

The

ADVOCATE



A Publication of the Missouri Pest Management Association



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring is finally here, the time of year that we all look forward to during those long slow winter months. It's good to hear the sweet sound of the phone ringing with reports of ants and termites on the other end. Things are in full swing for us, and I hope they are for you as well.

With the increased number of call sometimes the stress can build. We must strive every day to keep our customers happy and deliver the best possible service to them that we can. Here is a customer commitment list to keep in mind:

- A customer is the most important person in any business. If it was not for our customers, we would not be in business.
- A customer is not dependent on you. You are dependent on them.
- A customer is not an interruption. They are the purpose of the work.
- A customer does not do you a favor when they call. You are not doing them a favor by serving them.
- A customer is part of a business, not an outsider.
- A customer is not someone to argue or match wits with.
- A customer brings you their wants. It is your job to try and fulfill those wants.
- A customer is the lifeblood of every business.

There is nothing more precious than a customer. You have no referrals without loyal customers, and these relationships are key to success.

I truly hope that you all have a busy and successful season.

Sincerely,

Jeremiah

Jeremiah Ryden
MPMA President

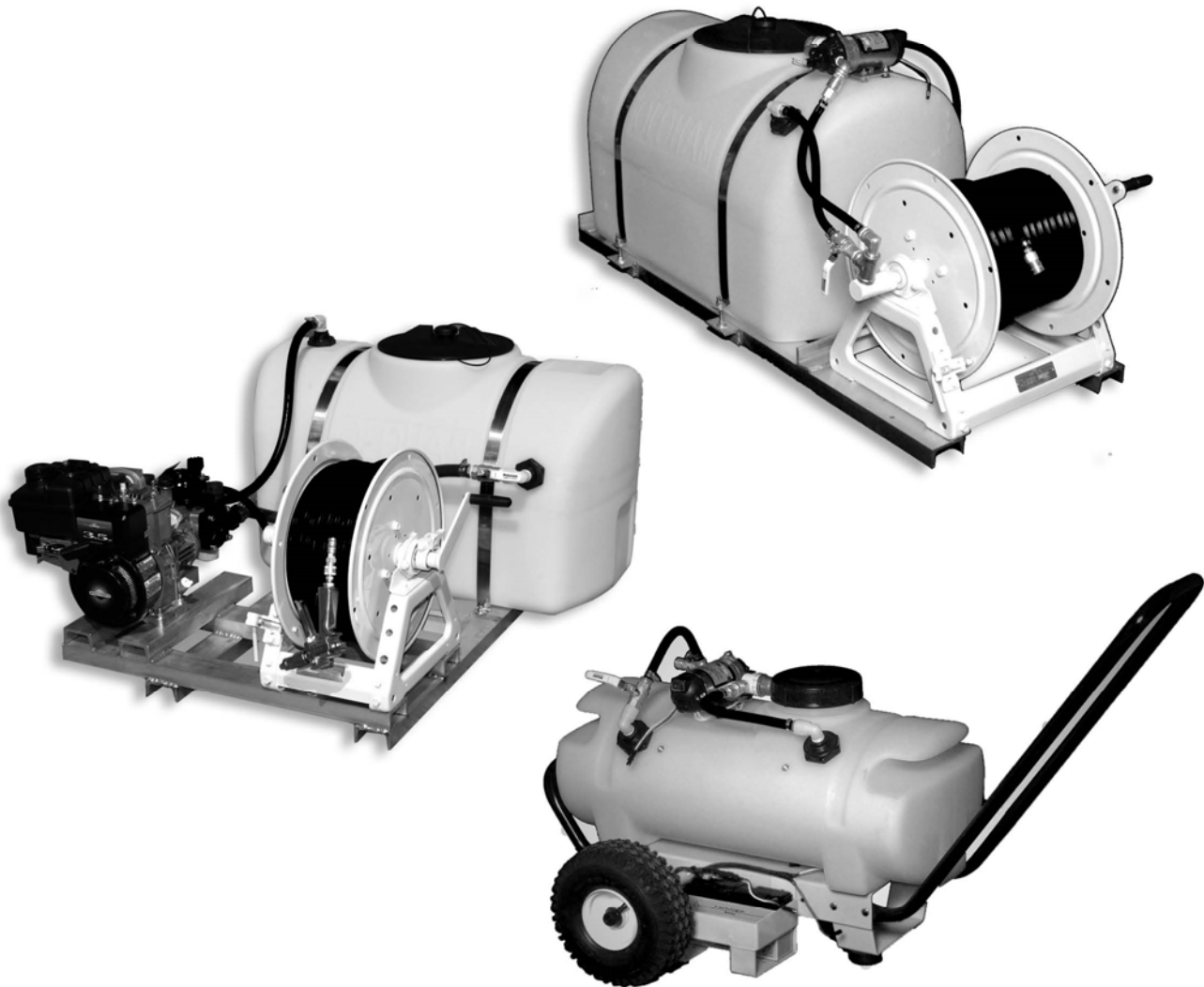


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NEWSLETTER OF THE MISSOURI PEST MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Content & Editorial Policy

News and items and/or letters pertaining to the Pest Management profession are welcomed. The editor has the right to edit or reject all material received. An address and telephone number where the writer may be reached during normal business hours should also be included for verification purposes.

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No responsibility is assumed for errors, misquotes or deletions as to this publication's content.

Distribution Changes

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Advertising

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Full Page	\$203.00/issue	\$750.00

Call for special Allied Member discount pricing at MPMA, 800-848-6722 or 573-761-5771.

Address & Other Changes

Notify MPMA is you change your address or company name. Write to MPMA, 722 E. Capitol Avenue, Jefferson City, MO 65101 or call 800-848-6722.

