

Platinum Member Spotlight Turner Tree & Landscape

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Turner Tree and Landscape, Lean and Green!

Have you ever driven past a row of palm trees staked with the distinctive "Turner Tree & Landscape" stakes? There are so many around Manatee County, it's hard not to pass one. Such a simple marketing concept, yet so effective. That is just one of the many great ideas created by Darrell Turner, President of Turner Tree and Landscape. This year marks the 32nd year in the landscape business for Turner. From humble beginnings of one man with a dump truck to a 90 person operation!



Darrell Turner, President of
Turner Tree & Landscape

Thorough attention to every detail contributes to the success of this business. At every step of the way, from potential customer to lifetime client, Turner's staff carefully and confidently carries

each job from start to optimal finish.

The customer service offered at Turner Tree and Landscape is so sensational, they should create a new word for it. In The detailed approach each team member takes in handling ever aspect of a client's project, exemplifies excellent customer service. "I personally supervise each and every client's project. Either by email with photos and samples of material, in person with their landscape architect or we invite them here to look and see, feel and touch," says Darrell Turner.

Projects are "value engineered" which entails working with the client to collectively discover the best outcome while staying within budget. Offering free upgrades on trees and free second year warranty on irrigation systems gives a value-added service at no charge to their clients. This enables Turner Tree and Landscape to retain current customers, resulting in a customer base which provides 80% of their repeat business.

Getting Lean

"It hasn't been easy downsizing to meet the demand of this economy and still stay on top" states Turner. "My employees have to wear many hats at this time. That is where our cross-training has really paid off during the recent economic challenges."

Turner's CFO, Bob Kinsch, has a watchful eye in regard to where expenses can be cut. "Reductions are never easy, but by revisiting the cost of cell phones, payroll processing, insurance policies, and going from a 5 day to a 4 - 10 hour day work week for our crews keeps us running more efficiently" says Kinsch. "You

truly need to know your cost and have a relationship with your vendors - instead of just using them. The cheapest price is not necessarily your best source from a financial side."

Darrell Turner never forgets that he puts his name on every project. His company's mission statement is an extension of that; 1) To give our customers the ultimate service experience while providing superior landscaping, 2) To treat our customers and staff with the utmost respect and professionalism, 3) To give back to our community, 4) To make a profit."

Turner Tree & Landscape makes a conscious effort to buy locally and has begun using the Chamber's new RFP tool to not just buy locally, but to buy from fellow Chamber members.

Getting Green

Finding simple but effective ways to be green has brought with it many savings. For example, 50% of invoices are now emailed to clients rather than printed and mailed. The by-product of that is a positive outcome overall. The customer, whose name is on the invoice receives it right at their desktop which it enables them to process it more quickly, saving paper and creates better cash flow for Turner Tree & Landscape.



Fresh plants staged for weekly
delivery and planting

Additional green processes and savings have come to Turner's tree farms by way of Microjet irrigation. Instead of plants receiving one long watering per day, now trees and plants are watered three times a day which is far more ecologically effective. As an example the savings on one of Turner's 100 acre farms has been 700,000 gallons of water in 1 year. The by-product of this is not only saving water, but faster and more effective tree growth. For example, an oak tree gains 18 inches to 2 feet of additional growth per year under this strategy. With 6 tree farms and more than 200,000 trees in inventory this is a significant savings of water and money.



Copper and Zak stand guard over the
daily operations at Turner
Tree & Landscape

Along with getting green, recycling is a top priority at Turner Tree and Landscape. New product brought in offers the opportunity to recycle the buckets each plant comes in and the pallet they come on. Grinding the pallets creates recycled mulch and reselling the

plastic pots, from 3 gallon to 300 gallon sizes, creates a win-win for customers and the environment.

Good Stewardship

In addition to a successful business, Darrell and his wife Mary Ann, are involved in many special community projects. They personally deliver meals once a week to local elderly people. Meals on Wheels

plus has re-elected Darrell as their Chairman through 2010. Darrell is also serving on the 2009 Manatee Chamber Board of Directors. Memberships include: Sustainable Landscape Council, Florida Nursery Grower's Landscapers Association, Gulf Coast Business Exchange, Association of Builders and Contractors, Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance, Manatee and Sarasota Chambers of Commerce, and Condominium Association Institute.

No Mistaking It!

