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OUTLOOK

Attitude Is Everything

What a week it's been. It seems everywhere I turn, somebody has a problem. A staff person had a minor accident. One member is wrestling with workers' compensation issues, while another struggles with OSHA. The federal government wants to increase employer contributions to Medicare. Our room block, and then some, is sold out for Winter Management Conference in the Bahamas.

A gentleman called here this morning so hopping mad nobody could figure out what he was trying to say. It turned out he had the wrong number, thank goodness. Another gentleman called and managed to be extremely nasty to two-thirds of the staff, but consistently hung-up on anyone who could help him. Too bad.

This is the stuff of a normal day in nearly any business, but as I hopped from one fire to the next, I noticed an interesting phenomenon. Everybody here at the NAA is wrapped up in somebody's need this week. As always, "somebody" needed what they wanted yesterday.

Some of the staff looked very down in the mouth. They moved slowly, as if in pain. Others were chipper as ever, cheerfully responding to call after call. A few inquiries revealed the reason for the difference. Those staffers popping the extra-strength Tylenol spoke of how badly they had been treated by the person on the other end of the phone. How they were yelled at, or given a bad attitude. They complained about how easy it would be to solve a problem, which sometimes isn't even a problem, if only the caller would let them help.

Smiling staffers seemed like a little army of Mary Poppins in contrast. These folks spoke of how they had responded to requests. I asked if the callers they had dealt with had been difficult—if they had yelled or otherwise thrown tantrums. The answer: a definitive no.

The point is proven, once again, that attitude is indeed everything. Around this office, we often think in terms of solutions rather than problems. We challenge ourselves to take a step back and see both sides of everything. I'll admit that the recipient of any phone call might interpret it as "difficult" on any given day, but as I fielded many calls myself, I noticed that there was a marked difference in my energy level when responding to negative callers. It leads me to wonder if, when I was led to a poor table in a restaurant or encountered a particularly rude clerk, I might have had something to do with the poor service I received.

Life is a two-way street. For every up, there is a down, for every in, there is an out. Or, as I said to our esteemed board president yesterday, "Some days you're the bug, and some days you're the windshield." Still, bug or windshield, we are all in the customer service business. It is our charge to rise above how we are treated and retreat to that professional place that allows us to write off poor behavior as somebody else's bad day. Maybe your most trying customer just lost his best friend. Maybe he's just grumpy. Bottom line, neither of these are your concern. In the customer service business, the objective is always the same: Provide the best possible service in the best possible way. When you are the vendor, it is your reputation (and income) that are on the line. Today's response could be tomorrow's job. Of course, when you are the customer irritated beyond all reason, it doesn't hurt to ask yourself, "What did I do?" At the end of the day, we all want to come up smiling.

Amelia Reinert
Director, Executive

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FEATURES

6

Treating the Whole Plant

By Mark Garvin

Plant health care is an evolving science that advances almost monthly. Recently, new technology has made mass production possible. Are you at the forefront?

34

Equipment Roundup: Wood Processors

There are many makes and models of log splitters and portable saw mills available, in all different sizes and price ranges. Here's a glimpse at a few of the machines available in today's wood processing market.

44

Computers in Tree Care

By Maris Franke, Mark Smith, Donna Garner and Peter Hannan

If you are not already computer literate, learn how to automate your accounting, work orders and job costing. Discover industry-specific functions that make the business of tree care easier.
Look for Our ‘97 Features

Every year our innovations are eagerly anticipated by both arborists and our competitors. Features such as our PolyChain® drive, remote control, wireless remote control, four wheeled stance, torsion flex suspension system are first sneered at by our competition, then eventually copied. We decided that instead of whining about all of the copycats, we’d rather dedicate ourselves to creating the kind of stump cutter that will make your job easier. So, it comes down to what you want, the innovator or an imitator?

In Their ‘98 Models
Treating the Whole Plant

By Mark Garvin

When Sea World of Ohio decided to create a new exhibit called "Dolphin's Cove" in 1995, 180 trees (2- to 10-inch caliper) and twice that number of shrubs had to be relocated. Using MycorTree Transplant Inoculant in the relocation, Sea World was able to report no losses among transplanted trees and shrubs at the end of the first year. Root growth and mycorrhizal development on the treated trees exceeded that of the non-treated trees by more than 500 percent.
This ectomycorrhizae of pine shows growth of fungus. These hyphal strands grow out from the mycorrhizae into large soil volumes, mining the soil for water and nutrients for the tree.

Gary Mullane of Low Country Tree Care in Hilton Head, S.C., applies MycorTree Tree Saver Transplant around backfill of a stressed live oak.

In recent years, several factors have combined to produce an immutable wave away from using chemical fertilizers and pesticides as the primary way to improve plant and soil management in the urban forest. Homeowners are worried over what their neighbors think about those chemical warning signs planted on the lawn. Increased government regulation and testing requirements have raised the development costs of new products. Lawsuits and clean-up expenses for contaminated water supplies have made many manufacturers wary of producing non-agricultural products. And most important, scientific advances have made hard chemical alternatives such as “natural” pesticides and bio-stimulants commercially available.
All of these developments have led arborists and scientists toward a more natural way of promoting plant health. New products joined with new techniques and attitudes to create the concept of plant health care a few years ago. Since that time, research has progressed at a dizzying rate.

The notion of plant health care is easy to understand: It focuses on the plant rather than the pest, and emphasizes the customer’s goals. A plant health care program includes many of the methods associated with Integrated Pest Management and more.

Plant health care is an evolving science that advances almost monthly. It emphasizes a reduction in pesticides and education of the consumer. Healthy, productive plants are naturally more resistant to disease and environmental stresses. The job of an arborist is to create those conditions that encourage a tree’s natural growth and resistance to damage and disease. Proper levels of soil bioactivity, water balance and a well-developed root system are fundamental to long-term plant survival and growth. Plant health care products are designed to create optimal growth conditions, while augmenting the plant’s natural resistance to environmental stress, disease and insects.

While the benefits of many of these products have been known for years, only recently have technological innovations made mass production possible. At the forefront of scientific advances in plant health care is Plant Health Care, Inc., (PHC, Inc.), whose scientists have created a range of products for the tree care industry that may be grouped into three categories:

1. Mycorrhizal Based Products: Mycorrhizae (of Greek origin meaning “fungus roots”) occur naturally on roots and are an essential link between plants and soil. PHC, Inc., produces strains that have been identified as superstrains for growing plants in stressed environments, including poor soils, lack of fertility, drought, disease, unfavorable pH, toxins and extreme temperatures. There are two broad groups of mycorrhizal fungi that are commonly divided on the basis of whether they live on the outside (ecto) or inside (endo) of the plant roots. Mycorrhizal products employ naturally-occurring fungi, which are often depleted or damaged in the urban forest, to improve the efficiency of feeder root systems and enhance resistance to root diseases and other pests.

2. Soil Nutrients/Bacterial Products: PHC, Inc. has developed a line of soil-enriching products derived from natural organic materials that contain dry, water-soluble humic acid, sea kelp, sucrose, proprietary beneficial bacteria, micro-nutrients, vitamins and amino acids.
In 1995, PHC, Inc. joined with Griffin Industries, the largest private animal rendering company in the United States, to develop a line of plant and animal protein-based organic fertilizer and soil conditioner products.

3. Water Management Products: These include microbial based pond and water cleansers, surfactants (wetting agents) and time-release polymer gels, which regulate delivery of water to root systems.

Too much or too little water can undo efforts to achieve plant health. PHC, Inc., under the product name of Terra-Sorb, produces a time-release polymer gel that stores and slowly releases water to plant roots in the soil, reducing the risk of plant loss or stress from drought. Terra-Sorb gels are sold as separate products and have been added to the company's mycorrhizal fungi line.

PHC, Inc. also sells Terra-Wet, a natural yucca plant extract-based wetting agent. Wetting agents, also known as surfactants, improve wetting ability and penetration of water when applied to dry, compacted soils or nursery potting mixes. They are also used to improve leaf coverage and performance of foliar fertilizer and pest control products.

From a few early converts of natural bio-stimulants, acceptance of new methods and products has spread. "Since the early '80s, we have used a variety of products as a complement to chemical fertilization," relates Jesse Milton, technical services supervisor of Arborguard Tree Specialists, Inc., in Avondale Estates, Ga. "We almost pioneered the market for fertilization in the Atlanta area. We don't even use the term fertilization anymore. We call it soil therapy.

"We use liquid sea kelp for root regeneration in aging or root-damaged trees, especially for saving construction-damaged trees, for which we are particularly known in the area. We have also begun to integrate it with chemical fertilization to reduce the amount of fertilizers and increase the amount of organics we use."

For Arborguard, soil therapy is an integral part of its overall approach to caring for trees. "We were probably the first company in Atlanta to do mycorrhizal inoculations," states Milton. "This has become a key component of our business. I would say that on a very large percentage of the properties that we prune, we also work on the roots. It is sold as a total package."

Fertilization with natural substances is popular with an environmentally minded public. "It is a lot easier now to sell soil services, even regular fertilization, because the organic approach to taking care of trees is so appealing to clients," observes Milton. "There is more of a stigma now to chemicals and nitrates in the water. This is a safe way to care for trees. People get very excited about soil fungi and bacteria because it is living activity."

Another pioneer leading the way in
the early days was Jeff Ott, owner of Northeast Shade Tree in Portsmouth, N.H., and a distributor of PHC, Inc., products. Ott was a consultant for PHC, Inc., at the product development stage, and its products are an integral part of his tree and shrub fertilizer programs.

"I started out working to introduce bio-stimulants to the tree care market back in 1989," recalls Ott. "We would investigate what products the tree care industry could use and how to market them. My participation was from a practical business perspective.

