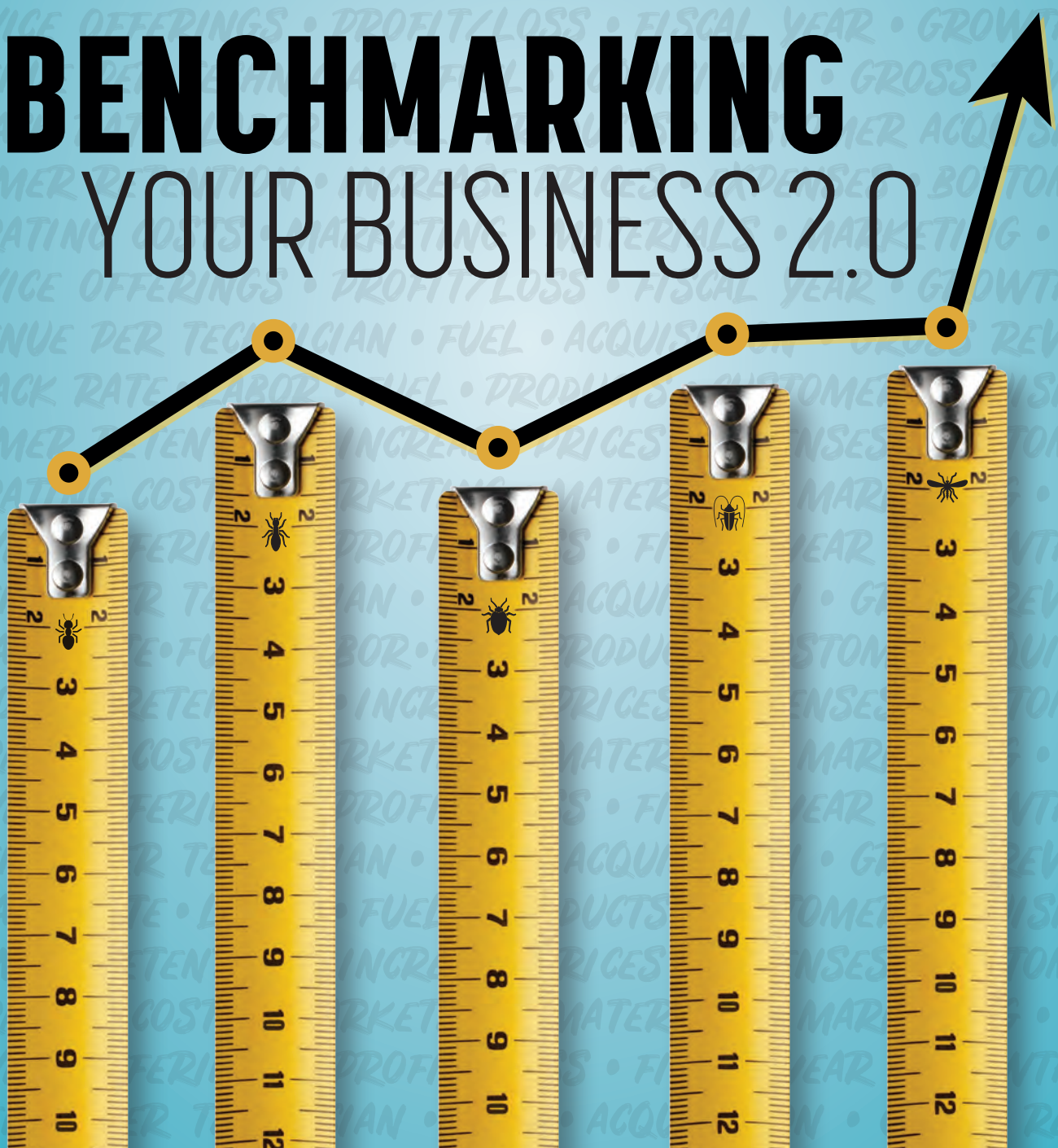
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[1]2012 University of Delaware, Graduate Research Dissertation. Not statistically significant at $p<0.05$; Statistically significant at $p<0.10$.

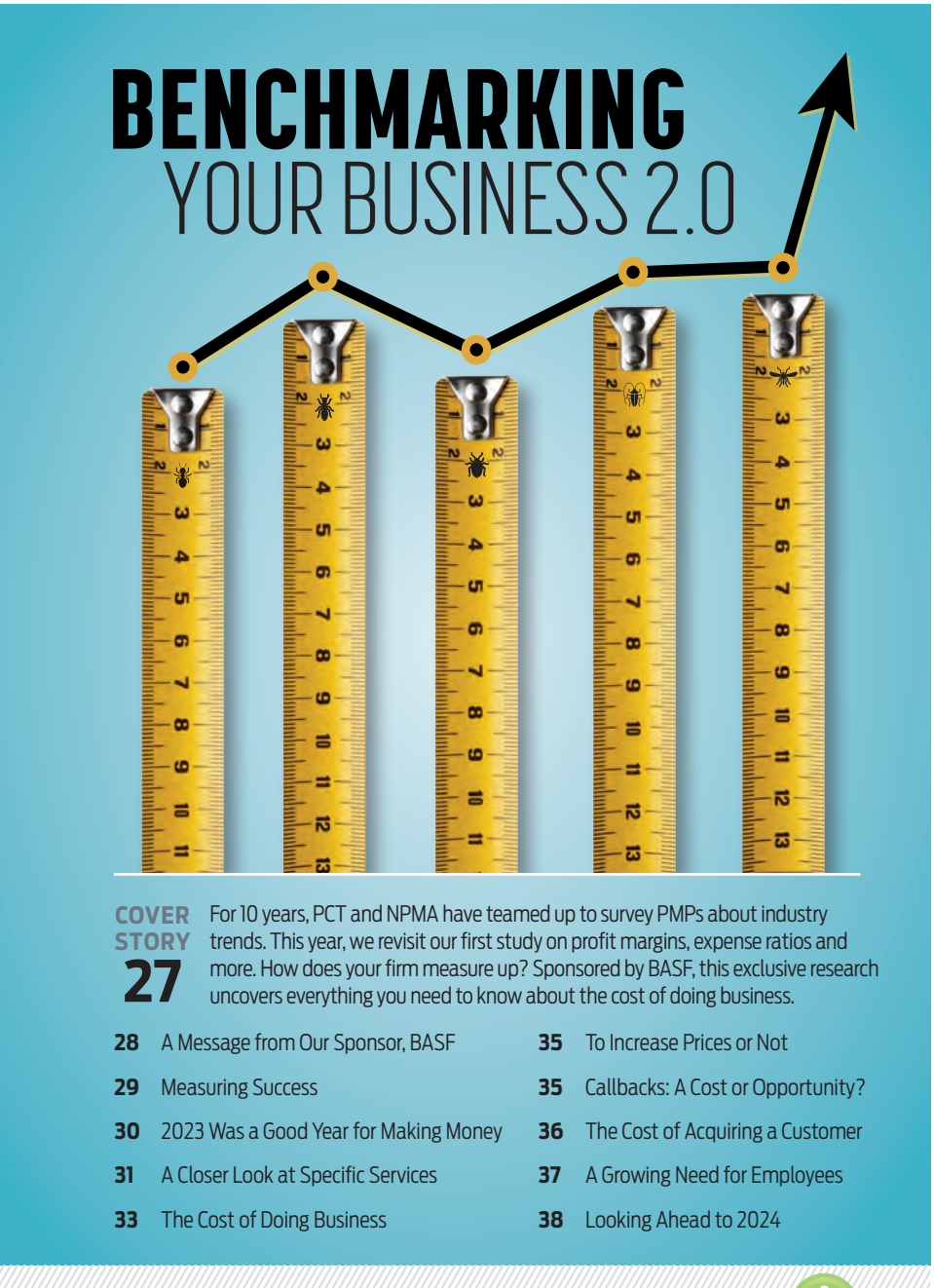
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PCT PEST CONTROL TECHNOLOGY

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THE PULSE



PCT's The Pulse: Digging Deeper features weekly online polls on topics PCOs are talking about now.
If you would like to have your voice heard, contact us www.pctonline.com/contact. Participate in our latest poll at www.pctonline.com/polls.

READER POLL RESULTS

Here's a look at results from a recent PCT Reader Poll.

Does your company offer holiday lighting services?

YES 10% NO 90%

Source: PCT Reader Poll, December 2023

PestWorld Video Coverage

The PCT staff captured video interviews with leading industry professionals at PestWorld 2023 last October in Hawaii. These videos covered a variety of business and technical topics. Recently added video interviews include a Q&A with Nicholas Holland, Peregrine Pest Control, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Holland shared his experiences offering wildlife control, as well as dos and don'ts for those pest management professionals considering breaking into this line of work. Watch this and other videos at bit.ly/3ufWKs9.





Most Downloaded From PCT Online in 2023

The PCT staff has been busy throughout 2023 reporting on the latest industry news and providing PCOs with helpful resources they need to run their businesses at peak levels. This includes breaking news, informative webinars, compelling videos and thought-provoking podcasts. Here's a look at the most viewed news and audio/video files, as reported by Google Analytics.

Top 10 Article Downloads

- In Memoriam: Stoy Hedges
- Brett Ponton to Leave Rentokil Terminix to Become CEO at SERVPRO
- How to Identify and Manage Paper Wasps
- Top 100 List
- Forshaw Announces Partnership with Rollins
- Rentokil Terminix Acquires Action Pest Control and World Pest Control
- Bed Bug Service Requests Up 60 Percent in Paris for Rentokil
- Rollins Acquires Fox Pest Control
- Shipping Container Fumigated Following FST Discovery in California
- Uninviting Bed Bug Hitchhikers from Semi-Truck Cabs

Top 10 Audio/Video Downloads

- Slideshow: 2023 PCT Vehicle Wrap Contest
- Webinar: Challenges and Solutions for Bed Bug Management in Low-Income Housing
- Podcast: Sentricon Standalone Success at Cook's Pest Control
- Webinar: Entomology 101 — It's a Bug's Life
- Video: Mike Boyle Discusses Huge Bed Bug Job That Burns Pest Elimination Completed
- Webinar: Bed Bugs and Beyond
- Webinar: Meet the Beetles
- Video: Jacob and Jared Borg on Their Decision to Sell
- Video: PCT's PestWorld 2023 Coverage
- Video: Russ Ives on Singing "The Star-Spangled Banner"

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How Is Your Company Measuring Up?

There is a great sense of excitement anytime the PCT staff launches a research project. It's an opportunity to dig deeper into topics of significant interest to PCT's readers and to provide them with findings they can use to improve their businesses.

In 2014, PCT teamed up with NPMA, with sponsorship from BASF, for our inaugural industry research report. Using third-party research firm Readex Research, we surveyed the industry about a variety of operating ratio benchmarks. We supplemented these survey findings with PCO interviews to gain even greater insights into topics ranging from vehicle expenses and employee costs to add-on services, revenues and material/supply costs. These interviews and survey findings were packaged together for our January 2015 cover story, "Benchmarking Your Business."





"Benchmarking Your Business" was PCT's cover story in January 2015 and January 2024.

Much has changed in the 10 years since PCT and NPMA launched that survey.

To name a few, mergers and acquisitions have reshaped the industry landscape, new technology has led to more efficiency, the labor market has cinched even tighter and inflation has risen dramatically. These and other circumstances have changed the way PCOs do business.

It only made sense that PCT and NPMA revisit benchmarking for this year's annual research report. For "Benchmarking Your Business 2.0," page 27, we surveyed our readers to compile updated data and fresh PCO perspectives on how they are managing expenses (e.g., labor, materials, acquiring customers) and what they see as potential growth opportunities. Our intent was to create updated industry standards for revenue growth, profit margins, expense ratios and more.

The other real value in revisiting this topic is that we could compare datasets from 2014 and 2023. For example, in 2014 the average percentage of general pest control revenue from bed bug control was 9.6 percent, while in 2023 it was 13.2 percent.

There is plenty of good news to be found in the 2024 report. Companies are making more money. The typical company experienced a 13 percent growth rate in total gross revenue and reported $310,000 total gross revenue. And, there are findings about issues that keep PCOs up at night. Our research found that material and supply expenses increased during the past 10 years — from 15.6 percent in 2014 to 19 percent this past fiscal year.

While the 2015 and 2024 reports have important differences, the goal of these reports is the same. We hope that you find "Benchmarking Your Business 2.0" to be a valuable resource for measuring how your company stacks up against your industry peers.

****

I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge the retirement of Kevin Connelly, part owner of MASH Services, a company he has worked for since 1990 (page 69). Connelly worked his way from technician to service manager to part owner, helping the company develop a stellar reputation in the Chicago area. When I asked Connelly about a memorable encounter, he recalled treating the home of an elderly woman who was a Holocaust survivor. "She was dealing with an unbelievably bad bed bug problem, but she really needed other help. We hooked her up with an organization that provides services to elderly Jewish people, and we also reached out to social services," he said. Connelly is a great example of so many pest management professionals we encounter who understand that taking care of customers goes beyond solving their pest problem. **PCT**

The author is senior news editor of PCT.

PCT PEST CONTROL TECHNOLOGY

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Rose Pest Solutions Acquires Central Exterminating

CLEVELAND — Rose Pest Solutions, Troy, Mich., expanded in northern Ohio with the acquisition of Central Exterminating, Cleveland. The deal closed Dec. 1.

In addition to its Cleveland headquarters, Central Exterminating has offices in Sandusky and Elyria, Ohio. Founded in 1948, Central Exterminating currently has 30 employees and services 4,800 residential and commercial accounts.

Jim Ives, president of Rose Pest Solutions, told PCT the acquisition fits into Rose Pest Solutions' strategy to maximize its territories. Currently, Rose Pest Solutions services northern Ohio from its Cuyahoga Falls (Akron, Ohio, area) location.

"This acquisition helps bridge some of the areas that we currently service and helps create more density in our clients, so it was just a great fit," Ives said. "Of the companies that we have bought, Central most closely resembles Rose," in terms of company culture and residential-commercial mix.

Central Exterminating previously was owned by Cindy Doe, who purchased the company in 2008. Doe reached out to Ives, seeking a reputable service provider similar in scope to Central that would take care of her employees, several of whom were long-tenured.

Ives said Rose plans on retaining all Central employees as well as the three offices, and plans to keep the Central branding, at least in the immediate future. Jeff Teague, Ohio region manager for Rose Pest Solutions, will oversee the Central business, while Tim Hughart, senior manager, Central Exterminating, will run the day-to-day operations. — *Brad Harbison*



Pictured (from left to right) Russ Ives, Cindy Doe, Scott Storc, Cindy Kettler, Chuck Kettler, Kim Rodriguez and Jim Ives.

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Douglas Products Announces Leadership Transition

LIBERTY, Mo. — Douglas Products announced in December the appointment of Andrew Klein as CEO. Klein replaced Wes Long, who led the company for 16 years. Douglas is a portfolio company of Brightstar Capital Partners, a middle market private equity firm.



Andrew Klein

"We appreciate Wes' leadership and are thrilled to welcome Andrew to the Douglas team," said Bruce Roberson, president and chief operating officer of Brightstar. "Andrew's impressive track record shows his ability to grow a business by providing differentiated value to customers and partners. His passion

M&A News

Please send press releases about your firm to bharbison@gie.net.

Plunkett's Pest Control recently acquired **Go Green Pest Control,** a Chardon, Ohio-based pest control company that provides full-service pest control and wildlife services to the northeast Ohio area. This acquisition merges two privately owned pest control companies and expands Plunkett's service capabilities in Ohio, for both pest control and wildlife services.



Members of Plunkett's Pest Control and Go Green Pest Control.

Go Green Pest Control was started by owner Chad Gotliebowski in 2017, as a full-service pest control company, and branched into offering wildlife services when Michael Martins joined the team. Gotliebowski will continue the South Carolina division of the company, while Martins will transition into a roll at Plunkett's/Varment Guard's specialized bird division. Their staff will be joining the Varment Guard Team as well.

Orkin Canada, a Rollins subsidiary, has acquired **Atlas Pest and Wildlife Control.** The acquisition was announced by The Aust Group, which represented Atlas Pest and Wildlife Control on the transaction.

Headquartered in Port Coquitlam, British Columbia, Atlas Pest and Wildlife Control is a full-service pest and nuisance wildlife control business, offering comprehensive services to predominately commercial and multi-family clientele throughout the greater Vancouver area. Established in 2015, Atlas was formed by Raymond Arthurs and Katelyn Curkic and grew into the largest privately owned pest control operation in the Lower Mainland with more than 50 trucks on the road daily.



