



## President's Message

**A**TTITUDE. Have you reflected on your attitude at your place of business? How has it improved your work environment? Better yet, has your attitude created stress? Attitudes can significantly enhance or deteriorate a workplace environment. More importantly, it often reflects throughout our personal lives. Attitude...you may need to check yours.

The irrigation industry's spring season has proven to be chaotic which creates frantic behavior causing disorganization, misunderstanding and poor attitudes. Keith Harrell, a writer for *Success* magazine recently wrote an article, "Attitude in the Workplace". In the article, Mr. Harrell describes his testimony of employees with negative attitudes. He says, "They dismantle teamwork, increase stress and cripple productivity." I find it ironic how Mr. Harrell writes an article that will target a corporate audience but the effects he refers to directly relate to each and

every irrigation contractor, supplier, distributor and associate within our industry. Think about it...the breakdown of unity, a heightened level of stress and diminished productivity. If a workplace environment has poor attitudes and

*The irrigation industry's spring season has proven to be chaotic which creates frantic behavior causing disorganization, misunderstanding and poor attitudes.*

these are the end-results, how could a business survive? It most likely will not, at least not for long.

Furthermore, your core business philosophy is a direct result of your attitude. According to Robin Tulleners' *21 Secrets for Irrigation Contractors*, "Philosophy in business may be defined as the attitude and conduct of the owner and employees...". Mr. Tulleners breaks down business philosophy into two parts: attitude and conduct. Creating a positive business philosophy with moral integrity will encourage teamwork, reduce stress and increase productivity, all of which provide the foundation for a solid business and fruitful attitudes. Are you in need of a positive change in your workplace? Check your attitude.

Whether you are company president, manager, designer, installer, service technician, office administrator or salesperson, your positive attitude will be the lasting impression you have on others. "Be optimistic no matter the challenge, even when others are negative," writes Jeffrey Scott in an article, *Think Like an Owner*. This season will bring challenges. The key is to approach each challenge with the right attitude. Scott's article also states, "You can single-handedly lift the attitude of your crew, and even your department, by having a consistent, outwardly positive attitude." According to Mr. Scott, it only takes one person to implement the attitude change...you!

For the contractors and suppliers who had intentions

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New Jersey  
Irrigation

# NEWS

The Newsletter of the Irrigation Association of New Jersey

IANJ Newsletter is published four times a year by the  
Irrigation Association of New Jersey.

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## President's Message

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of seeing revenue from snow, I understand your pain. As a result, I'm sure the attitude remaining is less than desirable. The good news is spring is officially here! It is time for the long hours of office work, proposals, installs and service work to begin. When you live for this irrigation stuff, I'll bet your springtime attitude is a force to be reckoned with. There's a certain inner strength and determination that evolves from the warmer weather that outwardly shows in your daily routine.

Your positive attitude is contagious. Spread it like wildfire. Use it to build your workplace environment so that it reflects your business philosophy. Create unity and teamwork. Your attitude is shown more than you realize.

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## Legislative Update

The 215<sup>th</sup> legislative session is underway, and IANJ is hard at work to build on the progress made in years past on our effort to end the outdated and unnecessary limitation on contractors' ability to connect systems to potable water supply. With an entirely new Assembly Regulated Professions Committee, IANJ leadership has been meeting with all the new members to push hard for the long overdue update to our licensure act. While IANJ does expect majority support in the Senate, our lobbying efforts continue to focus on the General Assembly, where the plumbers' lobby has historically blocked any efforts for this common sense legislation. IANJ remains optimistic—given the incremental progress seen over the past few years—that 2012 will be a watershed year for irrigation contracting.

On the regulatory front, it looks like the false alarms on continuing education are finally over and New Jersey is on the brink of becoming a WaterSense state. At our spring business meeting, licensure board representatives expressed confidence that bureaucratic roadblocks to implementation of the 2010 update have been overcome, and that regulations recognizing continuing education will be proposed imminently. Whatever the process holds, IANJ will be working hard to make sure the 2010 update is implemented and that New Jersey wins the race to become the first in the nation to have all licensed contractors EPA WaterSense partners.

