



### DeWitt Co.

The DeWitt Flexible Intermediate Bulk Container (FIBC) is a standardized container in

large dimension for storing and transporting up to 2,000 lbs. of dry, flowable products like sand, fertilizers, mulch or rock. The DeWitt FIBC container is manufactured from quality woven polypropylene and tested to meet tear and ultraviolet-resistance standards. They can be transported and loaded on pallets or by lifting it from the cross-corner support loops by forklift. The containers are unloaded or emptied by a special opening in the bottom with a discharge spout or star closure on the bottom of the bag. *DeWittCompany.com*



### TurfEx

Commercial-duty spreader attachments are designed to mount on many service vehicles, such as utility tractors, riding mowers and ATVs. The spreaders provide consistent, even distribution of anything from seed to fertilizer. They also can spread ice melt for winter maintenance applications. The TurfEx mountable spreader line consists of six models available as electric or

PTO-driven, with capacities of 3, 7 or 12 cu. ft. of material. Weather-resistant variable speed controllers are standard for most of the line (optional on the TS300). The spreaders come with a 2-in. receiver hitch and spread as wide as 20 ft. The 7- and 12-cu.-ft. capacity units are equipped with a three-point mount and can spread as wide as 30 ft. Other standard equipment for all models includes clear, fitted hopper covers. All units are covered by a one-year limited warranty. *TrynexFactory.com*

### Grasshopper

With a compact size for precision maneuvering in close quarters, a 48-in. cutting deck for optimal airflow and superior cut, and a powerful diesel engine that maintains blade tip speed in thick grass—while using less than 1 gal. of fuel every hour—Model 321D-48 increases operational efficiency and decreases costs for greater profitability, according to the company. *GrasshopperMower.com*



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## Case Construction Equipment

The Case SR250 and SV300 (pictured) skid-steers and TR320 and TV380 compact track loaders now feature 90-hp, 3.4-liter Case diesel engines with the full high-pressure common rail (HPCR) design typically used in larger construction equipment. To meet Tier 4 Interim emission requirements, Case equipped the models with cooled exhaust gas recirculation (CEGR) technology, including diesel particulate filter and diesel oxidizing

catalyst. Operator visibility and comfort, climate management and operator controls define the Case Alpha Series machines. The skid-steer cabs, which Case says are the widest in the industry, feature ultra-narrow wire side screens that improve operator visibility. Extra glass surface gives the operator 360-degree visibility. [CaseCE.com](http://CaseCE.com)



## Volvo Construction Equipment

The new wheeled and tracked skid-steer models available through the Volvo Construction Equipment dealer network are the radial lift MC60C (pictured) and MC70C, and the vertical lift MC85C, MC95C and MCT85C. Rated operating capacities for these models range from 1,350 to 1,900 lbs., and gross engine power from 48 to 59 hp. Featuring an exclusive single-loader arm design, Volvo skid steer loaders and compact track loaders deliver the performance and durability found in a traditional skid-steer design, along with the improved visibility, safety and enhanced cab access of a side-entry machine. The cab also features a large top window for improved visibility during truck loading. [VolvoCE.com](http://VolvoCE.com)



## New Holland Construction

The new C Series loader backhoes feature Tier 4 Interim engines, improved engine response, fuel efficiency and serviceability, and an optional auto ride control. The line-up includes the B95C (pictured), B95C TC, B95C LR and B110C. With backhoe bucket breakout forces of 12,933 ft.-lbs. and lift capacities at 12 ft. of 3,940 lb., the machines are ideal for tasks such as digging trenches or placing pipe. The new engines deliver faster response and increased fuel efficiency—up to 4 percent over previous models. In addition, a new tilt-forward hood, which replaces the flip-up hood on previous models, is easy to open, and provides wide access with low effort for routine maintenance needs. [NewHolland.com](http://NewHolland.com)



## Steiner

Available in 32, 34 or 40 hp gas or 24.9 hp diesel engine models, the new Steiner 440 Tractor is designed to deliver with focused aggression. Features

include a non-permeable, all-steel fuel tank and oversized filler neck with an EPA-approved tethered fuel cap; 200-watt halogen quartz front headlights; 1,500 psi of lift pressure, Eaton Series hydraulic pump and transmission; Peerless 2600 dual range transaxles; 5-gal. capacity hydraulic oil reservoir; 7-in. seat slides for operator fit; a new operator panel design that puts control at your fingertips; and a folding rollover protection system (ROPS) that comes standard. [SteinerTurf.com](http://SteinerTurf.com)