Left to right: Chris Aust, Stuart Aust, Raymond Arthurs, Nick Aust and Dan Aust.

Atlanta-based **Arrow Exterminators** announced the merger and acquisition of **City Green Environmental,** based in Fort Myers, Fla.

City Green services customers in Lee and Collier counties. This location represents Arrow's 50th office in Florida and 175th office throughout the U.S.



Left to right: Tim Pollard (Arrow Exterminators) Joel and Kathy Osborne (City Green), and Kevin Burns (Arrow Exterminators).

"With this acquisition, we are expanding our footprint in the thriving Fort Myers region and are excited to welcome the team members and customers of City Green to the Arrow family," said Arrow Exterminators CEO Emily Thomas Kendrick.

City Green President Joel Osborne said, "The transition process will be conducted seamlessly, ensuring that our valued customers will continue to receive the same high level of service and commitment they have come to expect from us. All existing employees of City Green will become integral members of the Arrow team. City Green employees will remain steadfast in their unwavering dedication to excellence and customer satisfaction."

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for the industry and strategic mindset aligns perfectly with our vision for the future."

Klein served as president of Assured Environments for more than 20 years, a company that provided commercial pest control services to many of New York's landmarks. Klein steered Assured Environments' sale to Terminix and, most recently, he worked for Rentokil Terminix in a consulting capacity.

How does Andrew Klein — who has spent his pest control career on the service side, first as owner of Assured Environments and later with Rentokil Terminix — move to the supplier side, becoming CEO of Douglas Products and Packaging Company? Early in his career, Klein was part of professional networking group Young Presidents' Organization (YPO), where he met Andrew Weinberg, now managing partner and CEO of Brightstar Capital Partners.

Weinberg reached out to Klein last summer when Brightstar began exploring the possible acquisition of Douglas Products.

Klein primarily knew of Douglas Products through his time with Assured Environments, which used Douglas Products' Vikane gas fumigant for bed bug control. The Brightstar Capital board of directors asked Klein and fellow consultant Steve Good to come up with a list of potential CEOs, and the board also asked Klein to "throw his hat into the ring."

"I thought 'sure why not,' but I had no expectations," Klein said. "I had never worked on the supplier side, but I am passionate about this industry, and I view this as an incredible opportunity to be challenged — to learn about the supply side of the industry and about fumigation — and to grow this business both in the U.S., and outside of the U.S." While with Terminix, Klein was part of the Terminix strategy team that made acquisitions throughout Europe and China.

Klein said his immediate goals are to meet all Douglas employees, to understand the business inside and out, and to meet customers and understand their needs. "What we ultimately want to accomplish is an organic growth strategy, working with Heather Kern, [North America commercial leader] in the U.S., and Janet Rowley, [international business leader], to grow the sectors we are currently selling into, and to find other opportunities in the pest management world to expand the product offering. And also to potentially diversify and expand the business beyond where it is at today." — *Brad Harbison*

PPMA Unveils Redesigned Consumer Website, PestWorld.org

FAIRFAX, Va. — The Professional Pest Management Alliance (PPMA), the consumer marketing and public outreach organization whose mission it is to grow

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PCO News

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City Wide Exterminating, serving the greater Charlotte area, announced it was recognized as one of the "Top 10 Best Places to Work in Charlotte" for medium-sized businesses by The Charlotte Business Journal.

The annual "Best Places to Work in Charlotte" awards are designed to highlight businesses that prioritize employee satisfaction and engagement, professional development and workplace excellence. City Wide said the its dedication to creating a thriving workplace culture has not only elevated its reputation in the pest control industry, but also has solidified its position as an employer of choice in the Charlotte area.



The City Wide team celebrates being named a "Top 10 Best Places to Work in Charlotte" company.

"We are incredibly honored to be recognized as one of the 'Top 10 Best Places to Work in Charlotte,'" said Ashley Morrison, president of City Wide Exterminating. "This achievement is a testament to our team's hard work, dedication and the positive atmosphere we strive to cultivate every day. We believe that a happy and motivated workforce is the key to our success, and we will continue to invest in our team and their well-being."


Turkeys collected by OPC Pest Services.

With the help of employees and even some of its customers, **OPC Pest Services** was able to give 20 families in the Bowling Green, Ky., area a complete Thanksgiving meal.

Local news station WNKY interviewed Kelsey Gallihugh, office manager of the Bowling Green branch, on the day they started accepting donations. That helped spread the word far and wide, and the donations started to pour in.

Each family received a 3-pound turkey breast, yams, cranberry sauce, carrots, green beans, peas, corn, mashed potatoes, cornbread mix, fried apples, stuffing, and mac and cheese. So many extra items were collected that the OPC branch was able to donate the rest to Barren River Area Development District (BRADD), which is a program that specializes in providing help to elderly and underprivileged families in Warren County and surrounding areas.

Thomas Pest Services, Schenectady, N.Y., was voted "Best of the Best" by Daily Gazette readers. This is the company's second recent recognition for best pest control services in the upstate New York area. Earlier this year, Thomas was recognized in the Best of the Capital Region by the Times Union, an Albany-based newspaper.

Sarah Thomas-Clark, vice president of Thomas Pest Services, expressed her excitement about this recognition. "We are thrilled to receive this acknowledgment from The Daily Gazette. This achievement is a testament to our dedicated team, who strive to ensure we provide the best possible service to our customers. We are proud to be recognized as the 'Best of the Best' in the pest control category," Thomas-Clark said.

Neighborly recently recognized its top performing franchise owners of 2022. During the event, top-performing franchise owners across Neighborly were recognized with a number of awards, including Franchise of the Year, presented by each brand president to a franchise owner who exhibited exceptional growth, leadership, customer service and sales.

Trey Powell, who owns **Mosquito Joe** locations in Lake Murray, S.C., and Augusta, Ga., was recognized by parent company Neighborly as Franchise of the Year. From 2015 to 2022, Powell serviced more than 2,500 customers across two states with very strong public-facing reviews, the company said.



Trey and Cindy Powell


David Poplin

David Poplin, owner of CDS Services, dba **Legion Pest Management,** was a recipient of President Joe Biden's Volunteer Gold Service Award.

The award showcases Poplin's commitment to supporting veterans and the community, and further solidifies his position as a leader in the pest control industry. Poplin is a U.S. Marine veteran who honorably served.

Legion Pest Management also received a Certificate of Recognition for outstanding and invaluable service to veterans and the community from U.S. Rep. Ken Calvert and the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, presented by Vice Chair Chuck Washington.

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/// continued from page 12

and protect the professional pest control industry, in late November unveiled the new look for its consumer website, PestWorld.org.

"Our consumer website is our main hub, chock full of incredible content and information that a variety of users — from homeowners to commercial property managers to members of the media — rely on for pest prevention advice and educational resources about the pest issues commonly found in homes and businesses," said Jim Fredericks, executive director, PPMA. "With a site that has a 20-year history consistently fueled by robust marketing programs, there gets to be an enormous amount of content, and finding how to serve up that content to align with today's user journey was key in the redesign process."

The redesign includes a fresh look for all pages, including the homepage, Pest

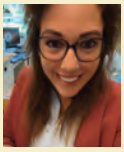
Comings & Goings

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Sinnott


Casey


Eppler


Keller


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Giordano

Kemp Anderson Consulting (KAC) announced the addition of **Grant Sinnott,** a quantitative analyst and data scientist. He comes to KAC from Bank of America, where he was responsible for quantitative analytics.

George Casey joins Neogen as key account manager, a newly created position to enhance existing customer relationships and oversee strategic business expansion.

Lisa Eppler has joined the Syngenta North American Professional Pest Management (PPM) team as its new Western technical services manager.

Truly Nolen Pest Control announced the promotion of **Verne Keller** to commercial district manager for Florida. When not in the field, Keller will be based at the company's Orlando service office.

Nisus Corporation announced that **Kim Kelley-Tunis** has been named vice president of regulatory and technical services. She takes over leadership of the department from **Greg Baumann**, who remains with Nisus in a new role as a strategic consultant and regulatory public policy advocate.

Cetane Associates announced that **Pam Giordano** has transitioned from part-time consultant to full-time director of the financial advisory firm.

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Guides and Find a Pro locator tool, where consumers can find local National Pest Management Association (NPMA) member companies. These modern designs and the reorganization of content found throughout the website are intended to improve the user experience for consumers. The site also has new pest photography and an updated logo to match the modern design. "When we started on this effort in October 2022, we knew it would be a massive undertaking and an important project knowing what a critical resource PestWorld.org is for consumers," said Fredericks. "We looked at data that showed us how consumers typically navigate throughout the site, in addition to what pages are most visited, and rebuilt it with this information in mind. Our goal was to create a better user experience in tandem with modern and upgraded designs that highlight key elements of PestWorld.org."

To further assist consumers looking for information about pests, a Pest Identifier Tool will be added to the site. Using a short series of questions, the tool will help a consumer narrow down which pest is suspected in their home. The Pest Identifier Tool is expected to launch in Spring 2024. Check out the newly redesigned website at www.pestworld.org.

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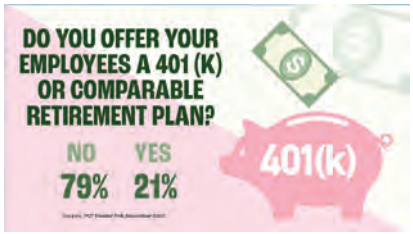
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Most PCOs Don't Offer a 401(k) or Comparable Retirement Plan

CLEVELAND — In today's competitive job market, many business owners offer 401(k) or comparable retirement plans to help attract and retain full-time employees. While this benefit undoubtedly makes a business more attractive to potential employees, it takes a significant amount of time, resources and money to sponsor



such a plan. And 401(k) or comparable retirement plans might not make sense for businesses like pest control companies that employ a lot of seasonal and part-time workers. Results from a recent PCT poll show that most PCOs (79 percent) do not offer a 401(k) or comparable retirement plan, while 21 percent do offer such plans.

Kurt Treftz, director of Cascade Pest Management, Snohomish, Wash., said Cascade has a plan that matches a certain amount for an IRA plan — not a 401(k). "I think it matters when employees make a decision to work for us," he said.

/// continued on page 68

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Making Memories IN PARADISE

Highlighted by business and technical sessions, PestWorld '23 in Hawaii provided attendees with more than just surfing opportunities.

By Brad Harbison



NPMA President Marillian Missiti shared her pest control journey.

About 3,000 industry professionals, representing 50 countries, gathered in Hawaii in October for PestWorld 2023, NPMA's annual convention and exposition. Despite the temptation to spend the entire week taking in the sights and sounds of the picturesque group of islands (and there was plenty of time for that), PCOs spent most of the week learning about the latest products and technology in the exhibit hall, and took advantage of the many educational and networking opportunities. Highlights included:

HELPING HAWAII. PestWorld was held just months after wildfires devastated Maui. NPMA CEO Dominique Stumpf presented a $7,500 check to the Maui Relief Fund alongside Hawaii Pest Control Association (HPCA) President Ryan Teramoto. HPCA also held a sold-out golf tournament fundraiser to raise money for Maui. Teramoto said between the fundraiser and money donated from NPMA and the Japan Pest Control Association ($2,500), HPCA was able to raise more than $12,000. Following this presentation, NPMA Immediate Past President Justin McCauley (McCauley Services) passed the gavel to NPMA President Marillian Missiti (Buono Pest Control).



The NPMA Board of Directors cut the ribbon to mark the beginning of PestWorld 2023.



MGK hosted the final night PestFest celebration at the Royal Hawaiian.





Keynote speakers Sebastian Terry (left) and Lt. Col. Jason Harris (right) inspired PestWorld '23 attendees.



The exhibit hall provided attendees with opportunities to network and learn about the latest pest control products.



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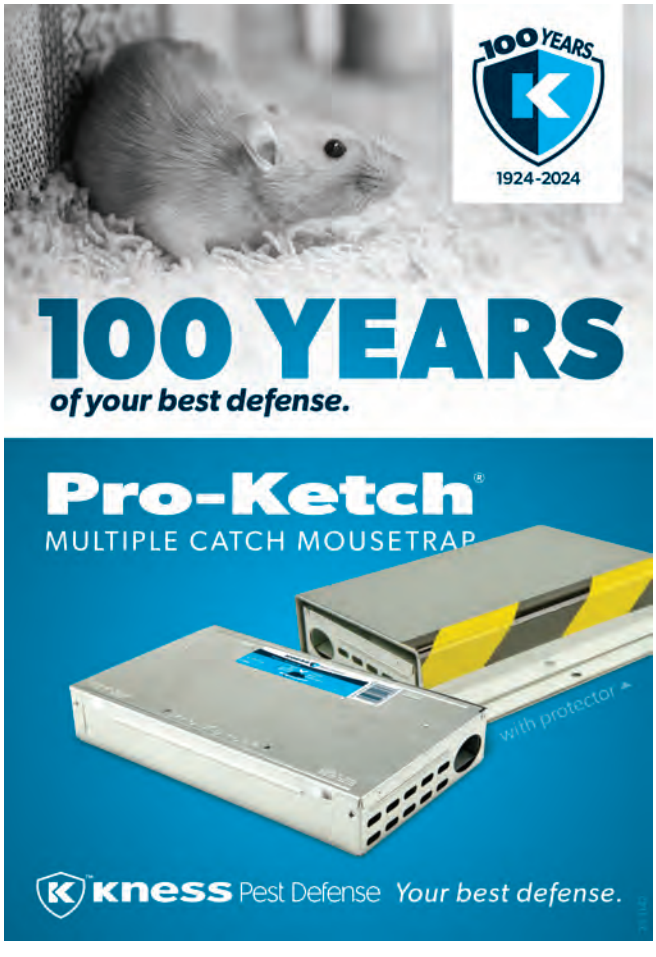
PPMA UPDATE. At the Professional Pest Management Alliance (PPMA) Board of Directors meeting, PPMA Executive Director Jim Fredericks said PPMA is focused on growing its membership and brainstorming new ways to attract more industry members into the fold. The organization has increased its investors from about 240 to 280 this year, he said, and it recently rolled out new supplier investor levels.

EMPOWERING YOUR TEAM. After a storied 20-year military career as a United States Air Force officer, mission commander, and special operations pilot, Lt. Col. Jason Harris has transitioned to the speaker circuit, where he shares his unique combat leadership lessons and expertise. At a Syngenta-sponsored session, Harris encouraged attendees to "empower and trust our people like



Traditional Hawaiian fire dancers.

BRAD HARBISON





"I sat down with one of the most top notch journalists that covers our space, Paul Giannamore, during National Pest Management Association's PestWorld 2023.

Paul asks a great combination of tough and direct questions, and his interviews always provide insight you rarely get anywhere else. Definitely worth the watch! Thank you to THE POTOMAC COMPANY for having me!"

-DAVID GIANNETTO, CEO OF WORKWAVE



IS YOUR COMPANY ON THIS LIST?

OFF THE RECORD
WITH PAUL GIANNAMORE

our businesses and our lives depend on it." Harris said leading service technicians, CSRs and others is similar to leading troops; in both situations, unproven teammates often are relied upon. In the Air Force, crews who serve on C-130 aircraft are typically, 17, 18 and 19 year olds and they work on 80 percent of the aircraft. "They're responsible for the mathematical calculations, for loading the aircraft, for chaining big stuff down in the back of the aircraft. They're responsible for the 60 Marines in the back and the 60 Army paratroopers at Fort Bragg." Harris said good leaders don't sit behind a desk, but rather involve themselves in the day-to-day operations as much as possible.



Blaine Kia emceed the Opening Ceremonies, sponsored by Envu.

@NPMA | DAN CHUNG

THE PASSION EFFECT. In a session sponsored by Corteva, Sebastian Terry, a best-selling author who coined the phrase, "The Passion Effect," shared his story. Terry received a phone call when he was 25 that changed his life. "One of my closest friends growing up, Chris, tragically died overnight," he said. "I remember sitting on the floor next to the phone and asking myself, 'Why am I here? What am I doing with my life?' I thought if Chris knew he only had 24





NPMA hosted a reception for Black Ownership Matters at the president's suite.

BRAD HARBISON

years on Earth, would he have loved the same way, or would he have changed anything?" From that moment on, Terry was determined to live life to the fullest. He grabbed a pen and paper and wrote 100 things that made him happy, realizing his goals and ambitions were in front of him. Terry encouraged others to do the same, creating a positive "ripple effect" for peak performance, well-being and a thriving workplace culture.