# Welcome New Contractor Members

**Alan C. Walter**

Alan C. Walter Landscaping  
Roseland, NJ  
973-226-3904  
0017989

**Philip Cavagnaro**

Cavagnaro Landscaping Irrigation LLC  
Neshanic Station, NJ  
908-369-5899  
0021230

**Tom Civera**

Civera Landscape Construction,  
Cape May Court House, NJ  
609-624-0651  
0015838

**Craig Roemer**

Eastern Sprinkler Inc.  
Toms River, NJ  
732-929-9595  
0017081

**Lee Cooper**

Four Seasons Contracting  
Howell, NJ  
732-684-7353  
0015608

**Jeffrey Glickman**

Greenlawn Sprinkler LLC  
Freehold, NJ  
800-372-3014  
192486

**Richard Grinkevich**

Grinkevich Lawn & Landscape  
Marlboro, NJ  
732-536-2221  
0016665

**Frank Tansley**

Hydro-Power Sprinklers  
Beachwood, NJ  
732-240-2006  
0017803

**Eric Jensen**

J M L Landscaping  
Neshanic Station, NJ  
908-371-1291  
332594

**Andrew Vanderham**

KST Contracting  
Toms River, NJ  
732-279-3170  
0017527

**David DiLeonardo**

Leafy Green Landscapers  
Buena, NJ  
856-692-8373  
0022918

**Chris Waldron**

National Lawn Care, Inc.  
Toms River, NJ  
732-929-2323  
0017796

**Scott T. McNally**

Quality Irrigation  
Ringwood, NJ  
973-728-1776  
0018014

**Travis Turner**

Rainman Custom Sprinklers  
Woodstown, NJ  
856-769-3989  
0015547

**Steven Johnson**

Rise & Shine Irrigation LLC  
Beachwood, NJ  
848-333-1857  
468008

**Barry Arnold**

The Sprinkler Man  
Atco, NJ  
609-828-1693  
0018894

# Irrigation Service Contracts: A Benefit for Your Customer, A Profit Center for You

*Irrigation & Green Industry, February 2012*  
By: Jeff Gottesfeld

In a cutthroat environment where companies vie for each other's business all the time, close your eyes and imagine this sweet dream: you garner a new customer, and have a great chance of keeping that customer for life.

You might think this is a pipe dream, but it's reality for the growing number of landscape contractors and irrigation specialists who also provide seasonal care for their customers' irrigation systems. These firms do it with a formal or informal Irrigation Service Contract (ISC) that seals a season-long – and, hopefully, lifelong – agreement.

The ISC is simple at its heart. In exchange for a yearly fee, the contractor gets the irrigation system up and running in the spring, keeps it running through the watering months, and then shuts it down for the winter (depending

on local conditions.) Some contractors bill at the beginning of the season, some at the end, and some every month.

*In exchange for a yearly fee, the contractor gets the irrigation system up and running in the spring, keeps it running through the watering months, and then shuts it down for the winter (depending on local conditions.)*

The principle is the same. The contractor gets a steady gig with good cash flow, and the customer gets a properly maintained and functioning system. If there's any problem, the customer knows whom to call.

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# A Benefit for Your Customer, A Profit Center for You

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Greg McLaughlin, owner of McLaughlin Landscaping in Hermiston, Oregon, offers a popular Irrigation Service Contract for his customers. He says that ISC customers are better customers than average. "We've looked at the numbers," he confides, "and tracked sales carefully since before the recession. Our overall revenue in 2009 was 24 percent below those for 2007, but our irrigation service business slipped down only 10 percent. Since 2009, we've gained back half of our overall revenue, but our irrigation service business is right back to where it was. Thank goodness for our ISC business. The numbers don't lie; it's a bigger piece of our pie."

Other green industry professionals echo McLaughlin's sentiments. Bill Rose, of Suburban Lawn Sprinkler in Framingham, Massachusetts, reckons that he has 98 percent retention of irrigation service customers for up to 20 years, if he did the initial installation of the system. Rose does not work with a formal written agreement, but instead maintains informal seasonal service arrangements with his customers.

Warren Collins, at KT Irrigation in Chantilly, Virginia, has been doing formal irrigation service contract agreements for years. A long time industry veteran, he spun off KT Irrigation from a larger landscape service firm five years ago because of how the business has grown and specialized.

*He says that ISC customers are better customers than average. "We've looked at the numbers," he confides, "and tracked sales carefully since before the recession."*

"At the peak of our season, we have 200 commercial accounts and more than 1,000 residential accounts," Collins relates. "All those people are on irrigation service contracts. The business is so robust that if you have a problem with your system or you call us for winterization, and

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# A Benefit for Your Customer, A Profit Center for You

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you're not one of our service contract customers, you're going to go to the bottom of our list. Come autumn, when we have to shut down 1,200 systems in about six weeks, there may not be time for you."

