

SPONSORED CONTENT

Sponsored by



INSIDE:

- » Exploiting Chaos to Build Business
- » Strategies for Selling Rodent Control Services
- » Tools of the Trade
- » Rethinking Rodenticides
- » Exclusive Research

2024 State of the

RODENT

CONTROL MARKET

BELL CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF INNOVATION IN RODENT CONTROL

Bell Laboratories' reputation as the world leader in rodent control technology is built on finding innovative solutions to an enduring problem. We pride ourselves on that reputation, which is why we strive to produce the highest quality products possible.

In 2024 alone, we've launched several new products and made many of our existing technologies more globally available. With regulatory pressures tightening around the world, we're committed to equipping pest control professionals (PMPs) with the tools they need to be successful.

Looking Back, Pushing Forward

As Bell celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, we aren't slowing down.

Bell started in a small Madison garage in 1974 with one product, Rodent Cake. Now, we're planning a state-of-the-art technical manufacturing addition to our 600,000 sq foot Windsor, Wis. plant which enables us to continue to provide rodent control innovations. We are always looking for ways to advance the professionalism of our industry.

This is evident in our strong commitment to the iQ product line, Bell's rodent monitoring technology. Since launching iQ, we've found that PMPs have a growing need for smart rodent control. iQ products provide both enhanced efficacy and increased productivity. They lower labor costs while improving the technician experience and job satisfaction – both wins for your company.

You will continue to see new iQ offerings in the months ahead, like the new Mouse iQ snap trap launching in February 2025.

A Strong Inner Circle

Bell's success ultimately comes from listening to our dedicated partners. It's vital to be surrounded by people who understand the work you do and who will work with you.

The world of rodent control is always changing, which is why we rely on feedback from our partners to develop new technologies, baits, and more. Everything we do is to help you find success.

Please get in touch with your Bell technical reps so they can show you how Bell's products can benefit your company.

We wish you a prosperous 2025. On behalf of all Bell employees, we appreciate your business and thank you for your support. ●

Steve Levy



President and CEO
Bell Laboratories



Steve Levy



EXPLOITING CHAOS TO BUILD BUSINESS

Business pundits have long sung the praises of entrepreneurs who respond to adversity by embracing opportunity. It's easy to see why when you consider the growth trajectories of industry giants like Microsoft, FedEx, Disney and General Motors — all launched during dramatic economic downturns. Market needs change during times of turmoil and uncertainty; business leaders can choose to either continue doing business as usual or leverage those market changes to their advantage.

Jeremy Gutsche, CEO of Trend Hunter and author of “Exploiting Chaos,” put it this way: “In times of change, consumer needs evolve; if you're able to spot new opportunities, you can reinvent.”

Caleb Fabry, president of Town & Country Pest Solutions in Rochester, N.Y., chose to reinvent his company's rodent program when market demands shifted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Like so many PMPs, he watched rodent calls surge as customers who once went to their offices every day were suddenly working from home, seeing and hearing rodent activity that had previously gone unnoticed. Fabry and his team seized the opportunity to revamp Town & Country's rodent program to be more effective for residential customers while becoming much more profitable for the business.

“We had been working under a warranty that said we could solve a customer's mouse problem in one or two visits, but we spent a lot of time going back, and back ... and back, all under this flat-rate pricing. Customers weren't happy and neither were we,” he explained. “When demand became heavy during COVID, we saw an opportunity to put a new program into place.

RODENT INFESTATIONS

Over the past year, have the number of rodent infestations in your location's market area increased, decreased or remained the same?

	All PMPs	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Increased	56%	68%	51%	51%	64%
Steady	41%	28%	47%	46%	31%
Decreased	2%	2%	0%	3%	4%

Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 281

REVENUE EXPECTATIONS

Compared with last year, how do you expect the percentage of revenue generated from your location's rodent control services to change this year?



