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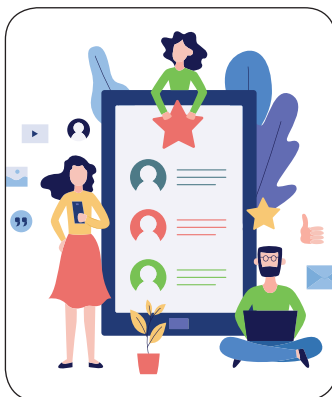
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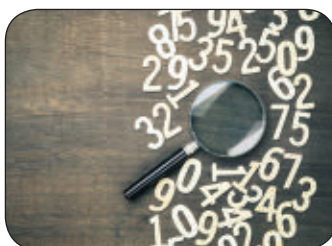
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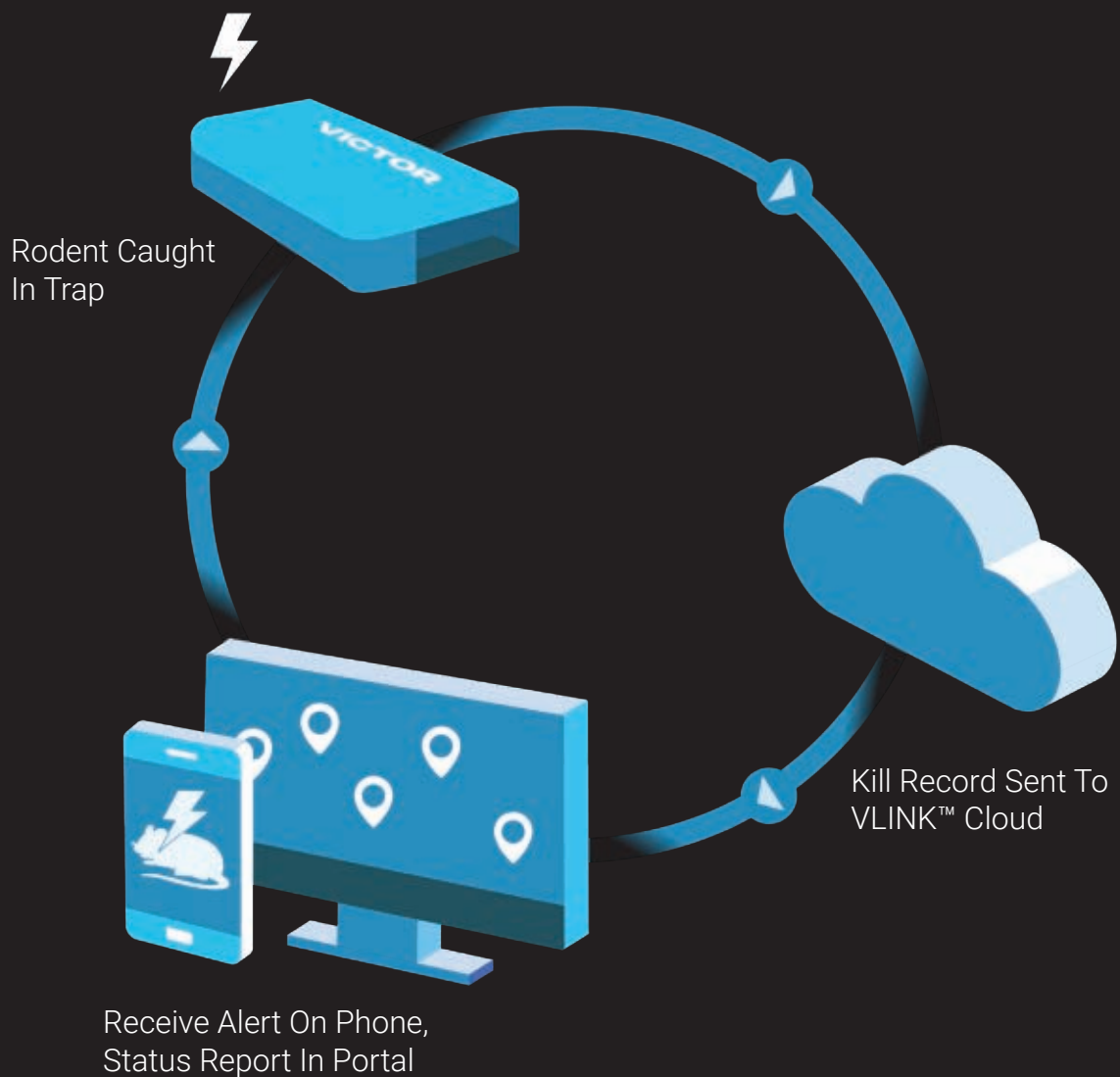
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DEMO**





The Future of NPMA

BY JUSTIN MCCAULEY, MCCAULEY SERVICES

NPMA just concluded another successful PestWorld, and after gathering with such an amazing and energized group of pest management professionals, it's hard not to marvel at how far we've come, both as an industry and as an association.

PestWorld was held in Boston, the birthplace of our nation. In this city, our founding fathers set out to create a government that works to ensure peace, an adequate national defense, and a healthy, free nation. In a similar fashion, in 1933, NPMA was founded to support the pest management industry's commitment to the protection of public health, food and property. Since our founding, we have been fortunate to have many skilled professionals share their time and talents to develop the culture of NPMA we have today.