“It was a pretty long road to sell the whole idea of something other than fertilizers. In the '80s, people had just started working with some of the humic acid products, which had been used in lawn care. It seems as if a lot of these products start with lawn care then we adapt them for tree care.”

But even with early resistance, Ott kept talking with arborists and consumers, promoting the benefits of natural products. “It took a couple of years of basic missionary work telling arborists how to improve their programs. Now, almost every tree care company that is doing serious amounts of fertilizer work is using some additional amendment beyond their slow-release fertilizers.

“One product we are very excited about are mycorrhizal spores, which are marketed through PHC, Inc., and Doggett. The whole mycorrhizal spore business was developed for use in forestry. We took that technology, tested it and plugged it in to urban forestry. It has performed beyond expectations. Field test results were just incredible.”

Mycorrhizal fungi are an essential part of all healthy plants, promoting root growth and providing a natural defense against diseases and pests. Mycorrhizae are abundant in forest soil, but in artificial landscapes and the urban forest, the number of mycorrhizal fungi may be low. This is especially true for soils that have been compacted, are low in organic matter or suffer from fertilizer and pH imbalances. Fumigated soils may contain no mycorrhizal fungi.

In 1995, the Bartlett Tree Expert Company conducted extensive research on the effects of inoculating mature trees with a PHC, Inc., product—MycorTree Injectable Inoculants. Bartlett found that mature landscape trees that are treated with mycorrhizal fungi are significantly more able to develop healthy, extensive root networks than untreated trees.

"When we started out with the product we were pretty skeptical," admits Dr. Tom Smiley, plant pathologist at the Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories. "So we took it out to a spot that would provide a pretty tough test—established, mature landscaped trees. We wanted to see what the effects would be using mycorrhizae and mycorrhizae combined with our fertilizer on root development. We were pretty surprised with the results.

"We had a large increase in root density using our fertilizer, mycorrhizae and a combination of the two," reports Smiley. “Contrary to common belief that fertilizer will reduce the efficacy of mycorrhizae, in our study a combination of fertilizer and Mycor PT really seemed to be the best treatment.

“Our initial study looked at root changes and root density,” Smiley continues. “We also saw tremendous..."
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increases in mycorrhizal colonization rates. The typical tree had an initial rate of 20 percent. That is, about 20 percent of the roots had mycorrhizae growing on them. We could bring that number up to around 65 percent. This in theory should create a more healthy tree with more rapid growth. Now we are studying the above-ground effects.

“...We get at least a doubling and sometimes a tripling of root density with mycorrhizal fungi added. Combine that with higher colonization rates of mycorrhizae and you end up with more fine roots, which are more capable of taking up water and nutrients. That should translate into a healthier tree.”

Additional tests in other parts of the country showed similar results.

Michael Murphy, owner of Preservation Tree Care in Beaufort, S.C., was part of another research effort at the

Vesicular-arbuscular mycorrhizae (VAM) are the most common type of endomycorrhizae. Spores of a VAM fungus, shown here, are attached to an endomycorrhizae of maple. The diameters of the spores are about 1/500 of an inch.

Additional tests in other parts of the country showed similar results.
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Trees can be colonized by more than one species of fungus. In this example, there are two ectomycorrhizae formed by different species on a Douglas fir.

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- Increases plant viability in distressed soils.
- Decreases infection of roots from certain soil-borne disease organisms.

South Carolina Urban and Community Forestry Conference that studied giant live oak trees. These trees "had been neglected for more than 100 years," say Murphy. "They were redeveloping the property and reconditioning buildings. Dr. Donald Marx [PHC, Inc., chairman and chief scientist] picked several trees that trucks were parking under to evaluate the differences in root development. We set up four quadrants under each tree. One quadrant had water put in, one just fertilizer, one mycorrhizal fungi and one mycorrhizae and fertilizer. We had increases in root development, dry root weight, percentage of mycorrhizal roots and rela-

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Plant Health Care With

Scientific advances in caring for trees and shrubs have been accompanied by technological inventions to make the job easier. Tree Management Systems, a developer and marketer of software products for the green industry, has developed a software program that allows arborists to maintain plant and tree inventory of management sites for plant health care purposes.

"After scouting visits, arborists can record specific information regarding plant health care into the system using the criteria developed by the ISA and Dr. Clifford Sadof," explains arborist John Garner, president of Tree Management Systems.

A good plant health care program requires a lot of data. This software makes that job easier and saves arborists from having to do things twice, once when they write things down on paper and again when they enter it into a computer.

"The time-consuming part of plant health care is acquiring and maintaining data on properties," says Garner. "Once it is put in a computer, companies can generate reports, send out notices and track recurring problems. If there is a particular agent affecting a plant, such as an insect or people pressure, we can apply a certain action and have a report ready for the customer."

The software, which was released to the market for the first time in November at TCI EXPO, is designed to allow arborists to build up a data base of information that will help them determine where the problem plants are on properties.

"The beauty of the program is its large data summary capability," explains Sadof, an entomologist at Purdue University. Sadof helped in determining the program's features from a scientific perspective.

"Arborists need to keep track of the..."
kinds of problems that keep recurring on certain properties,” relates Sadof. “For example, if the Smith property has a bad problem with tulip tree scale, that should be on the priority list for next year, so it can be taken care of at the proper time.”

In the winter, in addition to the normal equipment overhauls, arborists can use this software to help prioritize their plant health care activities for the following year. It can be a very important labor-management device. For example, if an area had a lot of defoliation due to Japanese beetles this year, the software allows arborists to compile a list of the places and schedule work crews accordingly by predicting which properties have to be hit first.

The software helps keep track of problems over the course of a season, prioritizes needs and predicts what might be needed in following years based on histories. Tracking can be done in several different ways: by property, plant species or geographic area. This capability has the additional advantage of allowing an analysis of how effective various actions were.

According to Sadof, “if an arborist used insecticidal soap or horticultural oil, he can look at the number of call backs versus using an insecticide. This will give an idea of tactic effectiveness.”

The last feature of the software is what Sadof calls “a biological control component.” He has done research on trying to develop rules of thumb for people in the plant health care industry. This software takes some of this generalized research about how much injury customers can tolerate before they consider a plant to be damaged and helps arborists use these rules.

For example, Sadof has learned that “people won’t notice anything until about 10 percent of a plant’s foliage has been chewed, distorted or yellowed. These kinds of rules are helpful in decision-making for arborists.”

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Cover Story

crease root growth and help trees survive construction or some other impact. What we found out was that treating trees with mycorrhizae has almost given us a whole other direction for our tree care business. We see such great results with the mycorrhizae I am almost tempted not to fertilize anymore. If I hadn't been part of the study, the results would have been hard to believe, but the results don't lie. The increases were just so great."

The conference where the study results were announced generated a lot of publicity. Newspapers covered the story and Dr. Marx was interviewed on TV regarding his research. After that, homeowners started calling Preservation Tree Care asking if they had heard about that "new stuff" they had seen on TV.

"When people hear about it, they will ask for it," insists Murphy, "even though they may not grasp the details. We try not to talk over people's heads with the long names for these fungi. We explain that these are naturally occurring in the soil. For whatever reason, it becomes depleted and we can put it back. It has been in use for 25 years, but only recently have we been able to purchase it commercially."

Murphy tells customers that he is adding "beneficial fungi," because when they think of fungi on their lawn they think of dollar spots or toadstools. "Without some education, you can't point out fungi on the side of a tree that..."
is killing it then try to sell them

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February 18, 1997
Ohio ISA
Winter Conference
Certified Arborist Exam
Worthington, OH
Contact: 330-332-0361

February 19, 1997
Michigan Arborist Association
Electrical Hazards and the Tree Worker
Toll Gate Education Center
Novi, Mich.
Contact: 800-MAA-4055

February 25-26, 1997
Southern Ill. Grounds Maintenance School
Conference and Trade Show
Gateway Convention Center
Collinsville, Ill.
Contact: Ron Cornwell, 618-692-9434

March 11, 1997
Michigan Arborist Association
Insects and Diseases Seminar
Toll Gate Education Center
Novi, Mich.
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April 2, 1997
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Developing the Urban Forest Symposium
University of Maryland, College Park
Contact: 410-535-4737

April 17-18, 1997
California Urban Forests Council
Rejuvenating Urban Forests Conference
San Francisco, Calif.
Contact: 415-431-6428

March 4-5, 1997
Colorado Association of Lawn Care Professionals (CALP)
Spring Training Conference
Jefferson County Fairgrounds
Contact: 303-850-7587

March 6, 1997
ISA Rocky Mountain Chapter
Seminar on Tree Root Biology and Mycorrhizal Fungi by Dr. Donald Marx
Denver, Co.
Contact: 303-321-0985

March 9, 1997
International Society of Arboriculture
First Annual Tree Climber's Jamboree
Florida State Fairgrounds
Tampa, Fla.
Contact: Andrew Kittsley, 407-246-2283,
or Dane Buell, 941-426-7894.

April 30-May 5, 1997
Western Chapter ISA Conference and Trade Show
Disneyland Pacific Hotel
Anaheim, Calif.
Contact: 916-641-2990

May 28-31, 1997
Canadian Forestry Association
Third Canadian Urban Forests Conference
World Trade and Convention Center
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
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Send event and seminar listings to: Editor, Tree Care Industry, PO Box 1094, Amherst, NH 03031
How to Find the Best Person for the Job

By Joseph Arkin

The owner or operator of the typical tree care company cannot afford the luxury of a personnel department, let alone a director of personnel. It pays long-term dividends, therefore, for the owner to know the correct procedures for hiring the best qualified worker from among numerous applicants.

A short-cut would be to use the services of an employment agency. At least the applicants will have been screened to some extent before being sent over for an interview. This method would work fairly well for office, sales or administrative personnel, but few agencies would be able to help find the best field crews.

