

Network News

Produced by:



A monthly newsletter informing and educating the LandOpt Nationwide Network



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LandOpt Performance Appraisal System Helps Contractors Look Beyond the Numbers

It's that time of year! LandOpt Contractors are hard at work on their 2012 annual plan, the emphasis of which is the Financial Plan that will be the focus of the Financial Planning training to be held in Pittsburgh Oct. 31 – Nov. 3.

Many of the numbers included in the financial plan are driven by your goals and vision for the coming year. Marketing, growth, expansion into new markets and new hires are all important factors for consideration. In the midst of all of that forward thinking, don't forget to consider your most important asset – your current team members.

That's where one of LandOpt's most valuable (and often underutilized) tools can be helpful. The Performance Appraisal System (PAS) is designed to help you and your team members build a roadmap for their success and create an opportunity for ongoing dialogue. Through the identification of primary and secondary objectives, managers can best identify the tools, training and support necessary for each team member to accomplish his/her goals. You might ask how this is all tied to financial planning? Having a roadmap for each team member allows Owners and General Managers to anticipate and properly budget for the costs associated with any of a number of variables such as the purchase of new equipment, bonus and salary increases, vacation time, promotions, and specialized training.

By utilizing the PAS to look ahead, Owners and GMs are not only able to give every team member a clear picture of his/her particular role in the company's overall growth plan, but the PAS can also identify gaps more easily. Examples of "gaps" include the need for additional manpower or special skill sets necessary to keep up with anticipated growth and/or new service offerings, or to pick up responsibility once someone is promoted. If recruiting and hiring assistance is necessary to fill those gaps, then the financial plan can account for LandOpt's assistance on that front as well.

Most importantly, however, is the fact that the PAS allows you to keep each of your team members engaged in his/her career success. Each of you has outstanding talent within your organization that you value, and it's important to make sure each individual feels that they are vital to the company's success plan. On an industry average, the cost of replacing an employee is between 3 and 5 times an individual's annual salary. Add to that the soft costs such as lost productivity, a potential lag in employee morale, and ramp up time with a new hire, and it's evident that the effects of replacing key roles are far-reaching. Taking the time to consider and plan for the success and professional growth of existing team members throughout the year via the PAS makes much better economical sense.

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LandOpt Professional Development Activity

Training & Events:

- Oct. 24-27—Transformation Training
- Oct. 31-Nov. 3—Financial Planning
- Nov. 14-16—PM Boot Camp
- January 24-26 —Principals Meeting

Webcasts:

- Oct. 20—Quadrant Selling
- Nov. 3—Financial Planning Progress, Pt. 1
- Nov. 17—Presenting 2012 Plans to Your Team
- Dec. 1—Financial Planning Progress, Pt. 2

Network Success!

- Congratulations to Mike Dettloff, Account Manager at Miller Landscape for showing that professionalism, diligence and follow-through can pay-off. He recently renewed a \$48K snow agreement for 36 months, and included a 46.5% increase. Nice work, Mike!
- Congratulations to ProScape's Adam Randall, now an Ohio Certified Nursery Technician – Landscape after successfully completing a 170-question exam based on industry knowledge. The certification will serve to enhance Adam's sales ability, as it sets him apart for his technical knowledge and industry expertise. Way to go, Adam!
- Sales professional Mike Dimeo is working hard for Burkholder Brothers in Southeastern PA. He recently closed both \$42K and \$82K long-term agreements. Congrats!
- The LandOpt Network continues to outperform previous years. Long-term maintenance sales are on the verge of cresting \$14M and the Network's total maintenance base has grown to \$14.93M on the year. That's some exceptional selling and retention, folks! Looking forward to seeing some record-breaking year-end totals!