## Ditch Witch

Charles Machine Works (CMW), manufacturer of Ditch Witch underground construction equipment, offers a new line of compact and powerful walk-behind trenchers—the RT12, RT16, RT20 and RT24. The entire line incorporates a stacked, in-line hydraulic pump configuration that effectively eliminates vertical shafts and the use of belts and/or flywheel reduction systems, and ultimately reduces downtime. The line also has fully hydrostatic ground drives, with simple-to-use, hydraulic, skid-steer-style steering. Ditch Witch walk-behinds feature a solid, adjustable trail wheel that helps keep the unit stable and reduces breakover when loading, unloading and traveling over curbs and other uneven terrain. Also, to keep the trencher boom in the ground during operation or maintain down pressure when placing the boom in the ground, the trail wheel gives the machine another point of leverage besides the track undercarriage. [DitchWitch.com](http://DitchWitch.com)

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## BEST PRACTICES

BRUCE WILSON

The author, of the Wilson-Oyler Group, is a 30-year industry veteran. Reach him at [bwilson@wilson-oyler.com](mailto:bwilson@wilson-oyler.com).

# Everyone drives revenue

**E**veryone drives revenue. If you don't agree, it's time to change the way you think about marketing—not in the functional context of creating demand for your services, but in the sense of how you view your organization.

Let's look at Apple. Apple is a manufacturer. But most of us who buy or use Apple products think of the company as a marketing powerhouse. That's because everyone who is affiliated with the organization seems engaged in selling it. From its developers and engineers to its retail staff, everyone is committed to providing a world-class customer experience.

Becoming a market-driven organization requires every employee, regardless of function, to focus on creating value for the customer and growing revenue. Directly or indirectly, everyone needs to move the brand forward.

Here's the problem: Marketing as a strategic function is often the first budget to get cut, especially when times are tough. And because marketing and sales are interrelated, cutting marketing and its processes often can result in leaving salespeople on their own, caving in to the low-price bidding war. Looking at it another way, keeping sales and eliminating marketing is like keeping the tactic and eliminating the strategy.

Companies ask me, how do I grow sales? The answer is, not without strategy. And for that you need the strategic value marketing brings and you need all employees to engage in the spirit, if not the act, of promoting your company, understanding and knowing what their roles are in driving revenue and meeting profitability goals.

To be successful in a world where technology has given customers greater control and access to more data than ever before, coordinating interdepartmental resources to create customer value will help your company become an organization where everyone is connected to the customer and involved in profitable growth.

It used to be that you went out and found customers. Now customers are finding you.

Are you reorienting your company so they can?

### Here are 10 ways to get started:

1. Link your marketing, sales and operations efforts to grow profitably. Align goals interdepartmentally.
2. Recognize that every employee drives revenue and reputation and participates in creating a first-class service experience. Tell your employees how they affect growth.
3. Hire employees with sales in mind. How will these people represent you to the public? How will they contribute to achieving positive results? Remember, the team on the loading dock is the face of your company to the vendor; the courtesy of the receptionist is the sound of your company to the caller.
4. Have employees participate on sales support teams or send representatives from different departments to sales meetings. Understanding sales and growth goals empowers everyone to pitch in.
5. Make sure employees understand the mission, vision and objectives of the company, its services and its target audience.
6. Communicate across disciplines. Make sure your employees understand how other departments work and encourage them to find ways they can work together.
7. Define jobs in the context of how the roles and responsibilities help the company grow. Measure the bottom-line consequences.
8. Train for growth. Encourage employees to grow their specific skills in a way that will enhance company growth.
9. Use your entire team as a bucket brigade. Don't delegate the responsibility for selling and branding to a bucket of one.
10. Information is the first step to engagement. Have town hall meetings to discuss how the company is doing. Don't leave anyone out. Inspiration comes from unexpected sources.

# Introducing PLANET's Community Stewardship Award

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## THE MISSION

Maintain, in an environmentally sustainable way, a traditionally cultural open space for this restaurant's customers—and the public.

The Beach House Restaurant on Kauai, Hawaii, has faced many challenges over the past three decades, including restoring the entire property after two separate hurricanes (Iwa, in 1982, and Iniki 10 years later) wiped out the restaurant and covered the remaining ground in ocean sand. During both reconstructions, the owners chose to keep the space open and environmentally friendly.

Lawn maintenance in a high-traffic area has expected challenges, but the addition of regularly occurring Pacific Ocean saltwater spray, and the proximity to the ocean edge, create special conditions. The lawn area is planted with seashore paspalum grass, and the public has direct contact with the lawn.

With that in mind, No Ka Oi Landscape Services (NKO), Hanalei, Hawaii, has implemented this environmentally sustainable lawn maintenance plan:

1. Seashore paspalum is the “right plant in the right place,” as it is a saltwater-tolerant species.
2. Weekly mowing with a reel mower keeps the lawn cropped and carpet-like.
3. Lawn clippings are left behind, providing natural nitrogen and acting as “sunscreen” for the lawn.
4. The irrigation system is closely monitored to minimize overwatering. Keeping the irrigation at optimal settings inhibits weed growth and fungus problems.
5. Slow-release fertilizers, dispensed with accurate calibration, minimize leeching nitrogen into the ocean.
6. Verticutting twice a year controls thatch, thus naturally reducing diseases.
7. Annual aeration and the application of 20 tons of sand create a healthy environment for grass.