As we approach our 90th anniversary, NPMA has around 5,000 members. Our mission statement states that we will "support members in being professional, knowledgeable and profitable through education, industry leadership, public policy advocacy, and growth of the market," and the many services, programs, and benefits of membership we've built further support that mission. Through the Professional Pest Management Alliance (PPMA), we have spread the word to the world that we are an essential service and continue to tell our story to consumers that choosing a pest management professional is the right choice. Through QualityPro, we are pushing to have the highest quality standards, training best practices and support for certified companies. Our Workforce Development Program's efforts show that working in such an incredible industry with such talented and hardworking people is a wonderful career full of opportunity. Through our Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity initiative, we are telling our story that we love our members and want to include a broad range of voices who can collaborate and contribute to a brighter future.

Moving forward, we owe it to the many pest management professionals who have built this association to continue their progress, developing a stronger and more sustainable community. We need more incredible pest management professionals to share their time and talents. With everyone's ideas and involvement, we will move this association forward.

I love and respect the people who have gone before me and am truly blessed to have learned so much from the very best. It's important to remember that our businesses and our industry is what it is because of the people in it—we all have contributions to make. I hope you consider playing a part in the future of NPMA. •

“We need more incredible pest management professionals to share their time and talents. With everyone's ideas and involvement, we will move this association forward.”



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DEALING WITH DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS

How to handle complaints, negative feedback and hostile situations

BY SANDY SMITH

#%!

EVERYONE HAS HAD THEM: THE DIFFICULT CUSTOMER who you just can't seem to satisfy.

Rather than looking at them as just a headache at the top of the to-do list, these customers can give you insight into your business operations—and provide an opportunity to keep them as loyal customers.

Eve Pappas, vice president and director of operations for Hoffman's Exterminating Co., Inc., knows this all too well. She had a customer who had experienced termite damage. His contract did not cover repair work.

To deal with the unhappy customer, Pappas suggested she and the manager go out and visit. "Our whole mission was to go, gather information and put together an action plan of how to resolve this in seven business days," she said.

When she and the manager arrived, they met an irate customer who "came running out of the house, screaming and yelling." She immediately calmed him down, inspected the site and set an appointment to come back in a few days.

A quick look through the records showed that the customer had been paying \$189 for the termite service for 13 years. He also purchased quarterly pest control service for a number of years.

She worked with the manager to add up the numbers and asked, "How would you want to be treated?" He looked at me and said, "The contract says this..." I said, "We're not in court. We're people and we're in a people business."

She recommended covering the \$800 in termite damage to keep the customer happy. It's the kind of flexibility that comes with a family-run company. Hoffman's has about 100 employees across five offices, with a sixth to open in early 2023.

But taking a long-range approach—even if there is a cost to making things right—can be useful for any type of pest control company.

"Obviously, with any service-related industry, repeat customers are going to be the lifeblood of what you do," said Tyler Oliver, assistant chief operating officer for Saela, which has almost 500 employees from Seattle

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to Chicago. "If you handle one of those correctly, it can be the difference in having that revenue for years to come or losing them immediately."

EVERY INTERACTION EMPOWERED

One of the biggest keys to success is in empowering every employee to provide "the best customer service," said Mickey Thomas, senior vice president of customer care for Arrow Exterminators, which operates 162 services centers, primarily in the South.

That means educating the customer that more bugs may be present immediately after a treatment, for instance. It means letting them know to schedule a callback if the problem continues. Or sending a manager if the customer has a problem with the technician.

In a people-facing business, problems are sure to arise. Even the bedbug-sniffing canine dogs "can have a bad day," Thomas said.

Learning how to read customers—and drill down to the essence of their complaint—is important.

"We definitely have our team members go through the notes and review," Thomas said. "Is the customer having the exact same issue they had last month? If you see a pattern that maybe we just didn't meet expectations, you may need to get technical services involved. We have so many layers of expertise that, if we can solve it, we go above and beyond to support the customers."

Billing and collections can be among the most fraught issues. Thomas suggests not letting unpaid invoices pile up. "That gets the customer in a bind."

Even then, though, sometimes the customer remains unhappy and the resolution may have to do "with the history of the account," Thomas said. One such instance: an apartment complex that demanded a lower-than-reasonable rate. The operations manager was empowered to determine whether that account was worth keeping, ultimately deciding it was not.

TAKING COMPLAINTS PUBLIC

Then there is the customer who never lets the company know of an issue but takes to social media or review sites to blast a perceived slight.

In those instances, Oliver finds it "best to play a little offense and try to proactively give customers outlets. Send them out surveys after the service that go directly to you instead of

posting online. Ask them to leave you a review. If it's negative, contact them."

But no matter how much a company does "people will still blast you on social media," Oliver said. "You have to have a team specifically trained to take care of those things. It can tarnish your ability to take care of new customers in the future."

Making small deposits in the bank of customer care can help, too, in those times when service falls short. "If you pull up the trash can for a customer, or pick up the newspaper in the driveway, those little things go a long way," Oliver said. "They remember that. It's always, 'Are we doing what we have to, or are we looking for opportunities to make a difference in the customer's experience with us?'"

Corporate involvement in the communities in which the company operates is another way to build tolerance for those little mistakes. "If I make a boo-boo, they know that we're real. We're not phony or fake," Pappas said.