Postmaster: Send address changes to: 722 E. Capitol Avenue, Jefferson City, MO 65101.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 22, 2015
MPMA Board Meeting
MPMA Office ~ Jefferson City, MO

August 13-14, 2015
August Recertification, Board Meeting and PAC Golf Tournament
Jefferson City, MO

October 2, 2015
MPMA Board Meeting
MPMA Office ~ Jefferson City, MO

October 20-23, 2015
Pest World 2015
Nashville, Tennessee

December 9-10, 2015
Joint Annual Conference with GSLPCA
Hilton St. Louis Frontenac ~ St. Louis, MO

January 8, 2016
Winter School
Location TBD

March 11, 2016
MPMA Board Meeting
MPMA Office ~ Jefferson City

May 13, 2016
MPMA Board Meeting
MPMA Office ~ Jefferson City

August 18-19, 2016
August Recertification, Board Meeting and PAC Golf Tournament
Jefferson City



MPMA Legislative Day Report

March 15-19, 2015

I would like to thank the association for allowing me to represent MPMA in Washington, D.C. Here are the highlights of the conferences and my trip to the "Hill".

STATE ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP FORUM

NPMA's new regulatory affair associate, Andrew Bray, lead the meeting. Andrew has replaced Gene Harrington who has taken a position he could not refuse with another organization. We wish Gene great success in his new endeavor.

The NPMA staff discussed the new composition of the 14th Congress:

One the House side:
Democrats 188
Republicans 245
Vacancy 2
Republicans gain 13 seats

On the Senate side:
Democrats 44
Republicans 54
Independents 2
Who caucus with Democrats
Republicans Gain 9 seats

Including Bob Dold
President of Rose Pest Solutions in Chicago, IL!!
We have a voice in Congress!

With the change in Senate leadership, more legislation that is approved in the House will be voted on in the Senate.

There was a panel discussion of governmental affairs leaders from



Colorado, Virginia, Georgia, Arizona, and New York. NPMA suggested that Missouri look to other states for guidance, when faced with new regulatory issues. For example the Georgia Pest Management Association defeated the levy of Sales Taxes on pest management services. It was also suggested that state pest management associations should form coalitions with pesticide user groups such as lawn care, nurseries, golf courses, city parks, and farmers. One big voice may accomplish more than many smaller voices.

LEGISLATIVE DAY PROGRAM

The Legislative Day program covered fumigation (Chemical Security Facilities), Food Safety Modernization Act, Bee Health, the Pest Management Records Modernization Act, and America's Small Business Tax Relief Act of 2015 (HR 636).

The fumigation program pertained to new requirements of the Department

of Homeland security. Companies who store fumigants, aluminum phosphide, magnesium phosphide, and sulfuryl fluoride may have to register their facilities. Contact the Chemical Security Help Desk at email address csat@hq.dhs.gov for more information. Each company needs to determine their storage amounts of these fumigants. For aluminum phosphide and magnesium phosphide, the storage amount is the placard amount of 15KG! Sulfuryl Fluoride is 2500 pounds. Once again, contact the

Department of Homeland Security to see if your business qualifies for this registration.

FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION ACT

This law (FSMA) was passed January 2011. The final regulations are supposed to be written by 6/30/2015. However, the regulators are expected to miss the deadline. This law was written to protect the 48 million people who suffer from food poisoning, plus the 3000 who die from contaminated food each year. Businesses who are exempt from this law are USDA Facilities (meat, poultry, egg), juice manufactures, seafood processors, alcohol related businesses, low acid canning, and small businesses. Where PMP's can assist their food company clients is:

Section 101: FDA's access to company records

Section 102: Registration and possible

(Continued on page 5)

MPMA Legislative Day Report

March 15-19, 2015

suspension by FDA Section 103: Hazard analysis and risk-based prevention FSMA is very complex. For anyone who would like to have the 33 page power point presentation, please contact me at 573-334-3003.

BEE HEALTH

NPMA's focus topic was Bee Health. The value of insect pollination to US agricultural production is \$16.00 billion where about three fourths is attributable to honey bees. The USDA estimates that 30% of the bee hives are lost over the winter months. Yet the bee population rebounds in the spring, summer, and fall so that the number of bee colonies are stable. According to February 9, 2015 Congressional Research services Report Bee Health: The Role of Pesticides, "The precise reasons for honey bee loss are unknown." Science suggests that parasites, diet, and nutrition, lack of genetic diversity, habitat loss, bee keeping practices, weather, and disease are affecting bee health. In fact, the USDA and EPA found the varroa mite as the "most detrimental pest of honey bees. Unfortunately some are blaming neonicotinoid pesticides as the cause for the decline in bee health.

In response to President Obama's June 2014 Presidential memorandum, EPA will soon propose label language to 1500 pesticide products to reduce exposure to honey bees and other pollinators. Each state is required to develop & implement state pollinator protection plans. These plans focus on improving coordination and communication between beekeepers, growers, and property owners. The State of Missouri has joined DriftWatch.org. East Pest Management Company is encouraged to join. The goal is for commercial applicators to know where bee

keepers' hives are located to prevent accidental decimation of bees. The other purpose is to identify the location of sensitive crop registries to prevent accidental drift damage.

NPMA has written Best Management Practices for bees (Please find the attached BMPs). PENDING USDA/ APHIS AQI FEE INCREASE RULEMAKING

In April of 2014, the US Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) proposed rulemaking that will increase various agricultural quarantine inspection (AQI) fees. This proposed rule would impose \$540 million in additional "user fees" including a forty five percent fee increase to fumigators. APHIS has not increased fees in 10 years, but they raised the price without consulting the pest management industry. This action is a violation of Executive Order 13563 of 2011. Seventy percent of fumigations are performed during overtime hours for the inspectors so the fumigators are charged at a higher rate. The inspection fees plus overtime can mount to \$700-\$800.00 which can exceed the fumigation fee and the value of the commodity.

To add transparency to this rulemaking, Congresswoman Frederica Wilson has drafted HR 1091 which requires APHIS to withdraw the pending AQI rulemaking and to instead meet with stakeholders to develop an alternative AQI fee rule. On the Hill, I asked the Congressmen/ Congresswomen to support Congresswoman Wilson's bill.

