

2022

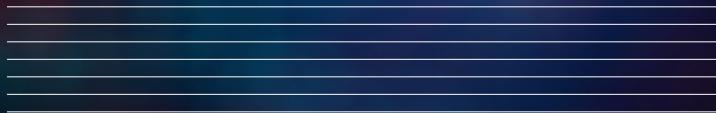
state of the

BUSINESS

MANAGEMENT

TECHNOLOGY

M A R K E T



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Software Technology Year In Review



WE'RE FORTUNATE TO LIVE IN A TIME OF RAPID TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION, and there's no question that modern software continues to transform the industry. That's why FieldRoutes is proud to sponsor this year's State of the Business Management Technology Market report by Lawn & Landscape magazine.

As the lawn care industry grows and evolves, technology's role is more vital than ever. Companies that benefit from time-saving automation are at a significant advantage over those that continue to struggle with antiquated solutions or generic tools that lack key, industry-specific features.

2022 has been an exciting year for FieldRoutes. We officially became a ServiceTitan company and joined forces with ServicePro—which has recently been rebranded as ServSuite® by FieldRoutes. This alignment allows us to collectively better serve our customers and truly become the best-in-class solution for the green industry.

All of us at FieldRoutes and ServSuite® by FieldRoutes are honored to be able to support this industry with the technology needed to grow quickly, operate efficiently, and compete effectively. We understand your struggles today with decades-high inflation rates, high gas prices, and the ongoing labor shortage. We recognize it's important to make the most of what you have available to you right now. That's why we've focused on advancing our solutions to help our customers overcome these challenges.

Lawn-specific features like the ability to optimize routes by vehicle chemical capacity, technician skillset and certifications, and same side of street routing get your team to their appointments quickly and efficiently. They also help minimize drive time, vehicle wear and tear, and fuel expenses—all of which contribute to your bottom line.

To combat the need to hire more sales team members, we've launched the new FieldRoutes™ Mobile app, which enables technicians to service customers efficiently and effectively close more business. It offers the convenience of accepting payments and getting contracts signed in the field, which makes it possible for technicians to start servicing customers the same day.

Our latest feature, Tech Tipping, provides a great way to increase your employee retention by empowering your customers to reward service that goes above and beyond at the time of payment or when a positive review is posted—all without impacting your bottom line.

Among all the results in this report, one of the most import keys to successfully scaling your business to optimum growth is choosing the right software and technology partner. We'd love the opportunity to see how we can help you. Give us a call, and let's talk about the future of your business.

WILLIAM CHANEY
Chief Executive Officer



Amplify Business:

TECH TOOLS THAT UP YOUR GAME

Where to start? Business technology is on the move and keeping up is a job. Here's how green industry leaders are vetting, implementing, training and just dealing with all that's new. **By Kristen Hampshire**

Taussig Landscape in Wamego, Kansas, was teetering over the \$1-million revenue mark and operating on Excel spreadsheets, basic scheduling tools and QuickBooks—along with plenty of printouts, pen and clipboards. “We had a spreadsheet with an entire week’s work on it and if the wind blew, it’s out the window and lost,” relates Derek Taussig, president of the firm that now has 35 team members. “Then, you’d have to remember what work was completed, the start and finish times, job notes.” Back at the office, Taussig would input labor hours into QuickBooks, deciphering times written on the fly in crews’ trucks.

Note: The survey results are based on more than 100 respondents. Not all survey percentages will total 100 due to rounding.