TAKING TIME TO RECOGNIZE. NPMA recognized industry leaders for their past and recent accomplishments. Larry and Alfie Treleven, longtime leaders of Sprague Pest Solutions, Tacoma, Wash., were presented with NPMA's 2023 Pinnacle Award. The award honors an individual(s) who has contributed not only to the success of the association, but to the industry over a lifetime or career. In addition to leading the fourth-generation firm, one of the largest commercial pest control businesses in the U.S., the Trelevens are active NPMA members who have served on numerous committees and have been instrumental in the growth and success of PPMA. Other award winners included:

- NPMA PWIPM Women of Excellence



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Award — Judy Dold, Rose Pest Solutions, Chicago

- NPMA Gives Award — Pest Management Systems (PMi), Greensboro, N.C.
- NPMA's Emerging Leader Award — AJ Treleven, Sprague Pest Solutions, Tacoma, Wash.
- ESA ACE Professional Award — Randy McCarty, ABC Home & Commercial Services, Austin, Texas
- NPMA Committee of the Year Award — The Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (IDE) Task Force
- NPMA Chair of the Year — Joel Nolasco, NuBorn Pest Control, Mamaroneck, N.Y. (chair of the Diversity Council)

For PCT's full PestWorld coverage, including video interviews, visit www.pctonline.com/tag/pestworld-23. **PCT**

The author is senior news editor of PCT.



WorkWave's David Giannetto (left) presented the NPMA Gives Award to Julie Tesh-Clark and Andrew Hicks of Pest Management Systems (PMi).

@NPMA | DAN CHUNG



A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT OF

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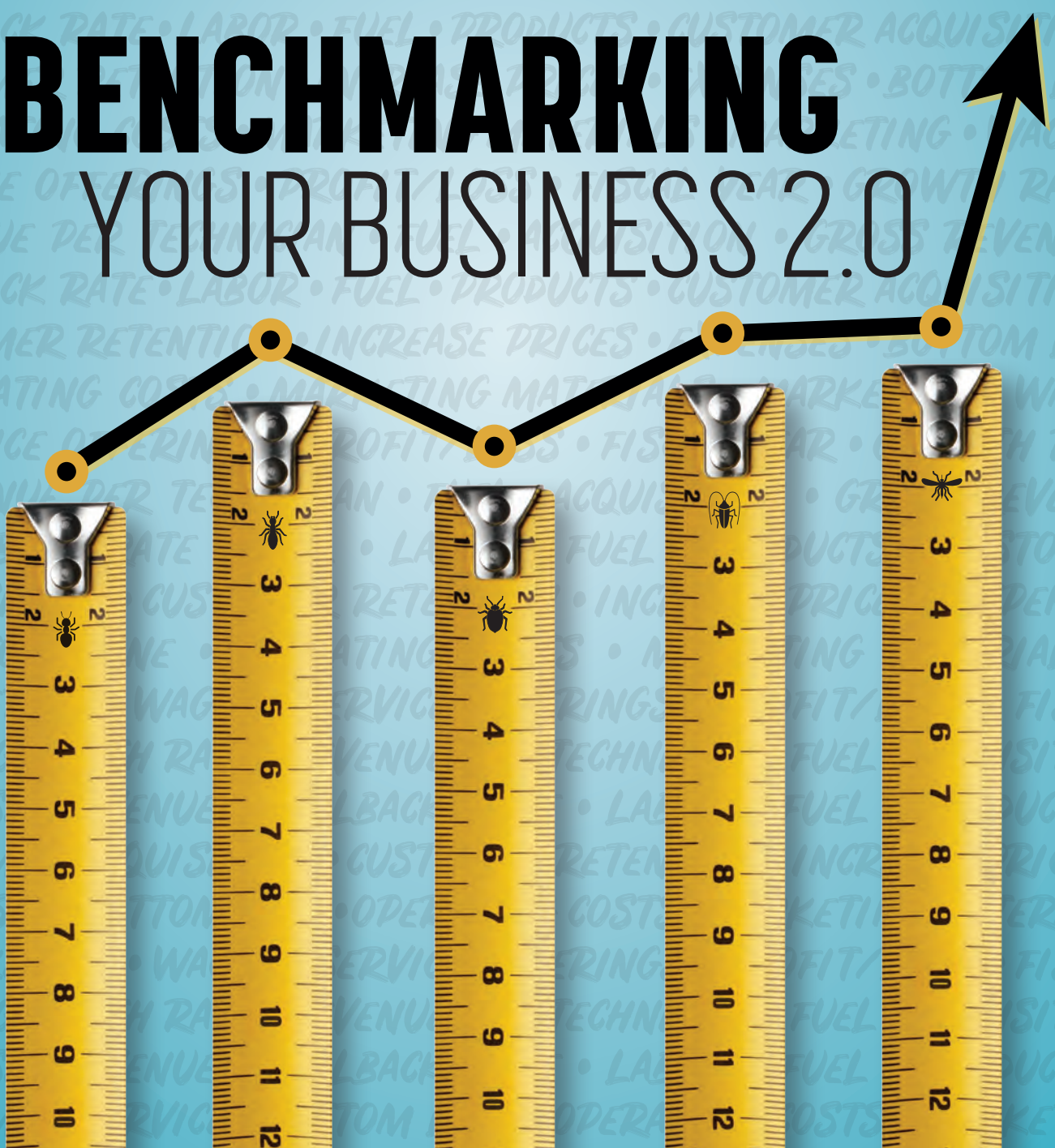
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We create chemistry

For 10 years, PCT and NPMA have teamed up to survey PMPs about industry trends. This year, we revisit our first study on profit margins, expense ratios and more. How does your firm measure up?

BENCHMARKING YOUR BUSINESS 2.0



A CLOSER LOOK AT THE METRICS THAT DRIVE THE INDUSTRY AND YOUR BUSINESS

For the past decade, BASF has proudly sponsored **ground-breaking industry research** in collaboration with PCT and the National Pest Management Association (NPMA). Our goal: to consistently provide you with **insightful data** to help you **successfully operate and grow your business.**



Barbara Aguiar

As such, we've explored the impact of management topics such as Workplace Diversity, Employee Recruitment and Retention, Managing Multiple Generations, and Wages and Benefits. Last year, we investigated a variety of business and financial trends to get a sense for What's Hot? What's Not? in the industry. Why? Well, post-pandemic, pest control companies were dealing with a lot of competing issues that were pulling resources in many different directions.

We thought it important to help prioritize major trends in technology, the workforce, sustainability, the merger and acquisition space, and more to help you focus your organization's time, money and brainpower. Because, really, why waste resources on achieving goals that might not pay off in the long run?

With that in mind, we think you'll find this year's research report, **Benchmarking Your Business 2.0,** especially useful as it provides **standard operating and expense ratios** for the industry. By comparing the industry's performance to your own company metrics, you can determine whether you're **doing better, worse or the same** as other pest control companies when it comes to **revenue, growth and profit margin.**

The report breaks down revenue percentages by general pest, termite and ancillary services. It provides **average customer callback and retention rates,** and the **typical cost to acquire new customers.**

You'll learn **which services offer the greatest potential** and **if you're spending too much in certain expense categories,** like wages, fuel and vehicles. Certainly, the high cost of doing business has been a hot topic of conversation this year at industry meetings, so you may find it helpful to see what your peers are spending in these areas.

We even compare this year's findings to the very first PCT-NPMA operating and expense ratio survey that we sponsored in the January 2015 issue of PCT. Interestingly, some of the more painful expenses that the industry is dealing with today account for a lesser percentage of spending than they did 10 years ago. Explore this in the following pages.

Even if your company operates with a different business model or offers specialized services compared to peers, we think you'll gain from the data in this report. Hopefully, it confirms that your plans are on track or helps you to redirect efforts to ensure that you stay on course.

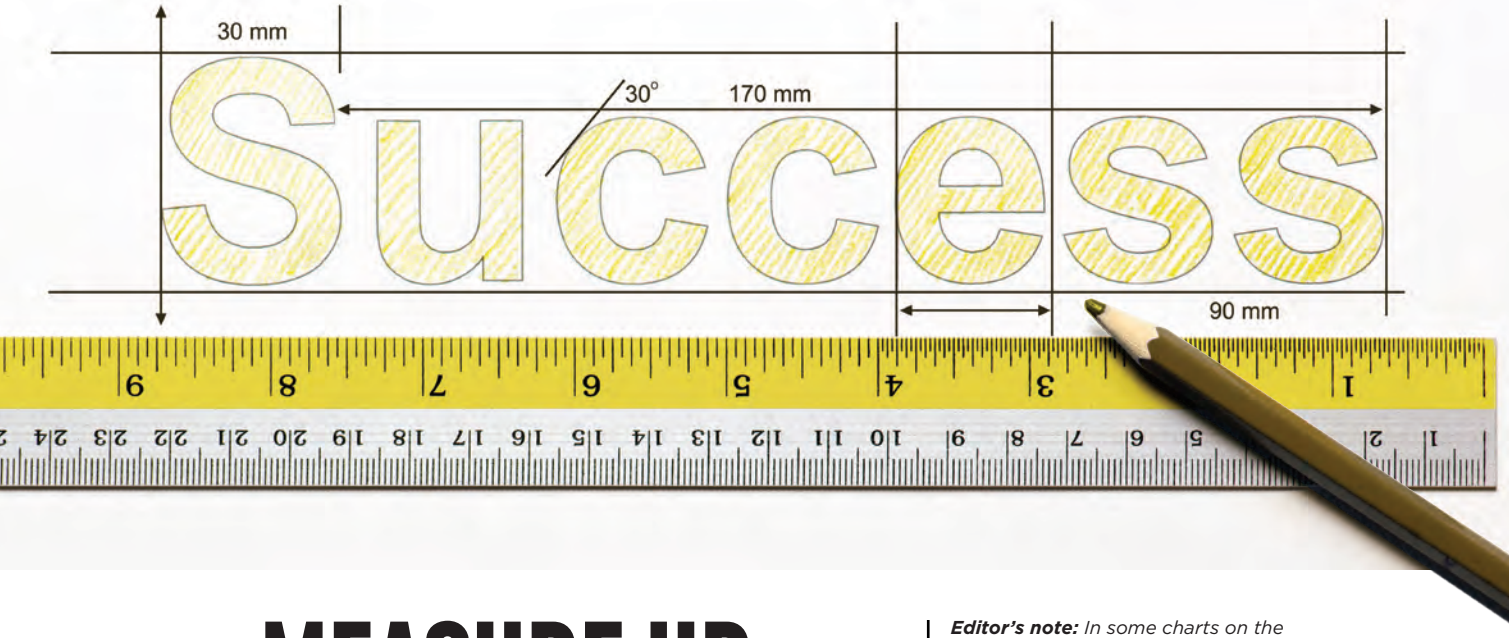
In the years ahead, you can **count on BASF** to be a **responsible steward** of the industry and to **listen to our customers.** We sincerely thank everyone who participated in this year's survey. Not only do the results benefit individual companies, but they help the teams at BASF, NPMA and PCT identify where we can add the most value to the industry. You also can depend on BASF to **continue to sponsor** research, training workshops, webinars and conferences that support your business and the industry overall.

It's difficult to forecast what the year ahead will bring. Much is in flux, from the economy and the coming presidential election to pending pesticide regulations. At BASF, however, we know that whatever comes our collective way, the pest management industry will adapt and thrive, becoming **stronger and more vital than ever.**

Here's to your success in 2024!

Barbara Aguiar

Barbara Aguiar
Director
BASF Professional & Specialty Solutions North America



MEASURE UP

How does your company's revenue growth and profit margin compare to competitors? Are you spending too much (or perhaps too little) on expenses like labor, materials, acquiring customers? Which services promise the greatest potential, and is your company poised to capitalize on them in the year ahead?

A new report from PCT and the National Pest Management Association updates industry standards for revenue growth, profit margins, expense ratios and more.

On the following pages, you'll learn how your company measures up to the industry today and over the past 10 years, since we also compare results to the industry's first operating ratio survey that we conducted in 2014 (January 2015 issue of PCT).

So, how does your company stack up?

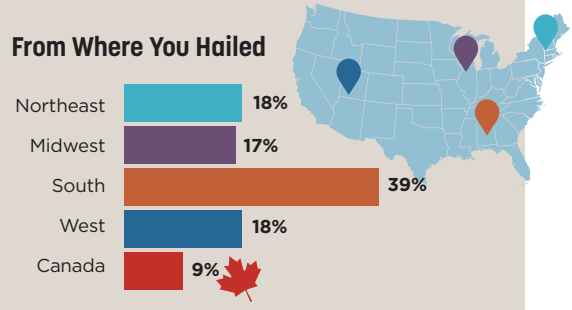
Editor's note: *In some charts on the following pages, we report on the median over the mean statistic, as the median is often a more stable value and isn't heavily influenced by high or low values/outliers.*

A median is the value that lies at the middle of a distribution: That is, 50 percent of the values are above it and 50 percent are below. It represents the "typical" response, and is not influenced by extreme values. For most distributions, the median will be either roughly equal to, or significantly smaller, than the mean. Medians for grouped data are calculated by locating the group which contains the 50th percentile, then interpolating between the lower and upper bounds to estimate the precise value.

ABOUT THE REPORT

The 2023 PCT and NPMA Business Profile and Operating Ratio survey was sponsored by BASF and compiled by Readex Research, an independent research firm in Stillwater, Minn. A sample of 11,671 pest control company owners, operators and presidents in the U.S. and Canada was systematically selected from PCT and NPMA databases. Data was collected from 596 respondents — a 5 percent response rate — via online survey from Sept. 18-Oct. 2, 2023. The margin of error for percentages based on the 596 usable responses is plus or minus 3.9 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. Charts may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

From Where You Hailed



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 596



A GOOD YEAR FOR MAKING MONEY

This past fiscal year was a good one for most pest management companies.

The typical company experienced a 13 percent increase in total gross revenue, found the 2023 PCT-NPMA business profile and operating ratio survey. Some companies surpassed that.

"It's been a monster run for us," reported Jim Carnelli, vice president of pest control at Green Pest Solutions, West Chester, Pa. "Last year was a year focused on our people, customers and change."

The company, which operates in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, implemented significant changes in several areas to drive growth.

"We've been doing a lot here to scale and prepare the business for where we want to take it," said Carnelli.

Likewise, All U Need Pest Control, Fort Myers, Fla., saw revenue jump.

"Our growth has been fairly remarkable," said Operations Director Kyle Selbach. "We've been basically doubling year over year."

The company was making about $300,000 in revenue when it was acquired by a new owner in 2017. Last year, it joined the PCT Top 100 list, coming in at No. 94 with $8.3 million in revenue.

According to the PCT-NPMA survey, the typical pest company in the U.S. and Canada had total gross revenue of $310,000 with a profit margin of 19 percent.

MAKING ADJUSTMENTS. To improve profit margin over the past three years, All-American Pest Control, Nashville, Tenn., eliminated "anything we do that truly doesn't matter" to customers or employees, said President Erin Richardson.

As well, it implemented a hybrid pay plan for the service team that uses a high hourly rate as a draw against commission, and it simplified, automated and outsourced administrative work so the inside sales team could spend more time working with new and existing customers.

These changes also helped the company boost average gross revenue per technician by 54 percent, said Richardson. The typical company's gross revenue per technician averaged $125,000, found the survey.

"Routing efficiency, team hustle and customer retention have a remarkable, positive impact on all aspects of a pest control business," added Richardson.

Money, Money, Money

In the most recently completed fiscal year, typical companies reported (median values):

$310,000 total gross revenue	**13%** growth rate for total gross revenue
19% overall profit margin	**$125,000** average gross revenue per technician

Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 596

A RISING TIDE



The revenue threshold for attaining PCT Top 100 status has risen steadily over the years. In 2002, pest control companies needed at least $2.6 million to make the list. In 2023, that number was $7.8 million.

Some of this growth was due to market expansion — an increase in the number of consumers willing to buy professional pest control services — thanks, in part, to the efforts of the Professional Pest Management Alliance (PPMA) over the past 25 years.

According to PPMA's 2021 Pest Control Attitudes & Usage Survey, 58 percent of homeowners held positive views of the professional pest control industry, and for those with regular recurring service, that number jumped to 82 percent. Also, 84 percent of consumers agreed that pest control professionals play an important role in protecting public health.

PPMA is supported through voluntary investments from pest control companies and the supplier community. These include pledges and subscriptions.

"We encourage every business, no matter what the size, to get connected with PPMA and contribute to our efforts to increase consumer awareness and grow your business," said Jim Fredericks, PPMA's executive director.



A CLOSER LOOK AT SPECIFIC SERVICES

Revenue for general pest control leads the way for most companies. Here's how it stacks up compared to other services.