PHOTOS: NO KA OI  
LANDSCAPE SERVICES



## THE WORK

- 1 | Ocean view.** The early morning salt mist settles on the property.
- 2 | Pretty as a picture.** Tourists and locals alike take advantage of the carpet-like texture of the lawn and the Pacific Ocean view. The constant traffic means regular lawn maintenance is crucial.
- 3 | Vertical integration.** The NKO crew verticuts the lawn twice a year.
- 4 | Two-step process.** Although weekly cuttings are left behind for mulch, the verticutting must be raked and cleaned up.
- 5 | Smart accessorizing.** The lawn is the star here, but planting beds are natural and full, adding to the beauty. It's worth noting that when small weeds are found in the lawn during regular inspections, they are immediately treated with salt.

*"We're big. We're beautiful. And we're nice." That's the motto behind the family-owned No Ka Oi Landscaping Services, founded by Frank and Abby Santos in 1977. Focusing on commercial, resort and high-end residential development properties in Kauai, Hawaii, the company boasts three divisions, approximately 25 employees, and a full 13-acre private nursery, where it grows plants exclusively for clients. This project garnered a 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Environmental Improvement Grand Award from the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET). For more information, visit [NKOlandscaping.com](http://NKOlandscaping.com).*

## Special order

Chalet adds revenue in lawn renovations with a specialty application process.

**O**N CHICAGO'S NORTH SHORE, creeping bentgrass is a common infestation that's difficult to control. Because creeping bentgrass is thick, matty and chokes out other grasses, it's a nuisance that many customers feel spoils an otherwise beautiful lawn. It's also prone to disease. For customers with bentgrass- or nimblewill-infested lawns, Chalet in Chicago's northern suburbs is turning the problem into an opportunity. It has implemented a specialty application service for lawn renovations.

Tony Kacinas, assistant manager in Chalet's soil and turf department, began trialing Syngenta's Tenacity, an herbicide with the active ingredient mesotrione, and found that it was producing happy customers by killing creeping bentgrass and nimblewill yet retaining desirable grasses.

"The old school way of renovating a lawn meant killing everything off and starting from scratch," Kacinas says. "I hated killing off good grass that didn't really have to go. Now we're able to keep that grass, which makes the renovation much easier because we have a base to build from."

After completing some successful trials, last year Kacinas signed up 15 lawns for the specialty application. "The feedback was really good, so this year I have 40 lawns on the docket," he says. "We've actually hired a specialty applicator to handle this service, along with other specialty applications we are offering. It became too much for me to handle on my own."

Kacinas says that the specialty application market is growing as more clients begin to value customized services.

"We know that not everyone has bentgrass or nimblewill, but we can target this to those customers who do," he says. "Whether they're on our fertilization program or not, this is something that we can market to both existing and new customers."

Because the product creates white spots on the lawn as the bentgrass and nimblewill die, Kacinas says it's important to educate customers so they have realistic expectations. That's why Chalet informs clients that the white spots mean it's working.



Tony Kacinas enrolled 40 lawns this year.

The company also uses iPads to show clients before-and-after photos of other properties that have received the application. "We're able to show them what the lawn looks like throughout the process so they're prepared for the white spots and not calling us in a panic," Kacinas says. "It's always smart to set a client up with proper expectations. Once they understand that you don't have to kill all of the grass, people appreciate that they're just dealing with some white spots."

The initial process includes three applications, each two weeks apart. Then the entire lawn is slit seeded. Chalet charges per square foot for the chemical application and a separate fee for slit seeding, which includes the cost of the seed.

Once the lawn is in a healthy state, Kacinas signs up customers for an annual clean-up application for any root systems that may have survived or seeds that may remain in the soil. It offers an opportunity for recurring revenue and keeps the customer happy.

"You don't want to go through that three-step application process only to have the bentgrass come back two or three years later," says Kacinas. "A once-a-year clean-up spray ensures the customer is getting true quality and that their expectations are being met."

Because the repeat service adds to the workload, Kacinas says he'll pace the new service's growth.

"We already have the 15 lawns from last year that we need to go back and do a one-time clean-up on," says Kacinas. "Next year, we'll have 40 additional one-time clean-ups on top of all the new sprays we're doing. So each year we'll be seeing more work."

With the success, he says the service promotes itself by word of mouth. Customers happy that their bothersome bentgrass is being dealt with are telling their friends. Chalet also has started promoting the service through its retail garden center.