ISCs, whether formal or informal, always start with winterization and spring startup (assuming you're in an area where freeze is a danger). Included in winterization is the cessation of the water supply to the system, which usually means inspecting and then closing the ball joint. Then, you purge all the water from the irrigation components – including pipes, heads and valves – by blasting compressed air through the system. This prevents freeze damage. Finally, you shut down the controller to prevent it from sending commands to the system, no matter whether that controller is "smart" or mechanical.

Many states require that irrigation systems have backflow preventers that will stop water in the system from leaking back into the main water supply. If there's a backflow prevention device, you have to make sure the unit is winterized, otherwise when the water freezes, the backflow device will crack.

Come springtime-again, assuming you're someplace where sprinklers shouldn't run year 'round-you'll start up the customer's system, once the danger of a freeze is over. (In some parts of the country, like in the mountains, this can be as late as May.)

As part of that startup, you'll re-inspect and open the valves, and then pressurize the system. Once pressurized, you'll check each zone for leaks and damage and inspect every sprinkler head for function and angle. Finally, you would repower and set the controller.

One additional service you can offer as part of spring startup-or at any time that the system is functioning-is backflow device certification. Most towns and cities require annual testing of backflow devices. Testing and certification can be part of the ISC, or performed for an additional fee.

Winterization and spring startup should be in every irrigation service contract. Clients, even in the warmer areas, need a fall checkup. Beyond that, you can offer the customer varying levels of attention and service, with the price varying on the number of inspection visits made during the watering season.

For each inspection, you would test for leaks, check out the rain sensor-if there is one-and verify that all sprinkler heads are working properly and are in good shape. Inspections are also the perfect time to adjust the customer's controller for local weather and soil conditions.

"Every yard has its own personality," says Collis. "When the yard is on a service contract, we know that yard,

and can adjust the controller so the customer isn't spending more money on watering than necessary."

Some companies offer a number of options for their clients. One company offers a "Platinum" plan, which will service from seven to nine watering zones, costs \$750 for startup, shut down, and service visits every month between

***Once pressurized, you'll check each zone for leaks and damage and inspect every sprinkler head for function and angle. Finally, you would repower and set the controller.***

May and October. Backflow prevention certification is \$50 extra. Their "Silver" plan, which includes startup, shut down, and a single mid-season service inspection in July, is \$295 for the same number of watering zones. McLaughlin's version of the silver plan is \$190 annually, while KT Irrigation charges \$360, but includes two mid-season inspections.

Different contractors add different bells and whistles. KT Irrigation, for example, offers an extended lifetime warranty at the "Gold" and "Platinum" level of service for systems that it has installed, as long as the customer has an ISC with the company to do the maintenance on it. Collis' theory is that if the system is properly installed and maintained, he's not going to have to do a lot of extended warranty work.

"We have a fair deductible on the extended warranties," he explains, "which means that the customer will pay for broken sprinkler heads and the like. Other than that, I don't mind being on the hook for systems that I know are well-maintained."

McLaughlin also offers a version of a guarantee. "We don't say that we give a 100-percent guarantee for our work, but as a practical matter, we do. We're a service-oriented company. One thing that we do as a matter of course is offer a discounted service contract whenever we make an installation. This is one way to bring in even more customers."

**The ISC also provides an opening to sell customers on system improvements.**

Nick Del Conte, of Del Conte's Landscaping in Fremont, California, does what he calls an "Initial Irrigation System Inspection" when he brings on a new ISC customer. This inspection serves two purposes. First, it lets Del

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# A Benefit for Your Customer, A Profit Center for You

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Conte document all the customer's components and brands, and creates a map of the system for future use by visiting technicians. Second, Del Conte can create a list of system maladies and present them to the customer for possible correction.

"We rank these system problems like an auto mechanic might with your car—from urgent to semi-urgent to would-improve-efficiency," Del Conte says. "Customers really appreciate it, and we end up making a lot of needed repairs and improvements."

If there is any drawback to the ISC, it is in the operational details of keeping track of your customers, and managing their particular configuration. Customers have different systems, different controllers, different sprinkler heads, and different terrain. To eliminate wasted time, you need to keep careful track of who has what.

McLaughlin minds the details in two ways. He has a database at his office, but also a simple three-by-five index card for each property, that serves as his main tracking sheet. "The card tells us where the clock is, where the valves are located, where to locate the hose bed, and even

warns my guys whether they should beware of a dog."

KT Irrigation uses a sophisticated database that not only keeps details about each customer and their property,

***"We rank these system problems like an auto mechanic might with your car—from urgent to semi-urgent to would-improve-efficiency," Del Conte says.***

but also does scheduling and route planning.

