

NOVEMBER 2022

# Offshoot

The Official Publication of the California Landscape Contractors Association San Diego Chapter



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# Coming Events

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## December 8, 2022

### San Diego Chapter Holiday Party.

Celebrate the holidays with your green industry friends at the CLCA San Diego Chapter Holiday Party. Plan to bring your holiday cheer and be ready for a really fun time. **Register at [www.clcasandiego.org](http://www.clcasandiego.org).**

*The Brigantine: 3263 Camino del Mar, Del Mar, CA 92014.*

## January 10, 2023

### San Diego Chapter General Meeting.

## February 14, 2023

### San Diego Chapter General Meeting.

## February 23, 2023

### San Diego Chapter Kickoff Mixer. 5 p.m.

Second Chance Beer Company, San Diego.

Registration opening in January.

## March 14, 2023

### San Diego Chapter General Meeting.



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# 2023 Annual Sponsorship Commitment Form

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\*\*Contractor receives one entry into Beautification Awards competition in lieu of award plaque sponsorship.

**Contact Bronwyn Miller at (949) 466-1222 with questions.**

## 2023 CLCA San Diego Chapter Sponsor Form

1. Please complete and return this form by Jan. 14, 2023 with written sponsorship commitment to: CLCA San Diego, c/o Eyescapes, 16769 Bernardo Center Dr, Ste 242, San Diego, CA 92128
2. Please remit your check\* made payable to CLCA San Diego Chapter by Jan. 31, 2023 or sooner to: CLCA San Diego, c/o Eyescapes, 16769 Bernardo Center Dr, Ste 242, San Diego, CA 92128

**We MUST receive your commitment by January 14, 2023 to put your name on the sponsor banner.**

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**Please email your digital logo to Bronwyn Miller at [bronwyn@eyescales.net](mailto:bronwyn@eyescales.net) by Jan. 14!**

Contact Bronwyn Miller at (949) 466-1222 with questions.

\*If desired, payment may be divided into three equal payments due January 15, March 15, and May 31, 2023.

# Business Texting Trends for 2023

Texting has been around for over 25 years now, and for many people, it is the preferred form of communication. Naturally, some businesses have started messaging their customers professionally as an organization.

If you've been considering adding business texting to your communication channels with customers, check out some of the survey results Text Request gathered from over 1,000 people.

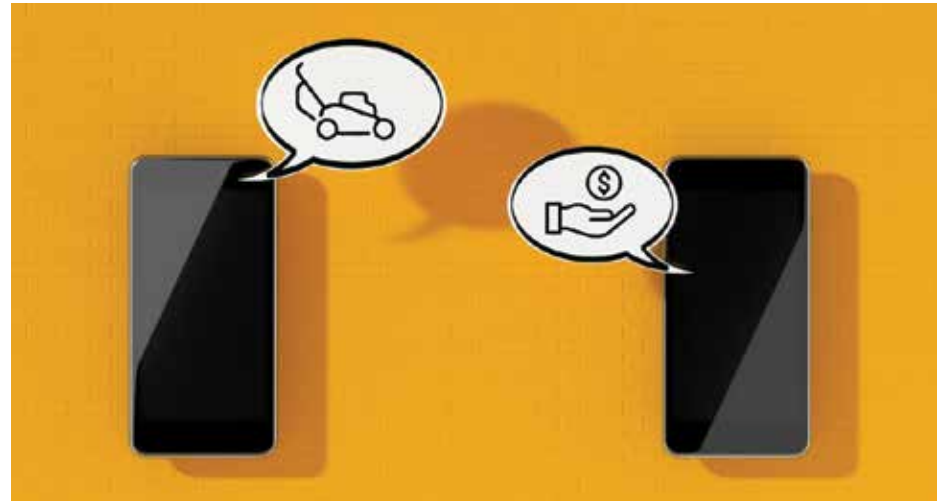
## Conversational Commerce

The first rising trend is how consumers want to buy things through text. This means prospects are texting with sales reps about products and services. They are also asking for payment reminders and bill pay options through SMS (short message service).

According to the survey, 69 percent of consumers want to receive texts related to making payments and 46 percent want to text businesses for sales inquiries. While customers are wanting businesses to text them about payments, only 30 percent are currently receiving texts related to payments. Adding texting to your billing can help improve your cash flow.

These texts could include sharing the invoices, sending links to pay online through text, payment reminders and letting customers know when they need to update their payment info when credit cards expire.

Another transactional texting opportunity is letting clients know about promotions and discounts. 52 percent of people want to receive texts from businesses about these discounts, but only 29 percent of respondents said they are receiving these from businesses currently. Some of the potential texts you could send out include asking clients to schedule their fall cleanups, holiday light installation or telling them about a discount you might



be offering for spring fertilization services.