Many owners go it alone and place a classified advertisement in the local paper or a national green industry magazine. But attracting applicants is only half the job. Deciding which one would be best for the company is just as difficult—and just as important. Some arborists think they can find the best person by looking them in the eye or relying on a gut reaction. Without dismissing these methods, it is wise to add some other ways that professionals have developed from their experiences.

Robert Half, head of the largest personnel recruitment network in the world specializing in financial and data processing positions, says: “An excellent interviewee is not necessarily an excellent employee. If there is a single key to interviewing, it’s the ability to get the most mileage out of each question.”

Here are eight questions designed to get applicants to reveal characteristics they may not recognize they are revealing.

1. Why are you giving up your job?
   Be wary of candidates who answer this question by bad-mouthing their current employer.

2. What did you like best about your last job?
   A candidate who can’t give a thoughtful answer here probably can’t think beyond the basic mechanics of the job.

3. If you could have made improvements in your last job, what
would they have been?
The answer here is a good barometer of a candidate's creativity and general sensivity.

4. Who was the most interesting client you had in your last job (or what has been the most interesting job or project so far in your career)?
The reasons are more important than the answer. They should give an idea, for example, of whether or not the candidate likes challenges.

5. Describe the best person who ever worked for you or with you.
A candidate who has trouble answering this could lack compassion.

6. What kind of people annoy you most?
Frequently (but not always) the traits that candidates mention in their answers do not apply to the candidates themselves.

7. Describe emergencies in some of your jobs for which you had to reschedule your time.
This is the question to ask instead of, "Are you willing to work extra hours when the situation calls for it?"

8. In which way would you like our company to assist you if you join us?
Look for balance here, which means to be wary of candidates who indicate they may need a lot of help or candidates who suggest they may not want any help.

When responding to a classified ad using a box number, many candidates will ask for an interview and include a resume. According to Half, more candidates than ever before are having their resumes professionally prepared, so the resume is rapidly losing its value as an evaluating tool.

The "best" resume may not always come from the "best" candidate; it often comes from the candidate who has had the most jobs (and thus, the most practice writing resumes) or the candidate who has hired a skilled resume writer. On the other hand, the best crew leader may come from the candidate who has had the most jobs (and thus, the most practice writing resumes) or the candidate who has been excessive job jumpers, or else have been out of work for a considerable length of time.

3. Look for profit-mindedness.
Try to sense, from the job description, whether the candidate appreciates the fact that tree care companies are in business to make money. One of the things to look for is how many times in the resume a candidate mentions efficiency measures, sales or customer services ideas that have helped increase earnings.

4. Watch out for trivia.
A resume that's "puffed-up" with trivia (sports interests, children's accomplishments, hobbies, etc.) may be a sign that the candidate is weak in experience and skills. It could also mean the candidate won't have enough time for the job.

5. Beware of qualifiers.
Many resumes are filled with phrases such as, "knowledge of...", "assisted with...", "had exposure to...", Don't confuse these qualifying descriptions with hard hands-on experience.

6. Don't be misled by a lengthy education section.
Candidates who lack appropriate education often beef up their background with detailed (and often meaningless) descriptions of special courses and seminars.

7. Be sensitive to sour grapes.
If the resume leads you to believe that the candidate is bitter about past jobs, tread with care. If the anger shows through in a resume, it can easily surface on the job.

8. Don't excuse sloppiness.
A candidate who isn't astute enough or doesn't care enough to make the resume letter-perfect is not generally a good bet to be conscientious on the job.

9. Don't read more into a resume than is already there.
You can usually assume that what is left off a resume is a skill or quality that the person doesn't have.

10. Look for evidence that shows a willingness to work hard.
This quality may not be easy to detect from a resume, but if you find it, con-
consider the candidate very carefully. Hard workers are not easy to find.

11. Let a specialist do the screening. People who specialize in a particular occupation, profession or industry, have the experience, training and know-how to tell, on the basis of a resume alone, which candidates should be eliminated from consideration.

Of course, you want a worker who has the best qualifications for your job opening. This requirement certainly saves many dollars in training costs, as opposed to just showing the experienced new crew member how things are done in your firm.

A careful screening will accomplish more than finding the most qualified person. Experience matters, but so does character. Perhaps one of the sore points for businesses today is the huge amount of employee theft. Estimates range from $30 billion to $40 billion per year.

Hundreds of companies are now making use of paper-and-pencil assessment tests designed to determine a tendency for dishonesty among individuals applying for jobs. The most often-used test seems to be the Personnel Selection Inventory, which is designed to profile attitudes and opinions of job applicants in the areas of dishonesty, drug abuse and violent behavior to determine the risk of fraud, theft or violence.

The tests, which are published by London House Inc, are administered on-site by your own company personnel and scored within minutes over the phone by the test publisher. Among the values of the test, researchers say, is the fact that it determines which applicants are highly tolerant of theft, have a tendency for violence and are likely to be using drugs.

The test uses situational ethics to show trends toward dishonesty. Most people who are dishonest think that all people are dishonest, says test developer William Terris, Ph.D. Thus, they don’t hide the fact that they have stolen from an employer, although they usually admit stealing only small amounts. It usually can be surmised that an individual who steals at all will steal much more that he admits. Conversely, Terris states that most people who are honest think everybody is honest.

London House recommends that the test be administered as the last stage of the pre-employment screening process, once the number of candidates has been reduced to the best few choices. Terris lists the primary reasons for using the Personnel Selection Inventory as:

- to screen out dishonest people. A

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NAA Member Wins Chipper

Ed and Lori Sage of Sage Landscaping, an NAA member company, won the specially painted Wood/Chuck Chipper Corporation Model 17X Chipper at the raffle held at TCI EXPO '96 in Charlotte, NC. “We were so shocked at winning,” said Lori Sage. “We had come to the show shopping for a used chipper and we couldn’t believe our luck.”

While the November raffle was not limited to those present at the show, Ed and Lori had purchased their second entry only moments before the drawing. The chipper is valued at more than $17,000, and all proceeds went to the National Arborist Foundation. “There were 326 entries, each for $50, from as far away as Norway, and as close as Charlotte, NC,” related Martin Novom, the NAF director of development. The Model 17X was donated by Wood/Chuck Chipper Corporation and the engine, a Perkins, was provided by Covington Detroit Diesel.

“We are pleased that we could donate this chipper and help our industry by allowing more than $16,000 go to the National Arborist Foundation’s important programs,” stated Dennis Beam III, vice president of Wood/Chuck Chipper Corporation. “I hope that other companies will be inspired to get involved with the NAF.”

“We are glad we could be part of this special event,” added Phil Fowler, III, president of Covington Detroit Diesel. “Donating a ‘green’ diesel engine, one that contributes less to pollution, is perfect match with the environmental focus of the National Arborist Foundation,”

“It is very exciting to have so many new people contribute to the Foundation,” said Novom. Of the 326 entries, 247 were from individuals who had not contributed to the NAF before. “A special event opportunity, like the Wood/Chuck Chipper Raffle, is an ideal way for people to become introduced to the activities of the NAF.”

Wood/Chuck does it again in 1997

Greg Daniels, NAF Board of Trustees Chairman announced that Wood/Chuck Chipper Corporation is donating a chipper for the raffle prize for at TCI EXPO '97 in Columbus, Ohio. Again, all the proceeds will go to the National Arborist Foundation. Details of the Wood/Chuck Chipper Raffle for 1997 will be announced in TCI magazine.

Three Associations Team up in Pilot Speakers Program

Three green industry associations have joined together to initiate an outreach Ambassador Speakers Program. The joint effort will motivate and prepare industry representatives to educate the public about the industry’s environmental benefits and to address consumer concerns.

To kick off the program, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) and RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment) conducted an Ambassador Speakers training seminar on Nov. 16 in Cincinnati, Ohio, for 16 industry representatives.

The pilot program has enlisted eight lawn care operators and eight golf course superintendents from Ohio, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. Initially, the program will be piloted in those three states. If you know of schools or civic groups in your area that would be interested in hearing an Ambassador presentation, please call Debbie Rudin at 309-691-2041.

Conservation Partnership

The Morton Arboretum and the Chicago Botanic Garden have agreed to work together to conserve rare and endangered plants in the upper Midwest, and have joined the Center for Plant Conser-
Scientists from the Botanic Garden, The Morton Arboretum, and Chicago State University are studying the propagation and preservation of several endangered species, including the Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid and the Forked Aster.

A New
Products
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The Professional Lawn Care Association of America’s (PLCAA) educational videos, brochures and manuals are now available in a new catalog. PLCAA’s Products Catalog for lawn and landscape professionals offers new items and best-sellers in several sections:

- Lawn & Landscape Management Tools
- Marketing & Management Tools
- Customer Awareness Tools
- Members-Only Professional Tools

New items include a Containment System Design guidebook by Fredric R. Haskett. This guidebook contains information for large and small companies on how to design and construct an affordable and safe facility for storing, handling, mixing, and recycling pesticides, fertilizers and other chemicals.

Another featured item is a new consumer brochure Water Quality and Your Lawn. The brochure is supported by several environmental organizations.

Some of the most popular items in the catalog are the best-selling management publications by Phil Nilsson. A highly respected green industry consultant and author with over 20 years experience, Nilsson gives profit-building advice on grounds maintenance, personnel management, selling and marketing and business-planning topics.

For a free copy of PLCAA’s Products Catalog, contact the association at 1000 Johnson Ferry Road, NE, Suite C-135,Marietta, GA 30068. Phone: 800-458-3466; Fax: 770-578-6071; E-mail: plcaa@atcom.net.

