What is the best part of your job? Is it the science of identifying pest infestations and crafting a management plan? Is it the adventure of never knowing from one day to the next what type of job you might be walking into? What about the satisfaction that comes from making people’s environments safer, cleaner, and more comfortable? Probably a bit of all of those, right? Now, what is your least favorite part of your job? If you are anything more than a one-man operation, I’m willing to bet money that it is the hiring, management, and retention of employees. Multiple surveys of companies large and small, in the pest control industry, and in unrelated fields, show that the number one challenge they face is finding help. With unemployment rates at record lows on the national scene at around 4.1%, the hard-working citizens of Nebraska are keeping ours down around 2.8%. As proud as that makes me, it’s a double-edged sword for employers. Fewer people are looking for jobs, and many of the people that are unemployed, have worked hard to earn that status. To compound the problem, many small businesses are not able to offer the type of benefits that are offered by larger companies. And presuming that you have attracted and groomed the dream team of pest control, it won’t last forever. People give notice, they walk off the job, they get sick, they retire. All these obstacles can make you want to quit your job! I know there are days when I dream of just Dad and I cutting trenches and hearing nothing but a 5 horse Briggs and Stratton pumping out another termite job. But with five technicians in the field, a service manager scheduling the coming weeks, and a couple of go-getters in the office keeping the money moving, I have the luxury of writing a newsletter for our association’s quarterly. In the end, I know that when you have a good staff and things are running smoothly, it’s all worth it.

Hiring, management, and retention are all big words with more nuance and complexity than can be covered here, and besides that, I don’t have the answers. We have had as high as 50% turnover inside of a year. I’ve seen good people come and go, and I’ve seen not so good ones come and not go soon enough. There is one thing that I can say has helped with all three of those challenges, and that is creating a workplace that people enjoy. When people refer their friends to apply for a job with you, they enjoy their job. When people smile, laugh, and show comradery, they enjoy their job. I’ve seen employees move away, and when they moved back to town they came back to work with us. I’ve seen people who had to leave for a variety of reasons, but express that they’ve had a lot of fun and that this was this best work environment they’ve ever been in, and that’s a great feeling. Before you think I’m going to break my arm patting myself on the back, I want you to know that it started with my Grandpa and continued with my Dad, Wayne. These are men who didn’t start out in pest control looking to get rich, or aggressively mow through their competition on the way to the top. These are men who wanted to make a living doing something they enjoyed. With that perspective, think about what the members of your team want. They want a paycheck, but they also want to enjoy what they are doing and where they’re doing it. When it’s obvious that you’re enjoying your job, you’ll see that it’s contagious, and the company ‘norm’ will a team of happy people working together. While company culture and high morale won’t solve all your hiring woes, they might just be the most valuable investment you, as an employer, can make.
NSPCA DIRECTORS & OFFICERS

Travis Lucas, ACE
President
Benzel Pest Control
813 Morrison Road
Gering, NE 69341
(308) 632-3437

Shawn Ryan
Vice President
Heartland Pest Control
820 Burns St
Gretna, NE 68028
(402) 332-4707

Brad Kuiper
Government and Legislative Chairman
Heartland Pest Control
820 Burns St
Gretna, NE 68028
(402) 332-4707

Andy Licht
Nebraska State Pest Control Association
8700 Executive Woods Dr, Ste 400
Lincoln, NE 68512
(402) 476-1528

Tracy Connor
District 1 Director
City Wide Termite & Pest Control
14330 Corby Street
Omaha, NE 68164
(402) 733-1784

Carl Braun
District 2 Director
Quality Pest Control
PO Box 12140
Omaha, NE 68114
(402) 738-9164

P. R. Olson
District 3 Director
Olson’s Pest Technicians
PO Box 808
Norfolk, NE 68702
(402) 371-7976

Dave Ryan
District 4 Director
Carey’s Pest Control
PO Box 895
Hastings, NE 68902
(402) 463-9416

Gregory Poppe
District 5 Director
Poppe Enterprises, LLC
PO Box 2042
Hastings, NE 68902
(402) 984-2856

Wayne Lucas
District 6 Director
Benzel Pest Control
813 Morrison Road
Gering, NE 69341
(308) 632-3437

NPMA Board Approves Dues Restructuring

On March 17, the Board of Directors of the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) voted to accept a large-scale sustainable platform for the future of the association, including a dues restructuring proposal developed by an appointed blue ribbon task force.

