



It's One Tough Bluegrass.



RAMBO BLUEGRASS

Other bluegrass varieties looked like sissies in comparison as **Rambo** outranked top challengers in demanding transition-zone tests. While others whimpered and withered, **Rambo** withstood brown patch, leaf spot and melting out, and was virtually unscathed by necrotic ring spot. As you might expect, **Rambo** was also among the densest. Thick with fine leaf texture, it stood strong even when mowed down to 1/2 inch. If grass knew fear, **Rambo** wouldn't. For extreme confidence, put **Rambo** in your turf today.

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JACKLIN
S E E D

Simplot Turf and Horticulture



Award Rules



High Tolerance At Short Cuts

No matter how you gauge performance, **Award** measures up. It handles disease pressure better than other Kentucky bluegrass varieties in its class, even when cut as short as 1/2 inch.* And trial after trial proves that **Award** maintains its intense dark green color under varying management regimes. **Award** has earned its status as an elite variety by raising performance standards to a whole new level. But, isn't that what you would expect from  Jacklin's Five Steps Above™ Program?

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*NTEP data available upon request.

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readily available.

- * Ability to talk with other franchisees.
- * Franchiser provides established marketing and advertising plan.

Cons

- * Franchise has fixed initial investment.
- * You must follow the rules of the franchise agreement.
- * The franchise may not offer an exclusive territory.
- * Financial results must be reported to franchiser and a fee paid based on revenue volume.

The risk/time tradeoff

Before making a decision to start a new service, consider how much risk you can accommodate. Risk can be in the form of money, people or concept.

All too often, an owner finds that a new service is requiring more management involvement than initially envisioned. Consider what could happen to the current

business if you and your managers are unable to concentrate on the core business while you get the new offering launched.

Establishing a budget

Develop the first year's budget of the new service based on a conservative estimate of its potential performance. Assume that events will not occur as predictably as you might wish. Allow for some shortfall in revenue and some overspending. Assume certain startup costs and also include the efficiency of office personnel services.

Mixed Mowing & Maintenance's budget for the addition of seasonal color service is shown below. While it may not reflect your new startup, it contains the type of costs and operating planning you should address when offering a new service:

1. Sales

Revenue is based on assumed customers from the current client base determined by the current customer survey and a projection of customers we can attract.

2. Operating Expenses

The cost of flowers is based on the cost per flat of flowers. Shop around early on in the process for volume discounts. Develop a realistic picture of your expenses.

Vehicle costs relate to the new vehicle purchased for the new service. Don't pass along an old vehicle to a new service. Budget also for vehicle operating costs for fuel, oil, maintenance and other items.

Labor. When a new service is started, often it doesn't run smoothly unless sales are being recorded in excess of the plan. Include payroll taxes and other employee benefits in the budget here.

3. Administrative Expenses

Payroll expense should cover the cost of a new sales person for this service. Again, budget for payroll taxes, other employee benefits and, possibly, vehicle expenses.

Advertising will be the cost for direct mail, brochures and other communications.

If you purchased a franchise, you will need to budget the costs to attend the franchise training seminar.

Ask questions everywhere

Before launching a new service, become as well informed as possible. Contact owners in a different market about their experience, seek input from consultants and, if you choose a franchise, call other franchise owners. Embarking on a new service for a company can be exciting. Just remember to be certain that the new business is not taking the life out of your main business.

Often, employees who are not involved with the new service can become frustrated when they see the enthusiasm generated by the new venture. Keep a finger on the pulse of all your employees when a new service starts up. Be ready to provide focus and excitement to the people involved in your main business too.

A new service can be both profitable and rewarding. However, this usually doesn't occur in the first year. Give a new service offering 3 years before you make a decision about its success.

The authors provide green industry consulting services for Wandtke & Associates, Inc.

