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# OC Vision

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## Embrace the Change



**Sal Hernandez**  
Pacific Breeze Landscape  
Chapter President

I hope you all had an amazing time with your family during the spring holidays. I want to thank everyone who participated in our “Back to Basics” event. I also want to thank our board members who are working hard to put these events together. In fact, we already have more in the works! We have finally dialed in our golf tournament, so be sure to sign up. It will be a fun event on May 20 in Fullerton. I’m also excited to announce that we will have a chapter Beautification Awards this year! Entry forms will be available online at our chapter website ([www.clca-orangecounty.org](http://www.clca-orangecounty.org)) on May 3, 2021. Start thinking about what projects you will be entering!

Change is everywhere. Markets are constantly changing too. We need to think through what we are doing to improve our business to adapt. Ask yourself: Where do you feel you are lacking? How do you approach such obstacles? Change allows us to grow and not get complacent. Take Sears and Amazon for example, one is old news, the other is the most influential company of our time. Technology is here to stay; we need to embrace it and integrate it into our company systems. If not, we too may become old news.

Now that spring is here, I hope everyone is staying busy. Make sure to reach out to our advertisers, vendors, and sponsors. They are the best point of contact for all your landscape material needs, and they’re always happy to help.

The great news is that we have members from all backgrounds, and we can learn from each other and continue to encourage one another. I wish you all success and remember, EMBRACE THE CHANGE!

The changing season around us is a great reminder of how important it is for us to adapt with the season too. Usually, this is the time for our industry to ripen, both literally and figuratively. If you haven’t prepared for the season, I suggest you get on this ASAP. Many people fear change, but as entrepreneurs and leaders of our industry, we should embrace it. It usually brings out the best within us. Back in my military days we had a saying: “Adapt and Overcome.” This quote refers to change itself.

For this month’s book, I recommend *The E-Myth Landscape Contractor* by Michael E. Gerber, Anthony C. Bass, et al.

Sincerely, Sal

<b>CLCA-OC Calendar &amp; Other CLCA Events</b>	
<i>Mark Your Calendars &amp; Save the Dates Now!</i>	
<b>May 20</b>	Chapter Golf Tournament, Fullerton. Coyote Hills Golf Club: 1440 E. Bastanchury Rd. <i>More information inside on page 6.</i>
<b>June 9</b>	OC Beautification Awards Entry Forms Due. <i>Forms available at <a href="http://www.clca-orangecounty.org">www.clca-orangecounty.org</a> on May 3, 2021.</i>
<b>June 24-26</b>	OC Beautification Awards Landscape Judging.
<b>July 15</b>	Chapter Fishing Excursion. <i>Registration opening soon!</i>
<b>Aug. 28</b>	Chapter Angels’ Baseball Game & Tailgate. <i>Angels v Padres, Anaheim Stadium.</i>
<b>Sept. 18</b>	Beautification Awards, Mission Viejo. <i>MV Country Club: 26200 Country Club Dr.</i>
<b>Nov. 3-6</b>	CLCA State Convention, Maui, Hawaii.



**With advocacy, action on upcoming events, and a Company/HR information portal, CLCA is taking action to help you survive the coronavirus pandemic. Visit [www.clca.org/covid](http://www.clca.org/covid) for the most up-to-date information.**

# Making the Most of Your Marketing



There are many marketing methods out there that your business can take advantage of, but sometimes it can be more effective to focus in on your current options and hone their performance. This article lists three tools that can help you make the most out of your current marketing strategies.

### Informed Delivery

If you currently use direct mailing campaigns, utilizing Informed Delivery by the U.S. Postal Service can help with your conversion rate.

Informed Delivery is a free notification service that allows consumers to digitally preview their letter-sized mailpieces and manage their packages that are scheduled to arrive soon. The postal service also allows business mailers the opportunity to engage with users through an integrated mail and digital marketing campaign.

While typical direct mailing campaigns would appear as greyscale scanned images to a consumer, business mailers can use Informed Delivery to connect an interactive, colorful digital ad to

their direct mailer. The service is free to advertisers.

Becca Presley, director of marketing & communications for Senske Services, based in Kennewick, Washington, first heard about the service in the fall of 2018 at a marketing conference and signed up as a consumer that day.

Senske Services' typical direct mail campaign in 2020 was 630,000 pieces. The company also used Informed Delivery for smaller customer-direct campaigns. In 2020, they loaded 2.2 million pieces into the Informed Delivery system and Presley predicts they will load close to 3 million pieces for 2021.

"We've noticed an uptick in conversion rate for Informed Delivery versus standard email marketing," Presley says. "For one campaign, we had a 34 percent conversion rate with the Informed Delivery ad compared to a 27 percent conversion rate for email marketing when promoting the same service."

