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# OC Vision

Official Publication of the Orange County Chapter of California Landscape Contractors Association • www.clca-orangecounty.org



Cover Photo: Wade Residence by 2022 multi award-winning contractor Tropical Plaza.



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# 2023 Orange County Chapter CLCA Coaching Staff



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CLCAOCChapter

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# Administrative Staff Connect with Us...





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For inquiries relating to chapter communications, both print and online, contact Bronwyn.

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# The Value of Relationship Building

ne of the best ways to grow your business is to build relationships with your local supplier representatives. These relationships enable you to tap into information and resources that might otherwise be hard and timely to find.

What do you do when you have a client ask for pavers you are not familiar with installing? Who do you reach out to with questions on determining quantities or how to price something you've never used? Having a relationship with your local supplier rep puts answers to these questions just a phone call or text away. They can get you the information you need or point you in the right direction to get it. What a great resource that is!

Personally, I refer to my supply company rep as an extension of my company. When I need pricing or to make a purchase, I can trust that they are working in my best interest. It's important to note that this relationship doesn't happen overnight. Trust and commitment go both ways and needs to be earned, by all involved. If you communicate to your supplier rep what you are looking for, they will do all they can to help. In return, you need to pay your bills on time.

So where do you begin? How do you meet your local supplier rep to start building that relationship? One way is to walk into your local Horizon, Site One, Ewing Irrigation, Imperial Sprinkler *or any other landscape* material supplier and set up an



**Dave Horton** So Cal Concepts **Chapter President** 

account. They would more than likely assign you a sales representative to service your account. Another way, and my preferred way, is to attend CLCA events. We have lots of supplier members who attend and are eager to meet you and help you out. This is where many of my supplier relationships began and it's a much more personal way to start a relationship.

Your CLCA OC Board of Directors is working hard to facilitate the building of these relationships by making sure that we have supplier reps at each function. Want a hand? I am more than willing to introduce and connect you with a representative. Just come and find me at the next event. You never know, it could be the start of something great.

~Sincerely, Dave









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2023 CLCA-OC Calendar  Mark Your Calendars & Save the Dates Now!		
April 12	OC Lunch & Learn, Orange, 11 a.m. Village Nurseries/Site One: 1582 N Tustin Street. Topic: New Plant Intros and Plastic Edging 411.	
May 25	OC Chapter Golf Tournament, 8 a.m. shotgun. Tijeras Creek Golf Club, Rancho Santa Margarita.	
June 15-17	<b>Beautification Awards Landscape Judging.</b> Entry forms available online in April!	
July	Family Fun Day & BBQ. Doheny State Beach. More details coming soon.	
August 5	Baseball Game & Tailgate. Angels vs Mariners.	
Sept. 23	Annual Beautification Awards, Yorba Linda.	

Black Gold Golf Club: 1 Black Gold Drive.



# Our Next Educational Event is Weds., April 12 at Site One in Orange!

# **OC Chapter Lunch & Learn**

Learn about new and interesting plants and get the 411 on plastic edging!

Join us for this lunch and learn at Village Nurseries in Orange to learn about new plant introductions and popular landscape plants for 2023. While there, also get the 411 on all things plastic edging from Epic Plastics.

**Keeping Up With Your Plants.** An update on new and interesting plants, and how to use them in the landscape. *Presented by Nicholas Staddon, Spokesperson and Plantsman from Everde Growers*.

Nicholas, an avid plantsperson, will provide an uncomplicated presentation on plants to include in residential or commercial jobs. Learn about several new and recent plant introductions, perfect for the southern California landscape. Nicholas will also introduce us to several books and other publications that can be a great resource in our professional lives. If you are involved in planting plants, maintaining them, or designing them into landscapes, you'll want to attend this presentation!

**Plastic Edging 411.** An overview of the newest products, and best practices for installation.

Presented by Brandon Fontaine with Epic Plastics.

In his presentation, Brandon will go over best installation practices, discuss the reasons why expansion and contraction happen (and ways to prevent it), introduce a new plastic edging product that has no thermal expansion or warping, and discuss the overall benefits of using plastic edging in your projects. Have you had problems with plastic edging in the past? Bring your details and Brandon will discern why you had issues and detail ways to prevent them in the future.

This event is free to attend with pre-registration at www.clca-orangecounty.org thanks to Epic Plastics.



# **ADVERTISE IN THE OC VISION!**

Visit www.clca-orangecounty.org for information and rate details. Call (949) 466-1222 or email bronwyn@eyescapes.net with questions!



# SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

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#### HOLE SPONSORSHIP | \$285

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# COFFEE SPONSOR | \$250

Sponsor coffee for the golfers to enjoy during registration! Your company logo displayed at the coffee table. ONLY TWO AVAILABLE. Does not include golf or lunch.

