders grow every two weeks is a big thing to me. I come back pumped up and excited. I don't need big wins and big days. If we eke out something every day to get a little bit better and if we enjoy what we do, that's enough for me. 🙌

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BY GREG HERRING

The author is the CEO of The Herring Group, financial leaders serving landscape companies. He can be reached at greg.herring@herring-group.com.

Why anchoring weighs down the profitability of your business

Although we may not like to admit it, we are all prone to cognitive biases. What is a cognitive bias?

Simply irrational thinking.

In the landscape business, a cognitive bias called anchoring can hold us back on our path to increasing our profit margin (profit divided by revenue). In turn, anchoring can also affect our life margin. Life margin is the excess time and energy an owner no longer needs to invest in the company to make it successful.

Anchoring happens when one data point influences our decisions. Nobel Prize winner Daniel Kahneman details this phenomenon in his book “Thinking, Fast and Slow.” If you consider how much you should pay for a house, he explains, the asking price will influence your decision. Anchoring occurs even if you try to resist the influence of this number.

ANCHORING AND PRICING

Let’s consider how anchoring may affect a landscaping business, starting with pricing.

How many times have you had account managers say, “We can’t charge that much!” when discussing client price increases? No doubt, they suffer from the anchor effect.

My hypothesis is, many of us anchor to prices from our twenties. If you are a business owner in your forties or fifties, how good are your instincts on pricing? My guess is they are outdated. I have observed that the longer people have been in the business, the lower their anchor prices.

THE WEIGHT OF MONEY

The anchoring effect also may affect your approach to salaries and technology expenses. It is not uncommon to hear owners say, “I can’t pay \$100,000 for an account manager!” They are used to paying less and cannot fathom wages have increased so much, even if they understand the economics of the situation.

Another common thing we hear in the landscape industry is, “I can’t spend \$50,000 a year on software!” People are accustomed to spending just a few thousand dollars a year on QuickBooks and Microsoft Office. This anchor for software is low. Would you spend more if you could make more?

OUTSMART THE ANCHOR

So, how can you overcome the anchoring effect?

1 Recognize anchoring exists and discuss it with your team. Talk about inflation and price increases with your account managers and business developers. Refer to things



they experience in their daily lives — the price of gas is the most obvious. Extend the discussion to fertilizer, chemical prices and the shortage of field labor. Help them overcome the psychological hurdle of raising prices. For example, allow them to take small steps, like increasing prices for a few clients to gauge reaction or, as we have frequently found, the lack of reaction. Small steps increase their confidence to raise prices on the remaining portfolio of properties.

2 Don’t price your services by instinct alone. What you have in your head as “a \$10,000 job” is not the same as it used to be. It was never a good idea to price jobs by eyeballing them and it is even worse in today’s inflationary environment. Your profitability will suffer if you continue to price this way going forward.

3 Use data to inform your decisions. If you have a robust landscape business management software system, you have great data on the profitability of your maintenance contracts, snow removal and ice management contracts and the performance of your business developers, account managers and production managers. The Herring Group’s Annual Landscape Industry Peer Benchmark Report provides information on the profitability of more than 100 landscape companies. Finally, you can get salary data from several places, including peer groups and associations.

It can be uncomfortable to raise prices or pay more than we are used to for salaries or business tools. However, recognizing the anchor to old information is the right move.



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BY KEN THOMAS

The author is COO of The Greenery and principal of Envisor Consulting. Reach him at kenthomas@envisorsco.com.

What Atlanta's finest steakhouse teaches us about process

I've heard it many times: The landscape business is not rocket science. But you wouldn't know it by the chaos that we seem to create constantly in our daily business experience.

I have yet to meet a landscape professional who isn't committed to quality and service, even at the expense of redoing a job to make a client happy or to satisfy his or her own quality standards. But why can't we seem to get it right the first time and every time, consistently? Let me draw an analogy between running a landscape business and operating a fine dining establishment.

One of my favorite entertaining spots in Atlanta is New York Prime Steak House. I never have to worry about having a fantastic dining experience when I visit with clients or friends. The team delivers excellence each and every time. How do they do it?

A PROCESS FOR EVERYTHING

Successful restaurants, or any businesses for that matter, consistently deliver an excellent experience to their guests with a proven set of processes combined in a system that guarantees success. They don't leave it up to chance.

One recent night after a great dinner with friends, I stopped to thank and compliment the manager, Jim. I asked him to share how he consistently "gets it right" time and time again.