PEST MANAGEMENT RECORDS MODERNIZATION ACT

This act would permit pest management professionals to electronically convey information to

consumers and state agencies. In December 2014, H.R. 5714 passed the House by a voice vote but failed to pass the Senate before the session ending.

Our goal was to have the House pass this bill again and send it over to the Senate for approval. This is not a controversial subject and should make it through both houses this year.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015 (H.R. 636)

This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code to make permanent after 2014 the \$500,000 allowance for the expensing of depreciable business property (section 179 property). H.R. 636 allows businesses to write-off the entire purchase price up to \$500,000.00 for the year the property is purchased instead of over several years. Qualifying equipment included machines purchased for business use, air conditioning and heating units, business vehicle with a weight in excess of 6,000 pounds, computers, software, office equipment, application equipment and heat equipment. If no action is taken, this deduction will be reduced to \$25,000 for 2015.

H.R 636 passed the House 272-142 on February 13, 2015. Our target was to obtain support for this issue in the Senate.

WHAT I ACCOMPLISHED ON THE HILL

Concerning Bee Health, I asked the Congressmen/Congresswomen to withhold support for measures that unfairly blame pesticides for the decline in bee health; specifically H.R. 1284 that cancels the registration of neonicotinoid pesticides. For the APHIS fees, I asked the Congressmen/

(Continued on page 6)

MPMA Legislative Day Report

March 15-19, 2015

Congresswomen to support HR 1091 that adds transparency to the rulemaking for these fees. I asked both the House and Senate delegation to support the Pest Management Records Modernization Act. Finally, I thanked the Congressmen/ Congresswomen for their vote to pass the America's Small Business Tax Relief Act of 2015. For the Senate, I asked them to support this issue in a forthcoming bill.

RESULTS FOR THE HILL

SENATORS

Blunt

- Bee Health: Will withhold support of legislation that unfairly blames pesticides
- APHIS FEES-The aid will discuss with the Senator
- Electronic Records-He will support this issue
- Tax Relief- He will support the \$500,000.00 deduction

McCaskill

- Bee Health: May withhold support of legislation that unfairly blames pesticides
- APHIS FEES-The aid will discuss with the Senator
- Electronic Records-She will support this issue
- Tax Relief- She will support the \$500,000.00 deduction

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Most of my contacts were versed on small business issues and not agriculture. That is why several aids needed to consult with the congressmen/congresswomen.

Vicky Hartzler

- Bee Health: Will vote down HR 1284
- APHIS FEES-will look into bill HR 1091
- Electronic Records: She will support Bill
- Tax Relief: Voted for Tax Relief HR 636 in 2/2015

Ann Wagner

- Bee Health: Has supported in the past will look into HR 1284
- APHIS FEES: Will look into Bill HR1091
- Electronic Records: She will support a bill
- Tax Relief: Voted for Tax Relief in 2/2015

Billy Long:

- Bee Health: **HR 1284 will be voted down in Committee**
- APHIS FEES: Will look into HR 1091.
- Electronic Records: He will support Bill.
- Tax Relief: Voted for Tax Relief in 2/2015.

Jason Smith:

- Bee Health: Will look into HR 1284
- APHIS FEES: Will look into HR 1091.
- Electronic Records: Will support Bill
- Tax Relief: Voted for Tax Relief in 2/2015

Emmanuel Cleaver:

- Bee Health: Will look into HR 1284
- APHIS FEES: Will Look into HR 1091
- Electronic Records: Will Support
- Tax Relief: Unknown

Blaine Luetkemeyer:

- Bee Health: Will vote down HR 1284
- APHIS FEES: Will look into HR 1091
- Electronic Records: Will support
- Tax Relief: Voted for Tax Relief in 2/2015

Sam Graves:

- Bee Health: Will Vote Down 1284
- APHIS FEES: Will vote for HR 1091
- Electronic Records: Will support bill
- Tax Relief: Voted for Tax Relief in 2/2015

William Clay Jr.

Dropped literature off at his office.

In Summary, the day on the "Hill" was very successful! We will be able to stop HR 1284, the bill which cancels the registration of Neonicotinoid pesticides, in committee. I believe NPMA will receive bipartisan support for HR 1091, which will force APHIS to review the inspection fee increase charged for fumigation. The Electronic Records issue should be passed in the House and Senate. Finally, the Tax Relief Bill, which has passed the House, is supported by both Senators, Blunt and McCaskill.

*Missouri Pest Management Association
Legislative Day Report submitted by
Lizbe Knotte, Government Affairs
Committee Chair*

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Industry News

Benchmarking Your Business Pest Control Technology (PCT)

PCT and NPMA teamed up to survey the industry about a variety of operating ratio benchmarks. We talked to PMPs about everything from vehicle expenses and employee costs to add-on services revenues and material/supply costs. How does your company compare?

By Jonathan K. Sweat, Director, **BASF** Professional & Specialty Solutions

As a pest control business owner how do you define success? Is it in the total number of satisfied customers you've provided pest control services to during the past 12 months? Is it in successfully achieving your list of corporate goals and objectives established at the beginning of the previous year? Or is it simply a matter of assessing your bottom-line performance when reviewing your company's year-end financials?

Chances are it's a combination of all those things, but to get a truly accurate sense of how your company performed this past year wouldn't it be helpful to know how you stacked up against your industry peers? That's the theory — and enormous value — behind the process of benchmarking your business, an exercise that allows you to compare your company's performance against others in the industry, helping to identify those areas where you can make improvements in the coming year. And isn't that what long-term business success is all about ... continuous improvement?

Last year, **BASF** Professional & Specialty Solutions partnered with the National Pest Management Association and PCT magazine to be the corporate sponsor for a comprehensive Operating Cost Ratio Survey designed to assist pest control companies in benchmarking their businesses. Given our longtime commitment to supporting the advancement of the professional pest management industry, not only from a product perspective but from a business perspective, we welcomed the opportunity.