SEASONAL COLOR INC. – PROJECTED PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT

Revenue	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Seasonal color	\$75,000	\$170,000	\$285,000
Total Revenue	75,000	170,000	285,000
Operating Expenses			
Payroll	36,000	50,000	75,000
Materials	37,500	76,500	114,000
Gasoline	3,000	4,500	6,000
Vehicle maintenance	1,500	3,000	4,500
Payroll taxes	7,200	10,000	15,000
Operating supplies	500	1,000	1,500
Uniforms	1,200	1,500	1,800
Total operating expenses	86,900	146,500	217,800
Gross profit	(11,900)	23,500	67,200
Administrative Expenses			
Payroll- sales	15,000	29,750	43,320
Payroll- taxes, etc.	3,000	5,950	8,664
Trade shows	600	600	600
Advertising/promotion	5,000	5,000	5,000
Vehicle depreciation	3,000	3,000	3,000
Vehicle expense	3,000	3,000	3,000
Entertainment	800	800	800
Total Administrative Expenses	30,400	48,100	64,384
Operating profit	(42,300)	(24,600)	2,816

Award-winning landscape management



In the last two years, 5 full-time staffers maintained this property and installed annual color twice yearly. They also renovated the water feature, provided remedial work on a 40-year old Japanese maple and stabilized a flood plain in the complex's nature preserve.

Post Dunwoody Apartment Homes

The 1998 Grand Award Winner of the Professional Grounds Management Society for Condominium, Apartment Complex or Planned Community

In keeping with the Post mission statement, "to provide the superior apartment living experience" for their residents, the lush, inviting, naturalistic grounds of this award-winning property are integrated to serve as outdoor living environments.

The Post Dunwoody Apartment Homes is a 20-acre, 530-unit, upscale, garden-style apartment community in north Atlanta, GA. The property has two resort-style swimming pools; two tennis centers; a 25-plot urban vegetable garden; an eight-acre nature preserve; a one-mile jogging/biking trail that borders the nature preserve; 10 picnic areas; and 1/4 mile of road footage.

To maintain year-round color interest, 15 annual beds, totaling 13,500 square feet, are installed twice yearly. Summer annual displays are incorporated in late April, and cool-season presentations of tulips and pansies are planted in November. More than 30,000 square feet of herbaceous perennial displays also offer seasonal color support.

The grounds are made up of a very diverse plant palette: turfgrasses, such as Meyer zoysia in irrigated areas, and Tif 419 hybrid bermuda in nonirrigated areas; evergreen and deciduous trees; woody ornamental shrubs; ground covers; ornamental grasses; herbaceous perennials; annuals; and wetlands.



Property at a glance:

Location: Atlanta, GA

Staff: Post Landscape Operations

Category: Condominium, Apartment Complex or Planned Community

Year site built: 1989

Total acres maintained: 20

Acres of woody ornamentals: 4

Acres of display beds: 1

Total man-hours/week: 80

Maintenance challenges

- ▶ The multilevel koi pond, surrounded by specimen conifers, must be carefully maintained. The groundcovers must be hand pruned.
- ▶ Neighboring development just south of this property has caused the team to increase its efforts to maintain the ambience of these apartment landscapes.
- ▶ Regular deadheading and pruning of summer annuals keep them shapely, in peak bloom and inbounds.
- ▶ Taking care of the many specimen conifers is a large challenge, including preventive and curative measures such as systemic injections for pest control.

Take the *plunge* into irrigation

By PALMA PATRUCCI

For many landscape maintenance professionals, making the decision to expand your services to include irrigation system installation and maintenance not only requires increased product knowledge, but a renewed focus on sales techniques as well.

The best place to start is with your local irrigation equipment distributor. A distributor will be able to walk you through various irrigation products, show you how the products work and provide valuable guidance for setting up your new venture. Additionally, they'll be able to put you in touch with manufacturer sales and technical support personnel.

Before taking the plunge into irrigation, it's best to learn as much as you can about the products currently on the market. Talk to your distributor and see when they will be holding a product field day in your area. Also, try to meet with a distributor sales representative, who may also recommend additional sources of training.

Arming yourself with the correct product and sales information is vital. Competition can be fierce. Focus on offering your customers and potential customers quality products and service. This will help set you apart from your competition.

Seven steps for success

The following 7 steps will help you sell irrigation services to your customers:

TIP #1: Talk to existing customers.

▶ Do they have an automatic irrigation system? Is it water efficient, automatic and was it installed properly? Repairing or

retrofitting an existing system can be an excellent source of revenue and can provide some valuable experience as well.

▶ Do your customers' properties have extensively landscaped beds? Do they have a drip irrigation system? If not, find out why. Demonstrate a drip irrigation system.