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Choose John Deere engines for smooth-running chipping equipment.
Echo’s new Model ES-2100 boasts an ergonomic design, and a 35-inch intake tube for no-stoop pickup. A 17-ounce, see-through fuel tank lets operators know when they’re getting low on fuel. Debris is shredded and blown into a large-capacity, two-bushel bag with a rear-discharge design. A patented, four-blade steel shredder mechanism quickly reduces yard waste by as much as a 12-to-1 ratio. When converted to a hand-held blower, it generates an average air volume of 300 cfm and a maximum velocity of 135 mph. For information, contact Echo Incorporated, 400 Oakwood Road, Lake Zurich, IL 60047. Phone: 847-540-8400. Please circle 81 on Reader Service Card

The new Tanaka ECV-4501 mid-size chain saw, which weighs just nine pounds, combines performance with safety for maximum comfort, maneuverability and smooth cutting power. It features a vertical cylinder for power, and its innovative air-filtration system removes particles from the air intake to help increase performance and prolong engine life. It also features an automatic decompression system that reduces pulling force to make starting faster and easier. An inertia-activated chain brake stops the saw chain instantly to reduce the chance of serious injury should kickback occur. The ECV-4501 accepts 16-, 18-, or 20-inch Oregon bar and chain combinations. The new saw is covered by Tanaka’s 1/2/5 warranty, which provides 1 year coverage for commercial use, 2 years for homeowner use and 5 years on the electronic ignition module. For more information, contact: Tanaka International, 22461 72nd Ave. S., Bldg. 3, Kent, WA 98032. Phone: 206-395-3900, (Mark Woodling, ext. 215); Fax: 206-395-4245; E-mail: MwatTanaka@aol.com

From Michigan Tree Technologies comes the Model TS 500, a complete, ready-to-spray system that can be mounted on any truck. The three-cylinder Bean piston pump delivers 35 gallons per minute from a 500-gallon Raven tank and saddle. The unit has its own fuel supply, battery, and charging system for easy mounting on any gas or diesel truck one ton or larger. The TS 500 comes with two large, locking Delta tool boxes for storage. Pump pressure adjusts from 0 to 800 psi for spraying small or large trees. Included are all mounting hardware, tail lights, rear bumper, mud flaps and license plate bracket. For more information, contact: Michigan Tree Technologies, 1160 Brenner Road, Highland, MI 48357. Phone: 810-887-5751. Please circle 83 on Reader Service Card
Trenco’s popular Log-Hog 930-series loader has received major upgrades. The 930C loader has a 27-foot boom length that offers continuous 360 degree rotation and 27,300 pounds of lift. There are a variety of mounting options, including crawler, truck/trailer, carrier or stationary mount. The air-conditioner has been moved to behind the seat. The hydraulic tank features in-tank filters and is mounted on top of the platform, which reduces the number of hoses. The hydraulic plumbing has been improved by repositioning the valves and rerouting the hydraulic hoses. New rubber isolation pads between the cab floor and the loader platform help reduce vibration and noise, and a residential-type muffler reduces engine noise. The joystick controls have been improved with the installation of bent handles, while a pilot pressure pump provides improved response for the joystick controls. For more information, call Bobby Cook at 800-527-6020.

The Wheel Saver from Leonardi Manufacturing Company is a thin flat disc approximately the size of a pocket that goes against the wheel of a stump grinder. The result is that the Wheel Saver is against the wheel, and the tooth is clamped against the Wheel Saver not the wheel. This prevents the tooth from digging into the wheel. Some of the damage is absorbed and some is eliminated by spreading the force over a larger surface area. For more information, contact: Leonardi Manufacturing Co., Inc., 2728 Erie drive, Weedsport, NY 13166. Phone: 315-834-6611; Fax: 315-834-9220; E-mail: leonardimfg@worldnet.att.net

The new STIHL 036 QS is the first gasoline-powered chain saw with a triple-activated chain brake. The brake can be activated by inertia, manually with the front hand guard and by releasing the rear handle. The tripping mechanism is integrated into the throttle trigger interlock in the rear handle. If the interlock is released, the brake is activated and stops the chain in a fraction of a second. The brake is reset when the interlock is depressed in order to activate the throttle trigger. During starting, the chain is automatically locked. For more information, call 800-GO-STIHL (800-467-8445).

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The program allows users to view one of 21 plants and select the herbicide they suspect caused the damage. If the pictures don’t match the damage on the plant, the user can return to the main menu for another try.

The CD may be ordered for $39.95 by calling 317-494-6794, or write to: Agricultural Communication Service, Media Distribution Center, 301 S. Second St., Lafayette, IN 47901-1232. For more information, contact Michael Dana at 317-494-5923.
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Many arborists make a good living using their skills to prune and save live trees, and to remove dead and dying trees. After that, they'll generally toss wood into the chipper or the back of the truck.

A growing number of arborists are adding wood processing, particularly firewood and lumber cutting, to their list of services.

As with most additional services, additional equipment is required. In this case, log splitters and portable saw mills. Some arborists even invest in shrink wrap machines to neatly bundle their firewood and other products ready for resale in smaller units.

There are many makes and models of log splitters, portable saw mills and shrink wrap machines available, in all different sizes and price ranges. What follows is just a glimpse at a few of the machines available in today's wood processing market.

Multitek - Log Splitter

The model 2020LD-CS is a tough portable one-man processor that features a 54 hp turbo-charged John Deere water cooled diesel power unit with a two-year engine warranty. This high performance firewood processor can saw and split firewood at a rate of up to two cords per hour (128 cubic feet per cord) from random length low grade logs.

Operator features include joy stick operator controls, fold down two drag chain live log deck, hydraulic drive saw with a .404 saw chain and floating vertically adjustable interchangeable multiple splitter head. The operator may choose between 4-, 6- or 8-way splits.

You can quick-connect to a heavy-duty 20-foot long discharge conveyor for loading a truck or stockpiling. The Model 2020LD-CS is a highly mobile machine with tandem axles, electric brakes and a pintle hitch for towing.

The Multitek Model 2040XP-90 firewood processor is engineered for the large volume pro firewood producer. This heavy duty cycle firewood processor can efficiently and accurately process low grade hardwood logs up to 20 inches in diameter by 40 feet in length at a rate of 2.5 cords to 3.5 cords per hour (128 cubic feet per cord).

This model has an 80 hp John Deere water-cooled diesel power unit, four drag chain live log deck, patented overhead log infeed shuttle grapple, durable 3/4-inch pitch, 11BC saw chain and sawchip blower. New improved features are a redesigned grapple carriage, increased hydraulic reservoir capacity, redesigned log infeed trough and tandem trailer axles.

The 2040XP-90 will quickly split the most difficult hardwood logs or tops into firewood with a powerful hydraulic splitter using a floating vertically adjustable interchangeable 4-, 6- or 8-way multiple splitter head.

The popular operator options include a heated or air-conditioned comfort cab enclosure, 10-foot live deck extension, wood debris cleanout conveyor or a 30-foot rear discharge conveyor with hydraulic lift. For the firewood packaging business an optional electric bangboard for close tolerance cutting is available.
Brute has redesigned its line of firewood processors.

Wood-Mizer Saw Mill

Wood-Mizer's new LT40 SuperHydraulic with 1/2-inch blades can saw up to 54 feet per minute in 12-inch wide red oak, and even faster in narrower boards or softer wood. The LT40 Super series is available with either a 40 hp turbo diesel, 35 hp gas or a 20 hp electric motor. The LT40HD has the same type of heavy-duty roller toe boards and fully supported log swing supports as the LT40 Superhydraulic.

All Wood-Mizer LT40 series sawmills handle logs up to 36 inches in diameter or 21 feet long. The LT30 series handles the same diameters and lengths up to 16 feet, 8 inches.

Brute - Log Splitter

Brute has made improvements to its processors. First it has carefully matched the pumps to the engines to provide for maximum efficiency. These are 3-section pumps to better distribute...
Arboriculture, like medicine, has changed considerably in the past century. Human infections and diseases that were once treated with amputation or salves are now treated with precise doses of antibiotics, proper nutrition and rehabilitation. The same is true for arboriculture. Tree surgery and spraying are carefully being supplemented by highly targeted micro-injection and by correcting environmental stresses on trees. Mauget tree care seminars focus on tree health and environmental protection. These one-day, informal seminars for owners, managers and applicators, are designed to update the way arborists view tree health care. Bring your questions about diseases, insects, nutrition, pruning, spraying, wound treatment, and the impact of tree care on the environment. No other seminar provides as much practical and up-to-date information about tree health care.

Seminars will be held throughout the United States. Take one day this winter to update your view of tree health care at a Mauget Seminar. For information on a Mauget Seminar near you, contact a distributor listed or call (800) 873-3779.

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Arborist
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power among the various functions performed by the processor. The FP150, FP160 and the new FP170 now have hydraulic lift/lower mechanisms installed to the live deck, replacing the electric winch on earlier machines.

The FP130 has a lighter, smaller frame because there is no integral engine, therefore it has a free-standing live deck (provided as an option), with quick-disconnect fittings, rather than the integral live-deck mounted on the frames of the larger processors.

The live deck, when connected, is hydraulically driven and functions in the same manner as the live decks of the larger processors.

The old design Brute log-splitters frequently had overheating problems and on the log-lift models, the design did not provide the maximum efficiency. The engine was installed on the same side as the operator, meaning the operator had to work in the heat and fumes put out by the engine.

The new off-set beam design has enabled the engine to be placed on the opposite side, away from the operator. Larger

Brute conveyors help pile logs or load them onto the truck.

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The log-lift has been completely re-designed to improve the lifting capability on models with that feature. Finally, the Brute conveyor has also been completely re-designed to eliminate the need for constant adjustments to the belt alignment to make any minor adjustments easier to handle and move. The balance of the two smaller machines has been improved, making them much easier to handle and move. The chip chute and separator on the 20-foot machine has been redesigned to better match the conveyor size.