During the May 2016 industry strategic planning summit, nicknamed “P3,” industry leaders identified assessing the NPMA membership dues structure as a high priority to ensure the future of the association. The dues structure had not been addressed for more than 20 years.

“The goal of the Task Force was to create a climate of trust within the membership, ensuring fairness, transparency and equitability,” says Chuck Tindol, past president of NPMA. “To ensure that all voices within the membership categories were heard and had a voice in the results, I appointed this 15-member blue ribbon task force comprised of representatives of all stakeholders, including large companies, small companies, joint and standard states and large joint state affiliates.”

The new dues schedule will take effect Jan. 1, 2019, for calendar year renewals and July 1, 2019, for fiscal renewal. The NPMA will offer transition plans for highly impacted companies. The revised dues are as follows (for a fuller schedule, see the PDF online):

- **Revenue: $100,000**
  - Current Dues (joint/standard): $115/$225
  - 2019 Dues (j/s): $185/$250

- **Revenue: $200,000**
  - Current Dues (joint/standard): $189/$509
  - 2019 Dues (j/s): $185/$250

- **Revenue: $500,000**
  - Current Dues (joint/standard): $493/$782
  - 2019 Dues (j/s): $375/$500

- **Revenue: $2,500,000**
  - Current Dues (joint/standard): $1,270/$2,887
  - 2019 Dues (j/s): $1,315/$1,750

- **Revenue: $10,000,000**
  - Current Dues (joint/standard): $4,908/$6,945
  - 2019 Dues (j/s): $4,125/$5,500

In a “Frequently Asked Questions” release, the NPMA addresses the notion that it’s merely trying to increase its revenue. That is not the case; rather, the NPMA has projected an initial membership revenue loss, with an overall increase in membership dues revenue of less than 10 percent by 2023. In spite of the initial projected loss, the NPMA will continue to place a significant focus on developing resources for its members to help them grow their business; train, hire and keep qualified employees; and be protected from unwieldy regulations. It has also invested in technology to serve members today and in future, including online education, with an eye to providing quality training and elevating the professionalism of the industry.

“We’ve been diligent in our work, conducting a comprehensive review to ensure that NPMA’s future will continue to be bright,” says Bobby Jenkins, chairman of the blue ribbon task force. “We are very pleased that the NPMA board of directors has approved this path forward.”
TEMPRID FX OFFERS UNMATCHED STRENGTH WITH A NEW LABEL THAT’S MORE FLEXIBLE THAN EVER.

With great power comes great flexibility. Temprid FX has the powerful, co-milled, dual-active combination formula you trust for rapid and long-lasting control of hard-to-kill pests. And now you can use it in more places. This strength and flexibility gives you the added confidence to take on the toughest jobs. That’s bound to make you a hero.

Learn more at backedbybayer.com

Bayer CropScience LP, Environmental Science Division, 2 T.W. Alexander Drive, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709. 1-800-337-2467. www.backedbybayer.com. Bayer, the Bayer Cross and Temprid are registered trademarks of Bayer. Not all products are registered in all states. Always read and follow label instructions. ©2018 Bayer CropScience
Is It Time To Increase Your Pest Control Pricing?

By Dan Gordon, CPA

Pricing is one of the most powerful ways you can improve your business’ performance.

Consider the following:

- An effective pricing policy will keep you profitable and successful.
- A mediocre pricing policy will keep you frustrated and barely in business, wondering what needs to be done to succeed.
- An ineffective pricing policy will put you out of business.

Staying successful by employing an effective pricing policy means increasing profit, beating the competition and creating wealth. Price increases or decreases have a magnification effect on profit. The reason is simple: Price increases usually reach the bottom line in one piece, whereas the advantages of lower unit costs or higher sales are diluted.

Once breakeven is achieved, price increases are extremely powerful and have a significant effect on the bottom line. Thus, for a company with 10 percent net margin, a 10 percent price increase could produce a 100 percent increase of profit to 20 percent. This works the other way as well: A 10 percent decrease of price decreases profit 100 percent, taking a 10 percent net margin to zero, or breakeven.