The results of that survey appear in an exclusive executive summary in this month's issue of PCT magazine. We would like to thank all those randomly selected pest management professionals who took the time to participate in the survey. We're confident you'll find the results of the survey beneficial in benchmarking your business, laying the groundwork for a successful 2015!

Solutions Showcase: Ants Pest Management Professional (PMP)

Termidor SC termiticide/insecticide creates a zone of nonrepellent protection around a home. Ants passing through the treated area pick up the product and transfer the active ingredient to nestmates through routine contact, which enables Termidor to control ants that never make direct contact with a treated surface. Additionally, Alpine WSG insecticide is a spray with a flexible label, allowing it to be applied indoors and out – including doors and windows, under sinks, landscaping and yards. It complements Termidor SC by expanding the transfer zone, providing a one-two punch against ants.

Product Spotlight Pest Management Professional (PMP)

New Trelona Advance Termite Bait System (ATBS) delivers certainty and flexibility to PMPs who want control, predictability and price assurance as part of a successful termite baiting system. Trelona Compressed Termite Bait, with the new active ingredient Novaluron, provides faster termite elimination and uses less bait than previous active ingredients, the company says. PMPs that are already using ATBS and have existing accounts that haven't had termite activity for a year can begin using Trelona ATBS and benefit from a six-month inspection interval.

The BASF Professional & Specialty Solutions News Digest is compiled and distributed monthly by the Professional & Specialty Solutions communications team. It is distributed to the entire team to promote an understanding of what the news media is saying about BASF as well as our industry.

Industry News

J. F. Oakes, LLC Announces Improved Body Design

J. F. Oakes, LLC announces the improved body design on the already popular XLure® Ready To Use (R.T.U.) Multi-Species Beetle Floor Trap. Contains multiple pheromone and powerful food attractants for Red and Confused Flour Beetles, Cigarette, Warehouse and Khapra Beetles, plus 10 other stored product beetles and some psocids.

The newly modified body now has a tab on the top allowing the trap to be secured into place with a tether system. The tether system, also available from J. F. Oakes, LLC, will prevent removal by unauthorized personnel, keep it from being removed from a secured area and will help prevent damage to the reusable trap.



The XLure® R.T.U. Multi-Species Beetle Floor Trap is an effective monitoring and trapping tool that is easy to use and now easily secured using the new tab and tether system. No more hunting for traps that have been accidentally bumped or moved.

J. F. Oakes, LLC Offers Replacement Hose for Compress Air Sprayers

J.F. Oakes, LLC has your winter solution for compressed air sprayer replacement hoses. Don't let the winter temperatures make your spray job more difficult.

Our Chemoak Replacement Hoses are **extremely flexible** even in the coldest temperatures. Chemoak Replacement Hoses are made from a polyflex hose with polyurethane tube, which is chemical resistant and will last 2 to 3 times longer than most compressed air sprayer hoses.

Also, Chemoak Replacement Hoses are ½ foot longer than standard replacement hoses, another feature to make your spraying job easier. Chemoak Replacement Hoses have swivels on both ends making them easier to use and they **will not kink**. Chemoak Replacement Hoses have hose guards on both ends to protect from daily use. Chemoak Replacement Hoses are available in red, green and black and carry a **5 year guarantee**.

Contact us at sales@jfoakes.com for more information.

Are You Seeking a New Job or New Employees in 2015?

Are you a job-seeking pest management professional or an employer searching for a new hire? Look no further! **Visit the NPMA Career Center** - a highly targeted, interactive job board focused on pest control industry companies and professionals.

Both members and non-members can use the NPMA Career Center to reach qualified candidates. Employers can post jobs online, search for qualified candidates based on specific job criteria, and create an online resume agent to email qualified candidates daily. They also benefit from online reporting providing job activity statistics to track each job posting's ROI.

For job seekers, the NPMA Career Center is a free service providing access to employers and jobs in the pest control industry. In addition to posting their resumes, job seekers can browse or view jobs based on the criteria they find matches their goals best. Job seekers can also post confidentially with confidence or search anonymously by creating a Job Agent. Job Agents notify job seekers via email when jobs matching their criteria are posted eliminating the need to visit their online accounts daily to track new postings.

There are currently 43 job opportunities posted from 25 different pest management employers. **Ready to get started? Visit the NPMA Career Center** today to browse and post jobs!

8 Sinful Customer Service Actions

Nancy Friedman, the Telephone Doctor

This is not MY list. These “sins” are from my audiences who share their views when I speak at conferences across the country. We survey the groups to find out what bothers them from companies.

And man, how they love to vent. And they love to let me know what bugs them, what frustrates them, how they want to be treated as a customer. Usually a freewheeling discussion and one that gets my attention a lot. It should get yours.

So listen up. Your customers are talking to you. And customer service training can help you.

Drum roll please...in no particular order. By the way, these go for on the phone or in person. As a matter of fact, all 6 touch points of communication.

Sin #1: Not smiling

Man is that important. Our Telephone Doctor motto: “**A phony smile is better than a real frown**” would have helped the gal who was trying to help me Saturday. What a poopy face she had on her. I refused to let it get me down or let her infect me at all. I smiled all the way through our conversation. I’m pretty sure it aggravated her. As my husband says, “just be glad her head isn’t on your body.”

Sin #2: Coworkers talking to each other and ignoring the customer

That’s an OMG! Stop talking to ‘each other’ when a customer walks into the store. Immediately. Talk with them! Wave to them. Smile at them. If you’re talking with another customer, they’ll see how nice you acknowledge all the others.

Sin #3: Not caring

Your customer can tell, immediately, if you ‘care’ or not. The immediate interaction retailers make with the customer needs to be a ‘caring’ one. Your facial expressions, your tone of voice, your listening skills. They can tell if you judge them as an annoyance or not. It’s usually written all over your face. It’s the old saying “the customer doesn’t care how much you know, until they know you care.”