TimberKing M-16 mill is designed to run off of a tractor PTO.

TimberKing Saw Mill

TimberKing is one of the top producers of one-man sawmills in North America. Founded in 1929 under the name Belsaw, the company has more than 24,000 customers worldwide.

Last spring, TimberKing updated the M-14 sawmill, a machine many affectionately call "The Old Belsaw." The new TimberKing M-16 mill combines all the most important features of the legendary M-14 mill with an extended cutting capacity and beefed-up all-steel base.

Because the M-16 is designed to run off of a tractor PTO, it is particularly suited to use on the farm for barn boards, fencing, trailer floors etc. And many bandsaw mill owners have found that their mill works even better when they square their cants with the M-16 before putting them on the bandmill.

The M-16 will handle a log 16 feet long by 24 inches in diameter. The optional M-22 extension package gives it a capacity of 22 feet by 24 inches. The standard carriage has four head blocks (up from three on the M-14) and a new Accu-Trak roller system.

TimberKing’s B-20 Bandmill features a Quad-Beam Deck, providing four times the support of single beam mills. This support, combined with the B-20’s 4-post head, gives the most stable cutting bandmill available. There’s no frame twist or cutting-head bounce, no wavy, inaccurate cuts.

The B-20 carries full hydraulics: log tanks and improved hosing/fitting design have minimized and virtually eliminated the overheating problems. New valves have improved the reliability and reduced the need for valve seal kit and handle replacements dramatically. An improved push-block design has increased the efficiency of the machines.

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- (10) 32 to 42 Bucket Trucks: Gas & Diesel... Call for Sale Price

1979 Mack: 280 H.P., 6 Spd. with Pitan HL 857 Crane: $23,500

1979 Mack Diesel, 5 X 2 sp., 14' steel flat dump: $12,900

1981 Int'l 2554; DT466, 13 Spd.; w/ 15 Ton RO TC150 Crane: 90' Hook Height: $39,500

(10) Chip Body Dumps in Stock: Call for Prices & Descriptions

Opdyke's
Truck & Equipment Sales
3123 Bethlehem Pike • Hatfield, PA (Phila. Area) 19440
(215) 721-4444

Please circle 44 on Reader Service Card
De-barked logs head for the chute to the Multitek Model 2020 SL-CS firewood processor.

loaders, log stops, dual-direction log turner, power clamping dog and roller toe boards. The power carriage feed is also run hydraulically.

A 25 hp Kohler engine powers the blade alone, giving more blade-power than 35 and 40 hp single engine mills. The B-20’s hydraulic features are powered by a smaller 5.5 hp engine.

The B-20 cuts a log 21’3” long, up to 34” in diameter, with production rates as high as 3,400 bft/day. Optional extension allows cutting length up to 40’.

Multitek “Yardhand” Firewood Conveyors

Your operation cannot be complete without an effective means of stockpiling or loading split firewood or any other bulk materials into a truck or trailer. Multitek offers two rugged mobile firewood conveyors in 20- or 30-foot lengths and 30-inch widths, with hydraulic drive, which can be quick-connected to an auxiliary hydraulic power source. Options available are hydraulic lift, self-contained gas engine power unit packages and rubberized belting.

Other Multitek machines include:

• Four models currently available in 35 hp, 55 hp, 80 hp and up to 110 hp John Deere diesel engines

• Unique shuttle grapple log feed mechanism for processing of low grade hardwood logs

• High speed splitters with automatic ram return and splitter heads for bundling and packaging

• On-the-fly centering of each cut round prior to splitting

• Interchangeable multiple splitting heads capable of splitting cut rounds in halves, quarters, sixths or eighths

• Log deck extensions, wood debris cleanout conveyors and conveyor cleanout chutes.
Scalpels For The Tree Surgeon

STIHL’s new 019T isn’t designed for everyone. Incredible balance, a slim profile, and a unique curved handle make this saw ideal for professional arborists.

A retractable climbing ring is there when needed and out of the way when it isn’t. See-through fuel and oil tanks mean there’s no excuse for being on empty in the middle of a cut. The rear air intake manifold is positioned to breathe cleaner air and reduce the time lost to filter cleaning. The slim, contoured profile makes handling in tight places easier and STIHL’s optional PMN bar and chain is lighter in weight and fast cutting.

The STIHL 019T, with its 2.15 cubic inch engine, weighs just 8.9 lbs. and is available at independent STIHL dealers from coast-to-coast. For more information or for the name of your nearest STIHL dealer call 1-800-GO STIHL (1-800-467-8445) or look in the yellow pages under “SAWS.”

Increase your reach with the STIHL HT 75 pole pruner. The adjustable shaft telescopes to 11.5 feet, and it weighs only 15.8 lbs. The HT 75 is equipped with a 12" STIHL PMN bar and chain which produces a very smooth cut, promoting the tree’s healing process.

Please circle 62 on Reader Service Card
B&B Manufacturing: The Wood-Paker Heat Shrink Packaging Line

In business since January 1985 producing shrink wrap packaging systems for the firewood/wastewood industry, B&B has geared its machinery to meet the needs of various products.

Firewood dealers can now compete with larger producers achieving even greater profits than they are now making. Those with waste wood products can now turn what they currently give away, throw away or sell at ridiculously low prices into handsome profits.

Easy to operate, low maintenance, easily affordable, B&B’s machinery has its own in-house stocked line of accessories.

Simply tear a sheet of shrink wrap film from the perforated roll (perforated at intervals to accommodate your product and rack size), place into rack adding advertising piece if desired, stack your wood product, overlap ends of film, attach handle if desired and/or firestarter stick, set your controls, engage the conveyor system, passing the bundles through the oven and you are done.

The seven most popular ways of making money using a shrink wrap machine:
- Sell packaged wood to local retail outlets
- Sell to campgrounds
- Packaging at your customer’s location
- Machine rental to others
- Sell to merchandisers
- Sell wood for home heating use
- Shrink wrap other products
Arboriculture in Academia
Sponsored by the Bishop Company for the advancement of our industry.

By Ken Palmer, President: ArborMaster Training, Inc.

For generations the average tree worker has had little or no academic background. Take me for example. I grew up climbing trees. My older brother and sister loved the tree house my dad built for them. When I was big enough to follow them into the woods, I was climbing trees. Even as a teenager I always enjoyed climbing the tallest tree around and watching the sun set. It was not until I was 21 that I came across a help wanted ad for a tree climber. That was more than 20 years ago, though it was at least another 10 years before I began to realize what a career in arboriculture could mean.

The typical tree worker happens upon a job in the industry by chance. He or she goes to work chipping brush, raking and “learning the ropes.” Provided the person survives, he will learn and may become a productive worker, but you can bet he will pick up many bad habits as well. With no formal training to break the cycle, old habits can go on and on for generations.

Broadening our knowledge and understanding of trees and plants can be a real asset to the company we work for, our self esteem and our future. Eventually most field personnel will want to try their hand at sales and they must be able to communicate in a knowledgeable manner. Most homeowners have a limited interest in specific tree removal technique. However, a sales person can gain the confidence of a prospective client and keep it if he or she can share their knowledge of proper plant health care and maintenance.

Today, there is a huge demand for trained arborists. More and more tree workers are enhancing their expertise through certification programs, attending trade shows and seminars and joining arborist associations. It’s so important for tree workers to think of themselves as professionals. However, there will probably always be those who think of themselves as “qualified enough,” who do tree work by the seat of their pants, reflecting a poor image of our industry to the public.

Therefore, it is essential that we educate not only ourselves, but also the public. The educated consumer will become our greatest advocate as well as our client. Unless the general public is able to differentiate between a skilled arborist and a “fly-by-night” operation, they are vulnerable, and will fall prey to the lure of saving money.

The responsibility belongs to us all. Our trade associations can play a leading role in reaching the public by coordinating efforts and leading special programs, projects and media opportunities. However, companies and individual tree workers represent the front lines, and probably have the greatest influence on the public’s perception.

The need for knowledgeable and capable personnel is growing faster than ever before, yet few young people know anything about the tree care industry. If we can reach children in their schools we will also make an impact on their parents. Those of us who care for trees must effectively share our passion and our vision of a society that understands the value of trees, the impact they have on our quality of life and the importance of proper tree care.

See you at the top!...Ken Palmer
How do you measure the effective use of a computer? With computers today, mountains of information is available to arborists. Through computers, companies will know all sorts of things about you, and you should know all sorts of things about your customers.

The question 15 years ago was, "Can you use a computer in your business?" Now, the question is, "Are you using computers effectively in your business?"

To answer, you have to identify how you use the computer. If you put information into the computer—then use that information again—you are starting to use a computer effectively. When you make a sales visit, you type in a customer's name, address, phone number, the location, directions, when the call came in and when you arrived at the property. But if you only generate one proposal to that client and you never use all that information again, then you might as well try a typewriter because it is more cost-effective.

Try putting the information that you collected over the phone into the computer. Even if you don't get the job after you have made your sales call, you have a new name for your mailing list. That becomes the second reward for data entry. If you send out bulletins about your specials next spring, then you have used the data three times. Your ratio of use to is 3-1 and climbing. That name should stay in your system, because you are developing a record of that property and property owner.

**Order Entry**

An order entry system is one of the most effective ways to use a computer. Just as you generate a business plan, you should have a plan for how your data flows.

If you talk to the chief financial officer of a company, or to its accountants, they will convince you that they are the backbone of the operation. If you talk to the administrative people who make a business work every day, they will convince you that they are the backbone. And I know for sure that if you ask those crews out in the field, they are absolutely convinced that they are the staying power of your whole business.

Nevertheless, business success begins with sales and marketing. If there is no sale, there is no business.

