

25 Landscaping Leaders

Annual list of companies growing faster than the industry average, how they're doing it, and how they're helping to elevate the landscaping industry at large.

The last couple of years have been good ones for the landscaping industry. Many estimates point to roughly 3-4% annual growth in both 2015 and this year. That sales trajectory is expected to hold steady over the next several years. It's what you call controlled, predictable growth. It's good.

That said, many companies have been growing faster than the industry average. For this year's Landscape Industry Hidden Gems list, we've identified 25 of them—companies that grew at least 4% in 2015 and are picking up the pace even faster this year.

At the same time, these companies are shining examples of what is good about the landscaping industry. The companies and their employees are helping

to elevate the level of professionalism in this industry. They are making positive contributions in their communities through outreach, philanthropy and the creation of jobs. They are operating in efficient, innovative ways that reduce waste and environmental impact. Their efforts are helping to counter the negative stereotypes that some consumers and potential employees believe about this industry.

Here are some commonly cited "best practices" gleaned by this year's Landscape Industry Hidden Gems.

Company culture

Define your mission, values and overall "who you are". Develop leaders who understand and share those values.

Provide the opportunity to learn, grow and advance.

Reward for employee development, i.e. pass a certification test, get a raise.

Use incentives and rewards to drive performance.

Always recognize hard work and a job well done.

Little rewards can go a long way.

Break down silos as your company grows – all divisions, departments and crews are in it together for the good of one company.

Identify what it takes to attract top talent, and develop a strategy around those requirements.

Unleash a proactive, diverse employee recruitment strategy using a variety of tools and methods.

Company	Year Founded	Growth Trend	Employees	Maintenance	Installation	Lawn Care	Organic Lawn Care	Irrigation	Hardscaping	Tree Care	Snow Removal	Lawn Renovation	Pest Control	Water Features	Landscape Lighting	Holiday Decorating
Good Natured Lawn & Landscape in Newton Falls, OH	2010	94%	8	•	•	•					•					
Complete Tree Care in Millsboro, DE	2006	67%	8	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
North Point Outdoors in Londonderry, NH	2010	48%	36	•	•			•	•		•	•		•	•	
Tab Property Enhancement in Brunswick, OH	2006	39%	4	•	•	•			•		•			•	•	
Organic Solutions! Inc. in Nampa, ID	2000	38%	13	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Pristine Properties Landscape & Maintenance in Spring Hill, TN	2000	36%	20-35	•	•	•		•			•	•	•		•	
Windswept Gardens in Bangor, ME	1971	32%	1-7	•	•			•	•					•	•	
Al's Complete Lawn Care in Lexington and Frankfort, KY	2005	28%	36-111	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•				
Outdoor Expressions in Canton, GA	2000	26%	60-85	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
Acme NLS in Swanton, OH	1996	22%	4	•	•	•		•		•	•	•		•	•	

Industry image

Identify who you are and build a representative brand – then be consistent.

Be an employment evangelist and go get the labor. Go speak to schools, clubs and other groups, host job fairs, etc.

Engage and enhance the communities you serve – donate services, coordinate charity events, provide education, etc.

Take the lead on environmental awareness.

Creating value

Understand who you are and what you do, and stay focused.

Find ways to utilize technology to not only improve operational efficiency, but also enhance the customer experience.

Define service mix based on customer wants and needs.

Build systems around customer feedback. How can you serve clients better and make their lives easier?

More to come

Regardless of sales volume or number of years in business, every landscape company has a unique story to share. Every company has unique insights into how to succeed in this business. Read on to hear some of those stories and insights from this year's Landscape Industry Hidden Gems. >

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Carpenter & Costin in Rutland and White River Junction, VT	2005	20%	28	•	•	•			•		•	•	•	•		
Stuart's Landscaping & Garden Center in Fon du Lac, WI	1986	20%	100	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Fit Turf in Centennial and Westminster, CO, and Macomb, Wixom and Detroit, MI	2008	17%	42			•	•			•		•	•			
L.C.S. Lawn & Tree Service in Milwaukee, WI, and Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN	1994	15%	75	•		•	•			•	•	•				
WAC Corporation of Greenville in Greenville, NC	1978	12%	25-40	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•		•		
Peterson's Landscape & Maintenance Services in Haltom City, TX	1989	12%	39	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Father & Son Lawn Solutions in Navarre, FL	2003	11%	6			•	•	•				•	•			
Dowco Enterprises in Chesterfield, MO	1984	11%	48	•	•	•		•		•	•	•				
Strauser Nature's Helpers in East Stroudsburg and Ephrata, PA	1998	10%	30-35, 15 snow subs	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
ArtisTree Landscape Maintenance & Design in Venice, FL	1990	9%	265	•	•	•		•	•	•			•	•	•	
Alpine Gardens in Fort Collins and Greeley, CO	1978	9%	85	•	•			•	•		•	•		•	•	•
Glasco & Co. Landscaping in Brenham, TX	1980	7%	80	•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•	
Blackstone Landscape in Walworth, WI	2007	6%	28	•	•	•			•		•	•		•		
James Martin Associates in Vernon Hills, IL, and Boulder, CO	1977	4%	145-278	•	•	•		•	•		•			•	•	•
YardApes in New Milford, CT	1990	4%	35	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	