▶ Explain the benefits of automatic irrigation: eliminating hand watering; efficient coverage; and the ability to apply water at the correct time (early morning).

▶ If they have a front yard irrigation system, is there an opportunity to do the backyard or hanging pots?

TIP #2: Ask customers for referrals.

▶ In addition to asking friends, family and your existing customers' neighbors, talk to local suppliers. They can be an excellent source to find "overflow" work from your competitors.

TIP #3: Use direct mail.

▶ Develop and send out business reply cards (BRCs). One side discusses your services and a place for interested potential clients to respond. The other side has your address with prepaid postage. Include your phone and fax number.

▶ A BRC can advertise a special price if your potential customers act now. Put a time limit on the special to create urgency.

▶ Place a flier in a third-party coupon pack mailer like "Value Pack."

▶ Pay a teenager to canvas nearby neighborhoods and place fliers on doors.

TIP #4: Immediately cultivate leads.

▶ Call the potential customer *immediately* and set up an appointment.

▶ Be prompt for the appointment and dress professionally. Your image will affect the first impression you make.



Develop a list of pertinent questions to gather information about the needs of the potential customer. Give some background on you and your company. Have references ready.

► Make sure your truck or car is clean.
► Develop a list of questions to gather information about the needs of the potential customer. Explain why you need the questions and give some background on you and your company. Have references and phone numbers handy. (Get approval from the references beforehand).

► Set up a second appointment so you can come back with your recommendations and a proposal.

Some manufacturers provide homeowner literature to include in your presentation. Use it.

► Present a typed, professional and clear proposal. Include prices, service and all value-added services you will provide. If your proposal is higher than most competitors' prices, be prepared to explain why you're worth it.

► Ask for the job!

TIP #5: Keep promises

► Follow through on your promises, prices and commitments. Show up for the job on the day you said you would come and be prompt. If you're delayed, call and explain your situation.

► Inform your customer how long you expect to be working on their property and try to keep to that timetable.

► Clean up the job site daily.

TIP #6: Promote yourself

► Place your company sign and sales brochures in a visible place on the job site, with the client's permission, of course.

TIP #7: Educate the customer.

► Once job is done, walk the homeowner through the system. Explain the controller, basic troubleshooting, and cleaning or changing a nozzle. Place a sticker with your company name and phone number on the controller cabinet.

► Follow up with the customer either by phone or mail two weeks after completing the job to ensure satisfaction and to answer any questions. If the customer is happy, ask to use him or her as a reference.

Palma Patrucci is Western Regional Sales Manager for Rainbird.

A-TO-Z IRRIGATION EQUIPMENT TERMS

Application Rate: A measurement of the volume of water applied to landscape in a given time. (In the United States, usually expressed in inches per week. Its metric equivalent is centimeters per week.)

Automatic Control Valve: A valve which is actuated by an automatic controller by electric or hydraulic means. It is synonymous with "remote control valve."

Automatic System: An irrigation system which irrigates in accordance with a preset program.

Controller: A controller is a timing device (usually electronic) which activates, times and sequences control valves according to a user-defined program.

Coverage: The area of landscape watered by a sprinkler or grouping of sprinklers.

Cycle: The completion of a controller's watering time when it sequences through all the zones in an irrigation system.

Domestic Water: Potable or "drinking" water. It can be used as a source of irrigation water, but once water enters an irrigation system it is no longer considered domestic or potable.

Drip Irrigation: This is a low-volume method of irrigation utilizing specially designed components to deliver precise amounts of water directly to the root zone of plants. Used primarily in landscaped and planter areas, this irrigation method maintains an optimum moisture range in the soil.

Dynamic Pressure: The pressure of the irrigation system during operation. Synonymous with "working pressure."

Evapotranspiration: The amount of water lost by the plant and the soil through both evaporation and transpiration.

Irrigation Efficiency: The percentage of water which is actually stored in the soil and available for use by the landscape as compared to the total amount of water provided to the landscape.

Irrigation System: A set of components which includes the water source (e.g., domestic

service or pump), water distribution network (e.g., pipe), control components (e.g., valves and controllers), emission devices (e.g. sprinklers and emitters) and possibly other general irrigation equipment (e.g. quick coupler and back-flow preventer).

