

JULY 2019

Offshoot

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

www.clcasandiego.org

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Rick Mandel

President's Message

Wow, it's hard to believe we are halfway through 2019 and summer has arrived. July is the time when we look at the last six months and regroup for the final half of our year. I know everyone is really busy—working very hard to stay on top of all the jobs and, of course, all the new work about to begin.

With the Beautification Awards dinner only about two months away, please make sure to book your reservations—and if you are bringing your employees, book a table. *Registration will be opening soon.* This year the event is on Saturday the 28th of September at the Farmer and the Seahorse. We look to forward

to an incredible evening with the chance to see some of our member's beautiful work.

We are working on having a Happy Hour meeting at the beginning of fall, at either a member's house or a brewery. We look forward to seeing all of you at this event for Happy Hour.

Beyond our events, I also wanted to share with all of you some of the great benefits that are provided by CLCA. Here are a few:

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- Webinars

There are, of course, many more—and the relationships we build over the years is probably the most important one. I hope the next time someone asks what CLCA stands for, you will recall these items above to help explain what the association is all about. ~Rick



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Coming Events

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August 13

San Diego Chapter General Meeting. All welcome.
8:45 a.m. breakfast/networking, 9:15 a.m. meeting.
Mimi's Cafe, 10788 Westview Pkwy, San Diego.

September 10

San Diego Chapter General Meeting. All welcome.
8:45 a.m. breakfast/networking, 9:15 a.m. meeting.
Mimi's Cafe, 10788 Westview Pkwy, San Diego.

September 28

Chapter Beautification Awards.
Farmer & the Seahorse, 10996 Torreyana Road, San Diego.

October 8

San Diego Chapter General Meeting. All welcome.
8:45 a.m. breakfast/networking, 9:15 a.m. meeting.
Mimi's Cafe, 10788 Westview Pkwy, San Diego.

November 12

San Diego Chapter General Meeting. All welcome.
8:45 a.m. breakfast/networking, 9:15 a.m. meeting.
Mimi's Cafe, 10788 Westview Pkwy, San Diego.

November 13-16

CLCA Convention, Lake Tahoe.
More info. can be found at www.clca.org/convention.

ATTENTION: If you RSVP for an event and are unable to attend, you must cancel your reservation at least 24 hours prior to the event, or you will be invoiced for the reservation. All registrations are prepaid; there are no refunds if you don't attend.



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Common Cash Flow Problems and How to Remedy Them

By Brad Sugars, ActionCOACH

This article has been updated since it's original publishing.

Are you experiencing troubles with maintaining a consistent cash flow in your business? If you are, you may find that you can't pay your bills on time, and expenses are fast getting out of hand. Cash flow problems plague every small business owner at one point or another – it's natural to go through the occasional rough patch. However, that doesn't mean that these rough spots can't leave lasting damage on your finances. Here are a few ways of improving your net cash flow.

Accept Credit Cards From Customers

You do not have to be a retailer to accept credit cards. Many small business owners make this mistake, and it can potentially cost you a lot of business. Consumers use credit cards to make a variety of purchases, and a lot of them don't carry cash on them. When they use a credit card to pay for things, you will typically get the money in two to three days. While this can seem like a bit of drag at first, it will quickly remedy itself as the cash flows from these transactions pour in.

Catch Credit Faults Earlier

Keep a check on aging accounts from existing customers. Do not wait until they have been delinquent for six months – by that point, you'll likely never get that money from them. If you have not received a payment by the next billing cycle, send out late notices. If you have not received a payment from a company that usually pays on time, call them to find out if there is any problem with the service you are providing or the order. While many cases of delinquent payments result from negligence, this is not always the case!

Raise Your Prices

When you first started out, you may have kept the prices of your products or services low to build up a customer base. However, as the business matures and you build up a steady stream of customers, it may come time to raise your prices. You will want to be careful about doing this – if you lose more business than what you get from raising your prices, then you'll actually lose money in the long run. But done right, you can easily increase your cash flows this way.

CLCA is not encouraging members to all raise prices. All business owners should always re-evaluate their pricing and financial models, however CLCA cannot say if prices should be raised or how much to raise. That is an individual decision.