	All PMPs	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Increase	67%	83%	64%	63%	64%
YOY change	+6%	+13%	+5%	+5%	+3%
Stay the same	31%	15%	34%	35%	33%
YOY change	-3%	-12%	-7%	-2%	+2%
Decrease	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%
YOY change	-1%	-1%	+2%	-3%	-4%

Source: Readex Research; Number of 2024 respondents: 281; Number of 2023 respondents: 229

Since then, our sales have compounded every year.”

Town & Country's new program includes a thorough inspection to assess the infestation, deployment of interior and exterior bait stations, a two-week follow-up visit to seal any holes, and a final evaluation to determine whether any new entry points have appeared and if additional visits are required. Once the infestation has been controlled, customers receive quarterly service and a warranty for as long as they participate in the program. Fabry also has added wireless security cameras that help service technicians show customers exactly how, when and where rodents are getting in. That footage has been invaluable as it

helps the team set up exclusion and repair work, which has become, according to him, “a huge part of our business.”

Fabry isn't the only PMP cashing in on the increasing demand for rodent services. According to respondents to the 2024 State of the Rodent Control Market survey, the upward trend in infestations — 56 percent of PMPs reported higher infestations this year — continues to benefit their businesses. Two out of three (67 percent) look for higher rodent revenues in 2024; in the Northeast, it's four out of five (83 percent). So while customers may view rodents as an annoyance or a threat to their homes and businesses, smart business leaders see them as a golden opportunity. ●



STRATEGIES FOR SELLING RODENT CONTROL SERVICES

Companies that leverage sales opportunities to their fullest are seeing their rodent revenues continue to rise. On average, PMPs reported that dollars earned through rodent control services represent about a quarter (25 percent) of their total revenues, and more than half (53 percent) said rodent work has become a more significant portion of their business over the past five years. In the Northeast, those numbers are 36 and 68 percent, respectively.

Holper's Pest & Animal Solutions in St. Louis, Mo., is one of the pest management companies that is fully embracing the business potential of rodent control services. Co-owner Cheryl Chappuis said that mice are virtually ubiquitous in Greater St. Louis and areas of Illinois — with moles, voles and rats also playing a significant role — which gives rise to new

sales opportunities.

“When homeowners see mouse droppings, that’s often a trigger for them to start thinking about pest control more broadly. They know they need to manage the mice, and as long as someone’s coming out, maybe they should address some general pest issues as well,” Chappuis said.

Likewise, when Holper’s technicians are in someone’s home taking care of general pest issues, they are on high alert for conducive conditions that could be attracting rodents. Chappuis shared, “As they drive up to a property, our technicians pay attention to whether trees are touching or hanging over the roof, and when they’re checking attics, they look for mouse runs. They photograph what they find and share that with the customer, recommending they add on rodent services.”

SELL PREVENTIVE SERVICES.

Soles Exterminating in Palm Beach County, Fla., starts selling even before signs of rodent activity come to light. Owner/Operator Tate Soles said preventive measures are necessary in the coastal communities his company services. “With commercial properties — multifamily units, restaurants and office buildings — property managers know they need to get in front of rodent control; they ask us for it. But it’s often not on the radar of residential customers, particularly those moving in from out of town who aren’t familiar with the rodent pressure here. They understand the need for cockroach and ant prevention, because those pests are always present, but we need to educate them about the rodent situation,” he explained.

Roof rats are the primary rodent species

SLICE OF THE PIE

About what percentage of your location's overall service revenue in the last calendar year was generated by rodent control services?



	All PMPs	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Average (Mean)	25%	36%	27%	19%	27%
50% or more	10%	30%	10%	3%	11%
30-49%	20%	32%	26%	15%	20%
10-29%	46%	32%	45%	49%	58%
Less than 10%	17%	6%	10%	26%	6%

Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 281



SIGNIFICANT RISE

In the past five years, has rodent control become a more or less significant portion of your location's business?