Since using Informed Delivery, Presley

says they've learned to work with their designer to place the important information such as the offer on the front side of the mailer. She also advises linking the digital ads to relevant lead forms, rather than just your home page.

"Another best practice is to track your results," Presley says. "We use Bitly short-codes to track clicks tied to the ads. The USPS also provides post-campaign results, but those are only available on their site for 30 days, so be sure to download results before they disappear."

Presley encourages others who use direct mailing campaigns to jump in with Informed Delivery.

"I hesitated moving forward with the program because I feared it was a large time commitment," she says. "It's not. It takes just a few minutes to load a campaign. There was a learning curve, so getting started took a little research and set up, but the team at USPS was really helpful and easy to work with. The number one reason to use the service is that it's free. You can improve your direct mail results with no added cost."



*Informed Delivery ads allow companies to upload a color version of their printed mailer and include a clickable link. Photo: Senske Services*

**ADVERTISE IN THE OC VISION!**  
 Find rates on page 9 of this magazine or visit the chapter's newly re-designed website at [www.clca-orangecounty.org](http://www.clca-orangecounty.org) for information.  
 Call (949) 466-1222 with questions.

*Continued on Next Page...*

## Making the Most of Your Marketing

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### Social Media Scheduling Platforms

While almost every company has social media accounts, this doesn't mean you have the time to post regularly. Social media scheduling tools such as Hootsuite and Buffer can help with this.

"Scheduling regular content is very important to keep followers engaged with your company," says Caitlin Clineff, recruiting specialist and company ambassador for Myatt Landscaping, based in Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina. "The more posts your followers engage with, the more they will show up in their newsfeeds. If you only post once in a while, people are less likely to see it.

"I ended up using Buffer because it was recommended to me by a friend who works in graphic design," Clineff says. "I kept using it because it was very user-friendly, free for the level we are using currently, and it supports posting to Instagram, which some other scheduling services don't."

The company shares all of their social media posts through Buffer including their holiday posts, photos of their work, and employee promotions. They also share when someone has earned a new certification, links to their blog posts, links to articles that may be of interest to their followers, and more.

"We use social media mainly as a tool to engage with potential and current clients and employees," Clineff says. "We don't do any 'marketing' posts, like offering special deals or encouraging people to contact us for quotes, we just try to share about our company so people can see a little bit behind the scenes and get to know us."

If you are looking for a social media scheduling platform, Clineff suggests making sure it integrates with the platforms you're wanting to use, that it fits your budget or if there is a free version that meets your needs. Also, determine if it will actually save you time.

"If you only use Facebook or Instagram, it may be faster to post directly to those sites, but if you're using multiple platforms or sharing a lot of content, you may save a lot of time by using a scheduling platform," she says.

### Customer Referrals

Almost every business benefits from word of mouth, but you can take that one step further by incentivizing it. Customer referral programs are definitely not something new, but it may be something you haven't really considered implementing.

Mark Borst, LIC, president and owner of Borst Landscape & Design based in Allendale, New Jersey, says he started his customer referral program around eight years ago. He prefers rewarding his existing clients who are loyal rather than giving new customers free services.

When he first started the program, existing customers would receive a \$250 credit for referring a new client to the company. Now over the past three years, he's split that amount, so the existing client receives a \$125 credit and the new customer receives \$125 as well. Borst says they get more referrals when they remind clients about the program through e-blasts.

"I would say it definitely has boosted new sign-ons and the referrals that we get from our existing clients are really solid referrals," Borst says.

"One drawback I've seen is that the people who are shopping just for numbers take advantage of the credit for the first year," Borst says. "They will then go work with someone else

next year so sometimes it's a one-and-done thing."

If you are considering adding a customer referral program, Borst says to think about what you're doing for your existing clients.

"Maybe cash isn't the driver," Borst says. "Maybe it's something else that you can come up with. We just chose it to be a credit on the account. We felt that would be the simplest way to manage it and get a thank you to them quickly."

*This article, authored by Jill Odom, was originally published on the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) blog at <https://blog.landscapeprofessionals.org/>*

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## California Landscape Contractors Association - Orange County Chapter **2021 ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT**

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Golfers will be emailed their assigned tee times on Monday, May 17, 2021.

**REGISTER:** Registration and payment must be completed by April 30, 2021. Register on our website at [www.clca-orangecounty.org](http://www.clca-orangecounty.org)

**PRICE:** \$165/golfer. Contractors: \$150/golfer.  
Includes participation in the tournament and a boxed lunch with drink ticket for all registered golfers.

**QUESTIONS:** Call 2021 OC AM Rep Bill Deeble at (562) 243-5330.

**NEW THIS YEAR...** Tournament winners will be announced at a virtual awards ceremony on Thursday, May 20, at 6 p.m. We will also have a raffle, conducted in a chinese auction format. Tickets will be sold during registration and participants will be able to choose the prize they want to win! Winners will be drawn at the virtual awards ceremony.

