



4

THE WORK

1 | A BLANK SLATE. In the beginning, just about all the property was offering was potential. Landscapes by Sundown's Greg Bobich worked closely with the homeowners, avid lovers of the outdoors, to create both a front-and-back landscape design.

2 | ELEGANT ELEMENTS. Taken from a similar angle as the photo above, the lower terrace is home to the pool house, two one-of-a-kind fire elements, a custom spa and the 25x50-ft. in-ground swimming pool. Huge boulders anchor the landscape to the surroundings.

3 | OUTDOOR LIVING. On the upper level, Designs by Sundown's in-house masons used cinder blocks with a cultured stone veneer, creating this wood-burning fireplace area.

4 | GUEST-READY. Much-needed patio space and seating for family gatherings was created on the upper terrace. In fact, intimate sitting areas were created throughout the property to invite visitors to sit back and enjoy the view and wildlife. An outdoor kitchen rivals the finest kitchens in town, with wildflowers adorning the dining area.

5 | FOUR-SEASON ENJOYMENT. This landscape was designed to be enjoyed in all seasons — a request from the homeowners. With inspiration from streams found a short distance away, this water feature offers tranquil sounds that can be heard on both levels.

6 | FIRE AND WATER CO-EXIST. The turquoise blue of the pool shows off nicely with the warmth of this one-of-a-kind boulder fire pit burning in the background. The water feature flows adjacent to the Siloam stairs.

7 | TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL. There was no scrimping on the use of stone in this outdoor creation. Siloam stone steps lined with accent boulders and pocket plantings lead guests to the upper terrace.



5



6



7

Founded by Michael Hommel in 1985, Designs by Sundown offers design, construction, waterscapes, masonry, lighting, irrigation, maintenance and seasonal color to the Greater Denver market. This property garnered a 2008 Environmental Improvement Award from the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET). For more information, visit www.designsbysundown.com.

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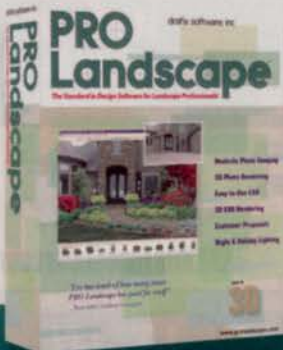
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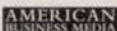
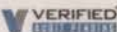
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Want to grow on the cheap? Better leverage customers' e-mails.

According to a July 2009 *Landscape Management* survey with 170 respondents, just 30% of landscapers know the e-mail addresses of even three-quarters of their customers. Very few landscapers know — and use — the e-mail addresses of all of their customers who have them.

This is both a tremendous opportunity and threat: We must better obtain and use our customers' e-mail addresses, today, to enhance sales and service, or our tech-savvy competitors will spirit them away tomorrow.

As outlined in our cover story beginning on page 8, three-quarters of landscapers report their digital marketing efforts deliver returns on investments superior to those reaped from local newspaper, radio, TV or telephone directory ads. We know digital marketing works. We just have to work it better.

E-mailing customers information of value is not spam; it's sound digital marketing. Give customers a good reason to open your e-mails, and an easy out (unsubscribe option), and you will protect and build your business rapidly and cost effectively.

Here are 12 quick e-mail marketing tips:

1. Mine for gold — Call each customer and ask what types of information he or she is open to receiving in monthly e-mails. Examples include special promotions, tips on lawn and landscape maintenance, and ways to save water and money.

2. Dig deeper — Repeat the previous step with prospects and former customers.

3. Plan your work — Create a monthly e-mail marketing campaign that marries customers' digital information wants with your company's sales needs.

4. Work your plan — E-mail customers and prospects information of value every month.

5. Grade yourself — Measure the return on investment of each e-mail marketing campaign.

6. Grow or go — Duplicate your successes and improve upon, or discard, your failures.

7. Reality check — Send customers quarterly satisfaction surveys. Surprisingly, just 21% of landscapers currently do this even annually.

8. Internal intel — Leverage these surveys to identify and reward employees who exceed customers' expectations and create new, repeatable best practices.

9. Boost retention — Give disgruntled customers an opportunity to rant. Better to hear the bad news now than after you've lost this and other business.

10. Reap referrals — Reward your raving fans for sharing the names, phone numbers and e-mails of a few homeowners or businesses that could use your services. Give customers a 10% discount for one year for each referral that results in a new customer. Cap the maximum annual referrals incentive to 50%, and mark up new referred clients' fees 10% to cover the program. In the second year, you'll be giving yourself an automatic 10% raise without touching the referred customer's pricing.

11. Upsell services — Half of landscape contractors are not e-mailing clients to identify, and capitalize, on opportunities to upsell. In your e-mails, let customers know everything you offer, and give them a reason (discount) to add new services.

12. Keep at it — Continuously repeat steps 1-11.

If you don't know, and regularly leverage, your customers' e-mail addresses, then you don't really know them, yourself or your growth potential. Got e-mail?

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