### **DONATE A RAFFLE PRIZE!**

## **THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2023**

#### TIJERES CREEK GOLF CLUB

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The Ted Robinson-designed Tijeras Creek Golf Club offers a "tale of two
nines" as the distinctive course layout. It opens with a demanding front
nine that is highlighted with shimmering water features that come into
play on three out of the first nine holes. The back nine holes are legendary
for the breathtaking scenery, and awe-inspiring elevation changes that
wind through old growth sycamores, oaks and native chaparral. In fact,
hole number sixteen was voted as one of Orange County's Best 18 Holes by
members of the Southern California Professional Golfers Association.

8 A.M. SHOTGUN START. Registration opens at 7:00 a.m.

**REGISTER:** Registration and payment must be completed by May 17, 2023. *Register on our website at www.clca-orangecounty.org*.

**PRICE:** \$165/golfer. Includes participation in the tournament & lunch.

**FORMAT:** Four Person Scramble.

QUESTIONS: Call Bronwyn Miller at (949) 466-1222.

**RETURNING THIS YEAR...** We will have a lunch and awards banquet following the tournament. We will also have a raffle, conducted in a pick-a-prize format. Tickets will be sold during registration and lunch and participants will be able to choose the prize they want to win! Winners will be drawn following lunch.

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













# Why You Need an Operating System for Your Business

By Jonathan Goldhill, Business Coach, The Goldhill Group

ike your computer, your business needs an operating system to organize the way the business functions. Want to increase your business's chance of survival? Set your business up like a franchise with a system (set of processes) followed by all.

A business operating system (BOS) is a structure to manage your meetings, metrics and priorities, processes and procedures, and create clarity around roles and responsibilities. It establishes a way of doing business with your people and your market. And it increases clarity with everyone in your organization when you share the system with your team.

A BOS is a place to keep those to-do's that you've committed to other team members. It's a place to keep your organization chart, roles and responsibilities and conduct performance reviews. It's also a place to keep your company business plan and department plans. By having all this in place and your vision shared with others, and processes followed by all, communication between your senior leaders, managers, and employees is greatly improved.

Businesses that have a stable operating system in place seem to run better. Companies that do not have an operating system feel out of control – they seem to struggle with accountability and clarity around expectations – and the same problems seem to reoccur. These companies have

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many inefficiencies, and there are times when chaos is everywhere.

#### **How Have Operating Systems Helped Businesses?**

Business operating systems (BOS) help leaders establish measures of success that let employees know if they are having a good day/week/month quarter. Operating systems, like playbooks, establish precise processes for how things get done at your company – like hiring, onboarding, performance reviews, or firing OR submitting estimates, proposals, signing contracts, and processing collections.

A sound operating system includes a system of quarterly and annual meetings where strategic thinking and execution planning are organized and recorded. Within the BOS, you'll define your vision for and record your 3-year, 1-year and 90-day goals and priorities. You'll keep track in a scoreboard that measures – leading and lagging indicators – how you are doing. Like a baseball stadium scoreboard, you can share visibility with those who need visibility to the metrics (measures).

Of course, it will also be a place to run and track your weekly meetings and To Do's. The purpose of this is three-fold:

- 1. To stay focused (moving the company forward on accomplishing your quarterly goals and priorities)
- 2. Review and share feedback from clients/customers and team members so that you can improve the employee and customer experience
- 3. Make decisions (identify issues, brainstorm, troubleshoot) and solve them

#### The Benefits of a Business Operating System.

Still not convinced? A BOS will highlight the most critical functions in your business that improve and practically ensure profitability. A BOS facilitates consistency throughout the organization so that new hires have the training and documentation on the procedures they are to follow. When everyone knows how to do their job, work gets done faster and cheaper, eliminating wasted effort. With clear measurables by position and employee, individuals see if they are productive and successful. Finally, you boost employee retention when employees know they are being successful and doing their work right.

#### How to Tell If Your Company Needs an Operating System.

- If the experience at your company is chaotic,
- If your company has a sizeable staff turnover,
- If you or key people at your company cannot go away on a 2-week relaxing vacation,
- If you are frequently remarking about the lack of accountability among your team members,
- If you are experiencing falling profits with increasing sales,
- If there are a lot of 'got-a-minute' interruptions in your day,
- If there are many communication breakdowns during the day,
- If you are operating blindly without a budget, then you need a Business Operating System.

No exceptions.

# LEAF Scholarship Applications are Available Online! Deadline to Apply is April 17, 2023

Seeking to promote and support the future of the green industry, CLCA's Landscape Educational Advancement Foundation (LEAF) is now accepting applications for 2023 scholarships.