The Importance of Employee Recognition

A Message from Tim Smith, President/CEO



Several weeks ago, in the midst of flipping channels on a Sunday evening, I stopped briefly to watch a few moments of the Emmy Awards. Perhaps it was the overabundance of television coverage (I was hard-pressed to find a channel that wasn't covering the red carpet arrivals!), the glittering gowns or the impossibly attractive men and women and the throngs of fans who turned out to admire them, but I was intrigued enough to watch for a short time. Regardless of how richly these entertainers are compensated and no matter how widely they are adored, what was important to them that evening was public recognition for a job well done.

My interest in the show dissolved fairly quickly, but I found myself contemplating the true importance of employee reward and recognition within our business long after the channel had been changed. Do each of us currently do a good job of saying "thank you" and "job well done" to our team members? Do you have an employee recognition program in place? How do you identify what is worthy of reward and recognition—do you rely on monthly or annual goals or objectives? What about the small day-to-day achievements and the moments of unexpected individual customer service that go above and beyond the call of duty? Providing positive feedback, reward and recognition on a regular basis is a critical component to keeping employee morale high and providing real pride of ownership in the roles that each of your team members fulfill.

Now, I'm not advocating that you roll a red carpet out your door and buy gold statues for your team members (though wouldn't that be nice!) but what I am suggesting is that you evaluate how well you identify and celebrate individual and team accomplishments, and more importantly, how you decide what is appropriate for each person. Because, the reality is, not everyone on your team wants or needs a "gold statue." Some people consider that kind of praise and reward excessive, unnecessary or embarrassing while others not only crave it, they require it in order to feel appreciated.

One of the most powerful tools we use at LandOpt is the AVA (Activity Vector Analysis) Behavior Assessment. We use it in the License Sales process, we use it to hire team members, we use it to foster better communications among team members and we use it to assist each Licensee with hiring and recruiting. It's important because it allows you to truly understand what makes each individual "tick," so to speak. And what you'll discover is that, depending on an individual's personality, everyone is motivated differently. While some may want the "Emmy" treatment with lots of public praise, others find much greater meaning in a sincere, one-on-one thank you, and still others are motivated by financial or tangible rewards. The point is that everyone is different and the challenge for owners and managers is to not only understand that, but to also identify what is most meaningful to each individual on your team. Take the time to appreciate your organization's most valuable assets on a stage that is meaningful to them.

Principals Meeting

Save The Date! LandOpt is Savannah-bound!



January is not very far away and that means it's almost time for LandOpt's annual Principals Meeting. As was discussed and agreed upon at the 2011 meeting held this past January, the 2012 Principals Meeting will be combined with the annual Sales Luau, which had traditionally taken place in the summer. By holding both at the same time, we'll be able to create an event that celebrates both sales and company achievements on an annual basis.

We are still in the early planning stages, but we're pleased to share with you that we've chosen [The Hyatt Regency](#) in Savannah, Georgia (pictured) as the destination for the 2012 event. Uniquely located near the River Front Plaza, this downtown hotel offers access to Savannah's Historic District, shops, golf, and entertainment. We have just finalized a contract with the hotel and will be providing full registration and event details very soon. Here's a quick overview of the agenda:

Tuesday, Jan. 24

- *Afternoon Group Welcome for Principals and Sales Professionals* by President & CEO Tim Smith. In addition to a look at what 2012 holds for the LandOpt Network, Tim will take a moment to review the highlights and success from 2011.
- *Evening Awards Dinner for Principals, Sales Professionals and Guests.* LandOpt will host a cocktail reception and awards program and recognize the Network's biggest achievers in individual sales and overall business growth categories.

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The LandOpt Network Welcomes H&H Landscaping As Its Second North Carolina Contractor



H&H Landscaping & Lawncare, Inc. based in Swansboro, N.C., has joined the LandOpt Network, becoming the second LandOpt Licensee in that state and strengthening the Network's presence in the Southeast region of the country.