And disarming the most irate customer can be as simple as lowering your voice, Pappas said, and asking, "'OK, what is it that I need to do to help you? I need you to start from the beginning so that I can clearly understand how you feel, what's on your mind and how we're going to fix it.' Nobody is perfect. We all can ask for forgiveness."

TIME TO LET GO

Not every interaction can be solved positively and there are times to let go. For Pappas, it was the time a service technician was met with racist threats by a customer. Or the time when

“Our employees come first. Without them, we won’t have a company. We have to send that message to our people that we have their backs.”

—EVE PAPPAS, VICE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, HOFFMAN'S EXTERMINATING CO., INC.

a new project in Philadelphia led to one of her crew being physically attacked. In both cases, the company backed their employees and canceled the work.

"Our employees come first," Pappas said. "Without them, we won't have a company. We have to send that message to our people that we have their backs."

Issues where the customer "feels like the business has done something wrong and the business feels like they have no fault whatsoever can be hard to resolve," Oliver said. Recently, a customer purported that a technician had damaged the property, but an independent insurance adjustor said the products were not the cause of the issue. "We were at a crossroads where the customer felt like we were at fault, but we clearly weren't," Oliver said.

It can be harder than ever to keep customers happy, especially with supply chain issues and workforce shortages. "People are understanding," Oliver said. "But with inflation, it becomes, 'If one thing has to go, it's going to be pest control because this issue is happening.' A couple of years ago, we wouldn't have lost that customer."

For her part, Thomas believes customer service has improved and society is returning to a time when they want to deal with a human. "Customers are a little more patient," she said. "They just want to be heard. They know that employment is challenging and that times have changed. If you're communicating with customers, they're more understanding." ●





PEST CONTROL COMPANIES DIVERSIFY WAYS TO COMMUNICATE MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH CUSTOMERS

BY CATHY LANDRY

WE ALL SEEM TO KNOW SOMEONE—A NEPHEW, a child, a friend, a grandchild, or even ourselves—who simply will not talk on the phone. Not only do they avoid phone calls, but they also seem to have little interest in e-mail. Instead, they text to check in with a friend, book a hair appointment or manage a doctor's appointment.

Different generations truly have very different ways of communicating, and tailoring your customer service and your marketing based on a customer's preferred means of contact is necessary these days, two pest-control customer service experts say.



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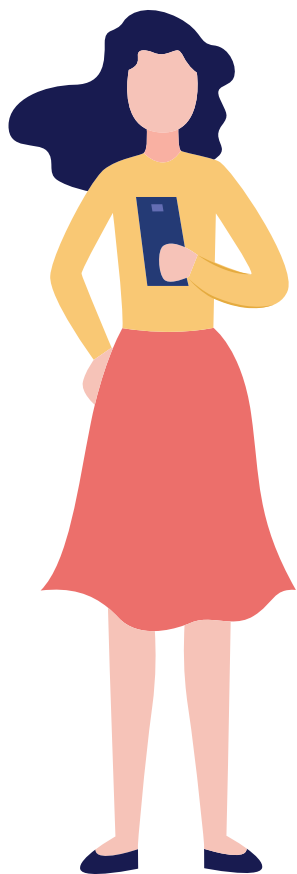
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"We know our customers are changing, and that's been taking place for some time," said Bobby Jenkins, president of Austin, Texas-based ABC Home and Commercial Services. "We have our younger customers, our middle-aged customers and our older customers, and even people within those groups aren't all the same. We want to communicate in the way our specific customers want to communicate."

Jenkins added that making it easy for customers to do business with the company is one of its guiding principles. "You need to be responsive to what your customer wants," he said. "You must have multiple ways to interact in efficient and effective ways."

The shift to new ways of doing business isn't always easy, but it is necessary to keep customers happy and to grow your business, said Julie Tesh-Clark, director of marketing and communications for Pest Management Systems Inc., a family-owned pest-control company serving much of North Carolina. The company, which



goes by the initials PMI, recently implemented a new software system to help it better determine its customers' contact desires, and make it easier to seamlessly use those preferences to communicate with those clients.

"We know our customers have a choice when it comes to their pest-control company," said Tesh-Clark, who also handles PMI's customer care and community outreach. "And if they want to communicate differently—and you are hearing it again and again—change is necessary." She acknowledged that many of the company's 70-plus employees were skeptical to accommodate these new realities, "but we knew that we needed to do this to stay competitive."

The good news, Jenkins said, is that software and programs to meet customer needs are generally available off the shelf, requiring just a little customization.

PMI saw the trend toward texting, and three years ago began looking at options for software that can help it meet customer needs. "It was clear that services we rely on every day—whether it's our veterinarians or hair salons—communicate with us through text. And many people really seem to like it better and find it more convenient," said Tesh-Clark, who acknowledged that she personally has embraced the trend wholeheartedly. PMI wanted to give its customers the same convenience, she said.

"A small segment of our customer base still doesn't even want an email on file. They don't text. They want us to call them to remind them of their appointment and send a paper bill," she said. "But another segment—which is growing every day—is high tech. They want to text almost exclusively to communicate, and they also want things like auto-pay and paperless billing." And it isn't just customers that prefer texting to calling, but also many of its team members, Tesh-Clark said. "Matching to everyone's preferences has been a challenge, but it helped us realize that across the board everyone in the industry is in the same boat," she said.

