



## Residential Interiorscaping

### *How to do it Successfully*

*Presented at CalScape Expo 2009 by*

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#### **A. The marketing of this service.**

1. This service should be marketed to a select clientele.

a. I personally market this service to the super rich (households with incomes over \$2- \$5 million plus annually. Normally for me this is CEO's, CFO's and business owners.

b. All of my work is normally done on a referral basis; referrals come from my existing clients, account contacts, architects, and designers. Other sources of referrals for me are high end garden centers, and high end florists.

#### **B. Resources I personally use related to offering this service.**

1. Regional Market Centers, such as The Dallas Market Center, The Atlanta Market Center, The Los Angeles Market Center, The San Francisco Market Center, The New York and Chicago Market Centers. Also, Las Vegas has a new World Trade Market Center.

2. Traveling out of the country and attending world markets such as Frankfurt, Mexico City, and China are great resources also.

3. Attend regional and national association trade shows such as CalScape, Ohio Short Course, etc. These association trade shows are all great sources of materials and supplies for continuing education to sharpen your business and horticultural skills.

4. You are looking for unique and one of a kind items.

5. Establish relationships with growers and specialty greenhouses.

#### **C. How to price this service.**

1. This service should be priced on the higher side.

a. Plants and containers should be marked up 2.5 – 3 times cost, plus install and delivery.

b. The hourly rate used to figure maintenance time should be slightly higher than you might charge to a commercial client.

#### **D. Special clauses to add to your contract/service agreement related to this service.**

1. Access times need to be specified in the contract and adhered to by both the client and service technician. Meaning which day of the week and a window of time in which service will be performed. Some companies I know require keys and alarm codes.

2. Penalties need to be specified in the contract for no access to a property.

3. A no disclosure contract should be drafted between the service technician and the servicing company. The service technician should not be disclosing any personal information about the homeowner or their properties to anyone except his/her supervisors.

#### **E. Start up costs related to this service.**

1. It is essential that the best, most knowledgeable, detailed oriented technician be sent to these types of accounts.

2. Professional attire, exceptional grooming and clean company uniforms are a must.

a. With this type of client it is all about appearances. Appearances and attitude of the service tech, and quality of the plants and containers are a high priority.

#### **F. Ease of implementation.**

1. Not the easiest to break into.

a. Usually one needs to be referred into these types of accounts.

b. One must have an existing market or community in place of high end homes. These are normally found in your larger metropolitan areas. This type of service can also be marketed in communities where expensive second homes or vacation homes are found.

#### **G. Pitfalls.**

1. A five million plus general liability insurance policy is a must. Just in case!

2. Service technicians should be well qualified/certified, and a background check should always be performed.

3. Service technicians and anyone having any contact with the client or client's contacts should be aware of what they are saying and doing while on the clients premises or having any interaction with the client or client's contact. It is very important to remember, no matter how close a service technician may think they are to a client or client's contact, remember, we work for the client. We are a guest in their home and we are not family.

4. Scheduling and access can be an issue.

5. Always be aware that you are being watched at all times. A lot of these types of homes have increased security and have hidden cameras. Security is of the utmost importance to these folks.

6. Act like you belong, but don't be pretentious. Don't stare; don't ask how much things are. Act like and be a professional at all times.

#### **H. Suggestion of what size company this service is a good fit for.**

1. Any size company.

#### **I. Ability to subcontract this service**

1. I personally would not be willing to sub this service out, because of the liability issues involved.