Founded in 1998 by owner Ryan Holland, H&H is a full-service environmental design and horticulture solutions provider on

the Crystal Coast with services that range from landscaping and irrigation to custom outdoor kitchen installations. Holland first learned about LandOpt through industry contacts and his interest was piqued by the fact that the organization was solely focused on the landscape industry.

"In my research, it seemed that most consultants and business solutions providers were focused on a broad spectrum of industries," he noted. "LandOpt was different in many ways, not the least of which was the fact that they are solely centered on the landscape industry. They know this business well."

By joining the LandOpt Network, Holland hopes to further elevate the professionalism within his company and adopt systems and processes that will improve the efficiency of his overall operation. "For me, this is simply about being the best," he stated. "H&H Landscaping currently has great customers and an outstanding reputation within this community, and I want to make it even better. No matter how much you have achieved, I believe there's always room for improvement. I look forward to streamlining our operations and ultimately providing the best experience possible for our customers."

The continued growth of the LandOpt Network has an impact on the landscape services industry as it helps to set the standard for contractors nationwide via a business-focused approach and proactive, professional sales process. "We are proud and honored to have H&H Landscaping join the LandOpt Network," said CEO Tim Smith. "Ryan and his wife Laura have worked hard to establish a very successful company, and we look forward to providing the tools, systems and coaching that will elevate them to the next level. H&H is a perfect complement to our existing network of contractors."

Please join me in welcoming Ryan and Laura Holland to the LandOpt Network!

Sales Focus Drives LandOpt Team Growth



The evolution of LandOpt continues with yet another addition to our sales team. Alison Blobner has joined LandOpt in the role of Manager, License Sales.

As part of the strategic focus on growing our National Network, Alison will be directly responsible for adding new Licensees by both qualifying and educating them on the benefits of our Network via the LandOpt Sales Process. Her initial focus will be on regional growth within our existing Licensee base, with the ultimate goal of expanding throughout the United States. She will work closely with Partnership Coordinator Teri McGuinness to identify appropriate landscape contractor candidates in the chosen regions.

Alison's background includes regional sales experience and management responsibility for large, global organizations, where she was tasked with generating new business and achieving targeted growth plans using a consultative sales approach. She was also responsible for the training and management of local and regional sales teams. Alison can be reached at: 412-427-3883 or Alison.blobner@landopt.com.

LandOpt Performance Appraisal System... (cont'd from page 1)

Each LandOpt defined role description has an associated PAS. They can be found under the Toolbox tab in the Licensee Center, within the [Product Library](#). These documents, along with the standard PAR form, can serve as the basis for truly effective growth and development plans for your team. Using them allows for continuous dialogue to not only keep each person on track with his/her goals and objectives, but helps to ensure everyone's buy-in and meaningful contribution toward the company's annual success plan. It's a genuine win-win.

To better understand the PAS, contact LandOpt's Director of Human Resources; Michael.Gaydos@landopt.com.

Network Announcements

- We're entering the homestretch for LandOpt training! The final Transformation Training of the year will take place the week of Oct. 24 (registration should all be in!) followed by Financial Planning the week of Oct. 31 (registration deadline is next week!). Project Manager training will be our grand finale the week of Nov. 14 and registration information will be sent out soon. Look for the 2012 training schedule to be published before the end of the year as part of the Critical Dates Calendar.
- Congratulations to Shawnae Saylor and Jamye Lynn Timms, winner of LandOpt's Facebook prize giveaway. There will be more giveaways in the future; don't forget to "Like" our page so you can be eligible!
- A picture is worth a thousand words! The Salesforce Chatter boards are not only alive with great conversation, but also some pretty awesome job pics! Check out the "Job Pics" group to see completed projects from across the Network! Thanks to Jay Bell and Brian Sayre from the Silvis Group and Kyle Bakhuyzen from PROCARE Landscape Management for their recent postings. Beautiful work! We encourage more of you to share your images from the field.

