



Landscaping influencers

What is motivating your customers to improve their landscaping

What is motivating landscape business

If the past year has proved anything, it's that the lawn care maintenance and landscaping industry is an essential service. As the COVID-19 pandemic moved out of the winter months in early 2020, more homeowners turned to landscape professionals to have their backyards professionally designed and installed. While some decided to stick to the DIY of landscaping, those with disposable income due to the pandemic sought to expand their space outdoors to give them more square footage.

This interest in expanding outdoor space started a boom in the landscaping industry, so much that supplies were rising in price or simply not available. Moreover, the demand was there to get green space outdoors because gathering inside was restricted in some areas, and lockdowns kept people at home.

However, the pandemic wasn't the only motivator influencing homeowners to spruce up their backyard with professional landscaping. Although, it may have been that final push needed to complete the long-awaited project. Still, there were many different factors in finally looking for a landscape design company to complete a design and a professional landscaping construction company to install it.





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In this ebook, we'll explore the motivators and influencers that are continuing to offer opportunities to landscape professionals, such as:

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Usable outdoor space for entertaining.

As people were staying at home over the last year, the value of outdoor space skyrocketed. Condo and apartment owners could only dream of the oasis some homeowners had with an entire backyard, while those homeowners were thinking about how they could reimagine the space and enjoy it even more.

The most significant motivator for homeowners to invest in landscaping and lawn care maintenance was their enjoyment. Homeowners want to use the space themselves, building in large patios, gardens, covered areas for entertaining, and fire pits to gather friends around.

According to a recent 2020 Lawn and Landscaping poll, 80% of homeowners said the ability to enjoy outside space was influential or extremely influential in their decision to improve their landscaping. In the same survey, 68% also said having an outdoor entertainment area was an influential reason to get professional landscaping.



With homeowners thinking of themselves and their enjoyment, their selections in designs are personal choices. These design choices include:

- Impressive relaxation areas
- Technology additions, such as audio/visual systems, projectors, and lighting
- Edible gardens
- Outdoor kitchens and pizza ovens

The key to this motivator is that homeowners are willing to spend more money to get the things they want. Personal enjoyment is something people are willing to spend money on because it's for their use. That means larger projects for landscape construction companies.

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Compared to the inside of your primary home, how important is it that the outside looks nice and is enjoyable to live in?

56%

Equally Important

11%

Much more important

Source: 2020 Grow the Market



Increasing the value of the property.

Having more enjoyable space is definitely at the top of the list of motivators for homeowners to get landscaping professionally completed. However, there is also the bonus for the vast majority of properties that professional lawn care, maintenance, and construction will result in a higher value for their home should the owner decide to sell. It's one of the best trade-offs when embarking on a landscaping project because homeowners win now -- gaining a space they can use, and they win later -- selling their home at a higher price.

According to the Lawn and Landscape survey, 76% of respondents said adding to their home's value was influential or extremely influential in their motivation to improve their landscaping. A well-landscaped home will have a significant price advantage over a home with no landscaping. The curb appeal doesn't just end at the front of the house but instead is the entire outdoor space.





It's much easier to sell a home with a mature landscape and construction already complete. However, experts do suggest that homeowners only build elements that are universal to possible future homeowners and not niche items that are specific to their needs if they plan on selling.

As a landscape designer and construction company, providing a new home evaluation after the project is complete or during the bidding process can be a way to get timid prospective customers off the fence and get them deciding to invest in landscaping. Customers do get a sticker shock when they see the costs of landscaping construction projects and lawn care. Showing them the increase, which can range between 5.5% to 13% depending on the home and landscaping, will get the customer thinking about investment rather than just a purchase.

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How influential are the following motivations to have a lawn maintenance contractor do mowing, trimming and edging of your lawn?

86%

A well-manicured lawn adds value to my/our home.

Source: 2020 Grow the Market



Keeping up with the neighbors.