### THANK YOU TO THIS YEAR'S OC CHAMPIONS



## Hazardous Treated Wood Waste...What to Do?

*Hint: Request a hazardous waste disposal variance.*

As of April 2021, there are very few options for the disposal of hazardous treated wood waste in California. Furthermore, the limited options that do exist involve managing the treated wood waste as a fully regulated hazardous waste, which is procedurally more difficult and costly. For many generators, temporarily accumulating the treated wood waste is an available option that should be considered.

The state agency responsible for protecting California's people and environment from toxic substances say they understand that "the change in status of treated wood waste and the sunset of the Alternative Management Standards has been disruptive and has caused frustration to many."

"The DTSC (California Department of Toxic Substance Control) is aware of the urgency in resolving this problem and we are actively working on the variance application process."

Used in fence posts, sill plates, landscape timbers, pilings, guardrails, and decking, treated wood must now be disposed of in class 1 hazardous waste landfills, following the expiration of a law authorizing less onerous waste management standards.

After December 31, 2020, all treated wood waste "that exhibits the hazardous waste characteristic of toxicity will be a fully regulated hazardous waste and will no longer be eligible for disposal in Class II or Class III landfills," a fact sheet from the California Department of Toxic Substance Control says.

Fortunately, on February 16 the department started accepting requests for variances that allow the disposal of treated wood waste under the less onerous expired standards.

As of April 9, the Department of Toxic Substances Control started to issue hazardous waste disposal variances for haulers, handlers, and landfills for treated wood waste. There is a bit of lag time, it seems, from when the variance is approved and when it makes the following lists:

- TWW Handlers with DTSC Variance
- TWW Disposal Sites with DTSC Variance
- TWW Handler Transporters with DTSC Variance



Depending on the manufacturing process and age, treated wood may contain a variety of toxic substances, including arsenic, chromium, copper, pentachlorophenol, and creosote. In a 2019 report to the Legislature, however, the department notes that not all wood that is treated with a preservative is a potential hazardous waste.

CLCA recommendations include:

- For the time being, don't panic – and keep an eye out for updates from CLCA on this important matter.
- Carefully review the California Department of Toxic Substance Control's Treated Wood Waste fact sheet, paying particular attention to the section detailing how treated wood waste must be managed in accordance with full hazardous waste management standards.
- Ascertain the cost of obtaining a disposal variance and determine if a variance request is the best course of action for your company.
- Consider storing treated wood waste for 90 days in the hopes that a legislative solution is forthcoming.

CLCA will continue to monitor the proposed legislation.

*This article was originally published on CLCA's website at [www.clca.org](http://www.clca.org).*



*Yes! That's exactly what I want to say.*

**Judy Rose**

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# Three Truths For Water Management

By Richard Restuccia, JAIN Irrigation

**W**eather information beyond temperature and simple devices like rain sensors are critical for precise irrigation management. Plant scientists teach us to balance the amount of water depleting from the landscape due to weather, the amount of water applied via irrigation, and free water from the heavens (rainfall!). Keeping the balance is key to minimizing water use and ensuring your plant and landscape assets are healthy and happy. Once you know the inches of water a plant needs to be healthy, the inches of water depleting from the landscape, and the inches of water applied by irrigation and rainfall, you can dial in precise watering control. You can't do this without weather data gathered, analyzed, and distributed automatically.

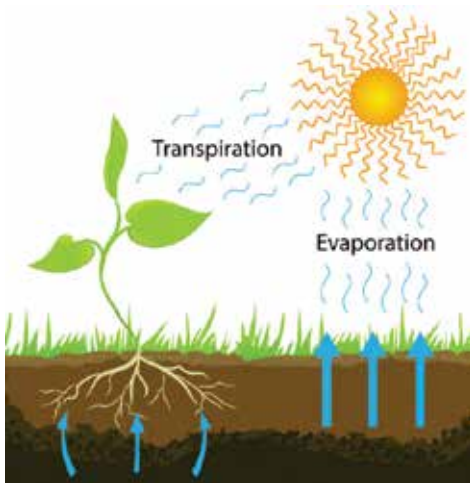
### Truth 1: Different plants use water at different rates.

Knowing how much water your plant needs is key to proper water management. There are many places to learn the water requirement of plants. Knowing the plant's water requirement and the evapotranspiration for the day is the first step of precision water management.

The easiest way to understand evapotranspiration is to think the opposite of rain. ET is the amount of water that evaporates from the soil and plant surface plus transpiration through the plant. Temperature, solar radiation, humidity, and wind velocity all affect ET daily. Knowing when plants need water and knowing when they are full is the first step to a healthy, thriving landscape. ET is almost always discussed in terms of a reference crop, alfalfa, or grass. When reported, today's ET was .2, or this week's ET was 1

inch consider this is for alfalfa ET<sub>r</sub> or grass ET<sub>o</sub>. The plants in our landscapes may need more or less water depending on several factors, one important factor being the plant species.