Principals Meeting (cont'd from page 2)

Wednesday, Jan. 25

- *Mid-Morning Teambuilding Activity for Sales Professionals and Principals.* (Guests are invited to observe.) We're cooking up a great event that will test your LandOpt knowledge and reward those who best work together for success.
- *Group Lunch for Sales Professionals, Principals and Guests.* We'll celebrate everyone's efforts in the teambuilding event and enjoy the fruits of our labor, so to speak! This will also serve as the farewell for the sales professionals who will be free to travel home in the afternoon.
- *Principals Meeting Kick-Off for Principals Only.* We'll begin the Principals Meeting portion of the event after a short post-lunch break. The meeting will be run in similar fashion to the 2011 event with small breakout group on specific LandOpt topics. Breakouts will begin on Wednesday afternoon and conclude on Thursday morning.
- *Evening Group Dinner for Principals and Guests.* We aim to enjoy the flavor of Savannah with a group dining event.

Thursday, Jan. 26

- *Morning Principals Meeting for Principals Only.* This will be a continuation of the breakout sessions that started on Wednesday.
- *Wrap-Up Lunch for Principals and Guests.* We will conclude the 2012 Principals Meeting with a group lunch over which we will summarize and provide highlights from the two days of breakout discussions. Principals will be free to travel home on Thursday afternoon.

As noted, complete details on the event will be distributed soon. For now, please save the date! We look forward to seeing you in Savannah!

Running for a Reason!



It's time to lace up your shoes and run for a reason! LandOpt is pleased to announce that we have joined the Corporate Challenge as part of the 2012 Dick's Sporting Goods City of Pittsburgh Marathon! What that means is that LandOpt (with the help of our Network) will designate a corporate charity for which we will collectively raise money by running (or walking) the Pittsburgh Marathon/half marathon or relay. Participants will run or walk in whichever event they choose and will be encouraged to raise money prior to the race via pledges by friends and family or whatever creative means they choose. LandOpt will be offering some special prizes for the individuals and companies that raise the most – so this will require the support and participation of runners and non-runners alike.

The Marathon will be held in Pittsburgh on Sunday, May 6 and LandOpt will pick up the cost of one night's hotel stay for those who choose to participate. (Travel expenses are the responsibility of each runner/walker). In addition to the Corporate Challenge party at the finish line, LandOpt will also host a post-race celebration and provide LandOpt team t-shirts. This is a great community service opportunity for LandOpt and each of our Licensees, as well as an occasion to promote good health and have some fun! We'll be asking each of you to vote for the charity that we choose to support (from the list of those pre-designated by the Marathon), so keep an eye out for that and full registration details, which will be sent to all GMs and Success Coordinators soon so that the information can be posted and shared with the entire company.

Whether it's your first marathon (or half) or your fifth, join us in Pittsburgh on May 6th to "Run for a Reason!" It's going to be fun!

Business Transformation

LandOpt helps to transform your business by focusing on our four pillars of success:



Human Resource Management

LandOpt empowers a select group of highly qualified, regionally-based landscape contractors with a powerful portfolio of business systems to dramatically improve their growth, profitability and productivity.



Business Management



Operations Management



Sales and Marketing

The LandOpt team facilitates the transformation of landscape contractors by providing the best in class technology, along with proven business processes and systems.

LandOpt enables Network Licensees to efficiently utilize these systems to increase growth, profitability, and productivity in their businesses.

Intensive coaching, followed with a continuing education curriculum, ensures the success of the Licensees. Training sessions pass along proven business practices in business management, financial planning, marketing & sales, operations and more. Coaching establishes a partnership between LandOpt and the Licensee, which builds a growing, successful business relationship.

The LandOpt Network of Licensees is a powerful resource in developing new relationships with peers in the green industry. The expanding network cultivates a growth of business experience and knowledge.

LandOpt continually measures and monitors the results gathered from each Licensee location to evaluate the effectiveness of the LandOpt systems and ensure success.

Be proud to be a member of the Powered by LandOpt Network.



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