Sin #4: A poor attitude

There are dozens, ok hundreds, of articles on how important ATTITUDES are in connecting with customers. Almost everyone in customer service has written one. But it’s not something you can easily, if at all, teach. The difference between attitude and moods?

Attitudes are permanent. Moods are temporary. Find staff with the permanent attitudes and you’ll have less bad moods, because those of us with a great attitude don’t like to wallow in the bad mood department. It’s not rocket science. It’s not brain surgery. It’s plain old common sense.

Sin #5: Rushing the customer

Everyone is busy. Ballgames to go to. Appointments to make. Things to do. Yada, yada.

The answer to that? Thank goodness we’re busy. We should be thanking our lucky stars we’re busy. But being busy does not give you carte blanche to rush folks. An easy, fresh smile to the person who’s waiting will go a loooooooooong way! Count on that.

Sin #6: Not listening

Listening skills, my friends, is the number one skill or trait our customers want from us. Time after time that trumps the list of ‘what do I want.’ Listen to us talk, to our questions. Listen to our requests. Our LISTENUP article, goes a long way. Take a peek.

Sin #7: Don’t point! Take them.

There are a handful of stores who when you ask them where something is will hand deliver you to the spot. There needs to be more stores like that. Nuf said.

Sin #8: Pushing customers off to the WEBSITE because you’re busy or you don’t want to help

Customers are pretty smart. If they want your website, they normally can find it all by themselves. Pushing them to the website because you’re too busy or don’t feel like helping is a major sin. It’s like asking them to leave your house.

Be more responsive. Interact with the customer. Don’t push them to the WEBSITE at the first chance. Chances are they’ll find a competitor’s site first and never see yours. Bingo! You lost a sale. If you ‘have’ to get them to your site, you might consider going with them and helping them along.

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60 Years in the Pest Control Industry



D. P. "Dub" Hays is celebrating 60 years in the pest control business. Dub started his first job on May 15, 1955 in Phillipsburg, Kansas. Over the years he has worked in Nebraska, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas and Missouri. Dub worked for twelve years for Orkin and nine years for Terminix before striking out on his own. At 88 years old Dub owns and operates Hays Pest Control in Moberly, Missouri. Dub was named the Missouri Pest Management Association's "Man of the Year" in 2011 and is a Past President of the Nebraska Pest Control Association. Dub believes in customer service and he feels honesty and dedication are the foundation of the pest control business.

~ Congratulations Dub!

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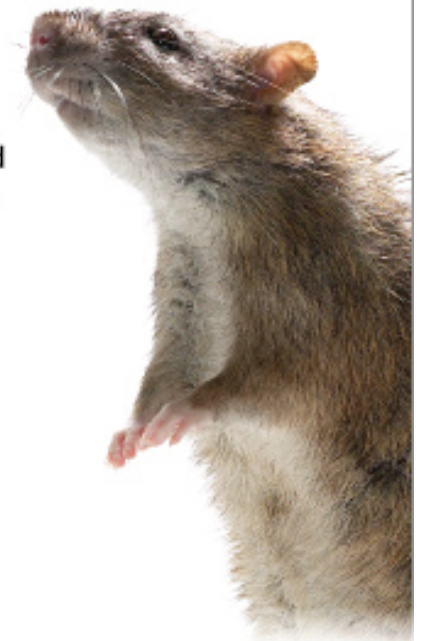
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Termite Renewals

June Van Klaveren, Compelling Communications

Several of my clients have come to me with this question: "We have had termite warranty agreements with customer, but they sell the house to someone else, and that person fails to pick up the agreement to continue protection against termites. How can we get the new homeowners to recognize the value of termite protection and continue the agreement?"

I posed this question to the LinkedIn Group – **MARKETING PEST CONTROL SERVICES** – and the responses were very interesting.

Some PMPs felt their renewals increased when they incorporated visible bait systems where the customer can see the device.

Others offer bundled services at a discounted rate to pick up all services on the home. They offer termite protection and "Free" pest control for one price. One PMP sends a cancellation letter via certified mail and reports that it gets the customer's attention.

Another suggestion was to offer a 20% discount if the customer would pay 5 years renewal in advance. The benefit to the customer was twofold: 1. They saved money 2. It was more convenient. The same PMP reported that about 25% of customers took advantage of it.

Another PMP reports, "The biggest problem we face with selling and renewing termite accounts in my market is the lack of consumer awareness when it comes to termites. In the past when swarming season came, all of the local news stations ran stories on the horrors of termites. This type of reporting in our area does not exist as it did in the past. Now it has become our job to inform the public

about termites. Unfortunately we can't get the same attention as the local news gets. Termites are still out there but they just don't get media attention."

Customers need valuable, compelling information about the benefits of your service...and they need it often. Once a year won't cut it. Use invoices, cards, letters, emails, drop-by visits, phone calls, blogs, etc.

Others made these suggestions:

- Make scheduling renewal inspections easier on your clients.
- Communicate with your clients more often than once a year when you want them to renew. Keep them aware of termite activity in the area, new exotic species, moisture control, reducing termite conditions, how costly termite damage is and that their homeowner's insurance does not cover termite damage.
- Treat every home as it was your mother's house. Don't just inform your clients of termite issues. Look out for other problems that may exist in and around the home. This builds more value to your service and a stronger relationship with your client.

One PMP sends out statements 30 days in advance of the expiration date, and includes a message that if you are the new homeowner, there is a Valuable Termite Warranty already in place and you may be eligible to renew the contract at a reduced price. We offer a \$75 transfer fee for the new homeowner to start off with, that demonstrates the value there. Generally if they not only renew the annual termite warranty plus sign up for annual pest control service the company waives the \$75 transfer fee (more savings for them).

Show cases studies of others in the neighborhood (with their permission) who have recently had termites, learned about prevention. It is an insurance policy for their biggest investment ... the home. Show them what the cost of repairs would cost.

Offering a termite "service agreement" vs. a contract allows an operator to market renewals even if they did not treat the property.

Offering to do inspections for real estate agents at little or no fee to their listings might also get your foot in the door. No damage coverage, only subterranean termite infestations.