Irrigation Requirement: The quantity of water needed by the landscape to satisfy the evaporation, transpiration and other uses of water in the soil. The irrigation requirement is usually expressed in depth of water and equals the net irrigation requirement divided by the irrigation efficiency.

Precipitation Rate: The rate at which a sprinkler system applies water to the landscape over a period of time. PR is expressed in depth of water per hours of operation, usually in "inches per hour."

Radius of throw: The distance a sprinkler will distribute, or discharge water. It is conventionally the radius of water discharged from the sprinkler nozzle.

Rain Shut-Off Device: A device which prevents the controller from activating the valves when a preset amount of precipitation occurs.

Remote Control Valve: A valve which is actuated by an automatic controller by electric or hydraulic means. Synonymous with "automatic control valve."

Rotor: A rotor is a rotary sprinkler, usually with an adjustable arc. Generally, rotors have single or multiple nozzles which rotate across the area of coverage to distribute water. Rotors have a distance of throw from 15 to 160 feet and economically apply water to large areas by using fewer heads than spray heads.

Spray head: A spray head is a fixed-arc sprinkler that requires no moving parts to distribute water. Generally, sprayhead sprinklers emit single or double sheets (or "fans") of water in a fixed pattern. They have a distance of throw of 5 to 18 feet and are used in smaller areas.

Valve: A valve is a mechanical or electrical device used to control the flow of water in a system. In most irrigation systems, the valve is actuated by a controller.

Quiet hand-held power blower

Echo, Inc. introduces the PB-24LN (Low Noise) hand-held power blower. This gas-powered blower generates 67dBA at full throttle at 50 feet, per ANSI B175.2-1990. This new blower is one of the quietest gas-powered, hand-helds on the market, designed specifically with the sensitive issue of blower noise in



mind. It delivers an average air volume measured at the end of the pipe of 300 cubic feet per minute and a maximum velocity of 150 mph.

The unit is powered by Echo's commercial-duty, 23.6-cc, dual-piston ring engine, with Pro-Fire® electronic ignition and purge pump-equipped carburetor for fast starts. Other features include a fully adjustable cruise control, a wide, rubber-padded base and a soft, rubber grip, sloped handle which is contoured to

fit the hand naturally. In addition, the PB-24LN has a re-designed muffler, an enclosed engine with sound-blocking materials, a modified air intake and sound-attenuating materials around the blower itself.

For more information contact Echo, Inc. at 847/540-8400 or

Circle No. 271

Blower with 195 mph air velocity

The Shindaiwa EB500 is a more powerful version of the SuperQuiet EB480, capable of nozzle velocities up to 195 mph. Designed to loosen debris with high wind speed and move it efficiently with high air volume, the EB500 was designed in response to requests for a stronger piece of cleanup equipment.



The new unit is powered by a 43.6-cc engine and features an advanced design, glass-filled nylon impeller and precision blower case. The air tube swivels vertically for easy operation and a large 71 oz. fuel tank allows for long work cycles.

Other features include high performance, air-cooled, two-cycle engine with chromed cylinder and two-ring piston; improved throttle and fuel shutoff controls; Walvro WYJ diaphragm carburetor with primer pump for all-position operation; all transistor electronic ignition; forced air cooling; and high capacity dry element air filter.

For more information contact Shindaiwa at 503/692-3070, on the web at www.shindaiwa.com or

Circle No. 272

MTD offers first rider in Pro line

The MMZ is the first sit-down professional mower in the Pro line. Powered by a 25-hp Kohler OHV



V-twin engine, the MMZ has a 54-inch floating deck. It also offers fully adjustable lap bar controls, 5-inch operator seat adjustment, 10-gallon fuel capacity, 9-mph transport speed, Service Pro meter and a

pivoting front axle. The 980-lb. machine provides for lower impact

mowing and with 75% of the weight in the rear, the MMZ has better traction.