Get Pay Advances

Do not start working without pay. Ask for \$1,000 or 10% of the contracted project price...whatever is less. This is not unreasonable, and your client should not have an issue paying this. Be especially persistent about this if it's with a new client; it will be difficult to collect if you don't know the customer well. If the business gets defensive about paying a minority of the total fee up front, that can often serve as a red flag.

The original article stated that you should collect at least one-third of your total pay if you are working on a long-term project. Doing this as a landscape contractor would put you in violation of the CSLB regulations on down payments. CLCA always encourages members to be aware of and follow the CSLB regulations.

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The Benefits of Smart Irrigation & Why It's a Good Investment

The irrigation industry is experiencing a renaissance of technology development. Now, more so than ever, you can find irrigation products that use advanced sensors, Wi-Fi and app-based capability to automatically adjust watering schedules, communicate problems and save water, giving consumers more data and power to control irrigation systems than ever before.

Smart irrigation systems irrigate landscapes efficiently. Without wasting water, these systems use technology to know when and how much to irrigate. The days of being beholden to a clock and calendar are over. We are now using real-time data to apply the right amount of water at the right time of day.

Investing in smart irrigation technologies ensures water savings,

as well as savings of money and time in caring for the landscape.

In honor of Smart Irrigation Month, an industry campaign to increase public awareness of the value of water-use efficiency, here are three irrigation technologies worth considering:

Weather-based controller. These controllers adjust the irrigation schedule based on local weather conditions. There is a wide range of products in this category with various weather inputs and landscape-specific adjustment factors. These controllers self-adjust and require very little intervention when programmed correctly.

Sensor-based controller. These controllers rely on soil moisture sensors placed below ground in the root zones of the landscape to determine if and for how long to

water. Systems with a sensor-based controller can be scheduled to run based on soil moisture and the specific water needs of the landscape.

Rain/freeze sensors. Irrigating in rain and freezing conditions needlessly wastes water and can damage the landscape. Rain sensors prevent irrigation systems from running during rainy conditions. Rain/freeze sensors add the ability to stop irrigation when temperatures approach freezing to prevent damage to the plants. These devices can reduce overall water usage and help extend irrigation system life.

Smart Irrigation Month is an Irrigation Association initiative to promote the social, economic, and environmental benefits of efficient irrigation technologies, products, and services in landscape, turf, and agricultural irrigation. Visit www.smartirrigationmonth.org to learn more.

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Hunter Industries Welcomes Warren Gorowitz as Director of Corporate Social Responsibility



Excerpted from Irrigation & Green Industry News, Sarah Bunyea



Supply, Phoenix. Gorowitz most recently led Ewing's sustainability efforts and has been instrumental in spearheading sustainability programs throughout the green industry, including controller recycling programs, ground-level work with the EPA's Water Sense program and development of the Water and Sustainability Innovation Award, presented by Ewing and Audubon International. Additionally, Gorowitz served as the 2018 president of the Irrigation Association, Fairfax, Virginia.

he has to join the Hunter family to further elevate sustainability and corporate social responsibility in the green industry. We are looking forward to building upon our continued partnership with Hunter, especially in areas of corporate social responsibility."

In addition to leading Hunter's corporate social responsibility efforts, Gorowitz will direct Hunter's industry relations activities.

"Through advocacy, community outreach, stewardship, and employee education and engagement, Warren led key initiatives to build sustainability as an integral part of Ewing and our culture," says Douglas W. York, president and CEO of Ewing. "Warren's been a part of the Ewing family for 25 years, and I'm proud of the opportunity

"Warren has shown remarkable leadership in sustainability initiatives at Ewing, the Irrigation Association and the industry at large," says Greg Hunter, CEO of Hunter Industries. "I know he will build on Hunter's strong legacy of sustainable manufacturing and corporate social responsibility, working with great partners like Ewing and others to further sustainability initiatives in the green industry."

Warren Gorowitz will join Hunter Industries, San Marcos, California, on August 12, 2019, after two and a half decades at Ewing Irrigation and Landscape

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San Diego Chapter Member Milestones

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

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Have You Done a Mid-Year Business Check?

By Adreana Young, Ewing Irrigation

As we move into the summer season, now is a great time to set aside some time to do a mid-year business check in.