## Business Texting Is More Convenient

When businesses were asked why they started texting their clients, the response was convenience. Phone tag can be tiring for both parties and people tend to enjoy texting over other forms of communication. Calls can be seen as interruptive, and emails can be easily ignored with the frequency people receive them. 70 percent of respondents said texting is the fastest way to reach them.

Texts don't have to be responded to immediately and take little effort to respond when you're ready. 64 percent of respondents said they read texts within a few minutes and 68 percent said they read every text they get, even the spam.

80 percent of people have texted with a business before and had a positive experience so they continue to expect that type of interaction. 77 percent of respondents said they want to text for customer services and 88 percent want to receive appointment scheduling texts from businesses.

If you think business texting isn't relevant because your client base is older, data shows that 50 percent of adults 65+ years old said texting is the quickest way to reach them

and adults 46-55 years old are the demographic most likely to read texts faster.

## More Businesses Are Texting

While business texting is still relatively young, 98 percent of the businesses texting said they would recommend it to another company. Another 42 percent of businesses plan to add texting to their communication channels in the next 12 months.

Text Request says that over the past five years most people want to text with businesses. 90 percent of respondents said they want to text a business and 84 percent said they want to receive texts from a business. While some people don't want to text businesses, this can serve as an additional communication channel for those who do prefer this method.

The number one thing consumers want is appointment scheduling. This can be particularly helpful for lawn care customers so they know when a technician is coming to treat their yard or design clients who might like a reminder about their meeting with the landscape designer or architect.

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



## San Diego Chapter Member Milestones

Congratulations to the following companies for reaching membership milestones this month.

### 24 Year Members

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### 15 Year Member

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### 12 Year Members

DC West Development  
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### 9 Year Member

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### 2 Year Member

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Mike Madewell with Hunter Industries will be returning to the board as **Education Chair**.

*The board was confirmed at our October 11, 2022, General Meeting and Elections held via zoom.*

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# Toro Recognized by EPA with WaterSense® Excellence Award

EPA recognizes Toro for eighth consecutive year in promoting water efficiency and conservation

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently recognized The Toro Company with a 2022 WaterSense Excellence Award for its dedication to helping consumers and businesses responsibly use water. Presented during the WaterSmart Innovations (WSI) Conference and Exposition in Las Vegas, The Toro Company was recognized for promoting water efficiency and conservation throughout 2021, along with 33 other utilities, manufacturers, builders, retailers, and organizations that partner with WaterSense to promote water-efficient products, homes and programs.



Wyland and Western Municipal Water District. Throughout 2021, The Toro Company participated in and conducted dozens of training events in-person and virtually that featured WaterSense-labeled products and focused on water efficiency.

“Sustainability is engrained in our approach to business. We value our association with the EPA as a means to broaden outreach and provide meaningful water-efficient solutions,” said John McPhee, general manager, Toro Irrigation and Lighting Businesses.

“We are honored to be recognized again this year and look forward to our continued partnership with the EPA WaterSense program.”

WaterSense, a voluntary partnership program sponsored by EPA, is both a label for water-efficient products, programs and homes, and a resource for helping consumers learn ways to save water. Since 2006, more than 2,100 WaterSense partners and over 40,000 models of certified water-efficient plumbing and irrigation products have helped consumers and businesses save 6.4 trillion gallons of water—enough water to supply all households in the United States for eight months. In addition to water savings, WaterSense has helped reduce the amount of energy needed to pump, treat, and heat water by 754 billion kilowatt hours and helped consumers save \$135 billion in water and energy bills. These savings also helped prevent 288 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions, which is equivalent to planting 4.8 billion trees.

For more information about WaterSense and the 2022 award winners, visit [www.epa.gov/watersense](http://www.epa.gov/watersense).

*Photo: Toro reps Rob Starr and Chris Davey with the WaterSense Excellence Award.*

“Throughout 2021, our award-winning partners helped people protect this precious resource by promoting WaterSense-labeled products and water-efficient behaviors,” said Veronica Blette, Chief, WaterSense Branch. “Saving water is particularly critical in areas impacted by drought, but is also a path to helping consumers stretch dollars by reducing their water and energy bills.”