For more information contact MTD at 330/273-4550, fax 330/225-9133 or

Circle No. 273

DRIVE® registered for turf use

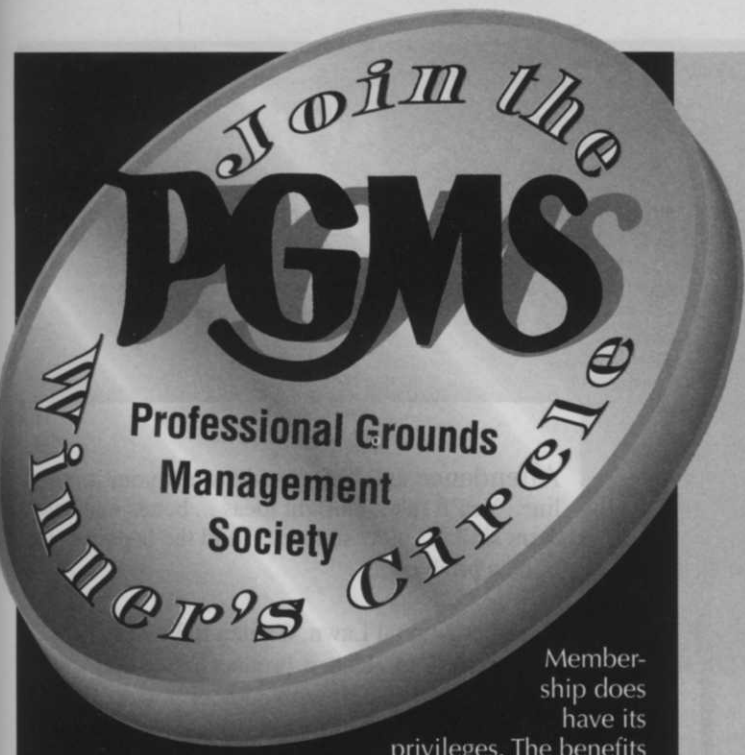
Drive herbicide, from BASF Specialty Products, represents a new chemistry for the turf herbicide market with the active ingredient quinclorac. It can be used on a number of turf species including creeping bentgrass, Kentucky and annual bluegrass, perennial and annual ryegrass, tall fescue, both common and hybrid bermudagrass and zoysia.

Drive also offers a unique combination of postemergence and residual control in a single postemergence application. Target weed species include crabgrass, dandelion, speedwell and numerous broadleaf and grassy weeds, including torpedograss and kikuyagrass.

The herbicide provides lawn care operators flexibility. As a postemergent spring treatment, contact and residual activity controls broadleaf weeds and crabgrass in a single application. With broad tank mix flexibility, most early-season weeds can be treated with one pass.

For more information contact BASF at 800/669-1770 or

Circle No. 274



Membership Has Its Privileges.

Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS) invites you to join its ranks and start benefitting from membership in a professional organization dedicated to assisting individual managers. We've been growing since 1911, helping to strengthen the educational and economic advancement of professional managers nationwide.

Membership does have its privileges. The benefits of PGMS membership including helping you become more effective and efficient. Why go it alone, when there's over 80 years of expert help available? Comprised of on-staff grounds managers and independent contractors, PGMS is the #1 broad-based professional grounds management organization in the United States. So far, *the only thing missing is you!*

Members nationwide agree: PGMS provides the greatest professional networking opportunity for grounds professionals.

What are you waiting for? For more information about beginning your membership, fill out the form below and mail today. Or save time and FAX us: **1-410-584-9756**. Isn't it about time?

Mail to: **PGMS**
120 Cockeysville Rd, Suite #104
Hunt Valley, MD 21030
Phone: 410-584-9754 • Fax: 410-584-9756

Name (please print) _____
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- Local branch meetings
- Bi-monthly newsletter
- Membership card and certificate, entitling you to discounts on rental cars, books and videos
- Certified Grounds Manager and Groundskeeper Certification programs
- Training manuals
- Who's Who in Grounds Management membership directory
- Information clearinghouse
- Customized list of courses offered by ICS Learning Systems, the nation's leader in distance education
- Annual conference and Green Industry Expo

Making Your World Greener Place



Attendance at EXPO 99 will affect your bottom line. You'll rake in bright ideas ... better management skills ... new sources ... and the latest array of new products.

The International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo IS new products. See 600 exhibiting companies with outdoor power equipment, irrigation supplies, hand tools, and off-season products. The 20-acre demonstration area is open all three days, within steps of the indoor exhibits.

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Check out EXPO's web site at:
<http://EXPO.mow.org>.

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