"Customers are really excited to hear that we have a new process to help them get rid of this pesky old problem."

The author is a freelance writer with seven years of experience covering landscaping.

### » SERVICE SNAPSHOT

**COMPANY:** Chalet

**HEADQUARTERS:** Wilmette, Illinois

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:** 275

**2011 REVENUE:** \$25.5 million

**PROJECTED 2012 REVENUE:** \$25.5 million

**ADD-ON SERVICE:** Specialty application service for lawn renovations.



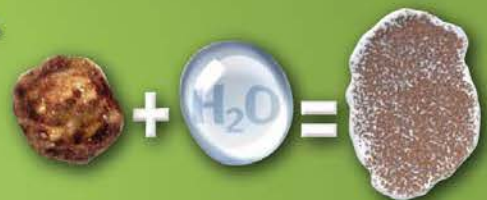
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# ACUTABOVE

GREEN INDUSTRY MAINTENANCE LEADERS » BY MARISA PALMIERI

**Zack Kline**, 23, exudes enthusiasm when he speaks about his company, A.I.R. Lawn Care, based in Montgomery County, Md. His 1-year-old business is green in more ways than one: A.I.R. stands for “atmosphere improvement and renewal.” The company is living up to its name with its battery-powered handheld equipment, solar-paneled truck and an electric commercial-grade mower.

The idea for the company was born a few years ago when Kline was working on a landscape crew on a 95-degree, “code red” day, trimming a 2.5-acre property with traditional equipment. As an operator, the noise and emissions bothered him. He recalls thinking, “There has to be a better way.”

Last year Kline entered and won a business plan competition at Salisbury University, where he studied marketing and information systems. He took home the \$5,000 prize, which he used to get his business off the ground.

While growing his company (it’s still a part-time effort) and working a full-time job at a payroll company, Kline is researching organic fertilization and mosquito control services, and he’s networking as much as possible. He’s a member of Bethesda Green, a sustainable business incubator, and the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET). He’s also busy forging partnerships and personal relationships with clients, peers and suppliers.

Take Stihl, for example. After looking into equipment options to fit his business plan, Kline decided on Stihl products. He did some research, learned that Stihl President Fred Whyte was a bagpipe player, and sent him a pair of bagpipe cuff links, along with a hand-written note introducing himself. Whyte called Kline to thank him for his gift and learn more about his company. Then he introduced him to Roger Phelps, Stihl’s promotional communications manager. After reviewing Kline’s business plan, Stihl decided to help him out by giving him several pieces of its Battery KombiSystem products. Phelps also introduced him to PLANET, which donated a one-year complimentary membership. Kline is taking advantage, having attended the association’s Renewal & Remembrance and Legislative Day on the Hill events in July; he’s also preparing to take the Landscape Industry Certified Manager exam in October.



Zack Kline’s firm is green in more ways than one.

## INSIDE INFO

**Company:** A.I.R. Lawn Care

**Headquarters:** Montgomery County, Md.

**Employees:** 1

**Key to being a maintenance leader:** I’m pretty big on quotes, and one I’ve taken to heart that my fraternity brother shared with me is, “It’s not what you know and who you know, but who knows you.” Trying to do this at such a young age, I see things coming together with networking and building relationships. Another one is, “Just show up,” which is what Woody Allen said. “Ninety percent of success is showing up.” And the other 10 percent is being prepared.

## TOP TREND

» **Sustainability.** Maybe I’m a little biased, but I’d say companies are trying to be more sustainable, and customers are, too. For example, in Montgomery County there are ordinances that prevent you from using certain equipment during certain hours for blowers and trimmers. With the green technology that’s available, as the battery life improves, that will be the new trend because it’s less fuel consumption, there are zero emissions and you get the same quality.

## TOP OBSTACLE

» **Time is the biggest obstacle for me.** I’m devoting a lot of my time to my full-time job, but I’m

always hungry to be doing stuff for my business. I hope to go full time next season. I’m in the process of getting a loan set up for next season so I can purchase more capital and take on employees. That way I can focus on behind-the-scenes business development.

For the industry, it’s being able to convert over to green equipment. Everyone has a lot of time and infrastructure invested in gas-powered equipment. It’s tough for owners, managers and crew leaders to be convinced about converting over. It’s about accepting change. One quote I was taught is, “Change is inevitable, but growth is optional.”

## TOP OPPORTUNITY

» **Education.** I have a great opportunity to provide an environmentally friendly service and educate people about the benefits. In lawn maintenance, many people just want their grass cut and for it to be green and pristine. They may not recognize the impact of everyone doing that. The EPA says that 5 percent to 10 percent of pollution comes from handheld power equipment.

The industry has the opportunity, too, to educate consumers and each other, and we all have the opportunity to learn about how we can be more sustainable with everything we do.