Case In Point

Let’s look at an example. If revenue plus cost structure per hour is:

- Direct labor: $17
- Chemicals: $6
- Vehicle: $8
- Other direct costs: $4
- Selling & advertising: $10
- General & administrative: $18
- Total cost: $63
- Sales: $70
- Profit: $7

If we change the sales price to $77, we doubled the profit by 100 percent to $14 because there are no additional costs associated with providing this service.

This is a double-edged sword, however, because reducing your price by $3.50 will cut your profit by half. A price reduction of $7 will wipe out your entire profit. Be careful when doing this analysis, because you need to know how price changes will affect your bottom line.

A Six-Step Process

Pricing should be analyzed at least annually to consider a revision. Here is how we figure price increases:

- Analyze and adjust your standard hourly billing rate, to ensure that your hourly cost and profit objectives are being met.
- Review your estimated time to complete a job — including time to retreat — to determine whether your estimated time to complete a particular job is accurate.
- View your standard pricing for new work and your customer service records, to determine the amount of time spent servicing each customer — and the amount of money that each customer was billed for the year.
- Divide the total amount of money billed by the number of hours of worked to determine the dollars per hour on each account.
- Once the dollar per hour has been determined for each customer and each job type, compare that dollar per hour to the standard hourly billing rate.
- If necessary, increase the price to bring the dollar per hour in line with the standard billing rate per hour.

Once you determine the price increase amount, the most important step is selling the price increase to your customers by showing the value of your service.

Dry Ice Is The Newest Weapon Against Rats

Rats have taken over cities around the globe, but there’s a certain mystique to a New York rat. Remarkable generalists when it comes to diet, rats in New York generally eat whatever they can find and live wherever there’s space. Keeping them out of homes is a perpetual concern.

Now, New York and other cities are turning to a new weapon to fight this ancient war: dry ice. In March, New York City began filling rat burrows with dry ice in order to kill rats. Outside of a container, the dry ice turns to gaseous carbon dioxide, suffocating the rodents.

“Or, nicely put, they go to sleep and they don’t wake up,” said the city’s Director of Pest Control Ricky Simeone at the time.

As anyone who has dealt with a rat problem can attest, one problem with traditional rat eliminators is getting the rats to march to their own destruction. The animals often have an uncanny ability to ignore traps. Dominating the planet doesn’t come easily, and if it were easy to pick off rats they’d be long gone by this point. Despite years of attacking the problem, pest control company Orkin ranks New York has having the second-worst rat problem in the country.

In one 2017 demonstration, dry ice was able to kill 12,000 rats in a single park. However, when New York Mayor Bill de Blasio watched a dry ice extermination, it didn’t go as planned: a rat escaped.

Speaking at a press conference afterwards in Brooklyn, Caroline Bragdon, the director of neighborhood interventions for pest control at the...
Continued from page 4

city’s health department, wanted to make clear that dry ice isn’t a silver bullet.

“Typically, you would do multiple insertions over time. The dry ice is inserted into the rat burrow where rats are living. Then you would cover the burrow as dry ice evaporates, they’re asphyxiated and they die. You may have to go back for a series of applications. Rats escape, you may have to go back at a later time, come back tomorrow.”

By placing the dry ice underground, it keeps the dead rat bodies underground as well, decomposing and eventually becoming part of the soil.

Dry ice, first produced in 1835 by French inventor Adrien-Jean-Pierre Thilorier, has had a winding road to becoming a rat killer. Cities including Boston and Washington, D.C. have been seeking approval for dry ice since 2016. They were stopped by the EPA, which oversees enforcement of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

FIFRA doesn’t recognize dry ice (which is frozen carbon dioxide) as a rodenticide and the agency demanded the cities halt their usage. But as warm summers and food waste have kept rat problems at the forefront of city living, the EPA has relented. It’s allowed Bell Laboratories to develop Rat Ice, which the company advertises as “the only approved usage of dry ice for rodents in the U.S.”

Source: New York Daily News

Recycle Your Pesticide Containers

Now in its 27th year, the Nebraska recycling program encourages applicators and others to bring clean, dry, intact pesticide containers to a nearby collection site. While there is no charge for the service, applicators do need to triple- or pressure-rinse pesticide containers and drain them before dropping them off.