Jenkins said personalization extends to sales, as well. "We have prospective customers that want someone to come out and give an estimate for service," he said. "These individuals don't even want to talk on the phone. Some are happy to have a detailed conversation with sales staff by phone and get an estimate that way. Others—mostly the younger



generation—just want to click 'buy' on the website," he said.

ABC's website, run by Monkee-Boy, is integrated with its Evolve customer-outreach software, Jenkins said. The website is set up to allow the company to offer service estimates, schedule services and pay for the work online in one session, he said. "For some problems, we need to have someone come out to give an estimate," Jenkins said. "But for all the services where we can offer online estimates, we want our prospective customer to have that option."

PMI recently switched to a software system called Pest Routes that helps it communicate with customers more effectively, Tesh-Clark said. "The first step was to survey and to listen to customer needs. By surveying, we can determine what each customer desires in terms of methods of communications and billing, and tailor our approach to meet their needs," she said.

Once the company has information about customer preferences, it can connect with the customer in their preferred method. The software system also has the capability to set up a dashboard of important information readily available to the technician and the customer care representatives. "This allows us to see the bigger picture," she noted.

Still, a computer system is only as good as the data inputted, and getting that data requires a commitment by employees. For service inquiries that come from the website, the company proactively asks about preferred communication methods, and that data is automatically added to the system through the software. Inquiries that come in from phone calls or emails require data entry on the part of employees. "The most important

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thing is to connect with our customers the way they want us to connect with them,” Tesh-Clark said.

Tesh-Clark warned that companies must be prepared to pivot. She explained that some customers started saying that PMI was contacting them too often with payment reminders. “We had to change the settings to reduce the number of touches to our customers,” Tesh-Clark said. “There’s a fine line on how many times they want to be contacted, and we certainly don’t want to alienate our customers. We want to give our customers the best and easiest experience from start to finish in this process.”

Jenkins said his company has offered various communications methods for some time. For several years, ABC has used texting not only for service and payment reminders, but also to provide customer service with a personal touch. “When a tech is leaving Mr. Jones’ house to go to Mrs. Smith’s home, we text or email Mrs. Smith to let her know the tech is on the way,” he said. “We also send a picture of the tech and a little bit about him or her.” While the customer might not be home, “it’s still a way to make contact with them and let them know the work is starting,” Jenkins said.

Once the technician completes the work, he will send a link to the customers’ preferred method of communications that includes a voice file detailing the work, as well as files with photos, a written report, a survey and a list of other services the customer could consider, said Jenkins, whose family-owned company offers not only pest control services, but also lawn, pool, air conditioning and plumbing services.

This personal touch—even through text or email—allows the company to develop relationships and helps in marketing to grow the business. “If the customer has a good experience with our company for a pest-control job, they are more apt to hire us for other services,” said Jenkins, whose 1,000 employees serve about 150,000 customers in Texas.

Customer service excellence is even more important in the world of smartphones since people generally have fewer personal interactions, he said. While ABC maintains a robust email marketing campaign to new and existing customers, technician on-site reports of other services the customer might need also help immensely. “We do a drip-marketing campaign that allows us to reach back to our customers



“Don’t shy away from change. It’s easy to fall into a routine. You might think it’s better to stay with this status quo, but it isn’t. You must adapt to grow.”

—JULIE TESH-CLARK, DIRECTOR OF
MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS,
PEST MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS INC.

at a predetermined frequency—either 30, 60 or 90 days—to see if they want a quote for another service or perhaps to offer a promotion,” he said. “This allows us to touch the customer multiple times to develop a strong relationship. And we do this all seamlessly with technology.”

With the market constantly changing, companies must manage their businesses with technology and use “data, data, data” to determine what they are doing right, what

their customers desire and what they could do better, Jenkins added. “You must be on top of technology changes if you want to be successful,” he said.

Tesh-Clark’s best advice to other pest-control companies struggling with offering new methods of contact and embracing new technologies: “Don’t shy away from change. It’s easy to fall into a routine. You might think it’s better to stay with this status quo, but it isn’t. You must adapt to grow.” ●

WHAT IS YOUR MULTIPLIER?

BY GARY SHAPIRO, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAM BROKERAGE CORPORATION

DO YOU GENERATE A MULTIPLIER ABOVE OR BELOW 1.0?

This is a question we do not often ask ourselves or think about, but the experience modification multiplier is a critical component of calculating your Workers Compensation premium. It ultimately determines how much you will pay.

ACCORDING TO THE WORKERS COMPENSATION BOARD OF NEW YORK:

"Workers' compensation (WC) is insurance that provides cash benefits and/or medical care for workers who are injured or become unable to work as a direct result of their job. Employers pay for this insurance and shall not require their employees to contribute to the cost of compensation."

All 50 states have workers' compensation systems that provide benefits for work-related injuries. Each state is different, but generally there will not be an experience mod within the first three years of purchasing WC, or if less than a specified minimum threshold is generated.

WHAT IS THE EXPERIENCE MOD OR MULTIPLIER?

Each employer is given a classification based on their business operation. This reflects all similar businesses which are grouped together according to their classification. The losses for the group are averaged together, and from this information, a manual rating factor is calculated. This factor is used to determine the WC premium.

While the classification rate is determined by the group's loss experience, the modifier allows business owners to tailor their costs for WC based upon their specific risk characteristics and loss experience. The experience mod recognizes each employer's ability to distinguish itself from other qualifying employers within the unique classification code by implementing safety and loss prevention programs.