The Toro Company has long been an EPA WaterSense partner and this is its eighth consecutive WaterSense Excellence Award. In 2022, Toro continued to produce a weekly radio program and podcast, called The Water Zone, focused on education and informing people on best practices and technologies for efficient outdoor water use. The show currently has over 40,000 listeners per month and over 100,000 followers on iHeart media. Toro also presented a technical paper, entitled *How Connected Devices Can Help Drive Sustainability for Irrigation*, in March 2021 and collaborated on a smart irrigation book, called *Hold Your Water*, in partnership with artist

**~KURAPIA~**

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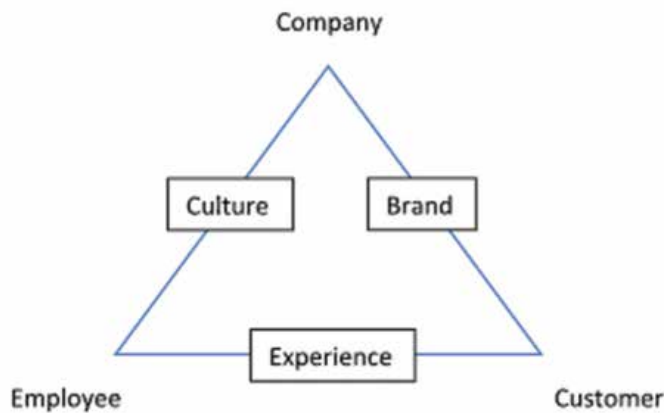
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# The Value Triangle

By Steven Cesare, Ph.D., Harvest Landscape Consulting

A business owner from Colorado called me the other day to talk about various “people-related” issues including communication, training, and staffing. As the conversation matured, I asked the business owner to take a step back and consider the Value Triangle. She had not heard of that concept before, so I asked her to draw the picture below to diagram how she could organize some of her concerns, share them with her staff, and develop a series of action items to clarify roles and responsibilities.



The equilateral triangle contains three primary points of interface capable of generating interpersonal value: the Company, the Customer, and the Employee.

The Company represents the organization’s values, business operations, goals, priorities, systems, services, and overall health. The Customer represents the point of potential commercial exchange involving a business or person seeking goods or services from the Company. The Employee represents the person paid by the Company to produce goods or services desired by the Customer.

The connection between the Company and the Customer is primarily defined by the Company’s Brand, which ideally attracts the Customer to the Company. To

maximize the value of this relationship, the Company must acquire, price, sell, and support goods or services palatable to the Customer. The Company’s business plan, gross margin goals, operating costs, marketing strategy, social media focus, professional image, and value proposition must be efficiently arranged to sustain ongoing Customer appeal.

The connection between the Customer and the Employee is primarily defined by the Customer Experience. The degree to which this Experience is characterized by professionalism, proficiency, and personal rapport, lends to a successful Experience implying continued encounters from the Customer. In this case, the Employee must possess sufficient customer service skills, interpersonal authenticity, and requisite position training to engender a positive Experience with the Customer.

The connection between the Employee and the Company is primarily defined by the Company Culture. If the Culture (e.g., values, norms, expectations) manifested by the Company aligns with those sought by the Employee, a suitable, mutually-rewarding employment relationship will result. With this thought in mind, management must continually improve the Culture to maintain stable staffing, morale, and productivity.

As I explained to the Colorado business owner, she should categorize key elements of her “people plan” in this manner to ensure resources are being distributed properly to sustain ongoing success. Failure to maintain that degree of allocation, alignment, and attention may cause significant disruption to the identified components, as well as to the entire Value Triangle, thereby rendering the company ineffective.

If you have any questions or comments about this topic or anything else related to human resources, consider signing up for *Steve’s HR Helpdesk*. You will be provided with an exclusive phone number and contact form to reach Steve as a Virtual Human Resource Assistant.

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# Heritage Landscape Supply Group Acquires Imperial Sprinkler Supply



Heritage Landscape Supply Group, Inc. has acquired Imperial Sprinkler Supply, Inc. (ISS), an independently owned distributor of irrigation, outdoor lighting and other landscape products. Terms of the agreement were not disclosed.

Founded in Placentia, California, in 1980 by Gabriel & Dolores Moriel, ISS operates a network of 25 branches across California, servicing professional irrigation and landscape contractors, municipalities, golf course superintendents, and other green industry professionals. The Moriel family and the company's entire sales and operations team will be staying with ISS to run the business going forward which will ensure continuity and consistency for customers, suppliers, and employees.

“We are honored to welcome the entire ISS team to the Heritage family,” said Matt McDermott, president of Heritage. “ISS is one of the largest and most respected independents in the country and has earned a reputation as the preeminent distributor in California. We are truly excited to add this game-changing and strategic acquisition to our growing network and look forward to seeing what our combined teams will accomplish together.”