	All PMPs	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
More significant	53%	68%	45%	51%	56%
Same	35%	19%	43%	38%	33%
Less significant	3%	2%	2%	4%	4%
Can't compare; not involved 5 years ago	9%	11%	11%	8%	7%

Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 281

Soles and his team encounter; they're drawn to the area's prevalent waterways and fruit trees. "Last week, a customer told me they saw rats in their neighbor's yard, eating the fruit on the ground, and asked if there was anything we could do about it. It was the perfect time to recommend preventative measures," Soles said.

BUNDLED VS. STAND-ALONE.

For Soles Exterminating, bundling rodent control with general pest control services has been a beneficial strategy. It's one many other PMPs have adopted, according to the PCT Rodent Control survey. Three out of four (77 percent) operators offer a bundled service, while 23 percent sell rodent control services only as a stand-alone service.

"We've been bundling the services for commercial properties for many years, and for residential customers about five years," said Soles. "We discovered we could provide a better service for customers and increase our revenue per stop. Thus far, we've gotten positive feedback from our customers." ●

AT HOME

Which rodent control market generates the most income for your location?

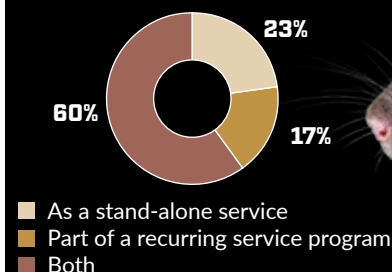


	All PMPs	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Residential	68%	79%	68%	64%	71%
Commercial	28%	17%	26%	32%	27%
Government	2%	4%	0%	2%	0%
Other	1%	0%	4%	1%	2%
No answer	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%

Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 281

PACKAGE DEAL

Is rodent control a stand-alone paid service or included as part of your recurring service program?



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 281



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Rodent management typically requires a multifaceted approach using a variety of baits, traps and other tools. Nearly all — 97 percent — of PMPs told PCT they use some type of baits, and 90 percent use some type of traps.

“You can’t just show up, put out some rodenticide and call it good,” explained Wilson Christner, co-owner of Whitmore Pest & Wildlife Control in Denver, Colo. “Depending on what our inspection turns up, our protocol may incorporate exclusion, trapping and a rodenticide program. We also provide the customer with a report

that includes site-specific recommendations, such as habitat modifications, to help prevent further infestations.”

Some accounts — restaurants, for example — can be more challenging than others. Whitmore co-owner Richard Christner described one of the challenges in the restaurant sector: “We often find that the staff is focused on efficiency, and so they leave the back door and the dumpster lid propped open. That makes it much more difficult to gain control of rodents. That’s one of the reasons commercial work needs to be structured at a higher frequency rate than residential.”

Caleb Fabry of Town & Country Pest Solutions in Rochester, N.Y., added that technician selection and training can help a pest management company achieve greater success. “The employees you choose are the No. 1 consideration in a successful rodent program,” he said. “We’re very particular about who we bring in and train; it takes a very special kind of person to handle a rodent job. They need to be a problem solver who is willing to investigate, spending time on their knees, crawling under decks and up into attics. Not everybody can do this job, so you need to be very careful in your hiring process.” ●



PRODUCTS & SERVICES

Which types of products/services does your location use to control rodents?