Over the past 10 years, general pest control services became a more significant source of revenue for pest control companies.

At a typical company, these services accounted for 85 percent of total gross revenue in the past fiscal year, up from 80 percent in 2014. Termite control services generated 5 percent of total gross revenue in 2023 and 2014. This data is based on the median (or "typical") response. (See further explanation on page 29.)

GENERAL PEST CONTROL. General pest control was the most profitable and fastest-growing service category.

According to the 2023 PCT-NPMA survey, gross revenue for general pest control services grew 17 percent last year at the typical pest control company. More than half — 56 percent — of PMPs said this segment of the business was more profitable year over year.

Under the general pest umbrella, "other" services — such as interior and exterior treatments to control ants, cockroaches, seasonal invaders, etc. — generated 60.6 percent of general pest gross revenue on average.

Luke Rambo, president, Rambo Total Pest Control, Puyallup, Wash., had more calls for ants and stinging insects last year. "That's driven some growth this year, definitely," he said.

Rodent control, however, is what has propelled the company's growth since it was founded 17 years ago. "Traditionally, 45 percent of our entire revenue is based on rodent control," said Rambo.

On average, rodent control accounted for 21.4 percent of general pest control gross revenue at companies, up from 19.4 percent in 2014, found the PCT-NPMA survey.

Rambo expected general pest revenue at his company to increase in 2024. Like other PMPs interviewed for this article, he recently changed from offering an extensive menu of *a la carte* pest services to fewer, more-inclusive packages. Rambo now offers insect control, rodent control and a combo insect-rodent control program.

"I think that's going to drive our growth considerably," said Rambo. So far, the new approach has been well received by customers. "It's quicker to communicate over the phone, it's quicker to communicate in person, and people are very much

Then & Now

Percentage of total gross revenue generated from service types at a typical pest control company (median values):

	2023	2014
General pest control (including mosquito control, bed bug control, rodents, etc.)	85%	80%
Termite control	5%	5%

Source: Readex Research 2023, 2014

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General Pest Was More Profitable

Compared with the prior year, was your company's general pest control business more profitable, equally profitable or less profitable in its most recently completed fiscal year?

- more profitable **56%**
- equally profitable **33%**
- less profitable **11%**

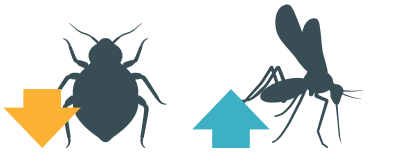
Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 505

Bed Bug Revenue Down, Mosquito Up

The average percentage of general pest control gross revenue (excluding termite control) generated from each service area:

	2023	2014
other general pest control	60.6%	64.1%
rodent control	21.4%	19.4%
bed bug control	9.6%	13.2%
mosquito control	8.4%	3.3%

Source: Readex Research 2023, 2014



responding positively to it," he said.

Bed bug control at Rambo Total Pest Control remains a separate service and is not commonly requested.

Industry wide, bed bug control revenue declined over the past 10 years. In 2023, it accounted for an average 9.6 percent of general pest control gross revenue, down from 13.2 percent in 2014.

Mosquito control, on the other hand, saw a big gain. It made up an average 8.4 percent of general pest control gross revenue last year, an increase from 3.3 percent.

TERMITE CONTROL. Gross revenue for termite control services grew 12 percent at the typical pest control company in the last fiscal year, found the PCT-NPMA survey. Forty-five percent of PMPs said this service category was equally profitable year over year.

Post-construction termite control remained the biggest money maker, generating 52.3 percent of termite gross revenue on average. Inspections for termites and wood-destroying organisms produced 16.2 percent of gross revenue, and renewals made up 14.8 percent.

Scott Lewis, president, Lewis Pest Control, Thomasville, Ala., expected his termite renewal revenue and profit margins to increase in 2024 and beyond. The company recently converted all of its termite customers from liquid termiticide treatments to baiting systems, a process that took five years to complete.

"It was an expensive conversion," said Lewis. "But we also raised up the cost of the renewals to cover that expense."

Termite revenue was down at DA Exterminating, New Orleans. Vice President Chris Caire said the decline was tied to the "insurance crisis" affecting his region.

"People have gotten socked with big, big percentage increases on their homeowner's [insurance premiums]. I think they're having to watch their money more because of the increased insurance costs" and as a result, they held off on renewing or purchasing preventive termite treatment, he said.

"The downturn in new termite treatments, luckily for us, is offset by a lot more pest control work," said Caire.

Historically, 60 percent of DA Exterminating revenue has come from termite work, 40 percent from general pest. Total revenue growth at the company was flat in 2023, but that followed "our best year ever" in 2022, said Caire.

One termite service that increased as a percentage of revenue over the past 10 years was pre-construction termite work. According to the PCT-NPMA survey, it generated 10.4 percent of termite control gross revenue on average, up from 8.3 percent in 2014.

OTHER SERVICES. Pest control companies have long offered add-on or ancillary services to boost revenue, especially in markets with limited territory or a finite number of general pest and termite customers.

That's true for Lewis Pest Control. "We're in a small market area. Thomasville, Ala., has 5,000 people, so we've diversified our services," said Lewis.

The company has a growing construction division that serves municipal and commercial clients. It also specializes in providing pest control to local paper mills that make food grade packaging.

"Once you're in an industrial site and they trust you, there's all sorts of various services we can do," said Lewis.

This includes lawn maintenance and weed control, clearing spider webs in warehouses and sweeping parking lots. Lewis said add-on service revenue for industrial clients has "grown substantially"

Pre-Construction $ Increased

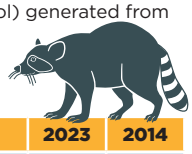
The average percentage of termite control gross revenue generated from each service area in the most recently completed fiscal year:

	2023	2014
termite control — post-construction	52.3%	53.7%
termite/wood-destroying organism (WDO) inspections	16.2%	17.9%
termite/wood-destroying organism (WDO) renewals	14.8%	15.1%
termite control — pre-construction	10.4%	8.3%
other termite control	6.4%	5.1%

Source: Readex Research 2023, 2014

Wildlife & Lawn are $ Add-Ons

The average percentage of ancillary services gross revenue (excluding termite and general pest control) generated from each service area in the most recently completed fiscal year:



	2023	2014
wildlife control	36.9%	35.1%
lawn & ornamental	23.2%	21.2%
handyman services	8.6%	8.3%
additional service offerings (deck/pool cleaning, insulation, Christmas lights, etc.)	7.5%	9.1%
fumigation	5.6%	6.4%
other	18.2%	19.9%

Source: Readex Research 2023, 2014

and he expected this to continue in 2024.

Wildlife control helped CT Pest Solutions, Naugatuck, Conn., grow total company revenue by 25 percent. Not many companies in the service area offer wildlife control. "It requires a lot," including a capital investment for specialty equipment and employees with specialized skills, said CEO King Jones III.

"There's a huge learning curve with it, especially if you're pulling people from pest control. Not every pest control person is ideal to do specialty services," Jones explained. "You're searching for a different type of candidate, different skills."

Another challenge: Wildlife service typically doesn't generate recurring revenue. That's why CT Pest Solutions offers a wildlife renewal program. Instead of providing a long service warranty, the company performs annual wildlife inspections for a fee, similar to termite renewals. Jones said the recurring program gives customers peace of mind knowing their homes remain secure and protected. "There's definitely a demand for it," he said.

According to the PCT-NPMA survey, wildlife control on average generated 36.9 percent of ancillary service gross revenue last year, while lawn and ornamental service accounted for 23.2 percent. These service percentages increased modestly from 2014.



THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS

It takes money to make money. But in 2023, it took a little bit more money, according to PMPs.

Everything needed to run a pest control business felt like it was more expensive last year, said PMPs in follow-up interviews. Topping the list in 2023 was wages.

"That's been a ginormous increase in expenses for us," said Luke Rambo, Rambo Total Pest Control. Over the last three years, he has raised starting wages by about 30 percent, and then he had to adjust existing employees' wages to keep pace. "It kind of cascades," he said of the overall hit to the business.

Paying good wages helped All U Need Pest Control retain employees and recruit talent, but that impacted the bottom line. "We're paying our employees well, so obviously you're going to see that in the compensation line of a P&L statement," said Kyle Selbach.

On average, wages, salaries and bonuses accounted for 32.4 percent of overall company expenses, found the PCT-NPMA 2023 business profile and operating ratio survey. Surprisingly, this was less than the 34.2 percent they accounted for in 2014.

Material and supply expenses increased considerably over the past 10 years — 19 percent last fiscal year versus 15.6 percent in 2014.

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At CT Pest Solutions, the financial impact of higher material costs was most acute during the pandemic when the supply chain was broken. This past year, service vehicle expenses were most felt by the company, said King Jones III.

Industry wide, vehicle expenses accounted for 14 percent of company expenses on average.

Securing new service vehicles was a challenge for All U Need Pest Control. A few years ago, the company paid $18,500 for a vehicle outfitted with wraps and tanks; today that vehicle costs $42,000. "We're ordering 10, 15 at a time, so you can imagine that's a huge hit to the bank account," said Kyle Selbach.

Chris Caire, DA Exterminating, agreed. "The cost of new trucks has gone up, so we're hanging on to them a little longer and fixing them. We're buying lightly used trucks because the price of vehicles has really shot up." Adding salt to the wound: The cost of auto insurance increased 17 percent, said Caire.

Rising fuel cost was a concern for Lewis Pest Control. "When you expect to pay 2 to 3 percent of your gross revenue in fuel costs, and then it gets up to 4 or 5 percent, it starts to really cut into your bottom line. Fuel is now a bigger expense than chemicals for doing household pest control," said Scott Lewis of the company's operating ratios.

Caleb Fabry, president, Town & Country Pest Solutions, Rochester, N.Y., agreed fuel costs were "crazy" expensive and unpredictable. Also "out of control" was insurance in general — for vehicles, property and liability. "My mind is just blown every year to see [the amount of money] that goes out the door for a just-in-case situation," he said.

Jason Carpenter, CEO, Environmental Pest Management, Columbus, Ohio, began preparing for inflation and higher expenses in 2021. He held discussions with long-time vendors that provide insurance, marketing support, fleet management and bookkeeping.

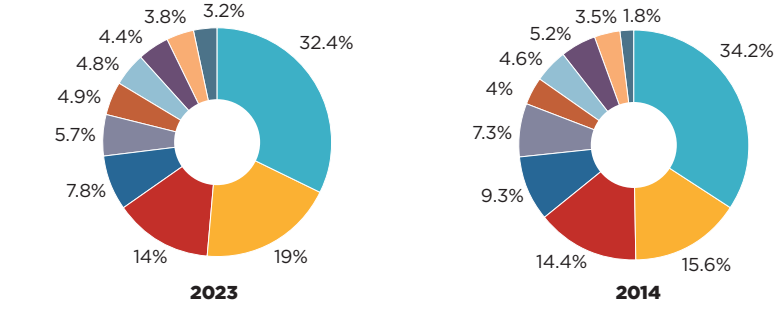
He didn't ask them to cut prices, per se; rather, he wanted to make sure he was getting everything he was paying for, and more. "I want to partner with somebody who's giving me good value for my money," Carpenter explained.

He also explored inefficiencies at the company, moving some in-person meetings to video meetings, investing in technology to optimize routes and washing vehicles every two weeks instead of weekly. That alone saved each technician 30 minutes a week. Before, "we were spending a lot of money on our guys just washing our trucks," he said.



Labor and Material = Top Expenses

The average percentage of overall company expenses distributed within each of the following categories:



- wages/salaries/bonuses
- material/supply expenses (chemical, equipment)
- vehicle expenses (fuel, maintenance/repairs, insurance, purchases/leases)
- operating expenses (training, travel, acquisitions, overhead, liability insurance)
- marketing/advertising expenses (digital and traditional ads, website)
- administrative expenses (office supplies, bankcard fees, professional services)
- building expenses (rent, taxes, repairs/maintenance, property insurance)
- other employee expenses (benefits, worker's comp, etc., but NOT training)
- technology expenses (software, hardware, computers, tablets, cellphones)
- other

Source: Readex Research 2023, 2014



ONLY FOR A PRICE



10%
TYPICAL AVERAGE PRICE INCREASE FOR SERVICES

Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 446

According to the PCT-NPMA 2023 business profile and operating ratio survey, 75 percent of PMPs said their company increased service prices in the last fiscal year. The typical average price increase was 10 percent.

Green Pest Solutions raised prices 8 percent. Customers weren't shocked by the $3.33 increase to their monthly bill, said Jim Carnelli. Last year, the company began billing monthly instead of quarterly, which spread out the price of service and lowered the amount due on each bill. Monthly bills are "more palatable" to customers and have a "subscription-based feel" that appeals to them, he said.

Since 2020, All U Need Pest Control has raised prices five times for new customers and once for longer-term customers, with little pushback. "No one's really said anything," said Kyle Selbach. People already are paying more for electricity, water, cable and phone service. Pest control companies "shouldn't be scared" of raising prices, as well, he said.

Luke Rambo, Rambo Total Pest Control, finally agreed to raise prices. "We held off for a long time until we realized that's just not fiscally responsible to do that. We have to raise rates."

At the same time, he took steps to maximize productivity and employee accountability, such as improving routing and scheduling to reduce windshield time and fuel expenses.

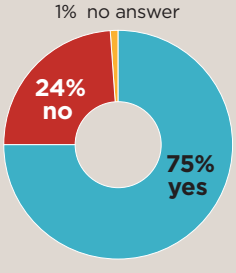
This month, Environmental Pest Management, which specializes in pest control for multi-family housing, instituted an annual 3 percent price increase in its contracts, which typically cover a two- to four-year period.

"It's not an egregious amount. It's well within the inflation percentage," said Jason Carpenter of the increase.

All-American Pest Control has increased prices annually for the past 20-plus years. "Increasing pricing consistently is like eating vegetables — just do it," advised Erin Richardson. •

Most Raised Prices

Did your company increase prices for services in the most recently completed fiscal year?



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 596

CALLBACKS: A COST OR OPPORTUNITY?



3%
typical company's average callback rate for all services

$57 cost of a callback or reservice for a typical company

Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 596

Callbacks can destroy profit margins. "It's hands down the reason why your profits will shrink," said Kyle Selbach, All U Need Pest Control. This is why the company closely tracks re-service percentages.

The average callback rate across services for a typical pest control company was 3 percent, found the PCT-NPMA survey. The cost of each re-service? About $57, which included labor, fuel and product expenses.

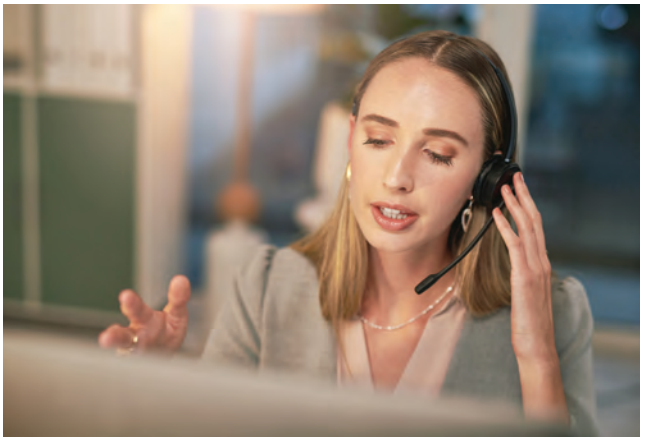
Jim Carnelli, Green Pest Solutions, said re-services were "a necessary part of our commitment to our customers," especially those on service programs. Stinging insects are especially difficult to prevent on properties. "Customers see that it's covered under your program, and they're going to call you back out," he explained.

In follow-up interviews, PMPs said companies reduced re-service rates by improving customer communication and employee training, implementing quality assurance programs and rotating products to reduce insecticide resistance. When quarterly customers requested service within a few weeks of a regularly scheduled visit, treatment was moved up sooner instead of sending a technician to the property twice.

"Sometimes those extra service calls or callbacks, that's the opportunity to get in front of the customer and have a conversation," reminded Luke Rambo, Rambo Total Pest Control. By building stronger relationships, clients put a face to the service, which ultimately helps to retain them.

"Callbacks are part of the game," he said. •

ACQUIRING A CUSTOMER WAS EXPENSIVE



Landing a new pest control customer was a costly undertaking this past year.

The greatest number of PMPs reporting — 22 percent — said their companies spent $100 or more to acquire a customer, found the PCT-NPMA 2023 business profile and operating ratio survey. The typical pest control company spent $63.