“Our family has spent decades building a business predicated on providing top-quality products and unparalleled customer service throughout California,”

said Darlene Hunn, CEO of ISS. “After over 40 years in business, we were very fortunate to find a partner in Heritage that would be a trusting steward of our company’s legacy and treat our people like family. It is with great excitement that we kick off this next phase of growth for ISS, providing our amazing team with the resources they need to take the company to new heights. Together, we will support an enduring commitment to our customer and supplier partners, while continuing to empower the hard-working employees that make it all possible.”

## About Heritage Landscape Supply Group

Heritage Landscape Supply Group’s vision is to grow by forming a network of the best independent distributors to provide exceptional customer service while increasing their value as a trusted growth partner to top manufacturers in the industry. They currently operate under a family of distinct local brands encompassing more than 190 locations across 27 states. Heritage Landscape Supply Group is a wholly owned subsidiary of SRS Distribution Inc., one of the largest and fastest-growing privately held wholesale distributors in the United States.

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# Where to Start When Your Business Growth Stops

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



Why would two landscape companies in the green industry, with the same financial performance, command vastly different valuations? The answer often comes down to how much each landscape business is likely to grow in the future.

The problem is that many successful landscape businesses reach a point where their growth starts to slow as the company matures. In fact, carving out a unique niche and specialty that made you successful initially can eventually start to hold you back.

If you make the world's greatest \$5,000 wine fridge, you may have a successful, profitable business until you run out of people willing to spend \$5,000 to keep their wine cool.

Demonstrating how your landscape business will likely grow in the future is one of the keys to driving a premium price for your company when it comes time to sell. To brainstorm how to grow beyond the niche that got you started, consider the Ansoff Matrix. It was first published in the Harvard Business Review in 1957 but remains a helpful framework for business owners today.

Sometimes called the Product/Market Expansion Grid, the Ansoff Matrix shows four ways that businesses can grow, and it can help you think through the risks associated with each option.

Imagine a square divided into four quadrants representing your four growth choices, which include selling:

1. existing products to existing customers,
2. new products to existing customers,
3. existing products to new markets, and
4. new products to new markets.

The choices are presented from least to most risky. In a smaller business with few dollars to gamble, focusing your attention on the first two options will give you the lowest risk options for growth.

## Existing Products to Existing Customers

It's natural to feel like you're greedy when you go back to the same customers for more of their dollars, but the opposite can often be true. Your best customers are usually the ones who know and like you the most, and they are often pleased to find out that you—someone they trust—are offering something they need.

Greg, a hardware store owner, realized the benefits of the Ansoff Matrix for his small business. Greg earned a 150% markup on cutting keys, but his cutter was hidden in a corner of the store where nobody could see it. As a result, he didn't cut many keys.

One day, Greg decided to move the key cutter and position it directly behind the cash register so everyone paying for his or her hardware could see the machine. Customers started seeing the cutter and realized—often to their pleasant surprise—that Greg cut keys.

Not surprisingly, Greg started selling a lot more keys to his loyal customers. The key cutter didn't woo many new customers, but it did increase his overall revenue per customer.

If you want to sell more of your existing products and services to your current customers:

1. Draw up a simple chart of your products and services.

*Continued on next page...*



# Where to Start When Your Business Growth Stops

...Continued from previous page

2. Don't be afraid to dust off those old offerings that you haven't paid much attention to lately.
3. List your best customers' names down one side of the paper and your products across the top.
4. Cross-reference your customer list with your product list to identify opportunities to sell your best customers more of your existing products.

For example, sell existing products, such as holiday lighting, to a customer you installed that brick paver patio for last year.

## New Products and Services to Existing Customers

Another approach to growth is to sell new products to existing customers. For example, there is a BMW dealership owner in the Midwest whose typical customer is a family patriarch in his 40s. When he felt he had saturated the market for well-heeled, forty-something men in his trading area, he thought about what other products he could sell his existing customers. But instead

of defining his customer as the forty-something man, he decided to think of his customer as the financially successful family and his market as their driveway.

Instead of trying to sell more BMWs into a market of diminishing returns, he bought a Chrysler dealership so he could sell minivans to the spouses of his BMW buyers. He then realized that a lot of his customers had kids in their teens, so he bought a Kia dealership to sell the family a third, inexpensive car.

Once you become successful, it can be tempting to sit back and enjoy your success. But to drive up the value of your business, you need to demonstrate how you can grow, and the least risky strategy will be to figure out what else you could sell to your existing customers.

*This article originally ran on Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply's blog at [www.ewingirrigation.com/news](http://www.ewingirrigation.com/news). Find other green industry tips and solutions there too!*



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