"When you're doing as many setups and shut-downs as we are, you want to be ultra efficient," Callis declares. "There's no sense in driving all over town when you can set appointments in the same geographic area."

That said, they're a win-win in so many ways for so many irrigation professionals, landscape contractors, and their customers. Let this be the season they're a win-win for you and yours.



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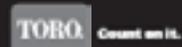
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# IANJ Spring Business Meeting

The Irrigation Association of New Jersey Board of Trustees held its annual Spring Business Meeting on March 27 at the Sheraton Hotel in Edison, NJ. IANJ President Eric Nelson (Green-Way Irrigation) updated attendees on the activities of the association through the first quarter of 2012 and presented the Financial Report for the year ending December 31, 2011. He also presented current IANJ Vice President, Mike Edmiston (The Toro Co.) with a plaque for completion of a three year term on the Board.

Nelson also introduced Jody Shilan, President of the New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association. IANJ and NJLCA have agreed to co-sponsor the 2012 Golf Outing to be held September 10 at Neshanic Golf Course. Both associations will promote the event to their respective members to boost both player and sponsor participation. "We look forward to this being the first of many co-sponsored events between both associations," said Shilan.

The meeting had several excellent presentations by invited special guests.

IANJ is working with United Water Company to develop a campaign to encourage consumers to use licensed irrigation contractors and understand good practices for water conservation. Tony Vincente of United Water provided an overview of how IANJ can help this awareness campaign by instructing consumers on proper backflow prevention, proper connections of irrigation systems, and the use of rain sensors for water conservation. Tim Martin (MBI-Gluckshaw) and Gary Amos (John Deere Landscape) are spearheading this project with United Water.

Tim Martin also updated members on progress on the Water Tap Bill which he is confident will be voted on by the NJ Senate this year. Martin also said that first quarter letters on donations to the Irrigational Political Action Committee were recently sent to IANJ members and he is encouraged by the initial responses of support.

George McCarthy (Spring Irrigation), chair of LICEB, said that the board has a number of issues before them including developing the final rules and regulations pertaining to the licensing act which he hopes will be concluded very soon. The Board is also focusing attention on enforcement of non-licensed contractors with procedures in place that will send notices of penalties to these non-licensed companies. The board also is reviewing regulations that will require contractors to have a business permit and licensed contractors to register who they are working for within a specified period of time. While not voted on as yet, McCarthy said the Board has specified that 16 CECs are required for license renewal which occurs every two years. Eight of these CECs must be education in water conservation. There is a three Tier System on CECs which the

Board needs to finalize.

Bob Dobson (Middletown Sprinkler Co.), IA President-Elect and also a member of the LICEB Board, updated guests on irrigation activities at the national level. He invited IANJ members to participate in the "Renewal and Remembrance" project to be held July 8 and 9 at Arlington National Cemetery and also the IA Annual Convention, November 2-6 in Orlando. IA is inaugurating a new "Technician's Certification" program this year which will provide online learning for other staff within contractor firms.

Bob is only the second president of the Irrigation Association to come from the contractor ranks. Congratulations, Bob.



# 2012 Winter Technical Seminars

Over 300 contractors came out to attend the week of seminars, January 23-27 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Jamesburg. 15 Supplier Members also exhibited at the 2012 Trade Show.

Here is some of the feedback from the week's events:

*"Art Elmers is an excellent instructor. He was able to get the class involved with examples of the readings."*

*"Electrical troubleshooting was a well taught class...I learned a lot from the class."*

Alex Cruz, Thom-Mist Lawn Sprinkler

*"The new '2 Wire' class was great and the instructor had lots of energy to keep my attention."*