So many students struggle with funding their education and every year the number of students needing financial assistance grows.

LEAF is here to help!

Since 1972, CLCA's Auxiliary has offered scholarships to college and university students majoring in landscape-related programs.

In 1988, the Landscape Educational Advancement Foundation (LEAF) was formed to carry on the tradition of awarding financial aid to deserving students.



The largest struggle LEAF has is building awareness that scholarships are available.

Any student attending an accredited California community college or state university majoring in a landscaperelated program and taking a minimum of six units is eligible.

Help spread the word by letting students know of this scholarship opportunity! The deadline to apply is April 17, 2023.

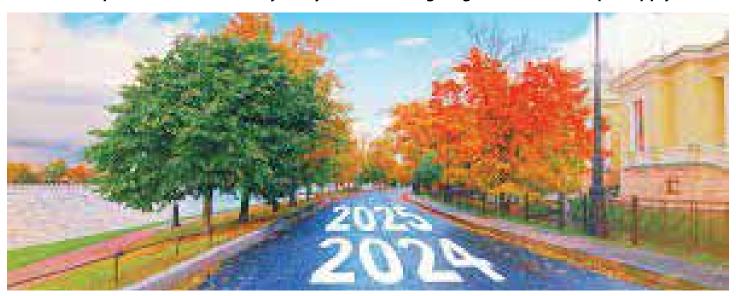
Together we can help students get the funds they need to continue on with their education!

Find the Application at clca.org/industry-resources/college-scholarships-leaf/



# **5 Industry Trends to Watch in 2023**

# Excerpted from an article by Larry Giroux, Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply



s meteorologists can attest, predicting the future is challenging. With data and feedback from the field, forecasting can be reasonably accurate and provide critical insights for maximizing sunny conditions and preparing to hunker down for a storm.

Green industry experts predict a fairly sunny 2023 season despite concerns about a potential recession, inflation, and lending rates. IBISWorld forecasts the landscape services industry will increase by 3.1% in the coming year. That builds on the average 8.1% increase seen between 2018 and 2022.

Lingering cloudy conditions related to labor shortages, supply chain uncertainty, and gas prices have impacted the perception of the overall health of the industry. In the most recent Landscape Management State of the Industry Report, 68% of respondents described the market as "very or relatively healthy," a 10-point decline from the previous year.

Here's what you need to know about predictions for the coming year to develop a strategic plan that allows you to maximize the bright spots and prepare for any storms.

#### 1. Revenues Up, Profits Down

Lower inflation rates and slightly lower gas prices suggest the industry may experience a less wild ride this year compared to 2022. According to the Landscape Management report, data from The Herring Group's annual Benchmark Report showed that the average growth rate for 2022 was nearly identical to 2021.

Continued growth at that pace indicates substantial opportunities for higher revenues across the next several years. However, respondents to Benchmark Report revealed that while revenues were up by 20%, most companies realized lower profits, with 21% reporting losing money.

In a recent Ewing Customer Survey, contractors said they are focusing on seven key areas to drive profitability:

- Managing projects better.
- Finding new ways to incentivize and retain employees. Raising prices.

- Streamlining processes.
- Enhancing training programs.
- Utilizing professional invoicing, cost management, and task scheduling.
- Learning the newer technology in the green industry.

Successful landscape businesses can reach a point where growth slows over time, especially when they specialize. In the coming year, savvy contractors are fueling growth by increasing sales of existing and new products to both current and new clients.

#### 2. Supply Chain Issues

Expect the U.S. economy to remain volatile. Supply chain issues have somewhat eased, but domestic and international politics can rapidly impact product availability and cost. Flexibility will be vital for sourcing products in a timely and cost-effective fashion. This will be especially true for longterm design-build projects. Educating customers about these challenges and including language in a contract that allows for similar substitutions or price increases can help protect your business from uncertainty.

#### 3. Labor Woes

Staffing remains one of the biggest challenges facing contractors this year. According to the Irrigation & Lighting 2023 Green Industry Outlook, 73% of contractors say their region needs more workers to meet company needs.

Rising wages are one factor affecting staffing. Local fast-food establishments and retail outlets advertise starting wages at \$18 per hour for less physically demanding jobs. Landscape contractors report having to raise pay to attract workers to physically demanding positions. Nearly 48% of contractors pay more than \$18 per hour, with 23% paying \$24 or more per hour, according to the Irrigation & Lighting report.

Keeping pace with pay and benefits is only part of the recruitment and retention solution. The hiring market has changed-today's applicants expect instant feedback via

Continued on Next Page...

# **5 Industry Trends to Watch**

# ...Continued from previous page

text or email. If you're not replying quickly, they move on to the next opportunity. Responding in real time can give you a hiring advantage.