**HOW MANY
EMPLOYEES DO YOU HAVE?**

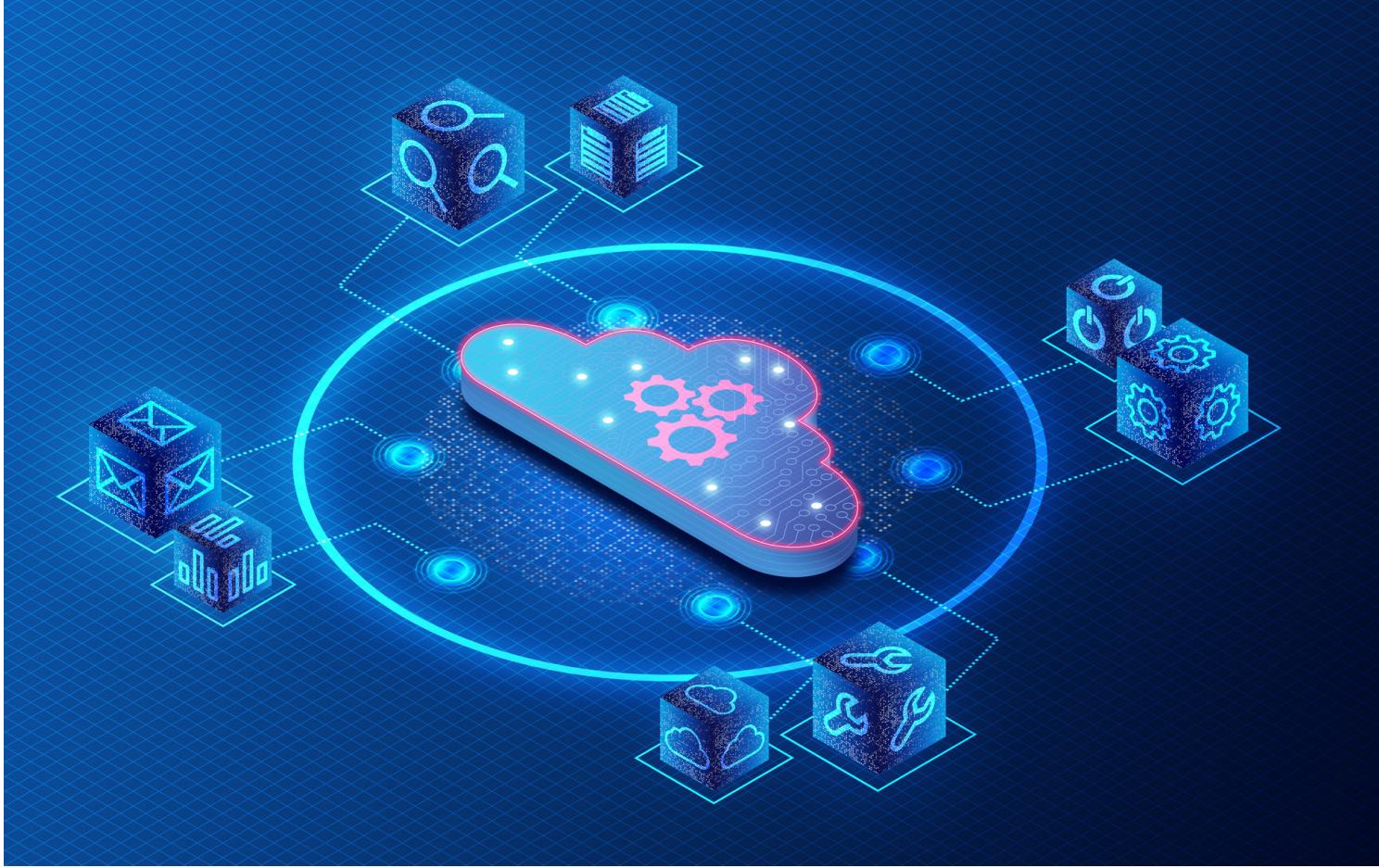
9%
100 OR MORE

10%
50 - 99

31%
10 - 49

16%
5-9

35%
LESS THAN 5



Something, well a lot of things, had to change.

So Taussig consulted with an industry adviser he's known for years and took his advice, selecting software that would tie together all the pieces-parts, from scheduling to tracking time, estimating and accounting. "I wish I had done it sooner," he says. "We were a pretty big company to bump up into a system like this and it would have been easier to grow with it."

Since putting the system in place, Taussig says numbers aren't "falling through the cracks," and the company is capturing more billable work. "And it really helps manage the mental side of it all because

there were a lot of details I had to remember and input," he adds. "Now, I can put it in the system and it's off my mind, off my plate and on to the next task."

Beyond software and hardware—smart phones, tablets, laptops—business technology for landscapers also encompasses design tools, cloud-based apps like Google Docs, messaging and meeting hubs like Microsoft Teams and even enabling online stores where customers can click and buy services. Ultimately, the end goal for all this tech is to work smarter and drive revenues.

"We are a labor-intensive, field-intensive business and technology helps us manager our growth," Taussig points out.