*"I left happy from my week of classes."*

Bob Towler, BJT Contracting

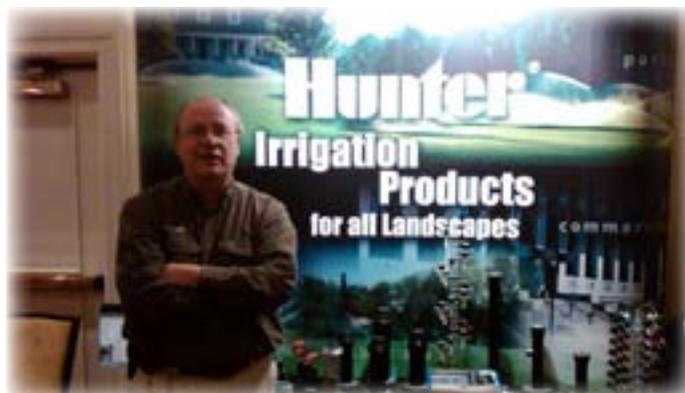
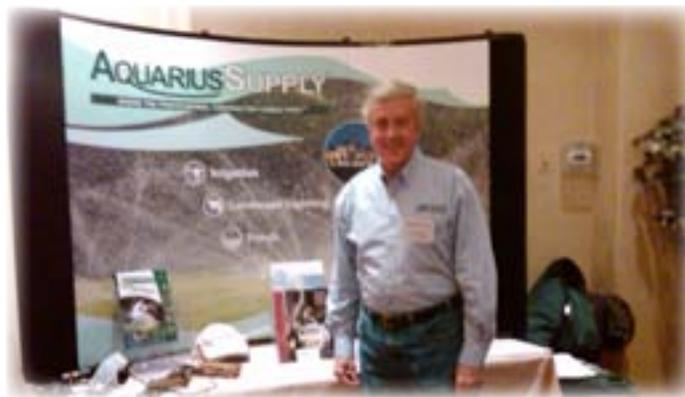
Overall, attendees felt that the classes were well presented and covered a wide range of product knowledge. "Experienced contractors are looking for more advanced classes and the IANJ Education Committee will be reviewing all the classes to determine which ones will be presented in 2013 and what new topics can be added to keep the Winter Tech event fresh and on top of industry innovations," stated Michael Edmiston (The Toro Co.), Education Committee Chair.

Our thanks to our terrific list of instructors:

Craig Boreland, Art Elmers, Dan James, Ted Moriarty, CIC, CID, CLIA, and Scott Stetser

Thanks also to our exhibitors:

- Alliance Risk Management
- Aquarius Supply Inc
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- Burnley Associates
- Hunter Industries
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- Jesco, Inc.
- John Deere Landscapes
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# IANJ Movie Review

For this issue we will be reviewing a film entitled *The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo*

**Title:** *The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo*

**Director:** David Fincher

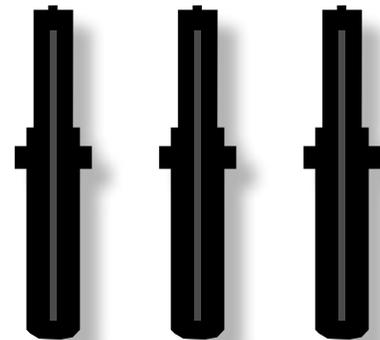
**Cast:** Rooney Mara, Daniel Craig

*The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* gives off a ripely kinky, menacing glow.

Fincher chose well in Rooney Mara. Thin, stark, haunted, with a look that crosses goth with S&M, she is fearsomely intelligent and emotionally stranded. Mara is astonishing as Lisbeth Salander, the pierced, bisexual, tattooed twentysomething hacker who teams up with journalist Mikael Blomkvist (a curiously wan Daniel Craig) to unearth secrets in the family of Henrik Vanger (Christopher Plummer), an industrialist who thinks his grandniece, Harriet, was murdered 40 years ago. *Girl* moves in fits and starts as if screenwriter Steve Zaillian felt no minor character unworthy of a share in the film's two hours and 40 minutes. Though the actors give their all, notably Stellan Skarsgård as the brother of the missing Harriet and Joely Richardson as an estranged relative, the film hangs back when you want it to come out swinging. Only Mara lets it bleed. Her defensive, bruised-animal performance inexorably draws you in. Lisbeth is a hunter of male predators, and her takedown of her rapist guardian (Yorick van Wageningen) is justifiably graphic. But what pulls her toward Mikael? Craig's distant, self-amused performance offers no clues. Editors Kirk Baxter and Angus Wall excel at crosscutting between Lisbeth and Mikael, separately investigating the case with orgasmic relish. But when the two hook up in Mikael's cabin and Lisbeth strips to jump his bones, the expected sparks – sexual and soulful – never materialize. The thrumming score by Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross, along with a slashing opening-credit scene in which Reznor and Karen O rework Led Zeppelin's "Immigrant Song," promise a fire the film fails to stoke. Even the altered ending gives no offense. Fincher's *Girl* is gloriously rendered but too impersonal to leave a mark.