Title or escrow closing arrangements are a good time to offer the service agreement. A local mortgage company who requires homeowner insurance, flood insurance, taxes etc., paid out of escrow, would be another source for termite service agreement renewals if it was paid the same time. Homeowners can relate to insurance and why they have to have it. A termite service agreement can be included in the thinking of what they need to have on their home.

If you'd like to contribute to this discussion, visit LinkedIn and search for the group "Marketing Professional Pest Control," click the join button and let us know your ideas.

June Van Klaveren owns Compelling Communications, a company dedicated to helping pest control companies market their services. She can be reached at 800-779-0067 or june@compelcom.com.

PROTECTING YOUR BUSINESS SO YOU CAN PROTECT YOUR CUSTOMERS

Welcome to the National Pest Management Association! By joining NPMA, your company has become part of an exclusive, global network of pest management professionals.



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Each year, NPMA hosts a number of conferences, meetings and online forums that provide unrivaled opportunities throughout the year for you to make connections with new suppliers, forge alliances with similar service providers, or prepare your company's future leaders.

Nowhere else in the pest management industry will companies find such targeted, valuable forums in which to build personal relationships, share ideas and best practices, and to discover new service lines and marketing strategies.

NPMA delivers proactive and prudent protection to the pest management industry. We protect your business from unfair legislation and regulations. We protect your company's future by providing networking and business opportunities and top-notch employee training. And, with NPMA in your corner, your business is free to focus on what matters most: protecting your customers' health and property.

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From the Claims File

Andy McGinty, EVP/COO, LIPCA Insurance

Our insured put a house under a termite contract about 1.5 years ago. The contract in question was your typical termite damage warranty. Pretty good contract but could be stronger to protect his business but that's another story. A graph was done but the original evidence of termite activity/damage was not listed. Anyway, the customer calls one day and says he has live termites. Our insured goes out and verifies the infestation and finds isolated infestation/damage on one wall inside the home. Routine type of claim that PMPs see over time that perform termite work. Here is the curveball. Our insured discusses with the customer, causation, how the area is going to be treated and how the repairs are going to be handled. Again pretty routine situation which a lot of PMPs have tried to handle on their own without involving their insurance company. Happens every day.

What does not happen every day is the insured telling the customer to go ahead and take care of the damages and send the PMP the bill as "he will take care all the damage". A common mistake that unfortunately happens more often than you think. To add more color to this story is insured was related to the homeowner and did not expect anything more than a bill for the damage our insured witnessed earlier. As you have guessed, the bill sent to our insured by the customer/relative was a little more than what was anticipated. Our insured was expecting a bill of less than \$5,000 and the bill received was approximately \$40,000. For those keeping track, that is 8 times the amount the insured was expecting to pay.

Needless to say this insured does not have \$40,000 to reimburse the customer/relative. He is now being sued for the damage repair and one of

the allegations are "he will take care of all the damage". Just to be clear to everyone, our insured admits he said this.

So the questions that many of you, along with me, are asking:

1. How often did the insure keep tabs with the damages and extent of damage?
2. Why did the PMP promise the customer/relative "he would take care of all the damage"?
3. The contract is only 1.5 years old but the graph is basically blank. How much damage is really owed? Can the insured (or insurance carrier) reduce or mitigate the previous damage or all damage that is being claimed?
4. Do you think there is a coverage issue with the insurance carrier promising to fix damage?
5. How many laps around the track should the insured have to run as punishment!!!!!!

Consider the questions yourself and compare to our answers below.

~~~~~

Questions from the previous article:

1. How often did the insure keep tabs with the damages and extent of damage?
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3. The contract is only 1.5 years old but the graph is basically blank. How much damage is really owed? Can the insured (or insurance carrier) reduce or mitigate the previous damage or all damage that is being claimed?
4. Do you think there is a coverage issue with the insurance carrier promising to fix damage?
5. How many laps around the track

should the insured have to run as punishment!!!!!!

Our Answers:

1. As you have guessed the answer is "NONE"!
2. The homeowner was related to the insured. So, of course, he thought that my relative would never try and take advantage of me. Wrong! Seen more family squabbles over pest control claims that I can count.
3. There all kinds of ways to mitigate the damages. A lot depends on the state that you are located. But the blank graph is the killer. It becomes and he said, they said credibility issue and since the insured did not go back out to check up on the damages-they will have a tough time controlling the damages claimed.
4. YES!!!!!!!!!!!!!! In just about every general liability policy there are conditions where you cannot promise to pay or "prejudice" the rights of the insurance carrier/policy to incur to pay damages that they are not obligated to pay under the law.
5. Well let's just say if he ate before he had to run, the end results would not be pretty!

Next claim:

You perform services to a customer to do a treatment and repair some very minor damage at the customer's home. The PMP feels the work was completed as promised and per the terms of the contract. Pretty routine right?

Well when the customer goes and pays the bill which is supposed to be around \$1100. The PMP gets the check and it is about \$300 short. The insured tries to deal with the customer to see why the payment was reduced. The customer says that he

*(Continued on page 19)*

## From the Claims *continued*

did not like the quality of the repairs and was told that it would take around \$300 to correct by another company.

The PMP requests to try and redo the work to the satisfaction of the customer but is refused and will no longer communicate to try an amicably resolve. So what can the PMP do to try and seek satisfaction against this customer? Oh by the way, the customer is a trial lawyer:

1. Take the customer to small claims court?
2. Slit the customer's tires? (yes we had to deal with this issue in the past)
3. Protest in front of the customer's home? (again yes we had to deal with this in the past)
4. Put something in social media about the customer's actions with colorful "opinions" of how the PMP feels about this person?

Consider the questions yourself and compare to our answers below.

~~~~~

Questions from the previous article:

1. Take the customer to small claims court?
2. Slit the customer's tires? (yes we had to deal with this issue in the past)
3. Protest in front of the customer's home? (again yes we had to deal with this in the past)
4. Put something in social media about the customer's actions with colorful "opinions" of how the PMP feels about this person?