THE IMPACT OF THE EXPERIENCE MOD MULTIPLIER

An employer can't elect to choose whether or not to use the experience mod. The WC insurance carrier is required to apply the mod that is earned. The experience mod will be calculated annually using a combination of claims data and payroll from the last three years. Multiple losses will have a greater impact than a single large loss. A business' claims information will be compared to qualifying employers within the classification code and a multiplier will be calculated. A multiplier of 1.0 means that the rating will be based on the group's overall average experience. A multiplier under 1.0 generates a credit, whereas a multiplier over 1.0 assumes that the premium will be above the group's average for WC insurance.

MANAGE YOUR BOTTOM LINE

While the experience modification multiplier gives each employer the incentive to manage their own bottom line, tried and true programs will allow you to effect positive change.

- Rely on your safety program, remind employees of documented protocol, and check safety gear, tools and other items necessary for the job. Be sure to replace as needed.
 - Revisit your return-to-work program. Allowing your employees to get back to work, even if it's in a reduced capacity, helps build morale and affords workers the opportunity to be viable contributors to the company's results.
 - The Quality Pro Certification provides great suggestions for effecting positive change in your experience modification and ultimately reducing overall cost.
 - Focus on the incident that causes an accident, encourage employees to report injuries promptly and investigate and train accordingly.
- The more you can do to effect this positive change and manage an injury free workplace, the more likely you are to effectively manage your WC costs. •

Obtaining the proper insurance coverage will help ensure that the business' bottom line is protected. Working with a specialty insurance broker who understands coverage issues and negotiates coverage that is customized towards your business' risks is key in preventing disruption to your business.

For an expert consultation or information on insurance and WC solutions, please contact Program Brokerage Corporation at 800-431-2794, info@programbrokerage.com, or visit our site at www.programbrokerage.com. Program Brokerage Corporation is the nationally endorsed insurance broker of the National Pest Management Association. With over 80 years of experience, our experts can review your current coverage and identify ways to best protect your pest control business during the dips and peaks of the industry.

“While the classification rate is determined by the group's loss experience, the modifier allows business owners to tailor their costs for WC based upon their specific risk characteristics and loss experience.”



Key Learnings from a Lifelong Marketer:

6 Strategies for Success

BY CINDY MANNES



The pest control industry has grown and evolved drastically over the last two decades with technological advancements, newer industry-wide initiatives, societal changes and cultural shifts. As my time as the executive director of PPMA draws to a close, I would like to highlight six key learnings from over the years that I hope will help you grow and advance your business.



THE POWER OF GOOD PRESS—LEVERAGE AND PROMOTE YOUR WINS

There is something noteworthy about marching to the beat of your own drum in the pest control industry. Do not shy away from highlighting what makes you unique and stand out from the crowd. The press is a powerful tool to showcase your business to your customers and raise awareness about the impact and importance of this industry. It is also necessary to establish a good rapport with local media and promote the wins you obtain, especially coverage that features your company as an expert opinion in relation to local issues. Additionally, in times of crisis, it will serve you well to be courageous but also cautious about how you navigate the situation. You should have a firm grasp of how your company is currently perceived, how you would like to be perceived, and what needs to be done to get from the former to the latter.

Be your own storyteller and maneuver the narrative to your favor depending on the current issue.



DIGITAL CHANGES ON A DIME

With all the new trends, applications and updates over the last two years, let alone two decades, it is paramount for businesses to adapt to the digital changes so they are not left behind. Professional websites and active social media platforms help to build a strong digital presence that showcases your company to potential customers, boosting credibility and building awareness. The technological landscape is continuously growing and evolving; it is imperative that pest control companies do the same.



As my time as the executive director of PPMA draws to a close, I would like to highlight **six key learnings** from over the years that I hope will help you grow and advance your business.”



RESEARCH TO KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER IS CRITICAL

Who are your customers? How often do they use pest control services? What method of communication do they prefer? To answer questions like these is where research must come into play. Research serves as a critical resource in ensuring companies have correct and adequate data about their customers, allowing them to gain more insight into how they can better serve their customer base. It can provide strategic guidelines for communicating with different audiences. Detailed studies and analysis of your customers not only aid in improving media relation efforts but also help to decipher what action steps your company could take to gain and retain more customers.



BE ROOTED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Community relations is an integral part of the pest control industry. Do not neglect the impact of offline connections, as face-to-face interactions and informal gatherings offer a great way for community members to get to know each other. Continually establish relations with the regions you serve and join forces with community leaders who have significant influence in the area that can broadcast your message and, in turn, positively impact your business. Your company should not be solely viewed as one of the businesses in the area. Instead, it should be situated as a vital part of the community, especially as it pertains to protecting public health.



MAINFRAME: YOU DO NOT HAVE TO RECREATE THE MARKETING WHEEL

Mainframe is an online digital marketing agency for companies seeking to improve their public relations, social media or marketing programs. In this fast-paced age where quality content is needed quickly, Mainframe provides pest control companies

of all sizes access to hundreds of customizable and ready-to-use communication materials reviewed by entomologists and industry experts. From consumer surveys and AI research to marketing toolkits and designed collateral, this online subscription platform is a great way to save money while still receiving high-quality content. Companies do not have to recreate the marketing wheel as most of the work has been done. With Mainframe, you'll have more time to devote to other needs within your business.



