Take Steps to Organize Your Business

As your company grows, the importance of staying organized grows, too. Managing customers and employees can get overwhelming without the right processes in place. These www.expired-link.com members discuss if software is the right fit for their business or not.

TheGreenester: I only have around 30 scheduled accounts, and I've realized that there is a lot to keep track of. Employee hours, expenses, rescheduling work, quotes, and the list goes on. How do bigger companies keep all of this information organized? Do you use specific software?

Weeze: Pen and paper and a calendar. Never depend totally on a computer — they can go down and you lose everything.

Grassmonkey0311: I use the notebooks to write down daily tasks I need to do. The computer is for everything else: scheduling, billing, payroll, etc.

Mxer108: I think you need to start now. Pick something that works for you and grow with it. You do not want to try to bring software in when you even have a list of 50. If you mow 50 lawns, you probably do hundreds of other things just like the rest of us. Start off with something that works. Refine the way you use it every year. The sooner you can start to look professional and keep all your ducks in a row, the better. I see a lot of people whining about the cost of these programs. But think if it costs even $100 a month, it would only take a couple of hours saved by using the program for it to pay for itself. Start looking long term and you will go a long way.

River: Back when I had 30 customers, pen and paper was easy — it took me 10 minutes a day at most. Now, I've got a person who does it part-time, but I've got 425 accounts, so it's understandable.

Mxer108: Back to what I said, if it took you 10 minutes a day, that is 4.3 average weeks in a month times five working days = 21.5 times the 10 minutes a day = 215 minutes a month divided by 60 minutes in an hour = 3.58 hours a

month spent. That is more expensive than having a basic subscription to a software service. That program will do much more than schedule. It will also invoice and keep you looking professional. Business owners need to stay efficient to be successful, and every hour counts. The days of using pen and paper to run your business are gone.

Steve5389: No matter the cost, wouldn't it be a write off at tax time? I started on pen/paper along with Google calendar.

13razorbackfan: I use my laptop and print everything out, plus I back up everything on my laptop. I only back up every couple of months, but need to do it every day.

Hawkeye Lawncare: Lots and lots of sticky notes. We have over 125 accounts and I really need to invest in some software, but I just can't decide what would be best for us.

Dave2: It's possible that your customers and the TheGreenester's customers are different. If those are 30 large commercial accounts, they would be a lot different than 30 small customers. It's hard to measure the size of a landscape company solely on the number of customers.

Graham Burns: I used a 24-hour yearly schedule book for quite some time. Then I began using the computer to keep track. It pays to keep up with technology, as it's the most convenient way of doing things. Start by using Google calendars for scheduling.

Landscapebusinesscourse: Without our software system we would have never scaled as fast as we did! It is a priority and will separate you from all the "other guys" that use paper invoices, receipts and do scheduling in their head.

Two Apps You Need For Organization

Staying organized on-the-go is important, too. Here are two apps you can use for when you're in your truck and unable to get back to the office.

Dropbox – Keep photos of your handiwork available so you can show them off to clients, but don't take up space in your camera roll with this app. Dropbox can organize photos and other files into folders, storing them in the cloud, making them accessible from any device.

Evernote – Store everything from photos to voice notes and text, create to-do lists and have all of the info available across your devices and search for what you're looking for, too. You can also share notes or photos with others on your team.