Our Answers:

1. You could but is your time worth \$300 or more to hear a Judge "Wapner" make that type of decision especially when they know so little about what you do on a daily basis?
2. Yes please don't do this. Especially when the store's camera gets you

on film. Yes a very similar situation occurred like this and it does not help that credibility issue that comes up at trial and we are trying to defend you.

3. Those trespassing allegations in the lawsuit are a pain to get dismissed. The insured ended up losing more business because of this action. Told me, "Really didn't think that one through."
4. Yes this is the main question and issue of this claim. Our insured did this and is being sued for over \$10,000. Most of the allegations are for intentional acts to defame, slander, etc and are not covered under most GL policies that I have seen. Best thing to do is WAIT A DAY TO CALM DOWN! I know it is hard and have made the same mistakes by responding to fast. Be careful.

Next Claim:

This one is more serious. Bed bugs which we know most PMPs are tired of hearing about but the claims are now more common than ever. Attorneys around the country are starting to specialize in suing anyone around mainly due to some of the large settlements and jury verdicts.

Our insured treats a hotel. Bed bugs found on the second floor but he also wants to inspect the rooms to the side, three rooms above and three below to see if there are any live bed bugs. Pretty reasonable request other than the manager says no as he didn't want to pay for these "extra" inspections. So the insured treats the one room. Months later he gets sued by a customer that stayed at the hotel and was bitten by bed bugs.

It is rare that the PMP gets sued directly from the plaintiff. It is more common to be brought in on a 3rd party action by the hotel (the hotel gets sued by the customer and the hotel then sues the pest company after

that). This is where it gets very interesting.

Our investigation reveals that the room where the customer was bitten was one of the rooms that our insured wanted to treat but was told no. In reading the allegations, the customer sued our insured because.....wait for it....."We should have forced the manager of the hotel to inspect the room where the plaintiff was bitten." Yes they said "forced". Of course after shaking my head a few minutes I call the plaintiff attorney and go over the facts and why our insured was sued directly by his client. After the typical "lawyerese" response I basically told the attorney you have no contract with our insured so that exposure is out. We have it documented we requested to inspect that room but was refused by the hotel manager. 5 days later our insured was dismissed. How did we get a dismissal that fast you say?

Questions:

1. How did the PMP document the manager refusing the other inspections?
2. Is documenting your file sufficient?
3. What other documents should be used to protect your company when this happens (and you know it does a lot!).
4. Is it worth the service and money when the customer limits what you know needs to be done vs. what services you end up performing?

Consider the questions yourself, possibly discuss at your training sessions and compare to our answers that will be printed in next edition. Good luck.

*Andy McGinty, EVP/COO
LIPCA Insurance Industry Owned Pest/
Lawn Program
andy.mcginty@lipca.com*

How to Survive in a Changing Economy

Lloyd Merritt Smigel

Have you noticed that gas prices are up? The building industry is in the toilet. No one is spending money as they used to? The overall Real Estate industry is down, and with all this going on – what are YOU doing differently? If you are still running your company, the way you always did – good luck to you. Your profits and growth figures will shrink.

So what do you do?

Uh – oh. I am going to say the “C” work that everyone hates. You have to CHANGE.

Change the way you have been doing things. Many of the companies I work with hate this, but they have to throw the excess weight off the ship or it will go down. They may even have to change the direction their boat is going. Yes, it has been a comfortable ride at sea, but the weather has certainly changed.

Here are a few of the changes you might want to look into:

1. Have a Strategy Meeting
2. Better routing – Less gas expenditures
3. Increase prices, at least annually
4. Don't sell cheap – this is not the time.
5. Be sure to get decent initials on all jobs.
6. Decide on what accounts or divisions are not worth continuing
7. Eliminate personnel that you are 'carrying'
8. Review or establish an effective sales Department
9. Increase your collection efforts
10. Review your hiring procedures to bring in better people
11. Cross Train
12. Tighten up or establish your quality control and quality assurance programs
13. Review your Marketing program

14. Look for additional add on services
15. Review Present Goals and Objectives
16. Review your training needs

The above are just some of the items the companies I consult with have been attacking.

Yes, there are more, but I wanted to inform you that if the economy continues this way – you had better be ready to “ride it out”.

If you don't make changes in the above, you may sink. I have already seen companies sell because the water is getting to rough for them.

The problem with all of the above is that in many cases the owner/ manager does not know HOW to make these changes. Get help.

One of the things that I see out there quite often is that the owner/ manager KNOWS that he has to change but does not want to ask for help. He or she would rather see the ship go down than to admit to anyone that he or she does not know what to do. Remember, all these big ships need tugboats to get them in to the harbor. If you need help – GET IT!

It doesn't matter what it costs to keep your ship

afloat. The repercussions are horrendous if you DON'T get the help.

Most of the Family Businesses I work with have this problem from one generation to the other. It is often, at this point in time, the younger generation wants to make many changes. The problem is that some may be good and others not. You might want to get input to the decision making because the wrong decision could be fatal.

These hard times that are upon us will separate many of mediocre run companies from the good ones. This is the time to ACT not to postpone over and over and over....

**Change in
the economy
means we have
to work
SMARTER
not HARDER!**



Lloyd Merritt Smigel

Our economy has changed and we have to change with it. I am still involved with the Discovery retreats, which are designed to help you make the necessary changes to advance in this economy not just stay afloat or be happy to make payroll.

It is time for YOU to invest in YOU and LEARN what you need to know to establish a PLAN to move forward.

*If you stand still, you will be
trampled to death.*



Call Terry NOW for consulting information and to order Lloyd's latest book, **Bug People to Business People** at (760) 751-0336 or email: terrycare@att.net

For Retreat information, please contact Dena at (706) 941-8140

www.lloydsmigel.com

Why Advertise?