The first thing he said was, "It's my people — they're great!"

"Yes, they are great," I replied, "but what makes them great? I mean, a lot of places hire great people."

He said, "What makes our people great is our process."

"Your process for what?" I asked.

Jim smiled and greeted another guest, then he said, "The process we have for everything." He continued: "Our process for buying only the finest quality ingredients, our process for storing them in the safest way to keep them fresh, our process for choosing our menu items and our process for training our team, the process for how we greet you at the door, the process for how we seat you and serve you ..."

“Process development starts by identifying ideal outcomes and comparing them to existing outcomes.”

Jim went on about how effective processes organize tasks into manageable groups that can be easily taught, measured and improved. He noted that while his people are sharp, the processes make them even sharper because they can focus on the guest experience rather than dealing with the chaos that can come with managing tasks.

I asked him how he set up all those processes and got his team to buy in. He replied, "Our entire business is made up of our system of delivering a quality dining experience to our guests. We realized that if we could become really good at delivering one fantastic meal experience, we could figure out how to replicate that."

Some of Jim's ideal dining experience outcomes include:

- Profitability (not giving away meals because of incompetence).
- Comparing current to ideal outcomes to identify gaps.
- Prioritizing gaps in outcomes to build processes to yield desired outcomes.
- Measuring gaps to boost processes.

By now, I hope you realize that this is not an article about the restaurant business. Market-leading companies don't leave success up to chance. Operations intentionally design systems and processes that guarantee ideal outcomes.

TAKE-HOME MESSAGE

What did Jim teach us about processes? Processes allow us to organize tasks into groups, help sharp people be even sharper, consistently achieve our ideal outcomes and focus on our clients rather than on tasks.

Process development starts by identifying ideal outcomes and comparing them to existing outcomes. Our businesses are composed of a multitude of sales. Each sale follows the same sequence from contract to completion. If we can determine how to produce one sale effectively and efficiently, and develop and document the process, then we should be able to replicate that process for every sale.

So, how many times do we need to hear about the value of standard operating procedures? This industry is too competitive to give away work or re-work, for that matter. Most landscape companies stuck along the way have failed to identify, develop, document and implement standard operating procedures.

Now that you know, don't be one of them! 📌

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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.

How to set up your business to successfully retire in place

Last month I wrote about how selling your business is a bad investment and highlighted alternative strategies to grow your business wealth. This article shows how to set up your business to run itself day-to-day so you can retire in place. Use this five-point program as a checklist:

1 BUILD THE FOUNDATION

The first step is to implement a clear mission, vision and values (MVV) for your business. It's as old as the Bible itself.

Moses' mission was to bring the Jews safely out of Egypt. The values adhered to were the Ten Commandments and the vision that kept the Jews holding on for 40 years was the dream of reaching the land of milk and honey.

You should develop your MVV together with your people to ensure buy-in. No more decrees handed down from on high.

Once developed, your team must actively use your company's MVV when giving employee feedback, making strategic moves and considering big decisions such as hiring, firing, etc. Use your MVV as a guide

for discussion and agreement. Teach the rank and file how to use the MVV in their everyday decisions, too.

Pro tip: Survey your team periodically for improvements to make sure to keep productivity and morale high.

2 CHOOSE YOUR MOUNTAIN

Years ago, GE decided it would only compete in markets where the business was No. 1 or No. 2, not dabble in markets where it had no chance to dominate.

You can follow a similar strategy that I call "*King of The Mountain.*" Pick a client niche, geography and service mix that creates a unique opportunity for your company to build a large market share.

Look for niches that play to the natural strengths of your business and not the competition. This allows you to build a moat around your business and helps your organization focus resources and build a deeper bench.

3 PRODUCTIZE YOUR SERVICES

It's hard to specialize in custom work without keeping your finger on the pulse. Simplify and package your services by limiting options and service configurations.

Lawn care firms sell a fixed program for a fixed fee. You can apply this thinking to everything from installation to irrigation by limiting material choices, installation regimens, design choices and maintenance packages.

4 USE AN ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS

Every great company is accountable to a clear set of systems. They

don't need to be perfect, but they need to be followed by everyone with a clear understanding of roles.

Your team needs an *accountability process* to keep your systems in use and updated. Some companies use a comprehensive quality management system (like ISO 9000), while others create simple lists and regularly review implementation to ensure everyone is on the same page.