If people take the time and energy to contact your business, it is your duty and responsibility (and good business) to find out how they heard about you.

When a person calls and wants someone to come out and cut down a tree, ask: "Have you taken advantage of our fine services in the past?"

If so, then she should be in your database. Ask why she called and what she needs while you pull her name and service history up on the computer.

If she says, no, then the next logical question is, "How did you hear about us?" If you have no idea why those phone calls are coming into your office, then you shouldn't have that $1,200-a-year yellow pages ad. If you don't know that it
works, you should save the money. Ask one question—how did you hear about us?—and put in a code for it, say YP for yellow pages, NR for neighbor referral.

Did you ever wonder why one salesperson can sell $40,000 worth of stump grinding a year and another sells $5,000?

If you track where you got the call from, and you generate a proposal based on that call, then you know what type of work that you are recommending. If you know the type of work you are recommending and how you got the call, there are all sorts of other things you can learn.

The computer knows how to sort the information. You can put all the stump grinding in one place, all the tree pruning or fertilization in other places. You also can figure out how much of your fertilization work came from yellow page ads. I can tell you the results of sales you’ll make based on neighbor referrals. They will be 4-5 times what yellow pages responses are. You will find, I think, that storm damage calls will be higher from yellow page ads.

There is another reason to track all this information. Create a code for Sal’s Nursery down the street. If Sal is giving you referrals, maybe at Christmas you should go down and see him. Even more important than that, you might want to thank Sal and make him aware that you are going to reciprocate and refer people interested in plant material to him.

By tracking the salesmen, you know the dollar volume of what they recommended and what was accepted. By knowing those two pieces of information, you can create batting averages. The advantage of this is that every time you add a new service or salesperson, you can avoid certain things. For example, let’s say that you decide to break up a salesperson’s territory because he is too busy. You hire a new eager salesperson who goes out and starts selling. He arrives at a property, looks at the trees, and tells the customer, “These trees really look bad. We have a great fertilization program at our company and it would put these trees right back in shape. This is something you should do.”

What if the customer looks at him and says, “You have been fertilizing these trees for the last five years.” It happens.

Remember, too, that people move. If you don’t have the ability to go into a computer and search for every proposal given to a certain address—so that whoever goes out on that job has an archived detail of what has done over the year to that property—then you are not making effective use of computers.

You don’t even need to be a computer whiz to computerize your order entry system. I met a fellow once who wanted to computerize and couldn’t type.

The solution we came up with was to put a mobile phone and a fax machine in his truck. He arrives at a site, walks around making notes to himself and draws pictures. Then, he goes to the front seat of his truck and faxes it back to his office. The office personnel then type it in as a standard proposal from his notes, and they fax it back to him. He thought it was an effective way to do things. This guy is a professional estimator. He put out 1,500 proposals last year by himself. That’s about six a day.
Business Technology

He also tracks his closing rates on estimates, and sends a follow-up letter if he doesn’t get the business. If you don’t get a response from the proposal, send a follow-up letter. Raise your ratio for using information.

Here is a good example of the type of use to which you should put information:

"Dear Mrs. Jones,

It was a pleasure meeting with you and to have an opportunity to walk your property. I hope you found our representative to be professional and helpful. We didn’t hear from you regarding our proposal. If you haven’t made other arrangements and you want to discuss this matter further, we are here. If you have made other arrangements, please don’t hesitate to call us in the future.

You have already collected the data. Use it.

If you get the job, convert the proposal

What Should You Buy?

By Mark Smith, Arbormasters

Unlike the decisions you make in other aspects of your business, computer and software decisions are too often made in reverse order. You wouldn’t go out to the local Chevy or Ford dealer and buy a 3/4 ton pickup truck, then come back to the shop and decide that you need to figure out how to strap a bucket or a dump body on it.

With equipment purchases, you have a job to perform and you select the tool or piece of equipment to do that. In the computer software industry, we find that people go out and buy a computer before they know what they plan to put in it and what they will do with it.

If you are buying a computer for the first time, or you are upgrading your present system, you must define your needs first.

Software/Hardware

Examine your current needs. Do you want to start tracking customers and receivables? Print mailing labels, orders, proposals, contracts and invoices? What about job costing and profit analysis? Do you want to monitor estimated time on the job versus actual time on the job, equipment and crew charging rates and track inventory—especially for landscaping, chemicals or spare parts?

Do you have an active plant health care program? You can use computers to attain better control over routing and scheduling.

We have found that larger companies place a greater emphasis on using computers for these things. Of course, any business person—no matter what the size of the business—should be interested in whether he is making money and which salesperson is doing better than the next. Even if you aren’t ready to start keeping better records, OSHA or DOT might require it.

Future Needs

If you are going to buy a new computer system, you should purchase more than you need, so that you can undertake additional projects as you grow. Some day, you may try desktop publishing for flyers touting fertilization programs, disease prevention and anticipated insect infestations. Realistically assess your needs. You could spend just a little more for a computer and save yourself money in the long run by doing things in-house.

Most small businesses use one or maybe two PCs, but individual computers can’t talk to each other, so you end up entering things twice. You might want to look into a network. Smaller companies favor Peer to Peer, a system by which one computer might hold accounting files, one the customer data base and one has WordPerfect. They can be set up in a chain, so that you can access all the files, but they are stored on only one.

Larger companies should investigate a client server system that has a dedicated server. In a way, a dedicated server is similar to a blackjack dealer. Everyone on a computer is a client on a server network and the server dishes out files, logs files and backs up files on a main data base. Each PC is a workstation with separate software
to a work order using the exact wording from the proposal, so that the crew knows what you told the client and exactly what they are to do. A picture of what is to be done, which is possible with today’s scanning technology, is worth 1,000 words.

We have had the technology to do this for a number of years. But machines have gotten smaller, faster, easier to use and cheaper, so it is now practical to consider. We not only have laptops, we have hand-holds, palm tops and a portable color printer that costs less than $350. It once took two hours to compose an image. Now, we can take a video picture of a site or a tree in two seconds and download it directly into a laptop computer.

The computer should make it easier to do the types of things you do more than once. Whether it is contract renewal, converting work orders to invoices or converting that information to a statement, those are applications that should be performed by making minor adjustments or edits to the original data that you put into the system.

applications. Everyone has his or her own computer, and files are also available to everyone from the server.

**Technology Frontier**

Remote access: If you can call the office from your truck on a cellular phone, you should be able to connect a laptop to the office using communications software. Anyone who uses the Internet already has a modem and communications software. Why is this useful? Say you are out in the field and a call comes into the office. The office can call and you plug the wire from the cell phone into your laptop. Once connected, you can load all the information from your office computer into yours and print it out. The same applies for creating an order. Send it directly into the office computer from your truck.

The Internet: Once you get past the garbage that clogs the Internet, you will find some very good information. Universities, particularly, have good information on local or regional plant health. Cornell or Purdue, for instance, will have specific data on plants in their areas. Texas A&M’s Web Page has an eight-step program for oak wilt management. You can call up its page on the Internet and print out what is on it.

The Internet is a good source for the latest information. Those books you bought five years ago are five-year-old books. Those text books from your school days you still refer to are probably out of date. Technology advances and knowledge expands rapidly.

Space: Satellites are becoming a part of the tree care business as we track infestations such as gypsy moths or fire ants. Part of the use of that technology is that we can identify widespread problems, which can be solved locally by your company, tree by tree. Satellites are also in use for mapping the urban forest and helping to determine its value. NASA is working with a company that takes a satellite picture and looks at stress levels of different species in a large area.

**Build or Buy?**

Some people think they should create their own methods of tracking customers rather than buy software created specifically for the green industry. Off-the-shelf software is cheap, but not industry specific. It can't do all the jobs you want. Plant and chemical libraries, mix ratios and disease or pest inventories are things that QuickBooks Probe just can't handle. Typically, you can't grow your business as well with generic software, because it can't solve the problems you need solved.

For hardware, you can go to a discount department store to buy a PC. Of course, you can buy a chain saw there, too. But you don't, because professional products, while more expensive, are better. You spend the money to get the right tool for the field. A computer is a tool for the office.

**Summary**

There are a lot of machines out there to help you with your business. Some are useful, some are toys, some are useful toys. Answer a few questions before you make any purchases. What are your needs? What would you like to do? What sort of information would you like to glean? How far and fast do you hope to grow? Are the new machines compatible with what you have already? Once you have an idea, then, and only then, should you go shopping.
The purpose for using technology is to make your life better, your business more effective and allow you to do what you do best. We want to give you back the time to do what you enjoy most.

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**MARKETING**

**ADDITIONAL SERVICES TO CURRENT AND NEW CUSTOMERS**

By Maris Franke, Practical Solutions

What information do you need in order to market services to residential and commercial locations?

- addresses (current and potential customers)
- plant inventory for each location
- list of scheduled services for current customers
- history of services for current customers
- a user-friendly report writing software, so you can get the above information out of the computer

**SERVICE LOCATION ADDRESSES**

You need to build a data base of information about current and potential clients. The addresses need to be what is called cass certified, which is a term the U.S. Postal Service uses to indicate the percent of your addresses that are standardized to the Postal Service's data base in Memphis, Tenn. If you intend to maintain a data base, it is important that the address be spelled properly and that it agree with the data base in Memphis.

Since people sell their homes and new homeowners come in, the data base will be updated with those new names and phone numbers. If your new addresses aren't cass certified, which really means standardized exactly, you will send double mailings to some addresses. Keep in mind that your customers may not give you the standardized address.