Lloyd Merritt Smigel

I don't get it. People spend lots and lots of money to get people to call them and then when they do:

1. They get a recording Press 1 for this Press 2 for that and hang up
2. No one answers the phone after 5 rings and hang up
3. They get someone who has no idea what he or she is doing
4. They are told that someone will have to call them back.
5. They are put on hold for 3 hours
6. They get to listen to your on hold advertising and/or elevator music.

What in the world is going on out there?

The other side of this coin is that you are cancelling more accounts than you are getting in.

HOLDING ON to your accounts, in my humble opinion, is just as important as getting new accounts – maybe even more important.

It is also a bit bizarre to see how easy it is to cancel your services. Often some office person takes the call and merely processes it rather than try to save it.

All in all, why are you advertising if #1, you are not professionally handling incoming calls and, #2 have a program to save every account that wants to cancel?

Here's another scenario for you. I call your company to complain to the manager. My expectations is for him or her to 'make it right' so I don't cancel (or sue).

Me – *“Is the Manager in, please?”*

Operator – *“Who’s calling?”* (Note: She IGNORED my question)

ME – *“I am a customer and would like to talk to the manager.”*

Operator – *“.. and what is this in reference to?”*

Me – *“It’s in reference to a problem I am having with your company.”*

Operator – *“and what is that sir?”*

Me – HANG UP – CANCEL – CALL MY ATTORNEY

Me – *“Hi, I would like to talk to someone about your Pest*

Services”

Operator – *“Please hold.”*

Operator – *“Can I help you?”*

Me – *“Yes, I would like to talk to someone about your Pest Serviced.”*

Operator – *“Our sales representative is out right now – can I have him call you back?”*

Me – *“How long would that be?”*

Operator *“It would probably be some time today or tomorrow – please hold.”*

BYE BYE

I see and hear and LIVE this almost daily. We all do. And then we hear how tough business is. Go figure.

The point is that before you decide to advertise clean up your house before the new company calls on you. Implement some policies – get a strategy and make each call count for new business and save as many customers as you can.

Mike Katz, the President of Western Exterminating Company heads up one of the largest Pest Control companies in the U.S. I call his office and ask for Mike Katz.

Me – *“I'd like to speak to Mike Katz, please.”*

Operator – *“One moment please.”*

Mike – This is Mike, how can I help you?”

...and then I call a little company and I get drilled. The owner/manager screens his calls because he is too busy. I believe Mike is just as busy. When I ran a branch or a district or was National Training Director with over 50 offices, I never screened my calls.

If we ARE truly a service business – perhaps we should act like one.

For those of you out there that are on top of this – Great. Keep up the good work.

If you are not in tune to true service – fear not – the customer can always go elsewhere.

Missouri Pest Management Association
**Annual Recertification &
Golf Tournament Fundraiser**

August 13-14, 2015 ~ Capitol Plaza Hotel ~ Jefferson City, MO

Thursday, August 13

- 10:00 am Board of Directors Meeting, MPMA office
- 1:00 pm PAC Fund-Raiser Golf Tournament , Railwood Golf Course
- 6:00 pm Bocce Tournament (2-person teams), Prison Brews

Friday, August 14

- 7:30 am Registration
 - 8:00 - 9:00 am **Rodents**
Speaker: Mike Weissman, Syngenta
 - 9:00 - 10:00 am **Termite Baiting and Biology**
Speaker: Neil McNeill, Dow Agro Sciences
 - 10:00 am Break
 - 10:15 - 11:15 am **Bed Bugs Biology and Control**
Speaker: Travis Chambers, BASF Corporation
 - 11:15 - 12:15 pm **Ants**
Speaker: Travis Chambers, BASF Corporation
 - 12:30 pm Lunch
 - 1:15 - 2:45 pm **Perimeter Pest Management and Occasional Invaders**
Speaker: Brian Sundnas, Rockwell Labs
 - 2:45 - 3:45 pm **Roaches Baiting and Biology**
Speaker: Brian Sundnas, Rockwell Labs
 - 3:45 - 4:45 pm **Safety and Labels**
Speaker: Harry Connoyer, Harry's Consulting and Pest Supplies
 - 4:45-5:15 pm Missouri Department of Agriculture
NOTE: Sources of Groundwater Contamination handouts will be distributed.
-

The Missouri Pest Management Association offers recertification training several times throughout the year to provide our members with the tools they need to conduct their business. For more information about the August Recertification call MPMA's Executive Director, Sandy Boeckman, at 800-848-6722 or visit our website at www.mopma.org.

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2015 MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL APPLICATION

Dues run July 1 through June 30. Please complete the information listed below, verify information with your signature and mail in the corresponding dues amount. Make check payable to MPMA and mail to: 722 E. Capitol Avenue, Jefferson City, MO 65101. If you have questions, call 573-761-5771 or 800-848-6722.

Company Name: _____

Company Representative: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

For Companies with Annual Sales Volume of...	Annual MPMA/NPMA Dues are...
<input type="checkbox"/> \$0 - \$100,000	\$185
<input type="checkbox"/> \$100,001 - \$200,000	\$235
<input type="checkbox"/> \$200,001 - \$500,000	\$335
<input type="checkbox"/> \$500,001 - \$1,000,000	\$645
<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000,001 - \$2,500,000	\$915

Allied,
Affiliated,
and Limited
Members
 \$125

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Active Members: Any person, firm or corporation engaged in pest management service work, for hire to the public at large shall be eligible for membership in this Association.

Affiliated Members: Any active member that operates or controls another firm, and/or business location actively engaged in the pest management service business.

Limited Members: Any person, firm or corporation not fully conforming with qualifications for Active members. A limited member shall automatically become an Active member upon meeting the qualifications set forth for Active Membership.

Allied Members: Any person, firm or corporation not engaged in pest management service work but which manufactures or supplies products, equipment, materials or provides services used by the pest management industry shall be eligible for Allied membership.

Honorary Members: Any person who has made a contribution of material benefit to the pest management industry may become an honorary member by three-fourth (3/4) vote of the members of the Association in annual meeting assembled.