1. Review your goals.

Before getting into the nitty-gritty of a check in, review the goals you set for your company at the beginning of the year. Ask yourself where you stand on each of those goals. Sometimes you'll be reminded of a goal or objective that you set out to do, but forgot about. No matter how much or how little you've accomplished over the first six months of the year, take note of it.

Once you've jogged your memory on the plans you had, there are three things you can do:

- 1. Reset, refocus and/or restart:** Are you falling short on a particular goal or resolution? That's okay! We're only halfway through the year. Now is just as good a time to start a goal as January 1. Write down where you'd like to be on this topic by the end of the year and set measurable and attainable goals.
- 2. Pivot or move on:** Did you have an idea in mind at the beginning of the year that doesn't interest you anymore or isn't attainable right now? That's okay! You can always come back to a goal. If now isn't the right time to start offering a new service or launching a new marketing plan for your company, it might be at another time. It's okay to set goals down and come back to them later.
- 3. Keep doing what you're doing:** If you've been crushing your goals or even just cruising along at a comfortable pace, keep it up! Checking in is always a good idea to make sure your process of achieving goals is working for you.



2. Check in with employees.

Once you've checked in with yourself and your goals for the business, schedule some time to meet with your employees. Depending on the number of employees you have, try to meet with everyone.

If you set goals for them at the beginning of the year, now is a great time to do a

review. When you have a better understanding of where your employees are, ask them for any input or for their perspective on the day-to-day of the business. Including employees in the discussion about the business will help them feel more invested in the success of the company and you will also get another perspective from someone who understands the business.

3. Review your finances.

If you've been tracking your spending and revenue up to this point, a review of your business's finances could be a quick task. Check in to see what you're bringing in versus what you're spending to see where you net out for the year so far. Are you on pace to hit your revenue goals for the year? If you are, great! Keep doing what you're doing. Not exactly where you want to be? That's okay, but now would be time to either hit the goal harder or pivot your strategy and realign your goals.

Tracking business expenses isn't always easy though, so if you don't have that information on hand take a little more time to figure out where you are. In addition to reviewing payroll and material expenses, don't forget to include other costs of doing business like gas and maintenance for your truck(s), or marketing expenses

Continued on next page...

Save the Date...

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Saturday, September 28, 2019
at the Farmer & the Seahorse

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Have You Done a Mid-Year Business Check?

...Continued from previous page

like advertising or website fees. It can take time to get all of this information in order, but knowing what it costs you to do business is one of the best ways to make sure your business is successful.

4. Make sure your equipment is working properly.

Now let's take a look at the tools that help you do your job. What's the status of your truck(s)? Are your tools and equipment in good shape or is it time to get some new ones?

It's easy to get caught up in the busy day-to-day of business, but ensuring your tools are in good working order will help you save money, save time and prevent injury.

5. Go back to your goals again.

You've checked in with employees, reviewed your finances and made sure your tools are in good working condition. But before you run full speed ahead into the second half of the year, review your goals one more time. Does anything need to change based on the conversations you had or what you found while checking in on everything?

Never be hesitant to make changes to your goals based on the reality of where your business is today. Your goals are only as good as your method of achieving them. Planning and reviewing those plans will help ensure you meet your goals and will give you peace of mind knowing where you stand.

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

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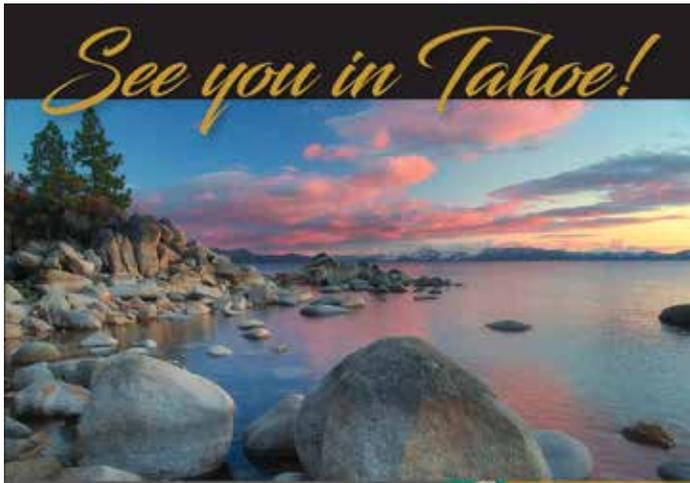
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