The program accepts plastic containers made from high-density polyethylene (HDPE) only. HDPE containers are marked with the plastic resin code #2.

Accepted containers:
- Pesticide, crop oil, adjuvant and surfactant containers (1.0 or 2.5 gallons)
- Crop protection chemical drums (15, 30, 55 gallons)
- Crop oil, adjuvant and surfactant drums
- Stained, but clean, containers or drums

More information on this UNL coordinated program, including a detailed list of the collection sites, can be found at cropwatch.unl.edu and typing Why and Where to Recycle Your Ag Pesticide Containers in the search box.

In addition, take a minute to become familiar with how to prepare your used containers before taking them in for recycling.

Now that spring has finally arrived and pesticide-related activities are in motion, it is also a good time to review information about safe transport, storage and disposal of pesticides. Pesticide accidents can be prevented by careful planning, using a secure storage location, adopting safe handling methods during transport and following proper disposal guidelines for products and containers.

How-To’s For Prepping Pesticide Containers

How-To’s For Prepping Pesticide Containers

Nebraska’s pesticide container recycling program accepts 1- and 2.5-gallon plastic pesticide containers and, in some locations, 15-, 30-, and 55-gallon drums. Containers are thoroughly inspected before being accepted.

To prepare your pesticide containers:
- Pressure- or triple-rinse and drain the containers.
- Wear the same PPE (personal protective equipment) while rinsing containers as the label requires for handling and mixing. This may include a heavy-duty apron and goggles, in addition to the standard long-sleeved shirt, long pants, socks, and liquid-resistant gloves and shoes. Most pesticide poisoning occurs when the product is absorbed by the skin and enters the bloodstream.
- Remove container cap and empty all pesticide into the spray tank. Allow container to drain for 30 seconds, then rinse immediately, before product becomes sticky and hard to remove.
- Fill container 10-20% full with water or rinse solution; replace cap.
- Swirl liquid within container to rinse all inside surfaces. Remove cap and pour rinsate into the spray tank, again allowing container to drain for 30 seconds.
- Repeat previous steps two more times for a total of three times.
- Puncture container so it cannot be reused.
- Remove and throw away any labels, booklets and slipcover plastic labels on the containers. Glued paper labels may be left on.
- Rinse off container caps before disposing.
- Return rinsate to the spray tank immediately so it can be sprayed on a labeled site. Never dispose of it on the ground, in water, or in any other nonlabeled area. Properly rinsing pesticide containers saves money, protects you and the environment, and meets federal and state regulations for pesticide use.
- Never store unused pesticide in any container other than the one it came in.
A study published in PLOS ONE reports a decline of more than 75 percent in insect biomass over a 27-year period in western Germany. Researchers with the Entomological Society Krefeld used malaise traps in varying locations in protected habitats to measure total biomass of flying insects caught, between 1989 and 2016. The overall trend: a 76.7 decline over that period, and no one “silver bullet” explanation appeared to be the cause. “The decline in insect biomass, being evident throughout the growing season, and irrespective of habitat type or landscape configuration, suggests large-scale factors must be involved,” say the researchers.

It’s a dramatic finding, and a concerning one if it is representative of global trends.

Helen Spafford, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Plant and Environmental Protection Sciences at the University of Hawaii, Manoa, cautions against extrapolating the findings of the German study broadly to other locations but says she finds it worrisome, nonetheless.

“The study warrants concern for other places around the world, particularly where threatened or endangered species are located,” Spafford says. “There are few studies that do this, and I urge any other groups who have been collecting like this to share their data. That way we can see if the declines in Germany are occurring elsewhere.”

If there’s reason to think similar declines are happening across the globe, it’s because the large-scale trends that contributed to the findings in Germany aren’t exclusive to that region, says Jason R. Cryan, Ph.D., deputy director and chief of research and collections at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences.

“Although no specific cause of that decrease is identified, several factors are likely important contributors, including climate change, habitat fragmentation and destruction, and the increased usage of pesticides and other chemicals in agricultural, urban, and semi-urban environments,” Cryan says. “Although the study was conducted entirely in Germany, these contributory factors are common globally, and thus we can expect that insect population declines of similar magnitude are occurring in other regions of the world.”