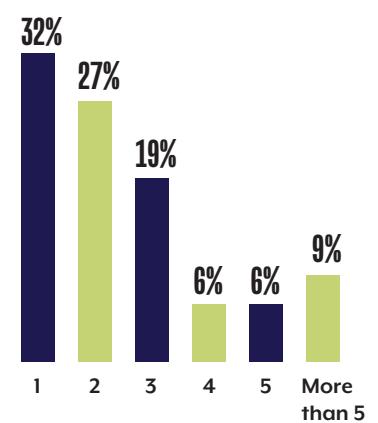
IMPLEMENTING CHANGE. Dealing with disparate systems is a common theme, and a need to "pull it all together" is what triggered a software hunt two years ago at Next to Nature Landscape in Olathe, Kansas. President Austin Hall arranged Zoom calls and demos with a few vendors he was considering. "We also talked to companies in our area about what they were using, and they were nice enough to provide their insight," he adds.

He involved department heads in the vetting process. "We wanted them to see the parts they'd be using so we had a really good understanding of what the software could do for us before we made a decision," Hall says.

When it came time to implement the system, Hall started the process in the off-season and brought in vendor representatives for training. "The closer we got, we went in with the attitude of the day we went live, we were going all in, 100%," he says. "We knew there would be a lot of mistakes and some fixes, but we didn't want our mentality to be, 'We'll do a little bit here and there.'"

Hall admits, he didn't realize how much data his company had collected over the

**HOW MANY DIFFERENT BUSINESS
SOFTWARE PRODUCTS DO YOU
CURRENTLY INVEST IN?**



years. A team of three internal leaders spent a few months entering information into the new system. "It was basically a fulltime job," he says.

After using the program a year, Hall invited the vendor in for some retraining. For example, the maintenance department reviewed contract templates and how to fill those out. "We gave them more knowledge on how to type in notes and more details, not just the basics," Hall relates.

The company runs more efficiently now. "We looked at our labor cost by running numbers through July and the labor costs have gone up by 8% but labor percentage has only increased by 1% of revenue," Hall says.

Purchasing has also improved now that the company knows how much materials are required for every job. "When we were a small company with a lot of pen and paper, everyone was able to do everything, but this software is making us focus on, 'This is your role,' and gives our team more focus," Hall says.

Regarding implementation, Taussig advises hiring a consultant to help put complex systems in place. He tried all winter to get a new software program set up. "We really weren't there and spring was coming," he says. So, he enlisted in the vendor's pro and invested in a 12-hour intensive training session with leaders.

On the other hand, rather than jumping in 100%, Taussig Landscape started with the budgeting and CRM tools, and then came estimating and scheduling. Phasing in the software was easier for his team to manager.

"Now we are at a point where we don't even use a time clock," he says, relating that crewmembers use the app to track time. Payroll is also run through the system.

Throughout the process, Taussig Landscape leaned on the vendor's training videos, available on YouTube in segments that range from a few minutes to an hour of instruction.

Taussig says, "It doesn't hurt to hire someone to help you implement it properly. It may seem expensive at first, but in the long-term, it will save you money and time."

**"WE ARE
A LABOR-
INTENSIVE,
FIELD-
INTENSIVE
BUSINESS AND
TECHNOLOGY
HELPS US
MANAGE OUR
GROWTH."**

DEREK TAUSSIG

WHAT WAS YOUR 2021 REVENUE?