**The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo gets 3 Rotors**



**Click on link below to preview the movie trailer**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
**IANJ and NJLCA to Co-Sponsor 2012 Golf Outing**

**April 2, 2012.** The Irrigation Association of New Jersey is very excited to announce that we will be co-sponsoring this year's 2012 golf outing with the New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association. Recognizing the value and importance of partnering with allied associations here in the Garden State, the NJLCA and IANJ are working together

to create a wonderful opportunity for landscape contractors and irrigation contractors to work together and play together. Traditionally, our two golf outings have always been scheduled within a few days of each other, forcing contractors to choose one outing or the other. Now they don't have to," said Jody Shilan, President of the NJLCA. "We see this as a win-win for both associations."

The golf outing has always been one of our most popular social events of the season and a great day to socialize and relax. With this new co-sponsorship agreement, I can pretty much guarantee that in addition to the socializing there will be some serious networking and even a little friendly competition going on between NJLCA and IANJ.

"Our thanks to both IANJ and NJLCA's board and golf committee for making this happen," said Eric Nelson, IANJ President. "We are excited to help present a great networking event for the irrigation and landscape contracting industries."

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# The Power of Social Media

*Landscape and Irrigation, January 2012*

*By: Les Robinson*

**S**ocial media is a fast-moving, ever-evolving medium that continues to help shape how business is done. With ever-increasing frequency, consumers are looking to various social networks for information, advice and opinions before making purchasing decisions. Whether it's Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube or another platform, as an organization, social media provides an opportunity to listen to, learn from, and speak directly to consumers in real time, 24 hours a day.

However, businesses should not leap into this area just because it seems like everyone is doing it. It takes careful planning and dedication with a clear focus on the business goals involved. Having exciting, successful social media interactions doesn't happen overnight, no matter how popular your organization is.

## **Here are some things to consider:**

**Social media is a two-way conversation, while more traditional** communication channels like advertising, are not. It gives an organization and consumers the opportunity to talk about a message, whereas a print advertisement, press release or television commercial is pushed out, and generally left at that. In that respect, social media doesn't operate alone. It often works best when integrated across advertising, public relations and traditional marketing. The discussion around the message and the opportunity for the audience to interact can take place on social media. Often, not only is it better for the organization to coordinate messages across channels, but not doing so could cause the various messages to lose focus.

## **You're going to need a plan**

Before creating your first social media site, you need a plan. Just having social media presence means absolutely nothing if you don't do something with it to meet your business objectives. Start the plan by evaluating what your business goals are and what you hope to accomplish through social media. Then, start creating plans to accomplish through these goals.

A clear, well-developed set of social media guidelines forms a solid base for the entire social media strategy, there should be a straightforward policy that provides guidance on who can engage in social media on behalf of your organization and what is and isn't permissible when engaging. It's important to be clear on the purpose for the guidelines, so everyone interacting on social media understands the business reasons for the policy.



## **Tips for interacting on social media**

**Listen:** Understanding the value of listening is a key to getting started. If you want to know what your audience wants to talk about, just listen to what they're saying, or ask them – they'll tell you. Also, because of the speed at which news about your organization can travel on the Web, you have to monitor mentions of your brand constantly and stay on top of what the social community is saying about you.

**Give them something useful:** A quick, effective way to get involved in – and gain the trust and respect of – a community that's talking about your organization is to answer the questions they're asking. As an official representative of your organization in social media, you have the ability to provide information, guidance, recommendations, clarifications, corrections and more. In other words, by listening first and identifying good engagement opportunities, you have the ability to provide value with any of the content you put out. Social media provides a great opportunity for you to harness your expertise and share it with the audience. The key is to provide value for both the audience and your organization.

**Your audience relies on you:** It's important to remember that in social media, conversations are happening in almost real time. In order to be a reliable source of information for the community, you've got to be an active member. Make sure you're able to dedicate the time it takes to update content, answer questions, and offer information to the community. When you speak, they will listen, as long as they know they can depend on you being there. In order to make it a two-way conversation, you've got to interact.

**Don't shy away from negative comments:** One of the questions I get asked frequently is, "What if someone says something bad about us?" Typically, I'll ask that person what they would do in that situation. "Just delete it, and

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# The Power of Social Media

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block them,” they often say. Many times, that’s the wrong answer.

When you have a healthy dialogue, not everyone is going to agree. There are people who don’t like you or your products and have no problem letting you and everyone else know about it. The conversations about your organization are happening with or without you, so why not look for opportunities to interact and turn negative comments into positive ones?