In 2017, the Entomological Society of America issued formal position statements on endangered insect species and arthropod biodiversity. (Spafford participated on the volunteer writing committee for the former, Cryan on the latter.) Both statements cite the critical role insects play in healthy ecosystems and note that insects can often be early indicators of ecological shifts, and they call for enhanced research and conservation. The findings from the long-term study in Germany underscore that need.

“This study has sounded the alarm for entomologists and others,” says Spafford. “We can’t just turn it off or switch it back to snooze. We need to wake up. If we are seeing these kinds of declines in insect biomass, then undoubtedly other organisms that are connected to these insect populations will be affected also. The cascading effects could be significant for plants, other animals, nutrient and decomposition cycles, and increase the vulnerability of systems to invasive species.”

Cryan concurs: “Insects are responsible for critical environmental services … upon which the Earth’s environment—and, more pointedly, human activities—depend. Removal of those pieces of the natural puzzle can only be detrimental to the entire system.”

The USDA offers Nebraskans an online clearinghouse of invasive insects that can threaten our gardens, trees, yards and crops.

Former Nebraskan Greg Ibach, now the agency’s Under Secretary of Marketing and Regulatory Programs, says the emerald ash borer, gypsy moth, Asian longhorned beetle, European cherry fruit fly are things that we’re worried about spreading into Nebraska and Iowa.

The website, HungryPests.com, details the top 20 types of bugs that are now or could soon be a problem and how we can try to stop their spread.

“When you travel or go camping, make sure you’re not taking your wood with you,” Ibach says. “Pick up the wood you’re going to burn at your campsite there in the local area so that if there’s a pest in the wood from your home area or vice versa, you’re not transporting it.”

“Some of the camping equipment and toys and chairs and barbecue grills you’re carrying could have egg masses or insects themselves attached to that,” Ibach says. “Take a good look at those, clean them up and make sure you’re not transporting pests that way.”

There’s also a worry about people who may be trying to bring back a treat for themselves or as a gift for someone else from their far-away vacations.

“If you travel abroad, it’s very important that you follow the rules that Customs has posted,” Ibach says. “We’re especially concerned about fruits and vegetables and meat that is coming into the U.S. from other countries. That’s the most likely way that we will bring a disease or a pest into the U.S.”

In addition, if you’ve ordered a package from outside the U.S. inspect it closely inside and out to insure there isn’t anything attached that could be harmful.

Damage from these pests costs our nation $40-billion each year. Since they have few natural predators here, the insects can wreak havoc on our environment, ecosystems and economy, putting agricultural exports and jobs in jeopardy.
Zoëcon makes controlling a wide variety of pests easier than ever with a lineup of one-step aerosol products for indoor and outdoor control. Zenprox® Xtend Aerosol, Gentrol® Complete Aerosol and Precor® 2625 Premise Spray combine insecticides and insect growth regulators to provide a quick knockdown of adult pests while preventing the emergence of future generations.

With flexible spraying options, these all-in-one products control an array of pests while cutting down on labor costs. No matter what insect control challenge you may come across, Zoëcon has a solution for you.

MAKE INSECT CONTROL EASIER THAN EVER.

Visit Zoecon.com to learn more.
Pre-baited Traps for Pantry Moth & Beetles

- Pantry insects damage millions of dollars worth of food each year.
- Ready To Use
- Convenient 2 packs
- Excellent for counter sales
- Instructions in both English and Spanish

Contains 2 slow-releasing pheromones in the glue to attract:

- Indian Meal Moth
- Almond Moth
- Raisin Moth
- Mediterranean Flour Moths
- Tobacco Moths, and
- Cigarette Beetles

Protect: all grain based foods, cereals, flour, meal, pasta, popcorn, dog food, and bird seed.

90-days of continuously released pheromones!!

Pre-baited Traps for Webbing Clothes Moths

- Pesticide Free

- Protects clothes, wool, furs, rugs, etc.
- Ready To Use
- Convenient 2 packs
- Excellent for counter sales

Glue traps are pre-baited with the webbing clothes moth pheromone (Tineola bisselliella) in the glue.

12 weeks of continuously released pheromones!!

Contact us today to request your copy of our new 2018 JFO Product Catalog

ideas... technology... resources... @ www.jfoakes.com | sales@jfoakes.com | 662.746.7276