Keeping up with the Joneses is a massive motivator. For example, when one neighbor gets a professionally landscaped backyard, the other neighbors will take notice and start to think about what they could do. It's why lawn signs appear in front of houses after outdoor work has been completed, letting people in the neighborhood know who completed the job. Marketing to the neighbors is an easier sell because they can see the work you accomplished, the time and took, and they can speak to their neighbor about the cost.

In Lawn and Landscape's survey, 48% of respondents said what was influential in their motivation to get a landscaping company to provide service was fitting in with the neighbors and meeting their expectations. No one wants to be the ugly house on the block, and if others are getting professional work completed, some prospective customers may feel their neighbors are judging them for their shabby lawn and unkempt backyard.



Furthermore, 45% of respondents said conforming to the homeowner's association standards was influential in their motivation to improve their landscape. Some home associations require their residents to have well-maintained lawns and landscapes. Those rules could include:

- How often to cut the grass
- How high bushes and shrubs can be
- How often beds are mulched
- How often to water the lawn
- What types of trees and plants can be planted
- What state driveways and walkways can be in
- Resodding lawn schedules

Prospective customers could handle these tasks independently, or they can pay a professional landscape company to handle it for them. Lawn care programs exist that ensure lawn cutting and bush and shrub trimming are completed on a schedule. This type of work can then lead to extensive project construction work as the homeowner tries to keep up with their neighbors' designs and plans or follow the home association rules.



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How influential are the following motivations to have a lawn maintenance contractor do mowing, trimming and edging of your lawn?

59%

Most people in the neighborhood use a contractor.

Source: 2020 Grow the Market

Going with the professionals.

Expertise is an underlying motivator that many landscape customers don't speak about enough. Being an expert in something comes with value, and more homeowners appreciate that expertise.

According to Lawn and Landscape's survey, 63% said addressing a specific problem, such as diseases or insects, was influential in their motivations to hire a landscaping company to handle their lawn care maintenance. In addition, 55% said repairing storm damage was another motivator.

There is also the apparent motivator; people don't like doing their yard work and would rather pay someone else to do it. In the Grow the Market report, Lawn and Landscape asked how influential are the motivations to have a lawn maintenance contractor do mowing, trimming, and edging, and 83% of respondents said contractors keep their yard looking better than they could. Another 58% said they have other things to do rather than spend time working in the year, and 48% said they dislike yard work.

Whether it be to prevent disease or insects, or simply because a homeowner doesn't want to do the job themselves, landscape companies have an opportunity to offer expertise and labor to prospective customers. These customers are still motivated to have

their green space look good but don't want to take on the work themselves.

More younger homeowners are willing to spend the money on professional services providing they see the value. The cost of a lawn care professional might be worth it if they get back family time, can have it completed during work hours, and when they are finished, their green space is ready for their enjoyment.





Summary.

Prospective customers have multiple reasons to seek professional landscaping services, from lawn care maintenance to weed management, fertilizer, and extensive landscape design and building projects. Lawn care contractors come with the experience and knowledge to do a better job than most homeowners could. In addition, because of the pandemic, homeowners have the income to take advantage of that expertise to get more green space and extend their entertaining room.

As a landscape professional, understanding your customer's motivations and what influences them can lead to greater success in marketing to prospective customers. Whether targeting their enjoyment, the investment a landscape is for their home's value, keeping up with the neighbors and following regulations, or simply because you can offer a valuable service, there are plenty of motivators that will influence prospective customers to call in the professionals.

Aligning your business to match those influences will lead to greater success and revenue growth. It also provides long-term stability, as maintenance contracts can continue for years and lead to larger jobs.

More homeowners are planning projects. Understanding why they are doing so can lead to greater success in winning their business with a well-informed, motivator-focused bid.



DynaScape Software
104 – 2660 Sherwood Heights Dr
Oakville, ON L6J 7Y8
1.800.710.1900

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