Many workers also are seeking career paths. Supporting additional training and licensing, and clearly outlining career development paths can help attract and retain employees.

On the bright side, bringing H-2B workers in to fill in hiring gaps should be easier in 2023. In October 2022, the Department of Homeland Security announced an increase in the maximum number of supplemental H-2B visas, allowing for an additional 65,000 seasonal workers.

# 4. Battery-Powered Equipment is Coming Faster Than Expected

An increasing number of noise ordinances and climate change policies are accelerating the industry's transition from gas- to battery-powered equipment long-term. It's no longer a matter of "a few years down the road." Landscape companies that have not already begun planning for the switch need to start this year.

Costs concerns associated with the shift are valid. Batteries cost more than gas cans, so having enough power backups on hand to keep crews working is higher than with gas. Theft also is a concern for many landscape contractors—the expense of replacing stolen batteries is essential to consider.

Phasing in battery-operated equipment requires planning. The infrastructure inside your shop will most likely need to be upgraded, with dedicated breakers to handle the additional electrical load.

Educating customers about battery-powered equipment's benefits and limitations will be necessary during the transition. For example, property owners may not realize that some gas-powered tools will continue to be essential for efficiency as battery-powered technology improves.

#### 5. Make Sustainability Part of the Conversation

Water shortages, climate change, soil health, and automation are increasingly on customers' minds. Companies that seize opportunities to offer sustainability-related solutions to residential and commercial clients will gain an edge in keeping pace with changing customer priorities and legislative policies.

Those products and practices often come with a higher price tag for installation and maintenance, which requires communicating with clients so they understand and embrace the need to lessen the environmental impacts of landscape and irrigation.

Becoming the go-to expert on sustainable products related to your services will show clients you're in tune with current events and are using creative options to keep their landscapes in top shape with environmentally friendly options, and it will give you an advantage over your competitors.

https://blog.ewingirrigation.com/

# Our 2023 OC Champions...

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1/2 Page (Color)	\$2,775
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Full Page (Color) - Inside	\$4,920

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# **CAN YOU HELP?**

# PhD Candidate Seeks Participants for a Research Project Exploring the Role of the Manager in the Business Model Innovation Process

o participate in this study, you must have at least five years of experience, be at least 18 years of age, and have a direct supervisory role of some staff in your department or the ability to impact the business model (BM) directly.

Qualified participants may work in sectors of the landscape industry such as:

- Landscape contractors; design, construction, install, or maintenance
- Nursery
- Irrigation and water management specialists
- Tree service providers
- Pest management

Participants are disqualified if they have a personal or professional relationship with the researcher, Chaz Perea.

In exchange for a 90-minute interview (can be done remotely), qualified participants will receive a \$25 In N Out gift card.

The interview will focus on how the participant interacts and experiences the business model innovation process: how participants define their value proposition to the customer, what role they play in delivering customer value, how they grow the business while sustaining the existing services, and other related questions.

If you know someone who may meet this criteria, please email perea dissertation email@yahoo.com.

Orange County Chapter Beautification Awards are Coming!

Start thinking about what projects you will enter into the competition!

Landscape judging will be June 15-17, 2023.

Deadline to enter is May 31.

Entry forms will be online in April.

www.clca-orangecounty.org

#### THANK YOU EWING IRRIGATION FOR SPONSORING THIS EVENT!



VP MEMBERSHIP Blake Boyd and President Dave Horton welcome AssuredPartners rep Melissa Tetzlaff to the Lunch & Learn at Ewing Irrigation in San Juan Capistrano on February 15.



AZURY LANDSCAPING rep Eli Magana thanks VP Education Jose Acevedo for organizing this fantastic event. As a new member, attending these functions helps him to stay at the top of his game.



LAS FLORES LANDSCAPE reps Felipe Gonzales and Joe Hamby look forward to getting info on the Clean Off-Road Equipment (CORE) voucher program.



NEW FRIENDS W. Bros Landscape rep Justin Skipper and Nor-Land Landscaping rep Dave Norred chat about the impact that converting to electric is having on their businesses.



OC BEAUTIFICATION AWARDS
Committee members Kinsley Grant,
Richard Cohen, and Margot Boyer discuss
the upcoming competition with attendees.



VISTA DEL VERDE LANDSCAPE rep Raul Lopez and So Cal Concepts rep Hector Nava are eager to learn about electric equipment offerings from Milwaukee Tool and EGO.



MILWAUKEE TOOL reps Bradley Herzog and Joshua Bishop showcase their M18 FUEL™ Outdoor Power Equipment that delivers a combination of power and longer run-times.



**EGO**'s rep talks about their industry-leading ARC Lithium™ battery that delivers power, performance, and longer run-times. He also details the variety of ways their electric equipment can be charged.

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