You can buy thick books that have every address in your city or town, or you can buy those addresses on disk. The price will vary based on the information included in addition to the address. You can buy lists that sort by family income, age, single-family homes versus apartments or almost any other factor you can think of. You can keep up with the new names by looking in your local paper for real estate transactions. In my town, Co-

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**Hose**

600 PSI Hose

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Please circle 52 on Reader Service Card

48 TREE CARE INDUSTRY - FEBRUARY 1997
Building a Plant Inventory

To market services such as pruning or insect control, you need to know which plants are on each property. You may also want to record the numbers, sizes and problems of individual plants. This will require work to maintain an accurate record for your existing customers. For potential customers, you can take an inventory during the slow times. Of-

Using the PC in Data Collection
From the Field to the Office

By Donna Garner, Tree Management Systems

Technology is booming exponentially, and one of the new developments is the Apple Personal Data Assistant (PDA) system. The Apple Newton technology came out in 1993, and there have been four generations since.

These little hand-held computers weigh less than a pound, and they fit in the palm of the hand. They are an alternative to laptops, which can be cumbersome in the field. Newtons are also a little bit more durable than a laptop and, at $800, cost about one-third as much.

The Newton PDA is a personal computer that learns your handwriting. It becomes used to your handwriting style. You can tell the computer whether you want it to recognize cursive or print or a mixture. The Newton can straighten your lines when you are drawing. Some companies have taken the PDA technology and made it water-proof and able to withstand repeated drops onto concrete. These additional features add a bit to the cost, though they might survive more abuse in the field.

With a Newton, you can send and receive faxes. It has a built-in calendar for your schedule. It has a card file that can hold thousands of customer names. Each card can hold 4,000 names and addresses of customers.

This is a powerful tool in data collection for field estimates. After you collect data, you can plug the hand-held in to a portable printer in the truck and give the customer an estimate on the spot or take this information back to the office and download it into the office computer. Newtons will work with Apple or IBM computers.

All of this can be particularly useful for plant health care services. It may be fairly easy to keep track of 10 customers, but when your business grows to 100 or 200, you need a sophisticated system to manage who gets what treatments and when. Your technician can go around a property and inventory each plant’s health. If you don’t use a computer, the technician brings all this information back handwritten and places it in a file. Without going through the paper files of every customer—past, present and potential—there is no way to access that information easily to alert you to future treatment needs.

All of this plant information can be drawn onto a map of the property using relatively inexpensive CAD software on the market. What really excites customers of plant health care services is getting some sort of review or report of the value of the service. You may visit the property 10 times a year and send a bill. But if you produce a written report and a map, they can see and appreciate what they are receiving for their money.

You Got Balls?
(In your Sweetgum)
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209/499-2100

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Lumbus, Ohio, the chamber of commerce tracks this information.

Now that you have this accurate list of your current customers and their neighbors, the next thing is to put a plant inventory together.
ten, a planned development will have similar or uniform plantings. Every house, for example, may have a silver maple in front and one apple in the back. Do a quick inventory of the neighbors of existing customers and use that to target a mailing to them.

Scheduled Services

You need to have an accurate coding system to match a plant inventory with potential or scheduled services. If the computer is organized, so that the different types of spraying you do are matched with the different plants on each property, you can maximize and organize your work. You should know that a certain property has a flowering crab in the back with a history of problems with apple scab. If that customer has not scheduled the corresponding service, you can call and sell that service.

The other big advantage is that if you have an outbreak of a particular disease or pest, you already have a built-in inventory that allows you to identify all the people with a particular species, whether you have treated a given property before, what type of treatment you used and when. A good service history will also allow you to pull up all the people who had pruning two or three years ago and haven’t had any since.

Once you have all these things together in the computer—address list, plant inventory, scheduled service and history—then the next thing you need is a system to turn the information into a useful marketing tool.

Marketing Your Information

A sophisticated report writing system generates specific reports, letters or postcards. The software should be able to do and/or logic, which means it can find all the properties on your list that have a certain plant and have signed up for a certain service. It will then select which letter needs to go to which customer, based on the plants on the property, the services you offer and whether or not the customer has already signed up for that service. If the customer is scheduled for one service but not another, a different letter with different phrases will be sent.

In this way, you can identify all of the properties that have lilacs with powdery mildew problems that are not scheduled for treatment.

The system you buy also needs to update some sort of correspondence log, so that you have a record of each time you have sent a letter. You don’t want to overdo your mailings or send the same letter twice. You can increase your revenues through targeted marketing, but customers don’t want to be badgered.
It is common sense that electric wires can be hazardous to anyone doing tree work. OSHA Standard 1910.331 states that only qualified employees can come within ten feet of an overhead energized electrical conductor. Plus, OSHA Standard 1910.269 clearly defines who is legally permitted to work within the ten foot boundary. Finally, ANSI Z133.1 dictates very specific training and operational requirements that all tree care personnel need to follow for safety's sake.

NAA Training Makes Sense. The National Arborist Association has exactly the training you need, whether you are a residential/commercial arborist or municipal arborist. It's our Electrical Hazards Awareness Program. EHAP offers a simple, economical and practical way to provide training needed by your employees. This program creates awareness of electrical hazards, which is absolutely essential for all tree workers. Plus, EHAP can be used by line clearance tree workers to supplement mandatory training requirements specified in 1910.269.

Like all NAA training materials, EHAP is easy to use and easy to apply. The program is self-paced, to put your employees in control of meeting their goals, and presented by you, to keep you in control of your business. For more information about EHAP, or any NAA program, or to order, call our toll-free hotline, or send/fax the coupon below.

National Arborist Association
P.O. Box 1094, Amherst, NH 03031-1094
Fax: (603) 672-2613

☐ YES I'm ready to provide my personnel with training in Electrical Hazards Awareness.

☐ I'M interested in the EHAP program. Please send additional information.

Send Me EHAP Programs for ____ enrollees, at $____ each*. Enclosed is $____

Bill my ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa Number: ___________________________ Exp. Date: ______

Contact/Credit Card Holder Name: ________________________________

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☐ Please send me membership information.

*RETAIL: $135.00 per enrollee; MEMBER DISCOUNT PRICE: $85.00 per enrollee. If ordering, please include a list of enrollees.

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People Still Dig Near Trees

Some people do not understand the value of avoiding digging near ornamental trees. Recently I visited an educational demonstration where good-hearted people had properly planted a group of trees in memory of those lives lost in the Oklahoma City Bombing. Unfortunately, a great deal of damage was done by other good-hearted people who simply did not understand tree biology.

It's very sad in many ways. The damage was to a birch tree, and on Earth Day, the person who planted the tree two years ago explained to me how pleased and happy he was that the tree had lived for one year. He went on to explain how everything else he planted died.

Flowers were planted in the non-woody root area, and the birch tree had both woody and non-woody roots disrupted when a good-hearted person thought it would look pretty to dig around the tree to edge the mulch. Birch trees do not tolerate this treatment. I am sad for the person who planted the tree properly. I am sad for the ones who did not understand that the rhizosphere is very sensitive. And last I am sad for myself and for my friends, who planted the demonstration because in a sense I have failed to communicate with parties involved.

A question one might ask is "How is it possible that we can cause pest and fungus problems, kill a tree by planting flowers at the base and digging up roots (woody and non-woody) of our trees? Non-woody roots facilitate the absorption of water and elements from the rhizosphere. Woody roots support the tree, store energy (starch and oils) and transport elements and water from the non-woody roots toward the leaves. Food from the stem is transported toward the non-woody roots by way of the woody roots.

On most trees most of the time, the non-woody roots can be found in the rhizosphere in the upper four inches of the soil. The way a non-woody root dies naturally is much different from how it dies by wounding when planting flowers and bulbs at the base of the tree. A natural boundary will form (abscission layer) first where the non-woody root...
meets the woody root (which will resist entrance of pathogens). After the boundary (abscission layer) is formed, the non-woody root will then die and be digested by microorganisms.

On the other hand, when we dig we often wound and kill non-woody roots before a boundary is formed. Now, the pathogens that infect woody roots have an open door. I call this predisposition.

In a sense the tree is in a receiving mode for pest and fungus. We find many other factors to blame the decline and death of the tree, e.g., borers, twig die back, mites, insects, fungus, weather ... The list goes on.

When we see these problems, we tend to dose the tree with nitrogen, which in a sense can turn beneficial microorganisms into pathogens when the tree is in a predisposition state or condition. I will not go into detail about all the chemical pesticides used to fight the pest and fungus. This works much the same as the death of mycorrhizae during flooding, soil grade change, soil compaction and the list goes on.

I hope someone will learn from this article—not because I wrote it—but because they see it for themselves.

John A. Keslick, Jr.
Tree Biologist
Web Site: http://www.ccil.org/~treeman/

Keep Up the Good Work

Your publication Tree Care Industry is a wonderful source of information regarding tree care. Thanks.

Richard Matteson
Pendleton Country Club
Pendleton, Ore.

Every month I look forward to Tree Care Industry. It is packed full of new and interesting articles. Keep’ em coming.

William J Weigle
RFD #1, Highbridge Road
New Boston, N.H.
Ergonomics Controversy Returns Again ... and Again ... and Again ... and Again ...

On Dec. 4, 1996, a jury awarded $5.3 million dollars to a former secretary for injuries sustained while repeatedly using a computer keyboard on the job. She apparently suffered severe carpal tunnel damage and muscle atrophy. The manufacturer of the keyboard, Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC), was deemed negligent for failing to place a warning on the keyboard. The same jury awarded significant amounts to a billing clerk who also suffered carpal tunnel damage and a legal secretary who developed tendinitis in her arms. DEC seeks to have the verdicts set aside, and plans to appeal if necessary, on the grounds that there is no scientific evidence that using keyboards causes musculoskeletal disorders.