GET INVOLVED IN NPMA AND INVEST WITH PPMA

As part of the pest management industry, you are essential—and so is NPMA. The National Pest Management Association is your all-important link to industry-specific professional resources and services that you will not find anywhere else. It is an exclusive, global network of pest management professionals with valuable benefits for thousands of NPMA members to use daily. I cannot stress enough the value of the pest control community coming together to uplift the industry. Fueled by the support of investors, the Professional Pest Management Alliance (PPMA) serves as the consumer marketing arm of NPMA, working year-round to grow, promote, protect and defend the industry through a full-scale marketing development program. Investing in PPMA is a way to give back to the industry, and it also serves each pest control company at large, as PPMA has been cited as one of the primary reasons for industry growth this year.

Each pest control company functions differently. However, from a small-scale business to a large corporation, I have found that these strategies, when applied effectively, have proven beneficial in advancing business success and marketing efforts. •

Cindy Mannes is the executive director of the Professional Pest Management Alliance. Visit www.npmapestworld.org/ppma for more information.

Proving Your **PROFESSIONALISM** to Customers

BY GRIFFIN VOLTMANN, CERTIFICATION MANAGER, QUALITYPRO



Credentialing through QualityPro is a great way to signal to other pest control companies that you are committed to helping professionalize the pest management industry. Signaling your professionalism to customers who aren't as familiar with the industry can be more difficult. The marketing value of QualityPro is part of why it exists. The program strives to help companies, especially those without a designated PR team, show they are committed to a national standard for professionalism. There is a comprehensive suite of marketing tools to help accredited companies shine a light on their hard-earned credentials.

CERTIFICATES AND BID LETTERS

QualityPro companies receive impactful marketing tools immediately upon completing their credentials. As employees pass our national exams, they receive certificates of completion that prove their knowledge in areas like General Pest Control, IPM, Schools and Public Health. The certificate of completion for the Food Plants exam is recognized by your audited accounts.

Upon earning QualityPro accreditation or a service certification (QualityPro Schools, GreenPro, QualityPro Food Safety, or QualityPro Public Health), each company receives a certificate representing their achievement, and a customizable bid letter to submit to customers explaining what it is they've achieved. QualityPro carefully lays out what it means to be accredited through our program and what went into getting accredited or having a company's services certified so that customers are aware of who it is they're giving their business to.

Our bid letters have been crafted to position companies as best they can be—specifically citing the benefits that customers are looking for from our accreditation program and service certifications. Potential customers are directed to further resources where they can do their own research and learn about the degree of excellence QualityPro companies have achieved and continue to strive for. We highly recommend using our bid letter, or a comparable formal bid letter, for all potential contracts and renewals as a show of professionalism so that customers large or small understand exactly what they're getting from a QualityPro company.

IPAD SALES DEMO

Accredited companies who have made themselves very familiar with the resources available through QualityProTools.org will already know about the marketing materials at their disposal. The iPad Sales Demo is designed to be customized to suit a company's particular pitch, and contains information on QualityPro and our service certifications so that salespeople in the field can pull up the company presentation to walk customers through what they can expect from the service.

COBRANDING WITH QUALITYPRO

Cobranding with QualityPro is as simple as showing off the credentials a company has earned. Accredited companies are empowered to use the QualityPro logo anywhere they see fit. Popular examples are putting QualityPro logo on fleet vehicles, in plaques on the wall, on websites, in e-mail signature lines and on uniforms. More than simply using the marketing collateral developed by QualityPro, cobranding is a practice intended to raise both the public perception



Branch Manager Chase Garity from Saela Chicago North proudly shows off the QualityPro certificates earned by employees.

of QualityPro's brand (by being associated with pest management companies of high quality), but also of companies' brands (by being associated with QualityPro). An accredited company should find ways to include their QualityPro status in everything they do, and as with all other aspects of business operations, the QualityPro program sets companies up for success with multiple resources for gaining and retaining customers.

We encourage all companies who are accredited to spend time familiarizing themselves with the marketing materials and cobranding webinars available through QualityProTools.org and determine how they can be best utilized in a company's marketing. Customers are seeking professional, reliable and science-based services, and QualityPro companies are uniquely poised to provide exactly that. We want to make sure that when customers see our companies, it is in the best possible light and with a full understanding of what our companies are able to provide for them.

Pest management remains one of the few businesses where customers welcome a stranger into their home to perform a service. The best way to open that door and ensure that technicians are welcomed and valued by customers is for companies to prove their commitment to going above and beyond customer expectations, and to teach customers to expect ever better, ever higher levels of professionalism of our industry—to choose QualityPro.

To receive a copy of the QualityPro Cobranding Checklist or for more information on all that QualityPro has to offer, reach out to us at QualityPro@pestworld.org today. ●

QualityPro is administered by the Foundation for Professional Pest Management, an independent organization that has been developing good business practices and standards since 2004. Designed specifically for pest management companies in the U.S. and Canada, we are proud to certify over 500 of the best companies in the pest management industry. QualityPro is endorsed by the National Pest Management Association (NPMA). For more information, contact us at QualityPro@pestworld.org.

