

Survey's Positive Key Indicators



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Spring, as always, is a time of renewal and hope, but spring 2015 promises much more than hope in terms of what our industry predicts to accomplish this year. The majority of respondents to this year's Green Industry Guide (GIG) survey say their sales, growth and profits will increase modestly this season over what they experienced in an encouraging and busy 2014. These results reflect the general direction of the economy, which is improving bit by bit from the trough it found itself in five years ago.

Let's look at some key findings from the GIG survey:

- 74 percent of green industry respondents said their companies grew in 2014, and 80 percent claimed their companies turned a profit this past season.
- Somewhat in line with the respondents' growth expectations, 79 percent of industry professionals indicated their primary business focus this season is retaining and adding clients.
- Where will these new customers come from? No surprise here. While the responses were across the board, the most popular were word-of-mouth at 33.5 percent and referrals at 30.5 percent. The other four choices—advertising (newspapers, etc.), current customers (new projects), sales staff and digital (website, Facebook, etc.)—lagged far behind in terms of responses.
- The trend toward full service continues as 24 percent of respondents said they are moving their companies to full service in 2015, while 21 percent (the second most popular answer) are adding tree & shrub care services and 18 percent are getting into lawn care/fertilization.
- The collapse of the construction industry in 2008-2009 saw industry professionals, many of them heavily into landscape installation, migrating into mowing/maintenance. While construction continues to claw its way back to pre-recession levels, mowing/maintenance continues to be very popular with 45 percent of respondents saying mowing/trimming/pruning was the fastest growing service for green

industry businesses in 2014. Lawn fertilization, weed control/pest control clocked in at 30 percent, the second fastest growing service category.

- Just slightly more than half of respondents to the GIG survey (54 percent) are increasing their equipment budgets in 2015, while 14 percent report they are cutting back on purchases. Purchases of mowers and hand-held products will be the most popular choices this year, although many companies say they will be buying more lawn care products, such as fertilizers and herbicides, as well.
- We asked, “What keeps you up at night?” and 56 percent of green industry pros indicated it was “trying to balance my work and personal life.” Coming in second was “getting paid on time” at 32 percent.

Finally, please accept heartfelt thanks from the *Turf* magazine team for responding to the 2015 GIG survey, and especially to the many industry suppliers who make this valuable guide possible.

We urge you, the readers, to check out the many labor-saving and customer-pleasing products and services our sponsors are sharing in the pages of this special publication.

This article is from the 2015 Green Industry Guide. Read the rest of the digital edition [here](#). You can find products, brands, companies and dealers in the industry on the main homepage [here](#).