"Our customer acquisition cost in 2023 has gone up dramatically," said Jim Carnelli, Green Pest Solutions. This was mostly due to higher digital lead costs, which he said went "though the roof."

To acquire a residential customer, the fast-growing company spent about $324, which included marketing costs, sales labor and commissions, he said.

High acquisition costs made it important to convert and retain customers. "When a customer is calling in, just the phone call alone could cost you anywhere from $80 to $125 before you pay commissions. You better be sure that you're taking every single phone call extremely seriously," said Kyle Selbach, All U Need Pest Control.

93% typical company's average customer retention rate for all services

Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 596

When customers call the company to cancel, they're transferred to retention specialists, who "are trying to find any avenue, whether it's service, whether it's cost, whether it's changing programs," to dissuade them from leaving, said Selbach.

The company actively listens and tracks why customers want to discontinue service. The biggest reason is they're relocating; the second is financial, for which the company is on "high alert" due to rising inflation. "We have our defense mechanisms up," said Selbach.

The average customer retention rate for all services at a typical pest control company was 93 percent, found the survey.

Rambo Total Pest Control saw customer retention increase after it moved from an *a la carte* service menu to three comprehensive service programs. Customers no longer feel the need to shop for other pest services (since most are now included), and they don't have visible spider webs and wasp nests, which door-to-door salespeople use as a motivator to get customers to switch service providers, he explained.

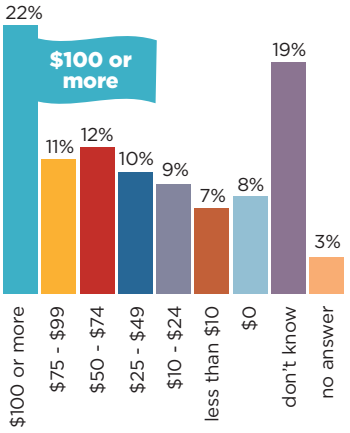
All-American Pest Control has systems to maximize leads, including those that don't result in an immediate sale. "Staying in touch with leads that didn't convert, reaching back out to canceled customers and making offers to single service customers is an effective way to build route density, grow sales and increase marketing and sales efficiency," said Erin Richardson.

CT Pest Solutions only takes on clients that match its business model and current capabilities. "Not every account is a good fit," reminded King Jones III. Some accounts "may be more of a burden or you may actually lose money" if employees can't serve them efficiently, he said.

In 2023, single-family homes accounted for 70 percent of customers for the typical pest control company. Commercial facilities made up 15 percent and multi-family housing was 5 percent.

A Big-Ticket Expense

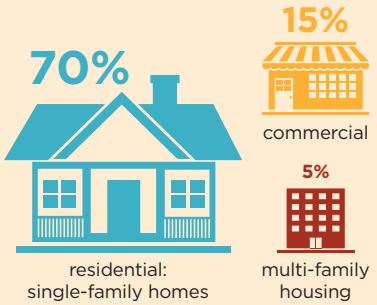
What was the average cost of a customer acquisition at your company in the most recently completed fiscal year?



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 596

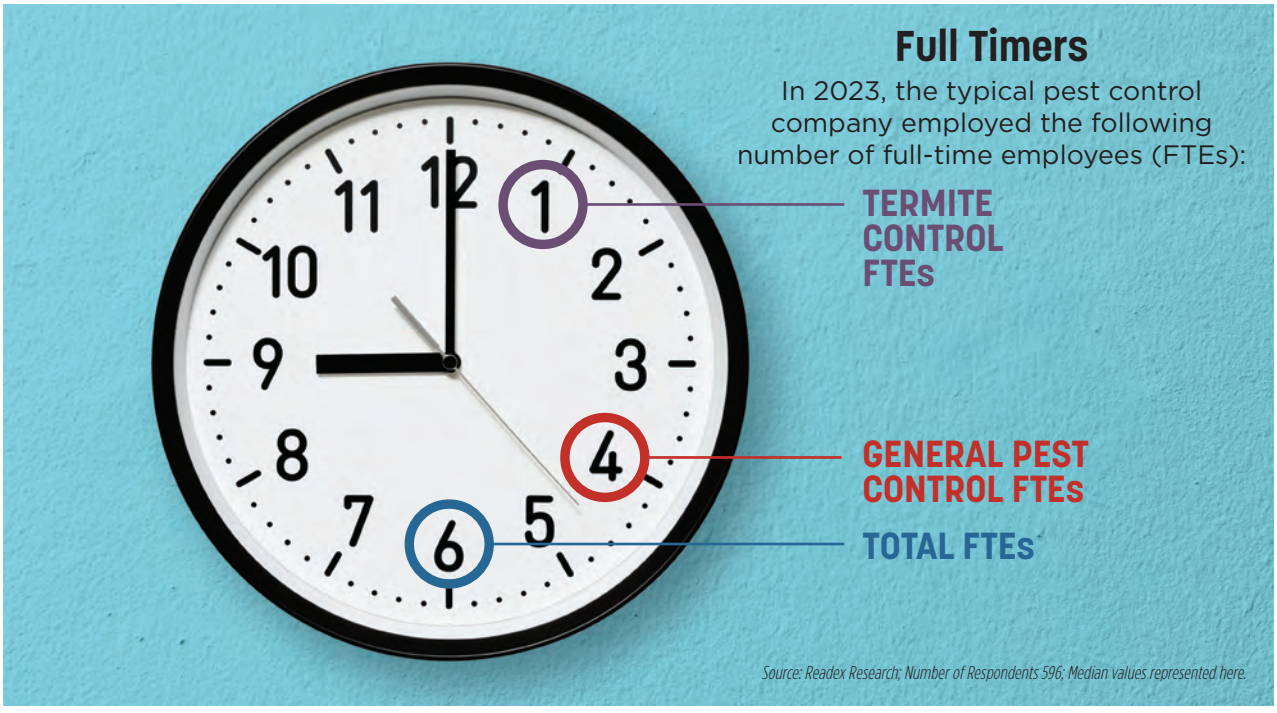
Residential Ruled

In 2023, the typical pest control company had the following types of clients (median values):



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 596

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A GROWING NEED FOR EMPLOYEES

Employees make your company tick. Here's how some PMPs are working on retaining and attracting them.

Pest control companies became bigger employers in the labor market over the past decade.

In 2023, the typical pest control company had six full-time employees (FTEs), of which four worked in general pest control and one worked in termite control, found the PCT-NPMA 2023 operating ratio survey.

In 2014, by comparison, the typical pest control company had four FTEs working in these service categories. Large pest control companies skewed the averages* higher: 39.1 total FTEs with 29.5 working in general pest and 9.7 in termite control.

Technicians accounted for the largest employee group at the typical company with two FTEs. Finding good employees has long been the bane of pest control companies. The pandemic only made it worse for some companies.

"Business is good" but "it's been a little bit of a challenge coming out of COVID and finding the right people and having them want to spend their career here," admitted Luke Rambo, Rambo Total Pest Control.

That made it essential to retain current employees. Advance Termite & Pest Control, Hutchinson, Kan., chose to "double down" on this front, said Vice President Jeff Wells. "Guys who do good work, we don't want to lose them," he said.

The company took a "kitchen sink approach" to retaining personnel. It increased wages, made sure benefits were competitive, increased paid time off and offered employees the use of a corporate golf membership. "We're trying to do everything we can" to keep them happy, said Wells.

At Town & Country Pest Solutions, improved training and education boosted employee confidence and made them more effective at solving pest issues and selling additional services. That helped retain workers, as well as positioned the company for strong growth in 2024.

"A lot of it is the culture of our company and getting buy-in from everybody to maximize our potential as we meet customers and are able to add value to everything we do," said Caleb Fabry.

All U Need Pest Control adheres to "an employee-first model," said Kyle Selbach. "We do everything in our power to care for and listen to our employees. If they're happy, that attitude is going to trickle down to our customers."

Likewise, CT Pest Solutions actively seeks employee ideas for improvement. "We listen and try to see if we can integrate some of those things to be more effective, more efficient," said King Jones III. "They have their finger on the pulse, and they want to be more efficient because being more productive for them means a bigger paycheck."

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***EDITOR'S NOTE:** In 2014, Readex received responses from two companies that were outside the standard distribution of all other data received. These responses were retained, but the numeric values were reduced. By reducing the values, it keeps visibility on two companies having higher employee counts but brings stability to the mean and standard error calculations. This was agreed upon by PCT and NPMA.



EYES FORWARD

In follow-up interviews, most PMPs said they expected revenue at their companies to grow in 2024.

Interior and exterior general pest control was cited by 36 percent of PMPs as the top service to help achieve future growth, found the PCT-NPMA 2023 business profile and operating ratio survey.

PMPs said a number of issues, however, could dim growth prospects. These included economic factors like rising inflation, interest rates and insurance costs, which affect both customers and companies. Other issues cited were pending federal and state regulations tied to pesticide preemption and rodenticides, and continued labor challenges.

Scott Lewis, Lewis Pest Control, didn't expect it to get any easier in the year ahead to hire employees who meet NPMA QualityPro standards. "It's a constant battle, and I don't see anything happening to change that," he said.

Lewis used to have people stop him in the street to inquire about employment. "If I lost someone, I could just make a call. We don't have that luxury anymore," he said. He recently hired a human resources person to help him recruit candidates. He's also acquired companies just to gain the talent.

Artificial intelligence (AI) could potentially help by reducing the time it takes to perform mundane, time-consuming office tasks, PMPs said.

"I think everyone needs to have a really strong outlook on AI. I think that is about to revolutionize the potential for the workforce," said Kyle Selbach, All U Need Pest Control.

Future Growth Opportunity

In your opinion, what one service offering at your company offers the greatest opportunity for growth over the next three years?

general pest control: interior and exterior	36%
general pest control: exterior perimeter only	11%
termite control	10%
mosquito control	10%
rodent control	9%
bed bug control	7%
wildlife control	4%
lawn and ornamental	3%
handyman services	1%
insulation	1%
retail store / product sales	1%
crawlspace encapsulation	1%
moisture control	1%
other	4%
no answer	2%

Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 596

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Tropicare Termite and Pest Control



"We really feel great about our choice to merge with the Arrow family. Their team impressed us. We know we made the right decision for our employees. Arrow really cares about how customers and employees are treated, and those were the two things we were really concerned about when we started to think about a sale. We are so happy to be able to offer our long-time customers an expanded range of services."

Marty Gagnon
Tropicare Termite and Pest Control
Land O'Lakes, FL

Falcon Lawn & Pest



"We first met Emily (Emily Thomas Kendrick, CEO of Arrow) in the 1990's, and we had talked with other members of the Arrow management team over the years. We always believed they would be the best fit for our employees, so this is a dream come true for us. Arrow is dedicated to hiring, training and retaining the best people, and we are so happy that this experienced team we've built over the years will be a part of the Arrow culture and have additional opportunities for growth."

Louis Witherington
Falcon Lawn & Pest
Orlando and Wildwood, FL

Boltin Pest Control



"We feel very fortunate to have connected with Arrow. We've talked to many companies over the years, and we know Arrow will take the best care of our employees due to their very strong family culture. They have greater opportunities for growth. After meeting Emily (Emily Thomas Kendrick, CEO of Arrow) and her team during the diligence phase, we knew we were selecting the right company."

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rmation

There are **five market forces** shaping today's distribution landscape. PCT analyzes what's at work and how these issues affect pest management professionals.

By Donna DeFranco

Distributors play a variety of critical roles in the pest management industry. They are the conduit between manufacturers and PMPs, the experts in product selection and application, and the partners dedicated to helping their customers' businesses grow — from one truck to 10, 10 to 50, 50 to 100 and beyond. Layer in details like in-person and on-demand educational programs and technology tools that inform decisions and drive efficiencies, and it's easy to see why PMPs rely so strongly on their distributors for support and stability.

Yet, despite their critical role in the industry, distribution companies are not immune from market headwinds. In the pandemic, they — like virtually every other business in the country — were challenged by shutdowns and other logistical issues. Supply chain disruptions were particularly grievous, affecting product availability, lead times and costs, which are all so important to distributors' customers.

Today's market challenges aren't as daunting for distributors as they were a couple of years ago. Why? Much like the PMPs who are their customers, they are approaching challenges with renewed optimism, insight and preparedness. Distributors are standing strong in the new normal, facing down issues related to the supply chain, inflation, labor, consolidation and competition. What follows are five ways market forces are shaping the pest management industry distribution landscape.

1 Supply Chain Snafus Wane

The global surge of supply chain disruptions in 2021 and 2022 slowed significantly in 2023, according to distributors. Those PCT spoke with agreed that products are moving through the chain more freely.

"We're in a much better spot today than we were a year ago," said Karl Kisner, vice president, marketing and supplier relations, Veseris. "There are a few categories of products that continue to be a bit more difficult. Gel baits are an example. Whether suppliers are having trouble getting active ingredients or the materials for the plastic parts themselves, they have faced delays throughout their channels. Getting PBO products can still be challenging as well. Overall, though, beyond certain pockets of products, we're seeing improvement in product availability and lead times."

Forshaw CEO Tom Forshaw IV said that supply chain challenges peaked for his company from Q2 2021 through Q3 2022. Taking a strategic approach to resolving or managing these issues, his leadership team focused on robust demand planning. Their work resulted in strategies for supporting their customers in the moment, as well as a long-term strategy for ensuring agility and resilience in their supply chain to mitigate risks related to any future unforeseen disruptions.



"The upheavals in the global supply chain highlighted the necessity of accurately forecasting shifts in customer behavior and demand patterns," said Forshaw. "We became the critical link between our customer information and our manufacturing supply partners. By sharing that information, we were able to optimize inventory management, reduce stockouts, improve fill rates, reduce lead times and ultimately enhance our ability to deliver high levels of customer service to our partners."

In addition to new strategic initiatives, distributors are confident that their time-tested communication strengths position them to navigate current and future supply chain disruptions. Rachel Mohorn, marketing director, Heritage Professional Products Group, said that communication was key to supporting PMP customers through the recent challenges. "It was no surprise to anyone that there were product shortages at times, so we just made sure we kept in close communication with all of our customers. We alerted them to potential shortages and informed them of options we had on hand. Of course there were going to be snafus, but we worked through them together."



2 Inflation Continues to Push Prices

U.S. inflation hit a 40-year peak in June 2022, at 9.1 percent, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Although the pace slowed over the next 12 months, hovering around 3 percent in the summer of 2023, consumers and businesses alike have felt the pain. Distributors are no different, as they have been pressured to raise their own prices in response to market-driven hikes by manufacturers and suppliers. Before passing those costs along to their PMP partners, however, many of them conducted internal analyses to see how they could minimize the negative impacts.

"Significant inflation causes any company to look at their prices and how they will need to be adjusted. It should also be a trigger to look at efficiency, because efficiency is one good way to combat inflation," said David Helt, president, Target Specialty Products. "Faced with rising prices on products, property, fuel, labor, etc., we looked at where we could tighten up our business practices, optimize expense utilization and improve productivity."

Kevin Laycock, director, category management, SiteOne, explained that large distributors also have an advantage in being able to buy in large quantities to get ahead of price increases. "By virtue of our scale, SiteOne was able to increase our safety stocks when supply chain issues and inflation threatened to put our customers in an adverse position. We can't prevent price increases, of course, but if we can prolong the time it takes for those inflationary impacts to hit our PMP partners, we can remove some of the uncertainty for them

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and give them an opportunity to plan."

An area of continuing uncertainty for distributors is freight and logistics. "Freight costs have been challenging over the past year," said Kisner. "Third-party carriers have all raised their prices in response to high fuel costs and demand. The recent threat of the UPS strike was averted, but then Yellow announced they were going out of business. There's a trickle effect now: Fewer trucks are on the road, and those that *are* on the road are getting busier. It's been more challenging to get products to the customer efficiently and at a reasonable price."

Kisner said he expects prices, for not just freight but also products, to continue rising. "Everything I'm hearing at this point is that nothing is slowing down. We're not seeing as many increases as we did last year, but we are seeing increases. We'll see what 2024 brings."



3 The Labor Shortage Hits, Well, Everyone

No matter the industry, no matter the market, good employees are hard to find. The pandemic changed workers' minds about a lot of things, beginning with how much they should be earning, where they should be allowed to work from and what actually constitutes a workday. These new attitudes are making it tougher for distributors, as well as their PMP partners, to recruit top-notch talent.

"Things were very difficult from late 2021 through 2022. Staffing was a big issue, particularly on the warehousing side of the business. Drivers were hard to come by and labor rates were highly inflated," said Helt. "In the past six months, though, we've been seeing improvements in the availability, interest and quality of candidates. We're not back to pre-COVID levels yet, but it seems the labor shortage is beginning to subside."