There are instances where deleting the comment and blocking the user is inappropriate. It depends on what your site guidelines are. If someone is being obscene or attacking or insulting your organization or other community members, generally, that person isn’t going to add a lot of value to your interactions. Consider what your site guidelines should be and make them clear to the community. There are also those times that make every social media manager proud, when the community does the responding for you. Once you gain trust and loyalty of the community, they will often address negative posts for you. As long as their responses are clean and within your guidelines, sometimes you can just sit back and watch.

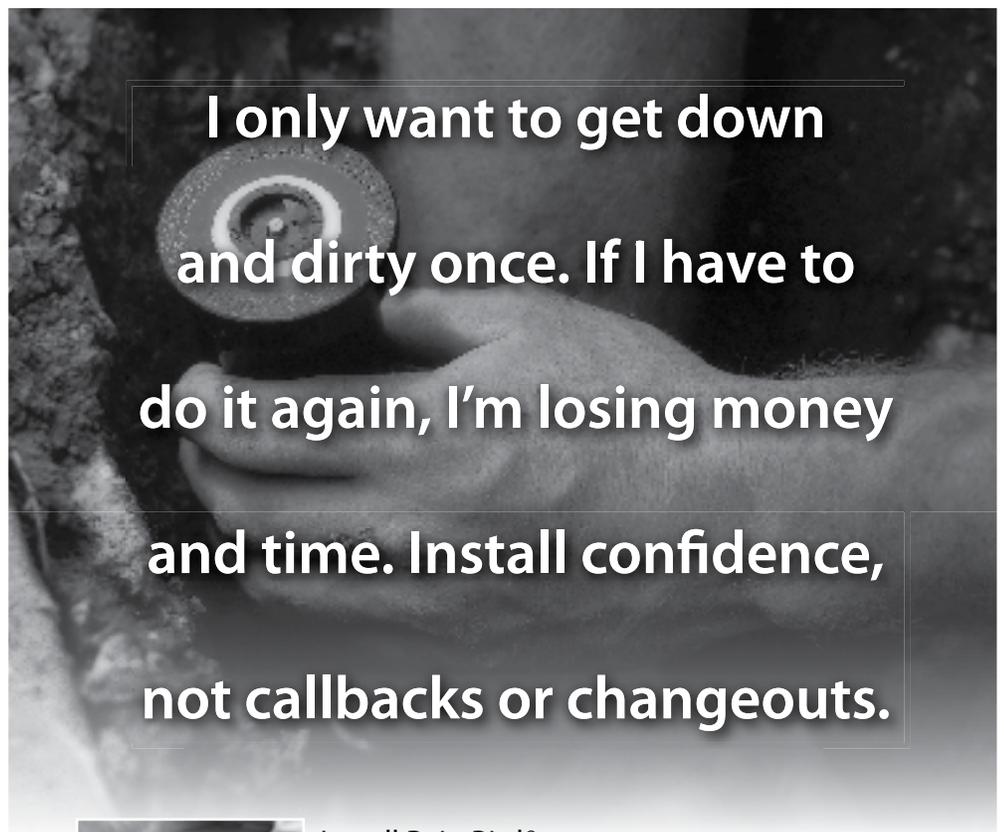
## Building relationships online

Social media is about relationships. One of the most difficult things for any organization to realize in social media is that it’s about the community. The community has the true power in social media. The audience decides how the conversation goes, and you can only hope they will accept you and let you be a part of it.

In order to harness the power of social media, you need to be a valued, accepted member of the social community that’s talking about your brand and services. It’s hard work, and it takes time to build a successful social media program. A well-planned social media program will allow you to reach and listen to consumers in a way that you haven’t been able to before. You will be able to provide information about your services to thousands

with one post. Consumers will get updated and corrected information from an official source on their time. Maybe, most importantly, customers and potential customers will get to know you, and they’ll know that you care about them.

Finally, remember to have fun with it. Your passion for social media will come through in your interactions and, hopefully, will rub off on the entire community. Social media is another place where consumers are. With a good plan and proper execution, you can satisfy your business objectives and provide content of value to those consumers and experience the true power of social media.



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# Using Smart Water Technologies

*Landscape and Irrigation, January 2012*

*By: Troy Leezy*

**W**ith increasing focus on water conservation and efficient irrigation practices comes new opportunities. Whether it is a product upgrade or replacing an aging irrigation system, a wide variety of efficient product solutions exist in the market today. Many of the new products available do not require much or any effort above and beyond traditional installation practices, and offer a reasonable timeframe for return on investment.