5 GAMIFY OPERATIONS

To retire in place, you want your team to win, win often and know the wins. Like a sports team, every position should have clear metrics (see Nos. 1-4) to identify a win each day/week.

I help many clients set up open-book management to encourage buy-in and ownership thinking. It still requires the use of scorecards, so everyone knows what his or her role is in winning the game.

It's critical to keep the game *fun*. Make sure the data is believable and timely, the metrics are clear and simple and your team wins more often than it loses.

When done right, these metrics will roll up to the leadership team, integrate with your monthly budgets and allow you to keep your finger on the pulse from afar.

YOUR CHALLENGE

To implement this plan, you need the right leaders in place who buy in to your vision and can implement it.

Next month, I'll address how to build a super leadership team and identify who will be your first-in-command. Having a second-in-command may not be enough. 🗣️

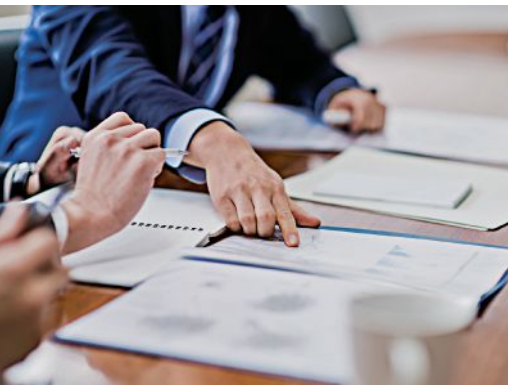


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BY BOB MANN

The author is the director of state and local government relations for the National Association of Landscape Professionals. Reach him at Bob@landscapeprofessionals.org.

The lifeblood of our industry

Sometimes serendipity can really blow your mind and remind you how blessed you are to work in the green industry. Here's something that happened to me recently. The first association I became involved with was the Massachusetts Association of Lawn Care Professionals. Fortunately, we shorten that to MALCP, so we don't run out of breath saying it. I can trace my membership back to roughly 1988, so there are friends in the association that I have known longer than I've known my wife.

We'll put together a couple of events each year to provide opportunities for pesticide recertification credits, one during the winter and another in the summer. These events were my opportunity to try my hand at public speaking. This year, MALCP asked me to speak at our Summer Seminar at a beautiful botanical garden.

Flash forward to a recent weekly NALP staff meeting. Our event staff went over the details of our annual Field Trip this year in Massachusetts. Wouldn't you know it? The MALCP Summer Seminar and the NALP Field Trip reception were on the exact same date in the same botanic garden. What are the chances?

(See page 8 for LM's recap of the Field Trip).

The MALCP Summer Seminar was great. Not as many people attended as we would have liked, but those who were there were attentive, engaged and grateful to be together after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. As the sun went down, the NALP reception

“I can trace my membership back to roughly 1988, so there are friends in the association that I have known longer than I've known my wife.”

kicked off with a catered potato bar and some libations for the 150 attendees. The host company, R.P. Marzilli & Co., had recently finished a two-year construction project at the garden that was nothing short of sublime.

SPIRIT OF COLLABORATION

At NALP, I am one of two horticultural professionals on staff. My colleagues are association professionals who bring their varied skills to running associations in many different industries. I was surprised to learn from them that people in many other industries do not get along with each other at all.

The green industry is quite the opposite. Maybe it's the humbling nature of the work trying to keep plants alive. Perhaps it's the respect for the creativity and skill in designing, building and maintaining landscapes. And if you've ever been to one of NALP's events, you don't go long without making a new friend.

This culture of friendship was certainly evident to me the next morning as the Field Trip participants gathered at dawn, shuffled onto buses and made their way down the road to Marzilli's headquarters for a facility tour. We divided into small groups and traveled from one station to the next to learn how they do everything from sourcing plant material to recycling granite curbing.

I've been in the business for quite a while now and worked for many different companies, doing many different things. Along the way, I've had the privilege to work with so many wonderful people. As I walked from station to station during the tour, I got a chance to speak briefly with my friend Rick Wing for a few minutes. He and I worked together in the early 1990s, after which he joined Marzilli. It not only was great to see him, but it is also great to see how successful he has become.

But the best part of my day was talking to people just getting started in their careers in the green industry. Quite a few remarked how much fun they had participating in NALP's National Collegiate Landscape Competition and how it helped prepare

them for their careers. It is this kind of collaboration that is the lifeblood of our industry and that collaboration starts when you begin giving of yourself through participation in your state association and hopefully NALP too.