One of the strategies SiteOne uses to overcome the challenges of the tight labor market is to recruit people without pest management experience. Depending on the position and the individual, Laycock said, product and industry training may be enough to get them up to speed. "We recruit people who have the SiteOne DNA — certain characteristics that indicate a candidate has customers' best interests at heart and top of mind. A candidate could have all the industry knowledge in the world, but if they don't have the right DNA, it's not going to work. The associate isn't happy, and the customer doesn't get the level of service they deserve and expect from us."

Forshaw focuses on making his company an "employment destination." He explained, "Years ago, I would sit at my desk thinking that we really need one more smart person. That has grown into teams of smart people, thanks to the addition of HR managers, bonus plans, performance reviews, quarterly company-wide updates and a focus on the unique attributes of each team member and how they can develop personally and professionally. People want to come to work here because they have the opportunity to be an integral part of a winning team that provides value to our customers and vendor partners."



4 Consolidation Presents Opportunities and Challenges

While consolidation among distributors has slowed in recent years, it continues at a fairly brisk clip on the PMP side. Distributors stand to lose if one of their customers is purchased by a company that prefers a different distributor; on the other hand, if they are the acquirer's distributor, they may stand to benefit from the additional volume. Then again, that volume could put pressure on distributor pricing. "The bigger a customer gets, the more leverage they have," said Helt.

Helt pointed out that another scenario — the creation of new small businesses in response to consolidation — presents an opportunity for distributors. "It's not uncommon for somebody to decide that they don't like the idea of working for the acquiring company, that they preferred working for the smaller company, and that they will strike out on their own to build a small business," he said. "As consolidation has heated up in the past five years, those very small PCO startups are out there. Distributors that are good at identifying these businesses and positioned to provide them with value — helping them grow their business and manage it smartly to maximize profitability — may have an advantage."

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ARROWS: © ANDRII YALANSKYI | ADOBESTOCK



5 Online Retailers Make Headway

To say the pandemic accelerated consumers' and businesses' reliance on technology would be an understatement. Mohorn summed it up: "Our habits changed: For a year or two, we bought everything for our personal lives online. It seemed only natural that we would buy professional products online as well. E-commerce has become a service PMPs expect. It's not a replacement for being a trusted adviser, but rather another medium through which you can buy the products you need."

Distributors have been happy to provide that alternative channel. Most distributors today offer online ordering. The challenge is that they are up against online stores that compete solely on price.

"E-commerce is offering PCOs an alternative, and certainly alternative pricing," said Helt. "It's important for those who consider shopping on those sites to remember that price isn't everything. We've built our company, and the distribution industry, on relationships and delivering value to our customers. We bring them product solutions and expertise, help them wade through the calculus of all of the vendor programs, bring in experts to train their people and help them enter new market segments to support their growth."

Still, many PMPs do purchase products from e-commerce sites unaffiliated with traditional pest control industry distributors. A March 2023 PCT survey found that in the past year, respondents had purchased from an online-only distributor, including DoMyOwn.com and Amazon.com, among others.

"When you look at a competitor like Amazon, they may be a great marketplace — awesome at product distribution — but when PMPs buy products there, they don't always know where those products are coming from," Mohorn said. "Conversely, when they buy from a distributor like Heritage, they know exactly what they're getting because they know we contract directly with the large manufacturers."

The other side of the online retailer challenge is that many of these sites also sell professional products to consumers. That's problematic in the view of many distributors, as well as PMPs, from not only a competitive standpoint, but more importantly, a stewardship standpoint.

"Online, consumers are sometimes able to buy pesticides in 1- or 2½-gallon jugs. That's more than a homeowner would need for years," said Kisner. "Why are they doing that? There's no protection, no enforcement to stop it.

"I realize that, as with plumbing and electric, there will always be some people who want to DIY, but we're talking about pesticides. We need to be sure they're being used correctly, following the same standards our industry professionals do. If, for example, active ingredients start showing up in a body of water, the assumption may be that it was from our industry, when it very well could have been a homeowner using that product inappropriately."

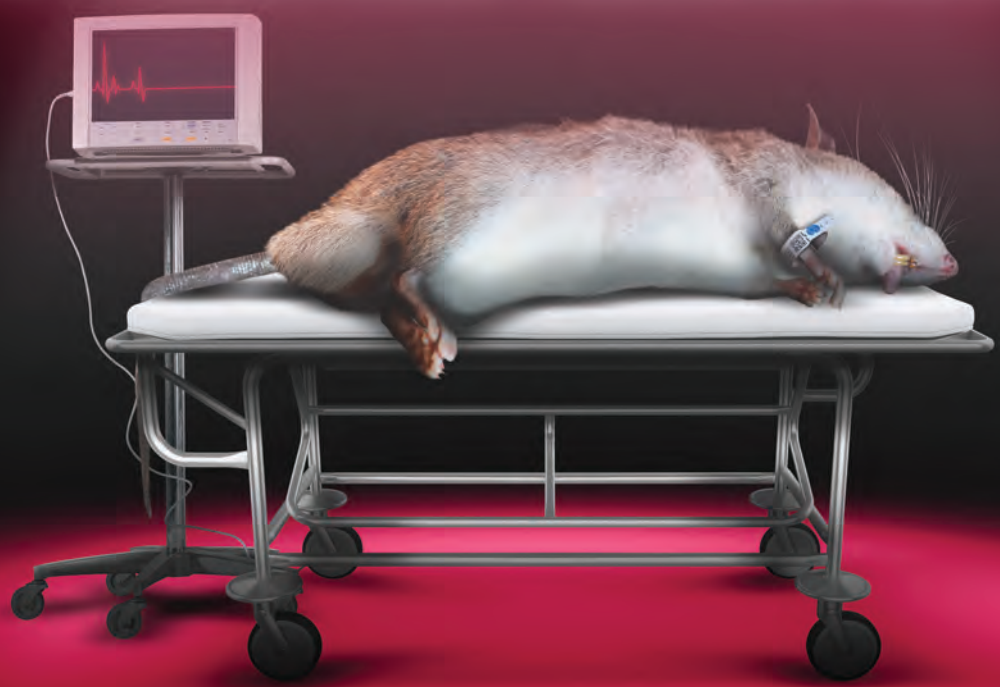
Helt suggested one additional area to watch in terms of e-commerce: the evolving roles of manufacturers and distributors in supplying online marketplaces. "The landscape for distributors is going to change because of e-comm," he said. "How deeply, closely or directly we get involved will evolve with the manufacturers, but we certainly can't ignore the growing importance of e-comm as a tool for PCOs. Distributors are, in some ways, better positioned to be directly involved than manufacturers are, particularly in the breadth of offerings we can provide. I see the role of both manufacturers and distributors growing in this area. It will be interesting to see how it all evolves." **PCT**

"The landscape for distributors is going to change because of e-comm." — David Helt, Target Specialty Products

The author is a frequent contributor to PCT.

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Evolution of Distribution's Role

By Donna DeFranco

PMPs know distributors don't just sell products. Here's how they're delivering value to the industry in bold new ways.

The pest management industry has changed over the past decade or so, with many second- and third-generation management teams taking over their family pest management businesses. Their goals may be different from those of their predecessors, and they may like to conduct business a little differently, but Forshaw CEO Tom Forshaw IV says that three tenets — honesty, trust and open communication — continue to be the bedrock of every strong PMP-distributor relationship.

"Forshaw has a long history of building strong relationships with PMPs across the country — many of them established by my father and grandfather over the past 60-plus years," Forshaw said. "We work to understand our PMP partners' goals, become part of their problem-solving team and utilize our resources to work toward their success. Helping our customers achieve their goals feels just as good to us as when we achieve our own."

That kind of gratification is common among distributors, who understand the need for high-efficiency solutions yet continue to embrace the power of human interaction and collaboration. Mutual success is, and always has been, the point for distributors who have risen to the top.

"All of our distributors care about the success of our company and our employees. When we are happy, they are happy," said Jeff King, president and CEO of The Pest Rangers in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. "They connect us with products, inventory tools, private training and networking opportunities, in addition to being involved in NPMA and state associations. They are clearly committed to our growth, as well as that of the entire industry."

It all comes back to people supporting people — just like in the old days, said Kevin Laycock, director, category management, SiteOne. He remembers going with his dad to Maryland State Pest Control Association meetings when he was just 5 years old. "The industry has certainly evolved in some regards, but the level of trust hasn't changed," he said. "Trust continues to be the root of every successful distributor-PMP relationship."

This is especially true of smaller businesses, Laycock explained, where owners are managing everything from sales and marketing to payroll and HR to financial reporting. "Small business owners need to really trust the distributor they're working with to help them make good decisions, because they don't want to make a mistake that negatively impacts their employees and their families. They are focused on the security of their business and of those 50 or however many families are relying on them; that's their extended family."

Scott Koscielniak, training manager at Blades of Green Lawn Care and Pest Con-

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trol in Edgewater, Md., shared insights into how the company's distributor has supported them in this way: "Having a partner who helps us navigate the struggles and celebrate the wins has been pivotal to our growth over the past 10 years. They have become a one-stop shop for us, not only supplying us with products but backing those products up with expertise and training"

PMPs face some challenges today that their parents and grandparents may not have encountered. Forshaw cited process automation and sustainability initiatives as examples of new areas where PMPs are asking for support. In many instances, PMPs are turning to their distributors for the same things previous generations did but with a contemporary twist.

PRODUCT SUPPORT. With more product choices, active ingredients and formulations than ever before, distributors play a key role in helping PMPs sort through their options. Being objective third parties is a definite plus: Distributors can look across suppliers' options without bias to zero in on the best recommendation for a customer's particular need. That guidance can be invaluable to PMPs, who want to approach every situation equipped with not only the right product but also the knowledge to back up its use.

How distributors share their knowledge and product insights varies, depending on PMPs' priorities. "Some customers are really into the details and research behind a product, wanting to know if you've tested it, and taking great interest in that historical perspective. Others go directly to the recommendation, asking, 'What's the best choice? What would you pick?'" said Rachel Mohorn, marketing director, Heritage Professional Products Group.

EDUCATION. Taking product support to the next level, distributors continue to enhance and broaden their training and education programs. From product selection and application to business management and awareness training, distributor courses are designed to help service technicians excel in the field and to support business leaders' efforts to build thriving companies.

Koscielniak shared, "Our distributors provide a lot of resources that help with continuing education. This includes access to a network of representatives who will come out to teach our team about safe and effective product use. They also help orchestrate CEU-credited trainings, as well as trainings unrelated to products. For instance, one of our distributors has partnered with the Safe House Project to develop anti-human-trafficking training for the pest management community."



In addition to their own training leaders and field representatives, distributors have historically relied on a variety of external resources and experts as they develop educational programs. Curricula developed for CEU courses, for example, often involve collaboration with university extension offices, suppliers' technical services teams and independent industry consultants. Distributors' in-house expertise runs deep as well, given many of their team members are former pest control operators or come from the manufacturing side of the industry.

What has truly changed about education over the years is the depth and breadth of education that's available, and the variety of formats. Online courses enable technicians and business leaders to learn at their own pace, on their own schedule, and afford distributors the chance to provide much more information than they could ever have covered through face-to-face trainings alone. In-person education is still popular, though, as many people continue to prefer classroom and on-site workshops that give them the opportunity to collaborate and problem-solve with their peers. Webinars are popular among both of these groups, as teachers and learners connect virtually on any number of topics.

"All of our distributors care about the success of our company." — Jeff King, The Pest Rangers

Erin Monteagudo, senior technical content and training specialist, has led Veseris through a decade of improving and evolving the company's ProTraining content to fully meet industry needs. "What's really resonating with PMPs right now is relevant, interesting training that helps their service and office teams excel," she said. "Yes, we provide courses to help people earn CEUs, but we also focus on useful education for training and refreshing employees. We give them information they'll really need without getting too academic. Innovative formats — microlearning that takes place in 15-minute increments, for example — keep people engaged and motivated to put their knowledge to work."

TECHNOLOGY. PestWeb was launched by Veseris' predecessor 25 years ago, to the delight of PMPs who suddenly had access to a tool for researching product labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) online. Over time, Veseris and other distributors added online training. More recently, they've

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The benefits of technology are far from one-sided. Forshaw's ForeSight technology tool, an inventory management system designed to give PMPs visibility into product forecasting, on-hand inventory and technician product usage, creates data that helps drive efficiencies within the distributor.



Distributors have added online ordering, bill paying and inventory management tools.

"PMPs enjoy a range of benefits when they use ForeSight, and it helps us ensure we have the right product, in the right place, at the right time," said Forshaw. "When it comes down to it, the main issues distributors face have not changed a considerable amount over the past five or 10 years, but we do have more tools to help us deal with them. We use technology to help with forecasting, logistics and data analysis."

ADDED VALUE. Increasingly, distributors are going above and beyond providing their PMP customers with products, training and technology tools. They strive to understand the goals of each business so they can support them with advice and custom solutions. As an example, David Helt, president, Target Specialty Products, explained, "A lot of pest control operators are becoming more diversified in what they offer, to generate more revenue from their calls. As a distributor, you have to be in a position to help them do that."

Additionally, King shared that The Pest Rangers' primary supplier orchestrates networking events and roundtables that encourage like-minded owners to exchange

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ideas, information and insights. Kosciel-niak said that distributor partners support Blades of Green Lawn Care and Pest Control by sponsoring company events and helping with challenges the company comes up against. This type of holistic support strengthens relationships and builds loyalty.

What else builds loyalty? Loyalty programs, which are also designed to add value for PMPs.

The SiteOne Partners Program, for example, gives customers the opportunity to earn points toward continuing education seminars and other rewards — account credit, merchandise, travel, gift cards, etc. — plus discounts from SiteOne partner companies on services related to running their businesses. SiteOne also offers a fall early order program that enables PMPs to lock in pricing when they order products for Q1 of the coming year.

"A distributor's goal should always be to help customers manage their businesses better, whether by providing financial benefits or other types of support," said Laycock. "It's all about helping them maintain and grow their companies over the long term."

INDUSTRY ADVOCACY. The regulatory environment has always been a complex challenge for the pest management industry. Today it's even more so as public concern for the health and safety of their families and communities solidly occupies center stage. Distributors are working hand-in-hand with PMPs, associations and legislators to protect the public and the planet by ensuring the safe labeling, distribution and use of pesticides.

"We need to continue to have a unified voice with key legislators and policymakers at the federal and state levels as the industry moves forward," said Laycock. "Fortunately, we have folks at all levels within the value chain who recognize the need for this and are actively collaborating on solutions."

Like many other distributors, SiteOne supports NPMA, PPMA, RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment) and other key associations and policy stakeholders. They sit on a number of boards to ensure they have a voice and opportunities to contribute. Laycock concluded, "Distributors that will prevail in the marketplace are those who aren't in it just to make some money, but who are truly invested in the future. It's our responsibility to be proactively involved and steadfastly committed to the long-term best interests of the pest management industry." **PCT**

The author is a frequent contributor to PCT.

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Forshaw, Rollins Look to the Future with New Partnership

In December, Forshaw announced a strategic partnership with Rollins that establishes Forshaw as Rollins' primary supplier in the United States.

This partnership is a major development in the industry as it pairs the nation's second largest pest control provider with an established pest control industry distributor that has grown to become national in scope.

Under the leadership of CEO Tom Forshaw IV, Forshaw has evolved on multiple fronts, including how it supports large regional and national companies.

Recently, Rollins began seeking a new distributor; its primary supplier was a subsidiary of Haas Group International, which filed for bankruptcy earlier this year. As a result, Rollins began diversifying its supplier relationships while still being supplied by Haas.

Rollins CEO Jerry Gahlhoff told PCT that the company began exploring the idea of returning to a pest control industry distributor. "Historically we've always had [a pest control industry distributor] as a primary supplier. The idea isn't new to us."

In the process of evaluating distributors, Gahlhoff said Forshaw rose to the top. "We became really comfortable with the Forshaw side pretty quickly."

Gahlhoff was impressed with how Tom Forshaw IV has reinvented Forshaw the last 10 years, in terms of how the supplier does business, territorial expansion and strengthening the logistics side. Gahlhoff said he views the Forshaw partnership as an opportunity "to get better, more reliable and more on-time service to our field."

Forshaw told PCT that prior to entering into an agreement, he expressed to Gahlhoff the importance of Forshaw maintaining relationships with existing customers. "We have figured out a way that we can work together without taking away from any of our existing partners," he said.