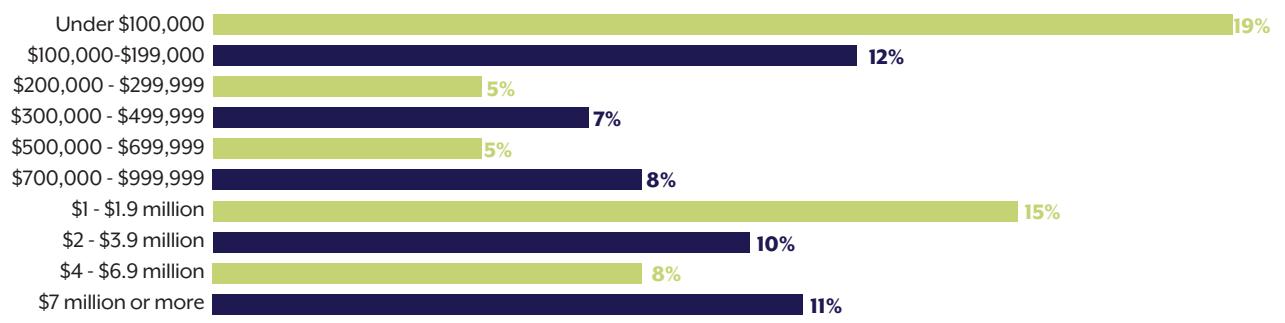
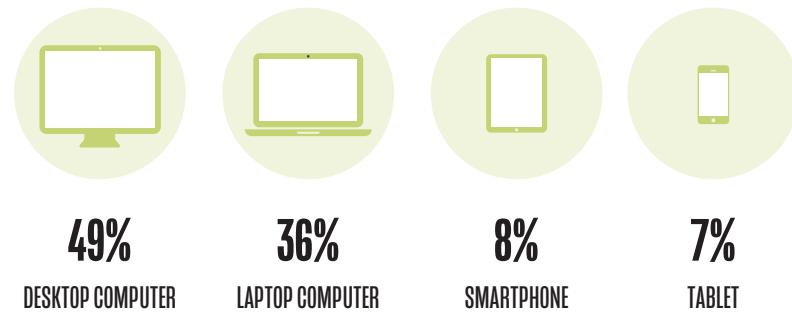
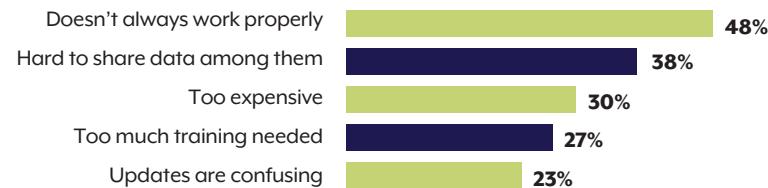


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WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED TOOL TO DO OFFICE WORK?



WHAT PAIN POINTS DO YOU HAVE WITH YOUR BUSINESS SOFTWARE SYSTEMS? (CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY)



BEYOND CRM—SMART TECH TOOLS. Beyond software, business software encompasses hardware and cloud apps—and of course, tools accessible by smart phone that streamline administrative tasks like tracking labor hours. Taussig taps into software that allows the business phone number to ring on multiple devices. So basically, his crewmembers get a company phone within their own phone so they aren't carrying around two devices.

Taussig gives team members the option of a company cell phone or a monthly stipend if they wish. "But most have an unlimited plan so they don't care," he says.

Robert Brandstetter, president of Rob's Lawn Stars in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, has his crew members track time on their smartphones by logging into the online platform. And a real focus for his business is leveraging their online presence. "I have not put fliers out and we consistently get customers calling us because they see us online," he says.

Rob's Lawn Stars invests in Google and Facebook ads. "It's our main source of advertising," he says. He is also looking into ecommerce options so he can power a web store for his mowing services. It would use a mapping device to measure the property. "People could get an instant price and make an instant purchase," he says, hoping to have something in place by 2023.

At Avalon Landscapes in Meridian, Idaho, Microsoft Teams allows crews to communicate messages related to scheduling and routing. "We post all of that information on Teams, and our account managers can get information out to crews for specific details on their projects," says Sean Cooke, general manager.

The company is currently implementing Microsoft Project on the construction side of the business to help streamline processes. "That way we can get budgets rolled out in greater detail and help crews lay out projects from start to finish, what

they accomplished each day and how many days it takes to complete the job," Cooke says.

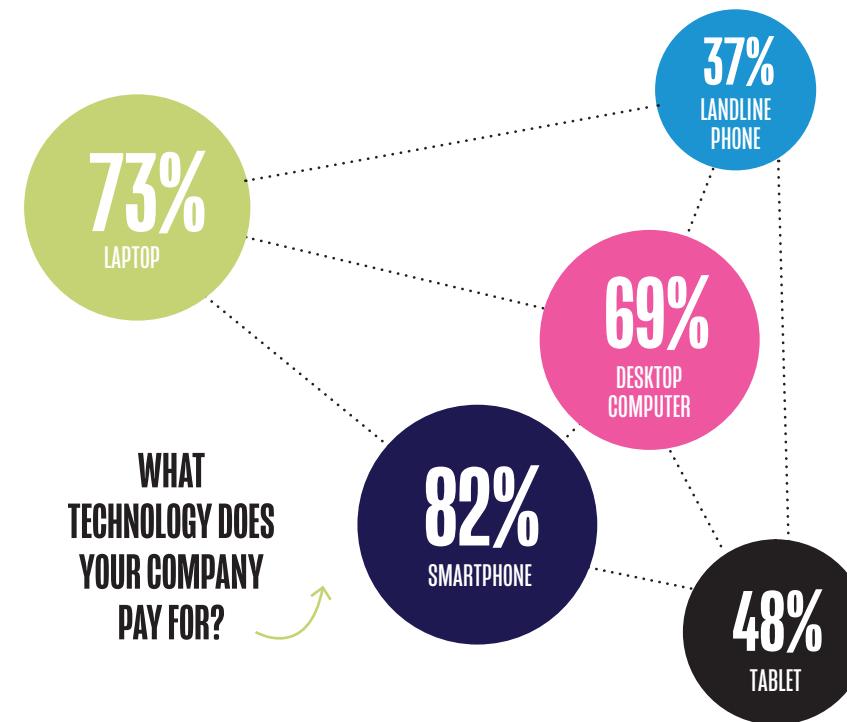
Tapping into the cloud at Taussig Landscape has allowed the company to house forms that everyone in the company can access. And it's free. "As a landscape designer, I can save a design on Google Drive, and if I'm not in the office and a client calls in with a question, anyone can open up the document and answer questions," Taussig explains.