This lack of scientific evidence regarding repetitive motion injuries is the crux of the argument over OSHA's development of an ergonomics standard. Most vocal in the battle against the proposed ergonomics rule is the American Trucking Association, which claims that an enforceable federal standard could cost the trucking industry billions of dollars annually without substantial evidence that money invested in compliance to new standards will provide any benefit to worker health and safety. The National Coalition on Ergonomics also opposes a federal standard on ergonomics because they feel rulemaking is premature. Both groups intend to challenge recently enacted legislation in California, which imposes a statewide standard.

Labor Secretary Robert Reich has announced OSHA's intention to move forward with proposed rulemaking, despite vigorous opposition from many trade associations. An ergonomics standard is a high priority with the Clinton administration, and OSHA plans to move forward with education programs, research, enforcement activities and rulemaking. The ultimate goal is a standard that will clearly outline employers' responsibilities in preventing repetitive stress injuries. Unfortunately for OSHA, the scope of an ergonomics standard is so broad that it is difficult to identify a point of departure. Ergonomics experts may need to be added to OSHA's staff just to deal with this issue. Currently, there is no single person responsible for development of a proposed rule, nor is there a specific timetable. A draft rule could still be years in the making. In the meantime, ergonomics appears to be the flavor-of-the-month on court dockets, and OSHA can pursue enforcement activities under the general duty clause.

The National Arborist Association is forming alliances to oppose development of a single ergonomics standard without further research. Of particular concern is the difficulty in isolating causes of injury that are work-related from injuries that are caused, or exaggerated, by other activity in employees' off-duty hours. For example, is ear ringing caused by chain saw use, or by listening to loud music in night clubs? Is tendinitis caused by keyboard use, playing tennis, or a combination of the two? Why is it that two people performing identical tasks for identical periods of time with identical tools can experience vastly different physical impacts? These questions must be answered with sound scientific research if OSHA is to develop a fair and substantial rule.

The NAA will continue to encourage worker health and safety by insisting that employers properly train employees, and that OSHA utilize reasonable methods of rulemaking and enforcement.

Amelia Reinert is deputy executive director of the National Arborist Association.
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Continued on page 64
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The most common and lucrative ways to save through the use of a home office are:

1. **Depreciation on office furniture, equipment and dwelling.** If you own the house, you can deduct part of the purchase price and improvements. You can also deduct a portion of the interest on your mortgage and a portion of your property taxes. If you rent your home, you can deduct a portion of the rent for your office.

2. **Deduction of home expenses.** With a home office you may deduct a portion of your homeowner’s insurance; utilities, including phone, electricity, water and sewer charges, heat and air conditioning; some home improvements, such as painting or roofing.

3. **Travel.** Commuting from home to office is not deductible, but travel from the office to job sites is. So if your home is your office, travel expenses to and from sites may be deducted. For more information on deducting travel and expenses, call the IRS at 800-829-3676 and ask for Publication # 463.

The possibility for tax savings with a home office is significant and alluring – so much so that you might want to consider setting aside a room in your house, even if you already have an office outside the home.

On the down side, the rules regarding which home office expenses are deductible and in what amounts are complicated. And you may increase your chances of an audit by establishing a home office or taking an overly aggressive posture toward deductions. The IRS regards home offices as a prime area for tax fraud, so it scrutinizes such deductions very closely. Don't shy away from saving money by taking full advantage of what the law allows, but be prepared to document and defend your return.

You probably keep pretty good track of most other business expenses for tax purposes. Everyone knows that items such as equipment, office supplies and postage are deductible. Here are some items that should be deductible that you may have forgotten to include on your latest return:

- association dues
- trade shows
- tapes and manuals
- Internet charges
- interest on credit cards used for business expenses
- uninsured losses due to theft, fire or accidents
- educational business expenses
- corporate donations to charity
- coffee service for employees
- security services
- bank fees
- legal and accounting fees
- periodicals

The IRS has been replacing its out-of-date computer system with newer, faster machines in recent years. This generation of computers can track your return versus returns filed in previous years. The IRS also can compare your return to national averages for businesses of your type and size. It also tracks income levels by zip code, watching for returns from wealthy towns or neighborhoods that claim little or no income. If the numbers fall outside certain guidelines, which the IRS won't divulge, it could spur an audit.

If you have legitimate deductions even if they seem out of line on the surfacedon't be afraid to list them out of fear of an audit. Consult a knowledgeable tax expert who can help fill you in on what is deductible and how to maintain records to satisfy the IRS.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reader Service No.</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ACRT, Inc.</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Aerial Lift, Inc.</td>
<td>Back Cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Albiez Insurance Agency, Inc.</td>
<td>Inside Back Cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Altec Industries, Inc.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Altec Industries, Inc.</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. American Arborist Supplies, Inc.</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Andy’s Truck Center, Inc.</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. ArborSystems LLC</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Bandit Industries</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Bishop Company</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Bishop Company/RF Inter-Science Company</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Border City Tool &amp; Manufacturing Co.</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Brute Manufacturing Corporation</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. J.P. Carlton Company, Div. DAF, Inc.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciba</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Corporate Capital Leasing Group, Inc.</td>
<td>Ins. Front Cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Creative Sales, Inc. (CSI)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Cutter’s Choice</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Davey Tree Expert Company</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Deere Power System Group</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Doggett Corporation</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Fanno Saw Works</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Forestry Equipment of Shelby, Inc.</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. GFX Corporation</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Green Pro Services</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Independent Protection Company, Inc.</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. ITB Company, Inc.</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. ITT Hartford</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Key Knife, Inc.</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Lewis Utility Truck Sales, Inc.</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Links Lumber &amp; Landscape</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. J.J. Mauger</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Monterey Lawn &amp; Garden Products, Inc.</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Monterey Lawn &amp; Garden Products, Inc.</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Mountain Town Manufacturing, Ltd.</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. National Arborist Association-Pruning Program</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. National Arborist Association-EHAP Program</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. National Arborist Association</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Navistar</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Niemeyer Corporation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Northeastern Associates</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Omni Leasing, Inc.</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Odyke, Inc.</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Oral Ivy, Inc.</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Peavey Manufacturing Company</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Pete Mainka Enterprises, Inc.</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Plant Health Care, Inc.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Poinsettia Software, Inc.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Polecat Industries, Inc.</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Power Great Lakes, Inc.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Professional Tree &amp; Turf Equipment</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. Roots, Inc.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. SavATree</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. Schodorf Truck Body &amp; Equip. Company</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. Sharp Tool Company</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. Sherrill, Inc.</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. Shindaiwa, Inc.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. Simon-Telelect, Inc.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. Southco Industries, Inc.</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. Southeastern Equipment Company</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. STIHL, Incorporated</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. TCI EXPO ’97</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64. TimberKing, Inc.</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65. Timberwolf Wood Processing Equipment</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66. Time Manufacturing Company</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67. Tree Management Systems, Inc.</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68. Vermeer Manufacturing Company</td>
<td>Front Cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69. Wallenberg Sales Corporation</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70. Western Tree &amp; Landscape Supply</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71. Westheffer Company, Inc.</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72. Zenith Cutter Company</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Please circle this number on the Reader Service Card for more information.
Different Dangers

Sometimes, it's the little things that present the gravest risks

By Simon Jones

Mark, Perran and myself had just arrived to finish off a job off from the previous day. I was reducing branches from a tree and the day was warm, so I took my shirt off. Suddenly I felt something sting me under the arm. I climbed from the tree and made my way over to the truck for the medical kit, which contained an anti-histamine spray. Surprisingly, the strangest taste came into my mouth, almost as if I could taste the sting. As I mentioned this to Perran, my balance began to go and my heart started pounding in my ears. Perran thought it was just shock from being stung and suggested that I sit down. By then I was feeling worse, and before I realized what was happening, I had collapsed to the ground with absolutely no control over my body. Not only was my heart still pounding, I was now having trouble breathing.

Perran called Mark over. By then I was sick, my senses were going and all I was thinking was get me an ambulance ... I am going to die. Mark had a mobile phone and was quick to use it to call an ambulance. By that time, I had blacked out. When the ambulance arrived, the paramedic quickly gave me an injection of adrenaline to stop my system from shutting down and causing a cardiac arrest. Again I blacked out. I came to in the ambulance, which was rushing through the London traffic to the hospital. I was sick again and my body felt paralyzed. My sight went and caused me to panic!

On arrival at the hospital, the medical staff rushed me through to the emergency treatment room. I was given another injection of adrenaline and again was sick. By this time, I was beginning to regain my senses. I had the worst headache!

At this point I realized that I was wired to a heart monitor and it was reading 155 beats per minute. I was also wearing an oxygen mask to help my breathing.

The doctor came in to see me and explained what had happened, which was basically a massive allergic reaction to the sting. I found it hard to understand as I have been stung many times in the past, but apparently the body can overload with toxins from stings.

I was released at the end of the day and told to visit my doctor with a letter from the hospital requesting a check-up and a prescription for a hypodermic syringe and adrenaline, which I must carry with me at all times. Such a small insect will always be a big problem in my life.

Simon Jones is the owner of Simon Jones Associates in Tadworth, England.

I came to in the ambulance, which was rushing through the London traffic to the hospital. I was sick again and my body felt paralyzed. My sight went and caused me to panic!

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models</th>
<th>Working Height</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AL-38-LHD</td>
<td>35' 6&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL-39-L</td>
<td>44' 6&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL-40-L</td>
<td>45' 6&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL-42-L</td>
<td>47' 6&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL-45-L</td>
<td>50' 6&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL-50-L</td>
<td>55' 6&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL-52-L</td>
<td>57' 6&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL-60-50-L</td>
<td>60' 0&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL-60-50-E14</td>
<td>70' 6&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL-60-50-E14</td>
<td>72' 3&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL-60-52-E14</td>
<td>75' 0&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL-60-52-C</td>
<td>50' 6&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL-50-C</td>
<td>55' 6&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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