Do you know why it is so important to stake a tree after planting? Every tree must be staked for one year to insure the tree doesn't move, enabling it to take root and receive proper nutrition for growth. So next time you drive past a tree marked with "Turner Tree & Landscape" on its stake, you'll understand why this simple marketing concept is so important and so effective!



MCSAC Celebrates Red Ribbon Week

The Manatee County Substance Abuse Coalition presented its Fourth Annual Red Ribbon Breakfast during Red Ribbon Week, October 22 to October 29, in partnership with the Pittsburgh Pirates at their Dining Facility in Pirate City. Principal Speaker was Michael Radzilowski, Chief of Police, Bradenton.

Chief Radzilowski spoke eloquently about the need for parents to be involved: "The Bradenton Police cannot bear the sole responsibility of addressing the youth alcohol and substance abuse problem we have in Bradenton." He added, "Parents must become more engaged in their children's lives, teaching them from a very tender age respect for others, as well as themselves. Only parents can teach that lesson, at that age." He added, "It needs to be consistent, into their teen years."

Rita M. Chamberlain, MCSAC SARG Coordinator, closed the Program with a history of MCSAC, going back to 2001, bringing it forward to July 2008 when MCSAC was awarded a Drug Free Communities Grant of \$125,000 for each of the next five years.

Specific Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug issues she covered included:

Manatee County's past 30 day use rates for alcohol and binge drinking, tobacco, marijuana and other drugs, doubling from middle to high school;

200 reported cases of alcohol, tobacco and other drug-related acts of crime and violence on high school campuses (in Manatee County);

Prevalence and use of ATOD contributes significantly to the county's high absentee (21.3% absent greater than 21 days) and high failure to graduate (31%) rate;

RX drugs are also of concern with increased availability and use. The District Medical Examiner reported Oxycodone was responsible for 43 deaths last year, compared to 22 in 2001, a 100% increase.

Both Chief Radzilowski and Ms. Chamberlain said it well: No single group or agency has the resources to impact a large enough portion of the environment to foster norm changes, except one

– parents. They (you) are the first line of defense in the protection of our kids, our future workforce.

For additional information on this subject or on the Manatee Chamber's Business Against Narcotics and Drugs (B.A.N.D.) Program, please contact Joni Korzen at 941-748-4842, ext. 130 or JoniK@ManateeChamber.com.

Access to Affordable Quality Health Care

For years, the Manatee Chamber of Commerce has been working with the Florida Chamber of Commerce's 139,000 grassroots investors who have been telling us that health care is a priority when running their business. Now Floridians are one step closer to obtaining affordable health care plans. The Florida Chamber of Commerce stood with Governor Crist as he unveiled Cover Florida - a low-cost insurance program to assist Florida's uninsured citizens.

"This is a good opportunity for businesses who want to keep their health care costs low and help their employees stay healthy," said Joanna Bonfanti, governmental affairs with the Florida Chamber of Commerce.

Cover Florida plans, which will be available for enrollment on January 5, 2009, will make affordable, quality health insurance coverage and access to health care available to Florida's 3.8 million uninsured applicants age 19 to 64, with four of the six carriers insuring children of applicants. Floridians will have the ability to receive preventative or catastrophic health care at a low rate through six carriers, including BlueCross BlueShield of Florida and United Healthcare. Chip Kenyon, senior director of expansion models for BlueCross BlueShield of Florida says this plan is a major change in the Florida market and no one who wants a policy will be locked out from getting one.

"Many families and small business owners have worried about the possibility of costly medical bills, waiting for years for health insurance they can afford to buy," Governor Crist said. "In less than a month, Cover Florida will be available, and their waiting will be over. Affordable access to health care will be a reality for Florida's hard-working families and businesses." To learn more visit www.coverfloridahealthcare.com



Thank You BBC Volunteers!

The Better Business Council's Advisory Committee held its annual Holiday Party at the home of Gus & Lisa Sokos of Demetrios' Pizza House, who also provided the delicious dinner. Gus is the incoming chairperson for the 2009 Committee. All contributions collected at the event were donated to charity at the request of the host & hostess, and in the true spirit of the holiday, the Council proudly presented Hope Family Services with a donation of \$250.

The Manatee Chamber's Better Business Council wishes to thank its volunteers for the time, talent, and interest they've devoted to the Council. It would not be possible to provide this important service without the valuable support of our members.