The company drive contains training sheets, employee evaluations, blank forms, the company logo, "everything we need to save for the business is all right there and everyone can access it," Taussig says.

Tech can smooth out HR functions like recruiting, too. Cooke is exploring software with centralized job posting,

applicant screening and hiring best practices. The company says the platform is "like a dating app for recruiting" with automated pre-screening text message questions that give applicants chances to verify or show interest. "That could really help on the front end when people apply for a job, and it's all automated," he says.

WHAT'S IT WORTH? Budgeting for technology can be tough because of the need-it-now factor—a smartphone dies and you're out \$1,200. But there are recurring expenses like subscriptions to apps and software systems that are easier to plan for. Taussig figures \$8,500 per year for subscriptions, another \$4,000 for computers and internet service, and he generally replaces two computers annually. There are eight total in the office, one for each member of administrative staff.



WHAT TECHNOLOGY DOES YOUR COMPANY PAY FOR?

DO YOU HAVE A "SOFTWARE/TECHNOLOGY CHAMPION" AT YOUR COMPANY WHO RUNS POINT ON THE PRODUCTS?



"I have a few employees with phones and those usually last only two to three years, but my desktop is 12 years old—it works great and I've never had any problems, but that's not common," Taussig relates.

For Next to Nature Landscape, gradually adding devices to the fleet of technology has allowed the company to equip the team as they evolve. "We estimate a ballpark of \$10,000 for computers and tablets every year," Hall says.

Shopping apps, tech tools, software and devices and comparing costs helps the budget for Cooke. "We consider technology 'ease of use' because we are paying for something that is not going to produce revenue, so we base the cost analysis on the time it will save us," he says. That said, the company will budget for hardware this year by forecasting what

needs to be repaired or upgraded. Avalon Landscapes consults with an IT firm that advises on what equipment and software needs to "phase out" or in.

"Whatever we need, they keep us updated," Cooke says. "They get us software licenses, updates and are essentially a subcontractor."

Having worked through a major technology integration at a previous company, Cooke knows firsthand that the expertise, time and training required can be costly—but going it alone is even more of an investment with the expense of lost billable working hours.

And at the end of the day, business technology is not only an essential budget line item, it's what customers expect. As Taussig says, "Anymore, it's just weird to see someone pull out a paper invoice and write you a ticket." **L&L**

HOW MUCH HAVE YOU INCREASED YOUR INVESTMENT IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY IN THE PAST YEAR?

10%
A lot

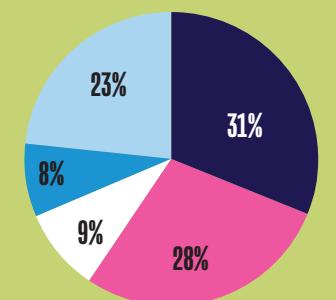
43%
Somewhat

36%
The same

1%
Somewhat less

10%
A lot less

HOW LONG AFTER FIRST IMPLEMENTING YOUR CURRENT BUSINESS SOFTWARE DID YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE THAT IT WAS BEING USED CORRECTLY AND EFFICIENTLY?



● 3 or less months ● 7-9 months
● 4-6 months ● 10-12 months
● More than a year

It's True! The Grass REALLY IS Greener On The Other Side!



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