



SOFTWARE AS A BUSINESS TOOL FOR LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONALS

EVERY PROFESSION HAS ITS SET OF FAVORITE TOOLS, and for most of them, the list now usually includes some software as well. This article explores the use of software as a business tool in the landscape design industry. For a growing number of landscape companies, software is now an indispensable part of their daily workflows, thanks to the availability and power of programs that are designed specifically for their needs.

WHAT MAKES THE BEST SOFTWARE INDISPENSABLE

When do you decide to buy a tool for your business? When it's clear that it will help you do your job better. For business owners, that ultimately means helping you to make more money.

In that respect, buying landscape business

software has become an easy decision for many business owners to make, because the best software brings many advantages. Among other things, it can:

- Save you time
- Make you more accurate
- Let you share information and work among many people on a team
- Be used to calculate costs, overhead and profits exactly, instead of "ballparking" or "guesstimating"
- Make your designs, proposals and presentations look professional
- Remind you of tasks and next steps
- Help you keep track of everything when things get busy
- Remind you to follow up with new prospects

"It really helps to know if we're making money on these jobs."

Bill Banford, owner, The Sharper Cut



landscape sales cycle are indeed unique. To be aided and improved by software, these tasks require more customized automation than any standard software can offer. That's the feedback that DynaSCAPE received from its customers, and that's the problem that it set out to solve.

USING MANAGE360 TO BE PROFITABLE AND COMPETITIVE

The benefits most often mentioned by Manage360 users are that it saves them time, and that it brings a whole new level of accuracy and reliability to their operations. Both of which translate, they say, into increased profits and growth for their companies.

On the question of using software as a business tool, Brian Sherne of BTS Landscaping in Flanders, New Jersey, says, "I don't think I could survive without it now. I don't think that it's an option." He now uses Manage360 to prepare his estimates and manage his sales, and says, "For me, estimating is the most time-consuming thing, and if you mess up the estimate, the whole thing is messed up, no matter how good a job your crew does. So you've got to put in the time necessary to do a thorough and accurate estimate. And with Manage360, the time-saving is huge. Absolutely beneficial."

Bill Banford, owner of The Sharper Cut in Cheltenham, Maryland, concurs that Manage360 is "very efficient for estimating." He likes the fact that the software is "geared specifically for landscape industry" and emphasizes that the benefits that it brings to his business are both in terms of time-savings and accuracy. "We use it for preparing our estimates, and for job tracking and job costing too. Which are really good. It really helps to know if we're making money on these jobs."

A user of DSIDesign as well, Mr. Banford says that "having the CAD software helps immensely for making changes to the design, storing them and making updates. And more importantly, it forces us to be more precise when we estimate, because when we get to the estimating feature, we know we're getting the proper information put in.

"And to run a business these days without having some kind of software, be honest with you, I don't know how people would do it."

- Let you keep everyone on the same page on a project/job
- Automate and streamline your workflow
- Help you follow your industry's best practices
- Let you reuse things that take time to make, like price books and kits
- Let you make revisions to proposals and invoices without having to start over
- Give you useful reports
- Help you to see trends and problems that might otherwise stay hidden
- Connect you to everyone else in your company
- Keep you informed when you're not at your desk
- Keep track of your expenses, income, overhead and profit margins
- Track everyone at every stage in

- your sales pipeline
- Help you to manage your staff

DYNASCAPE'S SOLUTION: MANAGE360

After years of developing specialized software (DSIDesign, DSIColor & DSISketch3D) to help landscape designers draw their plans, DynaSCAPE recognized an additional need in the industry: the need for a software tool that would help landscape business owners to run their companies, and to manage those aspects of the business that are specific to the landscape market. Things like preparing accurate estimates. Doing material takeoffs. Preparing proposals, worksheets, invoices, change orders. Recovering overheads. Tracking customers through the sales pipeline.

Not all of those tasks are exclusive to the landscape industry, but the combination and flow and details of all steps of the