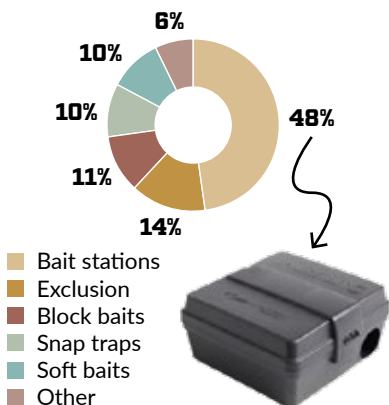
Bait stations 93%

Block baits	80%
Snap traps	76%
Glue traps	72%
Exclusion	70%
Soft baits	56%
Multiple-catch/Curiosity traps	47%
Tracking powders	24%
Place pack baits	19%
Pellet baits	18%
Liquid baits	17%
Non-toxic monitoring bait blocks	15%
Repellents	14%
Electronic monitoring devices	12%
Carbon dioxide (CO ₂)	9%
Fumigants	6%
Sterilization	5%
Electric shock traps	5%
Dry ice	1%
Other	3%

Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 281; Respondents could select multiple answers

TOP 5 TOOLS

What is your location's *primary* product/service regimen for controlling rodents?



Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 281

Rethinking Rodenticides?



It's safe to say that most PMPs are paying closer attention to the amount of rodenticides they're using than in the past. Between customers' (and PMPs') growing environmental concerns and pending EPA label changes, rodenticide usage faces intense scrutiny. That's likely a primary reason fewer than one in five PMPs (17 percent) said they are more dependent on rodenticides than they were five years ago. Twelve percent said they are less dependent, and 62 percent are holding the line.

"Per account, we are using less, or the same amount, of rodenticides as in the past. We're constantly researching other products to use to reduce our rodenticide usage," said Wilson Christner, co-owner of Whitmore Pest and Wildlife Control in Denver, Colo.

Richard Christner added, "We can use less rodenticide because we focus on providing our technicians with outstanding training, which helps them think strategically about when, where and how they place rodenticide. Precise placement helps keep prices down for our customers, and aligns with customer concerns about safety and environmental impacts."

The Christners don't anticipate needing to make any changes to their rodent control protocols when EPA enacts label changes because, said Richard, "Since starting our business in 2011, we have operated in a manner that's environmentally friendly and compliant with the pending EPA changes, including having all our operators certified by the state."

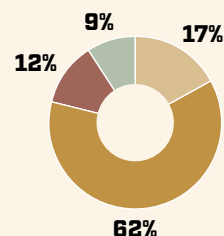
Not all PMPs are as prepared. In fact, 65 percent of survey respondents expressed concern about upcoming label changes, and 36 percent said they either have modified, or plan to modify, their rodent management program due to those changes. "We don't worry about what might happen with regulations; we're prepared to adapt however we need to once we see the changes," said Cheryl Chappuis, Holper's Pest & Animal Solutions, St. Louis. "My biggest concern is if EPA decides to allow counties to make these decisions. That could mean we'd need to comply with one set of rules for our accounts in St. Louis County and another set of rules in neighboring Franklin County."

RODENTICIDE DEPENDENCE

Are your location's rodent control services more or less dependent on rodenticide use today than they were five years ago?

■ More
 ■ Same
 ■ Less
 ■ Can't compare; not involved five years ago

Source: Readex Research; Number of respondents: 281



ABOUT THE SURVEY

The PCT 2024 State of the Rodent Control Market survey was sponsored by Bell Laboratories and compiled by Readex Research, a privately held research firm in Stillwater, Minn. A sample of 4,798 pest control company owners, operators, executives, technical directors, general managers and managers was selected from the PCT database. Data was collected from 290 respondents — a 6 percent response rate — via online survey from August 12-26, 2024. The margin of error for percentages, based on the 281 respondents whose company locations offer rodent control services, is plus or minus 5.7 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. Charts may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

THINGS CHANGE. ISN'T THAT AMAZING?



POWERED BY



FREE SUBSCRIPTION

NO CHARGES • NO CREDIT CARD NEEDED • NO FEE



24/7 **iQ** PULSE RAT **iQ** PULSE MOUSE **iQ** T-Rat **iQ** EXPRESS **iQ** LANDSCAPE **iQ**
WEIGHTED

For information on how the Power of **iQ** products can enhance your rodent control service and solve problems at your accounts, contact your local Pest Control Distributor or visit www.bellsensing.com.