As part of the deal, Forshaw will be building dedicated Rollins distribution centers: a western distribution center in a TBD location and an eastern distribution center (most likely in Forshaw's HQ location of Charlotte, N.C.). Forshaw said he anticipates both distribution centers being built by the end of the first quarter 2024.

Forshaw has built exclusive distribution centers for large companies such as Plunkett's Pest Control and the three ABC Home & Commercial Services companies (in Austin, Houston and Dallas-Ft. Worth, Texas). Forshaw said supplying all three ABC firms from one center taught Forshaw how to better communicate with these customers and anticipate future needs.

Forshaw said the goal is to take what it learned from these experiences and scale it to the new dedicated Rollins distribution centers. "We're going to take everything we've learned on how to communicate with the customers, how to forecast their needs, and then make sure our warehouses are prepared to supply their needs."

Forshaw said they are putting together a dedicated company for the Rollins account that will include a strategic representative and other workers. Forshaw also is bringing in an operations/general manager from outside the pest control industry who has "vast experience in distribution management, and in the management teams of very, very large warehouses," he said.

As primary supplier, Forshaw will provide Rollins with as much products and equipment as it needs. There are exceptions, including specialty products and equipment. Forshaw also said "Rollins is in the driver's seat" in terms of any direct-from-manufacturer deals Rollins has with industry manufacturers.

Forshaw said he is excited about the potential opportunity to grow some of the company's product offerings, and for Rollins to have a seamless product supply. "We don't know all of the positive impact that's going to come out of this, but we do anticipate that there's going to be opportunities for both of us in the future to continue to grow and thrive." **PCT** — *Brad Harbison and Jodi Dorsch*

Forshaw Acquires Geotech Supply

Forshaw announced in December its acquisition of Geotech Supply. Geotech Supply, established in 2005, is based in Sacramento, Calif., and supplies pest management professionals in California and Arizona.

Tom Forshaw IV, CEO of Forshaw, said, "We are beyond excited to join forces with Geotech Supply. This move is more than just an expansion; it reinforces our commitment to innovation, performance and, most importantly, to the people and partnerships we've cultivated. As we plant our roots deeper into California, we are nurturing our core values of family, trust and professionalism, while elevating the standards of service and quality our partners have come to expect."

Forshaw said its decision to integrate Geotech Supply positions the company to "bring industry-leading products and services to a wider range of clients, enhancing the company's presence and solidifying its support system for regional partners."

Geotech's John Woodward added, "As the Geotech team transitions to Forshaw, we bring our commitment and experience to a company with a solid reputation in the industry. Together, we're ready to continue providing high-quality service to the pest management industry."

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Formosan subterranean termite soldier (*Coptotermes formosanus*)

By Kevin Hathorne

KEEP TRACK

Ahead of this year's termite season, one entomologist advises PMPs to keep track of the types of termites they're finding.

In the late '90s, while attending Clemson University, my master's thesis included a study on the species and distribution of termites in South Carolina. It was such great fun traveling around the state, collecting samples and working with mosquito control agencies to obtain their light trap samples that captured swarmer termites.

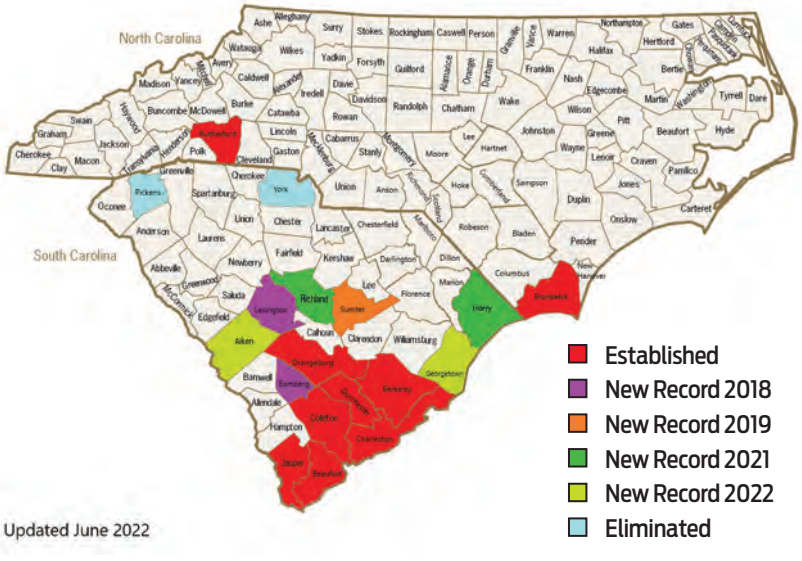
I also received much help from pest control companies sending me samples. In the end, there were eight different species of termites found. This included four subterranean species (Rhinotermitidae) and four drywood species (Kalotermitidae).

The four drywood species includes the southeastern drywood termite (*Incisitermes snyderi*), which is prevalent along coastal areas; the western drywood termite (*Incisitermes minor*), which only appears sporadically; the West Indian drywood termite (*Cryptotermes brevis*), which is no surprise since these are the most widely distributed drywood species in the world; and finally the dark southern drywood termite (*Kalotermes approximatus*), which is found throughout the state.

The last one is a native species that mostly infests dead branches on trees but will, on a rare occasion, infest structures. Their swarmers are easily identified by their dark black colored wings and can swarm at very odd times during the year.

The four subterranean termite species includes the eastern subterranean termite (*Reticulitermes flavipes*), which is ubiquitous throughout the state; a very closely related native termite sometimes referred to as the "southeastern subterranean termite" (*Reticulitermes virginicus*); the light southeastern subterranean termite (*Reticulitermes hageni*), which are smaller and have tan colored swarmers; and finally the introduced Formosan subterranean termite (*Coptotermes formosanus*), which at the time was restricted to Charleston and

Formosan Subterranean Termite Distribution by County in N.C. and S.C.



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ESTABLISHED SPECIES. To this day, these eight termite species continue to be the only established species in South Carolina. However, the distribution of Formosan subterranean termites (FST) continues to expand.

Since graduating in 2000, I have worked in the pest management industry and continue to keep an eye on this. It's important to encourage PMPs in the field to pay attention to the termites they encounter and report anything that seems to be different from what they are used to seeing. Most importantly, they need to know how to identify FSTs and report them when found in areas they are not known to occur.

I collaborate with Dr. Eric Benson, Clemson extension entomologist, in keeping track of the spread of FSTs in the state. For many years, they seemed to only be established in the low country region (other than a couple of isolated incidents where they were transported to other areas of the state but eliminated), and their spread throughout this area was slow.

Meanwhile, their presence in this region has been dominant to the point where they are the most common subterranean termite encountered, and it is almost rare to find native subterranean species.

Only in the last five years have they now begun to move upward into other regions of the state. FST swarmers are being collected and verified in several other counties, which includes all coastal areas and into the midlands. In 2019, an FST infestation was found and treated in a home in the middle of Sumter County, and in 2021, an apartment complex in downtown Columbia had a severe infestation.

As the climate changes and winter temperatures stay mild, this destructive invasive species continues to move northward. We also see this with other invasive pest species, such as the Asian cockroach (*Blatella asahinai*) and the brown widow (*Latrodectus geometricus*).

PMPs in the field are the front line — the eyes in the field — and it is important to make sure they are not only familiar with a pest species they deal with on a regular basis, but also on the lookout for pests not normally found in their service areas. When something strange or unusual is found, take pictures, make notes and collect samples to send to your company's technical specialist or state entomologist. **PCT**

The author is the technical director for Terminix Service, Inc.



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Bye-Bye Bandits

Use these methods for a smoother, more humane way to control raccoons invading your customers' homes. By Hugh Carberry

Clangs and bangs heard in an attic during late winter or early spring may sound as if an intruder has broken in and taken residence. Homeowners reporting these sounds are usually surprised when they discover a female raccoon has delivered a litter of young right under their roof.

Customers usually request a humane means of removal when contacting pest control companies. Although cage trapping meets their needs, in many instances capture can cause injuries, separation and possibly the female abandoning her young. Eviction fluids and paste made of male raccoon urine and other byproducts have been on the market since the 1990s and are marginally effective in causing the mother to leave. However, when used in tandem with nudging techniques, success rates can be as high as 95 percent. This dual method is less labor intensive and the most humane way to quickly alleviate the problem.

Eviction fluids and paste elicit a fear response in mothers that may trigger her to relocate her young. A study performed by the University of Nebraska and the University of Mississippi has shown that when used alone, eviction fluids and pastes have a success rate of only 50 percent. Eviction fluids work by exploiting an inherent fear all mothers have of male raccoons after giving birth.

Animal infanticide is the dark underbelly of raccoon behavior, which has conditioned females to react with fear when a male is nearby. A mature male will brutally kill the young of a female, causing her to go into an estrus cycle. Ultimately, the goal of this behavior is to provide the male with another breeding opportunity. Similar behavior is found in other mammals such as grizzly bears. This fear, when combined with other stimuli, will cause a female to leave her nursery 95 percent of the time.

Nudging is the process of creating multiple stimuli that make the mother uncomfortable in her human domicile. Customers are often eager to lend a hand and can participate by banging on their ceiling or wall with a broom handle to assist in the process.

Unpleasant stimuli are the keys to success, and the more of the raccoon's senses that you can affect, the better the outcome. Human interactions with the female, strobe lights, transistor radios and rat snap traps strategically placed at access points will have the mother quickly second guessing her nursery location.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER. Confronting a female while she is with her young is a force multiplier for making her leave. The confrontation is best made during the daytime while initially deploying an eviction fluid. Tennis balls doused with fluid and then tossed near her litter is a safe way to deploy it, and they are also very threatening to the mother. When a fireplace damper is the nursery, simply drop an eviction fluid-saturated tennis ball down the chimney to the raccoons below. The closer the eviction fluid is to her young, the higher the success rate.

Another highly effective technique to make the mother's stay unbearable is a strobe light. The incessant flashing causes a never-ending cycle of contraction and dilation of her pupils. This may become

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very irritating to a mammal whose sight is based on night vision.

Equally bothersome is a small inexpensive 9-volt transistor radio. Simply set the radio near the mother and young. It doesn't matter if the dial is tuned to a classical, country or classic rock station; the auditory affect is key.

Tactile stimulation will quickly have the mother raccoon hightailing from her den. Rat snap traps can be modified with picture hanging wire to prevent complete closure and will frighten the mother when she steps on them. The traps will not hurt the raccoon in any way. Two or three traps should be strategically placed near the raccoon's access points into a home or building. Traps can be screwed in place vertically on siding or roofs if the access point is not a level surface.

Nine times out of 10, raccoon activity during the springtime equates to a pregnant female looking for a cozy place to give birth. Mother raccoons have a propensity to choose attics, chimneys and other man-made structures for nurseries. The dynamic duo of eviction fluid and nudging will quickly have the mother grabbing her young with her mouth and moving them to an alternative den. Results can occur within two to three days, and occasionally within one day.

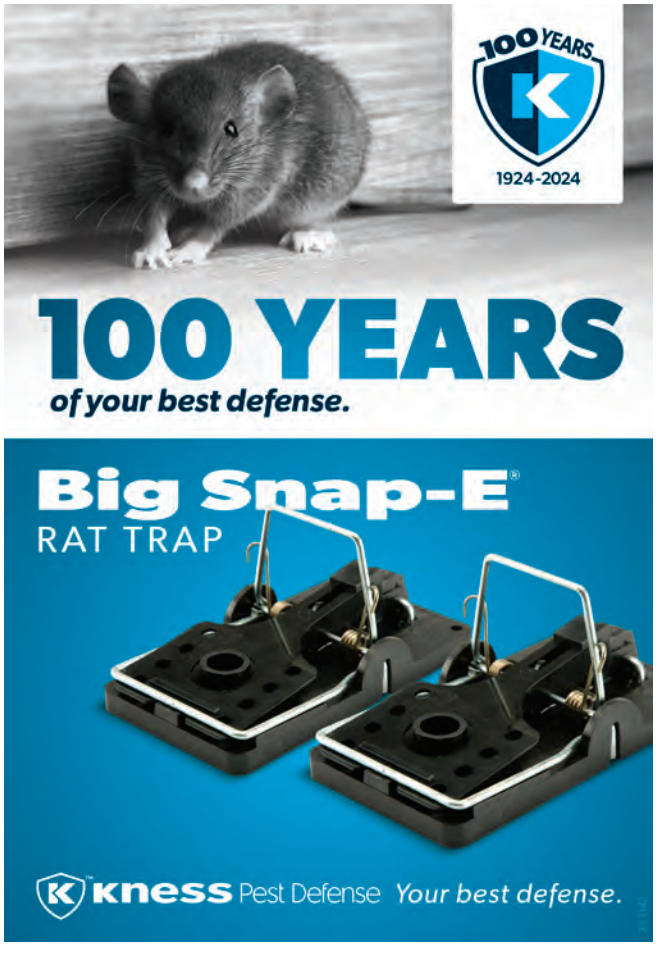


Tennis balls doused with eviction fluid (right) serve as one way to scare off raccoons.

The methods identified minimize abandonment and injuries associated with cage trapping and are less labor intensive. Progress can be monitored with cellular trail cameras set near the access point, further reducing the time on-site. Happy customers and happy raccoons will abound if these methods are employed to evict these unwanted guests. **PCT**

The author worked as a biologist for the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife for 29 years. He currently works as the wildlife coordinator/field supervisor for Ross Environmental Solutions, Franklinville, N.J.

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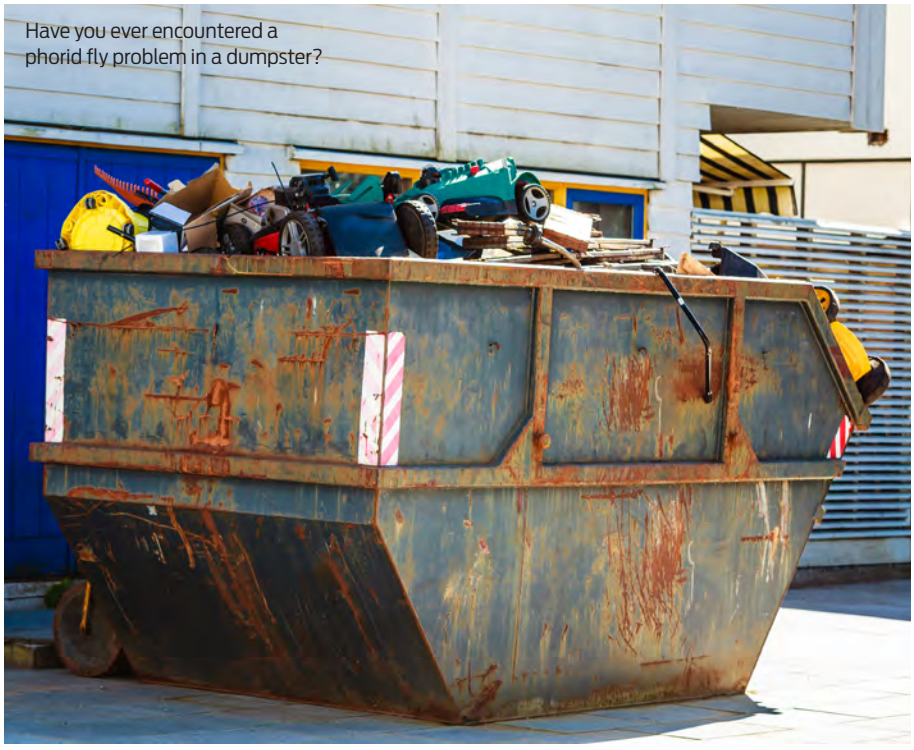
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Small Flies, Big Problem

We were recently contacted by a commercial customer about a small fly (phorid) problem that spontaneously exploded. This dramatic increase in flies had infested every floor, every office and every life throughout the building. It was a problem without a solution.



Have you ever encountered a phorid fly problem in a dumpster?

INSPECTION. Considering the basic premise of an IPM program is to do a facility inspection, we set off. As any respectable pest inspector would do, we started in the basement with the drains. There was standing, stagnant water in the drains and flies were in the area — some even resting on the grates of the drains. The obvious source, right?

Being noble and not trying to look too smart too quickly, we moved on and progressed up the floors. The first floor was worse than the basement, and the second floor not as bad as the first. *Hmm.* Now, in my head, I'm thinking, "Shouldn't they be worse near the source? There must be some dry trap coming up from the basement that is giving free access to the upper levels, and that's why they are worse on the first floor."