Reference ET is a measurement of water use for a specific grass or crop. The plants in your landscape mostly have different water requirements than alfalfa or grass. This is where the plant species factor becomes essential. Knowing your plant species factor allows watering for a specific plant. By multiplying the reference ET by the plant factor, we determine the specific plant's water requirement.



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## Three Truths For Water Mgmt

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### Truth 2: If you use a standard sprinkler timer, most likely, you are overwatering.

Intuitively when we see a plant not doing well, we give the plant more water. Often this is the incorrect thing to do. When we don't know how much water is in the soil, we overwater because we don't want the plant to run dry. If it runs dry, we kill it immediately. If we overwater, we probably kill it slowly over time. If you drive a car without a gas gauge, you will most likely fill up the tank too often because you know if you run out of gas, you have a real problem.

ETwater smart controllers using Jain Unity software set up an irrigation schedule for you. Using many factors, including how much water your plants use, soil type, wind, solar radiation, temperature, shade, slopes, and cloud cover, to name a few. Once the schedule is scientifically established, it is adjusted daily based on ET's hourly calculation specific to the controller site. No wild guesses, pure science.

### Truth 3: Rainfall is money.

To maximize savings, evaluate rainfall two ways. First, actual rain is based on how much of the rain is usable. If the average rainfall is 10 inches a year and it rains 9 inches in one day, most of the water is not used by plants. It runs off the landscape or pushes past roots in the soil. It's good to get rain, but often only a fraction of the rain is usable. Jain Unity software measures effective rainfall and enters the amount into your water calculation and schedule. Also, Jain Unity using predictive analytics to adjust your watering schedule based on future weather and rain. Why water a half-inch today if you are going to receive a quarter-inch of rain tomorrow. Unity will reduce the water today, evaluate tomorrow how much rain was usable and schedule the next irrigation accordingly. Using a standard sprinkler configuration costs around \$10K a year in Northern California to water an acre of turf. In Southern California, the number is around \$17K a year. Using a controller that calculates rainfall and future ET is a huge money saver.



The three truths are not magic. Plants need different amounts of water, and the amounts are known. We measure ET to know how much water the plant needs to replace. Finally, use rain to supplement your irrigation and save money. This is most efficiently done using a smart controller. Considering the water cost today and many water agencies are offering rebates for smart controllers, the time to make the switch is now.

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For more info. about advertising in the *OC Vision*, contact Bronwyn Miller at (949) 466-1222/eyescares@yahoo.com.

# Results-Based Team-Oriented Culture

By Steve Cesare Ph.D., The Harvest Group

A business owner from Oklahoma called me the other day to talk about several aspects of his company's strategic plan. While he was impressive on various components (e.g., key performance metrics, leadership development, and accountability), he had great difficulty blending them together under the undefined type of organizational culture he was trying to implement in his company.

It quickly became obvious that he had read way too many academic books on organizational culture, management practices, and executive biographies (erroneously posing as leadership case studies) which allowed him to rattle off myriad buzz words (e.g., world-class talent, leveraging analytics, empower horizon thinking) that sound erudite when in fact they continually ring hollow to me. After 5-10 minutes of his soliloquy, I finally interrupted him and said come down from Mount Sinai and keep things simple. I proceeded to tell him at its core, he should think only about designing, implementing, and rewarding a "results-based team-oriented culture."

Taken aback by that simplicity, he requested additional testimony to understand the essence of organizational culture. Accordingly, I simply stated that a company cannot achieve sustainable results without a strong team, and a company cannot survive without achieving desired

results. Strong teams yield positive results; positive results are produced by strong teams. That precept serves as the nucleus of all successful organizational cultures.

If someone tells you that organizational culture, leadership, and strategic planning are not unequivocally grounded in a results-based team-oriented context, you are wasting your time. And oh, by the way, your time is too valuable to waste listening to false prophets spinning nonsensical yarns to you.

*"Strong teams yield positive results; positive results are produced by strong teams."*

Keep it simple.

At that point I told the Oklahoma business owner to re-center his mindset and focus only on those two dimensions (e.g., results, team), draft his strategic plan around them, align his key performance indicators with them, and create success behaviors that manifest them.

With that framework conceptualized, he can think about the proper mechanisms (e.g., policies, procedures, training), managerial role modeling (e.g., coaching, communication, new employee orientation), and reinforcement principles (e.g., performance appraisals, employee recognition events, bonus programs) necessary to instill that "results-based team-oriented culture" throughout his workforce.

*This article was excerpted from the Harvest Group blog, Tuesdays with Steve Cesare.*

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COASTLINE  
Equipment

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