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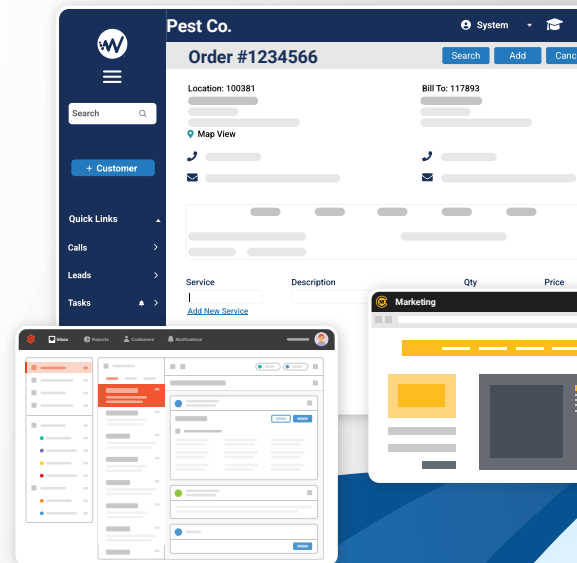
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A Fulfilling Job Helping Maintain Public Health

Morgan Manderfield
Entomologist
Ecolab
St. Paul, Minn.

BY JENNIFER JOHNSON, CAE, NPMA VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Morgan Manderfield always loved bugs and knew this passion would play a part in her future career. While she never imagined a career in pest control, she's found her ideal role as an entomologist with Ecolab in St. Paul, Minn. After earning her undergraduate degree in biology, she explored possible career options that would allow her to work within entomology. Ultimately discovering the variety of positions within pest control and the strength of this growing industry, she started out as a lab technician at Ecolab where she raised bug colonies and supported research.

Morgan has been with Ecolab's Pest Elimination division on the Research, Development & Engineering team for five years, and recently moved into her role as an entomologist. Morgan is primarily responsible for developing new pest control traps, monitors, devices, protocols and processes. Her days can vary, with opportunities to touch several sides of pest management. She may be in the lab one day, then spend others in the field conducting tests. Or, she'll have her nose in a spreadsheet analyzing data or on the phone with service specialists (technicians) working through a sticky situation. She also has the opportunity to go for ride-alongs with the service team or work through identifying different pests for those in the field. It's a job she loves, and while she can't tell us exactly what's on the horizon for those new projects coming from her team (shhh!), she looks forward to the work she is doing each day.



Because of Ecolab's focus as a provider of commercial and industrial pest control services, Morgan works with a wide array of pest groups, including cockroaches, large flies, small flies and stored product pests. Most often, she works with bed bugs within the hospitality sector. On occasion, she also has the opportunity to partner with other Ecolab divisions to support pest control within the healthcare or textiles industries. Morgan mentions, "The pest control industry is critically important in maintaining public health, and it's so fulfilling to be a part of it. I also value the opportunities to join our field associates and see firsthand how they are ensuring the safety of their communities."

Morgan has also been fortunate to continue her professional development. Currently



finishing up her masters in entomology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, she has also participated in a number of NPMA programs, including the most recent Women's Forum in Nashville and numerous webinars and online programs to keep up her knowledge of the field.

Looking to the future, Morgan is considering furthering her education with a doctorate and hopes to continue up the ladder towards becoming a staff scientist or corporate scientist within Ecolab. •

“The pest control industry is **critically important in maintaining public health**, and it's so fulfilling to be a part of it. I also **value the opportunities to join our field associates** and see firsthand how they are **ensuring the safety of their communities.**”



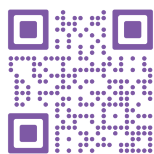
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BY MICHAEL BENTLEY, PHD, BCE, DIRECTOR OF TRAINING AND EDUCATION, NATIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Q My client is complaining of medium sized reddish brown, torpedo shaped beetles. They congregate around the porch light and occasionally find their way inside. What are they?

A The pests in question are commonly called click beetles (family Elateridae). There are more than 900 species of click beetles in the U.S. and none are structural pests—meaning they will not breed, overwinter or otherwise infest a structure—but many species are pests in agriculture. The larvae of pest species are called wireworms and can destroy roots of important crops like corn, tobacco and wheat. Adults are commonly attracted to lights, sometimes in large numbers. This is probably what your client is experiencing. Turning off the porch light, changing to a less attractive bulb, or using alternative lighting placed away from the door might help reduce the number of beetles getting inside the building.

One of the amazing things about click beetles (and the reason for their strange but descriptive name) is they will initially play dead when disturbed, but eventually (and when you least expect it) they will catapult themselves into the air with an audible “click.” This behavior is intended to startle and confuse predators, helping the beetles escape becoming a meal for a hungry insectivore. Scientists have measured the force by which the beetles launch themselves into the air at 380 times the force of gravity.

Q My clients keep asking me about the Joro Spider. Is it something I should be concerned about as a pest management professional?

A The Joro Spider (*Trichonephila clavata*) is an orb-weaver spider that originally hails from Asia (specifically Japan, Korea, Taiwan and China). They can be up to three inches long, and are brightly colored with stripes of red, yellow and blue. This spider was actually first documented in Georgia back in 2013 and has quickly spread to South Carolina. Experts believe the species was transported via shipping containers. It is expected that the Joro spider will likely naturalize to the East Coast of North America, given that the species has a good tolerance for cold weather and a penchant for accidental transport.