The drain quest commenced on the first floor, and not a single problem could be found. No source on the first floor seemed reasonable. We thought it must be the drains in the basement. The upper floors were not as bad. It seemed that there was an issue between the basement and the first floor. Now, how do we start eliminating possibilities?

THE PLAN. First off, we knew we had a drain issue, source or not. If water was backing up and not draining, we could have a variety of problems going on down there — cracked pipes, blockage, ninja turtles, who knows! The only way to know is by sending a scope down the drain and looking. This is best completed by a plumber, so a recommendation can be made to remediate the problem. A recommendation to scope the drains was made, and that was scheduled.

In the meantime, the drains were emptied by pumping the water out. No stagnant water, no flies, right? Wrong. Flies continued to increase in the building.

Now what, you may ask? Monitors, that's what.

Temporary insect light traps were placed everywhere. They were checked daily. To give you a sense of the scale, in one office, more than 500 phorid flies were captured overnight. Within a couple of days, it was obvious that the issue was worse in one area of the building — near the loading dock.

You see, this facility had been receiving large amounts of deliveries due to furniture being changed out in parts of the building. Doors were being propped open for long stretches of time, and dumpsters were right outside the doors. The construction dumpsters were getting a fairly large amount of food debris from worker lunches, and they didn't have lids. These dumpsters were covered in phorid flies.

In checking the airflow of the building, it was determined that there was negative pressure inside. When the doors were open, the air was being pulled in from outside, basically sucking the flies in all day.

SOLUTIONS. There were several ways to go here on recommendations and solutions. First, the issue could have naturally resolved itself when the furniture delivery was complete. However, that could take a while and wasn't a great solution in the short term.

Keeping doors closed would help but was still going to let flies in when they opened. One of the best options was to move the dumpster. Getting it away from the doors would take the breeding site away from the entry point. Adding an air curtain to the door wouldn't hurt, and making a few of the insect light traps by those doors permanent might help collect what got through the air curtain.

As for the drains, we're still not sure. Ongoing investigations into why they weren't draining properly continue, but it likely isn't the source we initially thought. I'm glad we didn't stop there. Maybe it *is* ninja turtles! **PCT**

The author is technical services director at Rollins in Atlanta.

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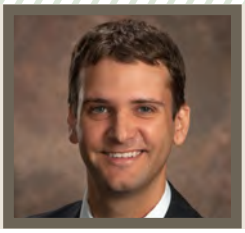
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Inveterate Invertebrate Pests of Meat

When we as an industry discuss food susceptible to stored product pests, we usually mean grain- and legumes-based products, spices, chocolates and candies, powdered products, etc. However, there are niches within the broad category of stored product pests that are a bit different. Meat, for example, does not usually get mentioned in the same breath as other food and food adjacent products susceptible to stored product pests, but there are pests that have staked (steaked?) their claim.

Not all invertebrate meat pests are considered stored product pests, though. The primary distinction between pests of meat comes from those that attack fresh, unprocessed meat versus those that infest cured or otherwise processed meats. Pests of fresh and/or unprocessed meats are not stored product pests, but use meat as an egg- or larvae-laying site or as a food source for larvae.

FRESH MEAT PESTS. Blow flies, bottle flies and flesh flies (*Calliphoridae* and *Sarcophagidae*) are known to infest fresh meat. Some flies in these groups will lay eggs or larvae directly onto meat, and the relationship between foodborne illness and these pests is well established. The larvae are decomposers, and adults often are the first insects to locate new carrion and deposit eggs or larvae on it.

Unsurprisingly, meat intended for human or animal consumption also gives off odors that can be strong attractants to these flies and lead to undesired outcomes. (This is particularly true for flesh flies, which deposit much easier-to-see larvae.) For this to happen, meat must be exposed to what are primarily exterior flies, and concurrently, gravid females must detect the odors of that meat, find their way inside and have enough time undisturbed to oviposit or larviposit on the meat.

Wasps in search of protein for larvae will sometimes make use of meat (raw for human consumption, cooked, carrion of all kinds), and there even is a residual insecticide labeled for use against yellowjackets when combined with raw chicken inside a special trap that turns the meat into a bait.

The best approach for pests of unprocessed meat is to try to keep them away in the first place. Practically, this means reducing attraction to the facility or area by keeping garbage cans and dumpsters as clean as can be while emptying them regularly, stepping up exclusion efforts by keeping doors and windows screened and closed, using air curtains or fans and taking care not to leave meat unattended while exposed.

PROCESSED MEAT PESTS. Over the past 10 to 20 years, there has been, anecdotally, a sharp uptick in problems associated with the redlegged ham beetle (*Necrobia rufipes*), primarily in facilities that produce, store or sell pet food. These problems can become the primary pest issue, even in environments that are susceptible to a lot of pest groups.

Redlegged ham beetles are highly mobile, large (1/4-inch long) and visually striking (metallic greenish blue) when compared to other stored product beetles. Both larvae and adults eat meat, particularly dry-aged and smoked meat, but the burrowing larvae are more destructive. Redlegged ham beetle adults are fairly easy to spot, but larvae inside of food or packaging are not. Determining the spread of the infestation can be a challenge in an environment rife with well-spaced pet food and pet treats, but you can supplement your inspections with commercially available monitors, as well as the tried-and-true method of adding a slice of pepperoni to the middle of a glueboard.

Larder beetles (*Dermestes lardarius*) are decomposers, and the larvae attack dried foods, carcasses, feathers, meat and meat-containing products like pet food. Eggs are laid on susceptible materials, and larvae feed on or below the surface of their food. Before pupation, last-stage larvae leave their food and wander in search of a protected place to pupate, even burrowing into wooden pallets sometimes.

Cheese or ham skippers (*Piophila casei*) are 1/8-inch flies associated with organic waste and are attracted to pungent, putrid odors associated with overripe cheese, cured fish and salted meats like smoked ham. The larval stage is the economically damaging one and the genesis of the common name, as larvae move in a distinctive flipping, skipping fashion.

This isn't a commonly encountered pest, but accounts with infestations can be difficult to solve and infested hams can contain thousands of larvae. Spilled or leaking grease and bits of susceptible foods in cracks and crevices can be enough to sustain infestations and put valuable product at risk. Identification is crucial, as these small flies can easily be overlooked or confused with another species.

Even seasoned pest professionals struggle with mites (*Tyrophagus putrescentiae* and *T. longiors*) — from identification to control — and for good reason. They are tiny (1/32-inch), their features are difficult to make out and, honestly, they just don't usually get a lot of consideration in the landscape of structural pests. However, we know there are legitimate issues caused by mites when they bite, feed on plants and infest food and food packaging.

The two mite species mentioned above readily feed on the surface of cheese, grains and cured meat. Since these mites are so small, they can easily go undetected during inspection, and crawling pest monitors are not always placed in a way to pick up a mite infestation. Once an infestation is established, it can be difficult to eradicate, but a combination of inspection, monitoring, ventilation/air movement, storage practices, temperature control and, in some situations, targeted use of miticides can be a successful strategy. **PCT**

Bennett Jordan is a staff scientist for Ecolab and is responsible for providing technical services and driving innovation initiatives within the Pest Elimination Division. He earned his Ph.D. in entomology from the University of Florida. He is a member of the Urban Pest Management Technical Committee (www.upmtc.org).

Streamlight

www.streamlight.com



The Stylus Pro HAZ-LO is the newest addition to Streamlight's Stylus line of slim, everyday carry penlights.

The product is Class 1, Division 1 safety rated for hazardous work environments that use any type of chemicals, Streamlight reported. The pocket-size light features a push-button tail cap switch and measures 5.92 inches in length, with a diameter ranging from .63 to .78 inches. Powered by two AAA alkaline batteries, the penlight uses a high-power white LED to deliver 105 lumens and 380 candela over a beam distance of 39 meters, with a run time of 2.25 hours.

Pest Pro University

www.pestprouniversity.com

Pest Pro University, an online training platform, announced its launch for pest control education. The platform is designed to equip pest control professionals with the latest knowledge and best practices directly from field experts while changing the way companies train technicians, office staff and management.

The company said it focuses on the practical aspects of pest control in its training and believes in learning from those who have mastered their craft in the field. The platform



uses interviews and real-world footage from industry experts. Lesson topics include safety, tech tools and equipment, bed bugs, lawn and ornamental, and termites.

JF Oakes

www.jfoakes.com

JF Oakes announced a new monitor/trap in its



Ready to Use Pro-Pest line. The Pro-Pest Lookout monitor/trap has an attractant placed into the glue for cockroaches and common household crawling insects.

Pro-Pest Lookout comes with two traps per sheet, allowing the flexibility of two separate traps or one larger trap. Both configurations offer ramps on both ends, even after separating along the perforation. The traps are manufactured with heavy-duty cardboard and a printed black interior. Directions and a tracking chart are printed on the bottom of each trap. **PCT**

MANUFACTURERS
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/// continued from page 18

"Unfortunately, that doesn't always translate into participation, as my sense is that younger employees are more concerned with using the money now and not necessarily saving."

Freedom Pest Control, Merrimac, Mass., offers employees a 401(k), with a match anywhere from 3.5 to 4.5 percent, depending on their contribution. Freedom Pest President Tom Drapeau said, "I feel it's extremely important in today's marketplace to look at not only the success and the longevity of the company but to make sure that we are taking care of our employees also in regards to their retirement."

Similarly, Neighborly Pest Management, Sacramento, Calif., offers a 401(k) plan with an employer match of up to 3 percent. Neighborly owner Jim Steed said he and vice president Sean Bradley strongly advocate for employee participation. "When employees fully understand the importance of this benefit to their retirement as well as the other benefits that are possible, then almost all join," Steed said.

Steed said he and Bradley regularly hold discussions about this important benefit and encourage other employees to share success stories. "Because of this program, we have had five employees become first-time homeowners," he said. "For me it's a must have for any-sized company." — *Brad Harbison*



FMC Give Back Donates $20,000 to PestVets

PHILADELPHIA — At NPMA PestWorld 2023 in Honolulu, FMC presented a $20,000 check to PestVets through the newly created FMC Give Back Program. At NPMA Legislative Day 2023, FMC launched the PestVets Give Back Program, a new initiative aimed at raising funds for PestVets.



FMC presented PestVets with a $20,000 check at PestWorld 2023.

COURTESY OF FMC

Through the efforts of PMPs enrolled in the FMC True Champions loyalty program, FMC was able to present PestVets executives with the check at PestWorld. As part of the FMC True Champions end-user loyalty program, a percentage of the purchases of select FMC products determine the amount of the donation.

"FMC is thrilled to help contribute to PestVets. PestVets is a critical part of FMC's commitment to the pest industry.

This new Give Back Program gave PMPs the chance to support PestVets and help further their mission of helping returning veterans re-acclimate to civilian life through employment in the pest control industry," said Kyle Richards, Pest & Nursery/Greenhouse market manager for FMC Global Specialty Solutions.

Kevin Connelly Retiring After 33 Years in Pest Control

CHICAGO — After 33 years in pest control, Kevin Connelly is trading in his sprayer and spreadsheets. Connelly sold MASH Services of Illinois, a company he has been involved with since 1990, to Plunkett's Pest Control, effective Jan. 2.

"Everybody has to hang up the spikes at some point, and I thought the timing was right," Connelly said. "I liked the idea of selling to Plunkett's because they are a 100-year-old, family-owned company from the Midwest with a good reputation in the industry."



Kevin Connelly

Connelly, who turns 65 next year, said he's been working towards retirement since he started with MASH Services in 1990. At that time, he was a single dad who was saving money to put his daughter, Megan, through college, as well as his own personal retirement.

What initially drew Connelly to MASH Services was location. "As a single dad, I was looking for a place to work that was close to where I lived, so I figured I would do this for a year or so," he recalled. "But after a while, I got pretty good at it and started thinking it was pretty cool. It involved nature and science, and it was interesting. I found it hard to walk away from."

MASH Services was owned by the late Gerald Leeb, who recognized Connelly's abilities and within three years promoted him to service manager. One of the ways Connelly helped grow the company was by placing more of an emphasis on sales and marketing, an area that was not one of Leeb's strengths. As Leeb moved towards retirement, he worked out a succession plan that involved selling part of MASH Services to Connelly, who would also manage the trust of Leeb's son.

Connelly said a career highlight was being involved in a University of Kentucky (UK) bed bug study after he reported to former UK entomologist Dr. Michael Potter that less than 20 percent of seniors in a building he was servicing were not reacting to bed bug bites. His and other findings were published in the 2010 PCT article "The Sensitivity Spectrum: Human Reactions to Bed Bug Bites."

Connelly will work in a consulting capacity for Plunkett's during the transition. Beyond that, he and wife Liz are looking forward to traveling. — *Brad Harbison* **PCT**

COURTESY OF KEVIN CONNELLY

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Antique Rodent Trap Hunter

Antique furniture, comic books and rare coins are typically what comes to mind when it comes to collectibles, but plenty of people also pursue "off the beaten path" retro items, including rat and mousetraps. John Moore, IPM director for Fumigation Service & Supply (FSS), Westfield, Ind., is one such collector. Moore has accumulated more than 500 rat and mice traps that date back to the mid 19th century.


John Moore

Moore's interest in rodent traps was sparked by a 2014 visit to the office of colleague Dannis Warf, also a rodent trap collector. "On his shelf, he had this really weird-looking boxy trap called a Delusion Live Catch Mouse Trap," Moore recalled. "And from there, I became fascinated with the history of the mousetrap in the United States."

Since that visit with Warf, Moore has built an impressive collection of his own. "It's kind of become a fun competition between Dannis and me."

A highlight from Moore's collection is the William E. Pratt mousetrap, a device that was patented in 1885. "I had to download the patent to figure out how the darn thing worked," Moore said. "It was really complex, and it's the only known example of that trap. You can find it in old advertising and there's a patent for it, but to my knowledge, I am the only one who has one."


Delusion (patent 1876)

Moore said that on the rare occasion he *does* get a mouse in his basement, he will try out some of these old traps. "Let's try this one from the 1930s and see how well it works," he said. "I have fun with it."

The mousetrap is the most patented item in U.S. history, with more than 4,000 patents issued. "Some of these traps are amazingly complex and unusual," Moore said. "I have 300 of them displayed [in a lighted case] like a museum."

Although the mousetrap has the most U.S. patents, Moore said he doesn't think people today are applying for mousetrap patents at the same rate they were in the past because we know more about rodent biology and behavior today. In the late 19th and early 20th century, there were many misconceptions about rodent behavior and, Moore said, "I think people have learned that nothing outperforms the old snap trap."

Moore said he has thought about selling his collection, which he thinks could net $30,000-$35,000, but right now he is having fun collecting the traps. He and his wife, Sheila, are antique dealers who have booths at local antique malls — and this is something that gives him an advantage. "I have an understanding of what the accurate retail market value is, and I can also pretty quickly identify an item that has been severely undervalued."

Moore also recommends that rodent trap enthusiasts visit the Trap History Museum (www.traphistorymuseum.com) in Galloway, Ohio. — *Brad Harbison* **PCT**

For more photos of John Moore's rodent trap collection, visit "online extras" on www.pctonline.com.

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PCT
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TOP 100 LIST

PCT magazine is in the process of identifying the largest 100 **pest management firms** in the U.S., based on 2023 revenues. Please take a moment to provide us with the following information about your company and return it to us via mail, fax (216-525-0515) or at **www.pctonline.com/top100-form.aspx** by **Friday, February 15.**

Aim your camera phone here to access the form!

We look forward to your reply so that your company receives the recognition it deserves as a member of PCT's Top 100!

Your Name _____

Your Title _____

Company Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____

ZIP Code _____

Phone _____

E-mail Address _____

Website _____

How many offices does your company have? _____

What percentage of your business is residential vs. commercial?

Residential _____ Commercial _____ (Total should equal 100%)

1. What were your total revenues in 2023 (Jan. to Dec. 2023)?
   $ _____
2. What percent change in revenues was there from 2022 to 2023?
   ❑ Increased by ___% ❑ Decreased by ___% ❑ No Change
3. We anticipate a ____% increase/decrease (circle one) in 2024.
4. Please indicate the percentage of your overall business in the following categories (Totals should equal 100%):
   General Pest Control _____% Termite Control _____%
   Turf & Ornamentals _____% Other _____%
5. Please indicate the number of employees in the following areas:
   GPC Technicians _____ Termite Technicians _____
   Universal Technicians ____ **Total Number of Employees** _____
6. What is the name of the individual holding each position?
   Owner _____
   President _____
   General Manager _____
   Technical Director _____
   GPC Manager _____
   WDI Manager _____
   Purchasing Director _____
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