I know for a fact that is the case for me. 



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AD INDEX

Albaugh.....	27
Andersons, The.....	5
ASV.....	59
Bailey Nurseries.....	22
Bayer CropScience.....	21
Bobcat Co.....	55
Ecologel Solutions.....	24
FMC Professional Solutions.....	CV3
Grasshopper Co., The.....	CV2
Greenworks Commercial.....	9-16
Hardscapes North America/HNA.....	57
Home Depot Rental, The.....	90
Horizon Distributors.....	61
Husqvarna.....	7
Irrigation Association.....	62
Isuzu.....	3
John Deere.....	CV4
Kershaw Law Firm, The.....	OTS1*
Landscape Depot Investments.....	BB*
Leaf Burrito.....	64
NALP/ELEVATE.....	25, 99
NaturaLawn.....	102
OPEI/Equip Exposition.....	65-89
PBI-Gordon Corp.....	31
Pike Creek Turf.....	101
Portable Winch.....	101
PRO Landscape by Drafix Software.....	26
Progressive Insurance.....	23
Quali-Pro.....	95
Sipcam Agro USA.....	63
SmartGate.....	101
Spring-Green Lawn Care.....	56
Steel Green Manufacturing.....	93
Syngenta.....	53
Turkuhi Manufacturing.....	97
Turfco.....	51

*denotes regional advertisement
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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.



Why it's important to keep an eye on your backlog

If you're like Grunder Landscaping Co. (GLC) and most of the landscape companies we've talked to over the past two years, backlogs and wait times are as long as they've ever been. At GLC, a client who calls us right now for a pool project is waiting until 2024 to have it installed.

I'm not one to complain about the strong demand for landscaping, but some challenges come with this market, especially with the labor environment. It can be difficult to get clients to wait for your schedule and to keep them engaged while they wait for their project to start.

We can't control the economy, and I say we should all be out making hay while the sun shines. To make the most of the strong demand we see right now, I always go back to one of my favorite adages, "All planning is good." Here's a two-step process you can use to fill holes in your schedule and target more of the work you need throughout the year.

STEP 1: FORECAST SALES

It's vital to pay attention to what's on the schedule 30, 60 and 90 days out. Thanks to the routine forecasting we do at GLC, we identified in the spring that while we were booked solid for jobs that include a hardscaping component, we would have room in the fall for small- to medium-sized landscaping installations.

To make sure we're always looking ahead, we review the following key performance indicators for sales monthly:

- Gross profit
- Sold backlog
- Forecasted backlog

“I'm not one to complain about the strong demand for landscaping, but some challenges come with this market ...”

- Capture rate percentage
- Monthly goals
- Work proposed/estimating

We also review metrics during our weekly sales meeting to always track our progress. It's easy to get caught up in the day-to-day and lose track of what's ahead. Had we not kept our finger on the pulse, we could have missed this opportunity, leaving us scrambling to fill the crew's time at the last minute.

STEP 2: FILL THE HOLES

After forecasting gaps in your schedule, the next step is to communicate these opportunities to your sales team and adjust their priorities accordingly. In the example above, we made sure the design/build sales team knew that landscaping-only jobs were top on our list of projects to sell, and we revisited the marketing we were doing to align our messaging with this new priority.

It starts with establishing goals for the team and breaking down those goals by sales manager or salesperson. Lay out weekly or monthly targets and drive toward those goals with regular check-ins. This shouldn't be a top-down exercise. Engage your team in setting these goals and in planning to reach them. As with every aspect of your business, buy-in from your team is everything.

Don't underestimate the impact of reporting. To use an old sports analogy: How can you win if you don't know the score? Establish weekly and monthly reporting processes so everyone can see the scoreboard and know how far the team has to go to bring home a W.

Finally, it should go without saying: The most important part of setting and reaching goals in your company is rewarding and celebrating the people who achieve them. Yes, it's their job to show up and sell work, but it's your job to motivate them. Incentives and financial rewards should be a given. And don't forget that personal acknowledgment and company-wide recognition go a long way. No one should leave at the end of the day wondering if they're appreciated or not.

Having a plan for how you will grow your business and tracking your progress throughout the year is the only way for your company to grow. Even with long backlogs and high demand for our services, smart companies will continue watching their sales. 📈

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