It is not expected that the Joro Spider will become a common household pest. However, the impacts of this invasive spider on local ecosystems are still to be determined. The Joro Spider is not considered to be an aggressive species, and the rare bites are not considered to be medically relevant to humans or pets. Scientists are still attempting to document the spread of this spider, so if you spot one, report it to your local extension office. If an infestation occurs, removal of webs and spiders through vacuuming and eliminating potential harborages can be effective with this type of spider.

Q I’m struggling to control a small fly infestation in my customer’s bathroom. The flies are often seen around the base of the toilet and near the shower drain. I assumed they were phorid flies, but I’m not having any success with the traps I usually use to target this species. Any ideas?

A It’s possible you are dealing with another common small fly associated with bathrooms, the drain fly. This group of flies is also commonly called moth flies because of their fuzzy, moth-like appearance. As their name implies, drain flies are often associated with drains that contain a buildup of organic matter. The standing water and organic matter found in poorly functioning drains creates the perfect breeding site and larval habitat for these small pests to thrive.

Luckily, controlling drain flies is relatively simple once you know where to look. As is the case with other small fly infestations, eliminating the larval food source will resolve the infestation. In this case, the food source is the organic matter building up in one, or more, of the bathroom drains. You can cover the drains with clear tape to isolate the affected drain(s) that need to be treated. Once the breeding sites have been confirmed, you can use a wire brush to break up and clean out the organic buildup. A bio-enzymatic product can also be helpful in removing any debris that may be harder to reach. Lastly, you can mechanically remove any adults that may be lingering in the bathroom. They aren’t strong fliers so they should be easy to target. Good luck! ●



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NPMA Upcoming Calendar of Events

NPMA Conferences are designed to help you connect, build strong relationships, and grow your business, all while developing your team's knowledge of the latest in pest management.

Eastern Conference

January 18–19, 2023

Harrah's Resort Atlantic City
Atlantic City, NJ

2023 Wildlife Expo

February 7–9, 2023

Marriott Resort Myrtle Beach
Grande Dunes
Myrtle Beach, SC

NPMA Legislative Day

March 12–14, 2023

Capital Hilton
Washington, D.C.

Safety Summit

May 4–5, 2023

Renaissance Orlando
at Seaworld, Orlando, FL

Women's Forum

May 9–11, 2023

Charleston Marriott
Charleston, SC

Executive Leadership Forum

June 14–16, 2023

Snow King Resort
Jackson, WY

NPMA Academy

July 18–20, 2023

Westland Kierland
Phoenix, AZ

Carolinas/Mid-Atlantic Summer Conference

August 3–5, 2023

Westin Savannah
Savannah, GA

PestWorld 2023

October 17–20, 2023

Hawaii Convention Center
Honolulu, HI

BizTech Summit

November 28–30, 2023

Sheraton Downtown Denver
Denver, CO



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For more information on these or other NPMA events, please visit www.npmapestworld.org.

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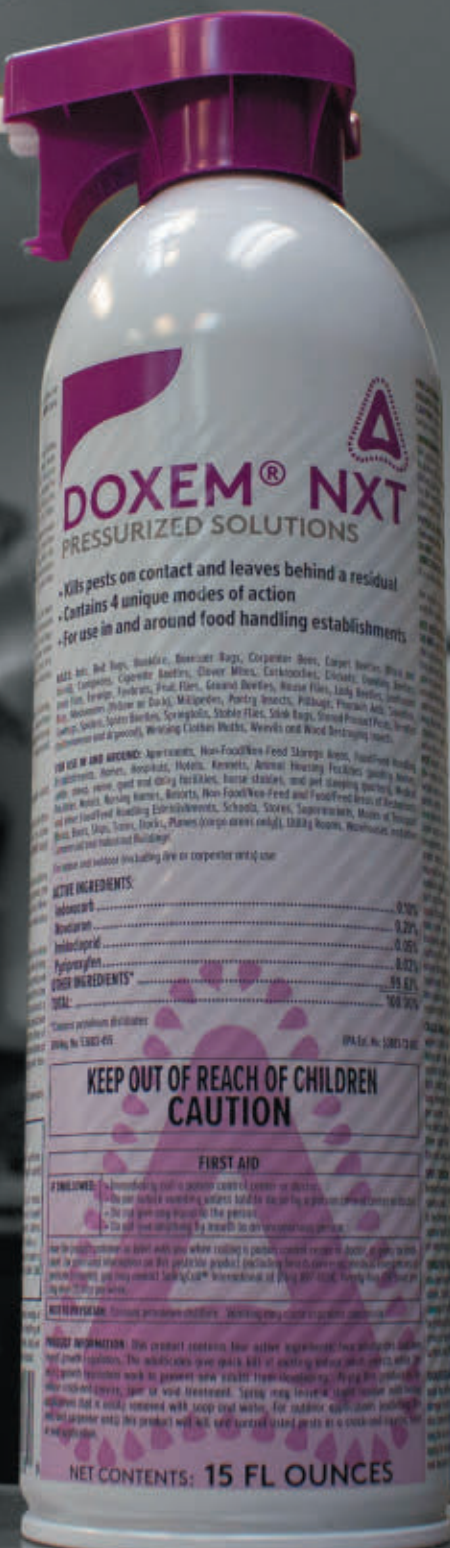
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1. Edward F. Marshall. Cholecalciferol: A Unique Toxicant for Rodent Control. DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Proceedings of the Eleventh Vertebrate Pest Conference. 1984.

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