While exploring any upgrade solutions, strong consideration should be paid to getting site pressure as close to optimum as possible for the sprinkler types to be used. Pressure is as important as proper spacing to achieve the greatest possible efficiency in any system. High pressure is as much an enemy to efficiency as low pressure and should be a priority regarding initial design or existing system evaluations. There are a wide variety of solutions on the market to address high pressure. Pressure can be easily adjusted at the valve with an add-on regulator that allows the installer to select the ideal pressure the sprinkler requires. Additionally, many manufacturers offer pop-up spray sprinklers with built-in pressure regulators pre-set to optimum nozzle requirements; or a simple add-on pressure regulator at the valve can be an easy solution.

The simplest form of water conservation upgrade can be a wireless rain sensor, which saves an average 10 percent of water use. On the high end of control upgrades are “Smart” irrigation controllers that adjust irrigation schedules on a daily basis depending on weather conditions. Studies have shown Smart controllers can save up to 30 percent of water use depending on prior management practices. New products are arriving on the market that are more cost effective and user friendly, making Smart controllers an easier sell – especially on residential projects.

Replacing existing spray nozzles with rotary nozzles, such as MP Rotators, or incorporating them into a new system design provides greater water savings and drastically increased efficiency. In many cases, rotary nozzles can be successful in improving poor-performing spray systems due to low pressure. Because rotary nozzles require less water to operate, they have the advantage of reducing friction losses in an existing system and improving the operating pressure at the head. Additionally, due to lower water requirements of the nozzles, more area can be irrigated with fewer zones, reducing system costs with fewer valves and smaller controller sizes, as well as less pipe, wire, fittings and labor.

Drip tubing with pre-installed, in-line emitters offers



substantial advantages over traditional irrigation methods in not only water savings, but also time and cost considerations. In many cases, the tubing can be simply “snaked” through planters and then mulched over. Winterization can be a snap by incorporating threaded cups on line ends that can be removed for blow out.

On any projects with elevation changes, check valves should be installed, at the very minimum, on the lowest heads. One hundred feet of 1” pipe on single zone can waste 4 gallons of water per zone cycle through low-head drainage. On a 12-zone system, that equates to 48 gallons per irrigation day. Beyond saving water, check valves will also protect the sprinkler from the water hammer that occurs every time the valve turns on (and water rushes to fill the empty lateral line), greatly increasing sprinkler longevity.

One last note when working on improvement of older existing systems: sprinklers should be reset to proper grade level, screens cleaned, and nozzles replaced. Nozzles on both spray heads and rotors will wear over time and lower the ability for water to be sprayed efficiently. It is a good idea to check with your local irrigation distributor to see if there are newer, more efficient nozzles available for existing, installed sprinklers.

# Non-certified contractors can be reported

**I**n an effort to provide enforcement to the New Jersey Landscape Irrigation Contractors Certification Act, N.J.S.A. 45AA-1, the Irrigation Association of New Jersey has received a copy (through the New Jersey License Examining Board) of a Contractor Certification Verification form. This form may be used by Certified Irrigation Contractors to give the Examining Board the names of contractors they observe to be operating without the required certification. **ALL FORMS MUST BE FILLED OUT COMPLETELY OR THEY WILL BE RETURNED..**

**New Jersey Landscape Irrigation Contractor Examining Board  
Department of Environmental Protection  
Bureau of Revenue  
CN 417, Trenton, NJ 08625-0417**

Gentlemen:

I have observed the below named contractor installing a landscape irrigation system. I request that the New Jersey Landscape Irrigation Contractor Examining Board verify that the contractor has obtained certification pursuant to Landscape Irrigation Contractor Certification Act, N.J.S.A. 45AA-1.

Date of Inquiry: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Contractor Firm in Question: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address at which contractor was observed installing a landscape irrigation system:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I request that, should the contractor in question not be certified, the Board notify the contractor that he/she will be in violation of the Landscape Irrigation Contractor Certification Act as of January 1, 1997. I trust that the Board will send such notice in a timely manner and understand that I will receive further correspondence from the Board stating that said notice was made. I further resolve to make only this one request for verification for the above named contractor in question.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Contractor  
Firm making inquiry: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

# Are You Selling by Design or Default?

In advance of the IANJ Business Meeting on March 29, Danny Wood, a nationally recognized business development expert and sales training consultant, presented an informative session on "Are You Selling by Design or Default?"

Wood challenged attendees to review their sales and marketing processes to determine who is really in control of their sales development. Wood presented a methodology for receiving a consistent flow of referrals and how to shorten the time between prospecting and closing the sale.



"This would make a great four hour seminar," said Steve Dobossy of RR Irrigation. "It was a great presentation with good content and was very helpful."

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