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#### Letter from the President

Spring is around the corner, following a reasonably wet and in many parts of the state mild winter, we may be in store for higher than normal pest pressure. That in and of itself sounds great for the industry, however it's not about the pest pressure wholly, our success is really about our reaction to those pest issues at our client's properties.

I couldn't be happier that we recorded record attendance at both training sites for our ECA Idaho Pest Expo in December. The program was top notch and attendance was peak. The investments our industry is making in training and development will pay big dividends for our customers and our companies.

Today's customer is much different than even just a few years ago. Today we are finally seeing record numbers of Millennials coming into homeownership. These individuals have a different perspective on what a home is in relation to their lives.

Historically for War Generation and baby Boomers a home was an investment, and they wanted that investment protected. This new group of homeowners though still see the investment side of homeownership, they add value to the way in which they use the home. Their general level of tolerance for

pests is lower and the “uses” of the home such as family, parties, relaxation etc rank much higher in priority than previous generations. The tolerance for pests invading or disrupting those activities is extremely low. They hate pests and expect us to maintain a level of control far exceeding previous generations. ECA member companies who continue to support training and development through various channels will be poised for growth, retention and continued confidence in the marketplace.

I hope everyone has a fruitful and safe spring and summer season.

Todd Sawyer

### The Verdict was Wrong on Glyphosate

Scott Partridge, Monsanto Vice President

Like everyone else following the *Dewayne Johnson v. Monsanto Co.* trial, my colleagues and I have deep sympathy for Mr. Johnson’s plight. Our hearts go out to the Johnson family, and we understand their desire for answers.

Glyphosate is not the answer. Glyphosate does not cause cancer. The verdict was wrong. We will appeal the jury’s opinion and continue to vigorously defend [glyphosate](#), which is an essential tool for farmers and others. We are confident science will prevail upon appeal.

The jury’s opinion does not change the science. Glyphosate has a more than 40-year history of safe use. Over those four decades, researchers have conducted more than 800 scientific studies and reviews that support the safe use of glyphosate. The [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#) and the [Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues \(JMPR\)](#) both recently reaffirmed glyphosate does not cause cancer.

The [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#) and other regulatory authorities in [Europe](#), [Canada](#), [Japan](#), [Australia](#), [Korea](#), and

### Supporting the next generation of the Pest Control Industry

By Ben Miller, Sawyer Inc./Orkin Pest Control

Did you know that the ECA of Idaho offers annual scholarships to deserving students in Idaho?

During our winter conferences, we award deserving students with scholarships to help them fulfill their educational needs. We are often amazed of how few applications we receive for this reputable award. The applications are non-intrusive and can be completed in a short amount of time. We encourage ECA members to have their college sons and daughters apply for this scholarship. The deadline is the end of November each year.

As a long-time Professional Applicator and recently retired regulator from the state, I have seen many changes in the urban applicator industry. Many of these changes are welcomed, making us stronger and more reputable in our touchy judgmental society. Some of us are at the age where total retirement will be creeping up on us in no time. We welcome that time, but we also have the question in the back of our minds of whom will take over? This isn’t just a company dilemma but also an industry concern.

Recently at the December 2018 ECA Pest Expo in Boise, we awarded a \$500 scholarship to Penelope Rose, a young Horticulture Student at the College

elsewhere routinely review all approved pesticide products and have consistently reaffirmed that glyphosate does not cause cancer. Rather than arguing the science, the plaintiff's lawyers repeatedly crossed the line, distorted the facts and used baseless and egregious emotional appeals to inflame the jury. We are deeply troubled by the conduct of the plaintiff's lawyers in this case. The judge admonished this conduct on several occasions and instructed the jury to ignore these statements. However, we are concerned that this conduct unduly influenced the jury's deliberations, and we will be raising this issue in our appeal. [Read the full article here.](#)

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**If you would like to contribute an article (or share one that you have read) for this newsletter please submit to [abates@ecaofidaho.org](mailto:abates@ecaofidaho.org).**

**We are always looking for subject matter that interests our readers. Please feel free to send us a topic that you would like to know more about.**

of Western Idaho. I have to say that Father Time is a factor with me not being easily impressed any more. Miss Rose and her essay describing the benefits of the Pest Control Industry, has refreshingly made me think more positively that our industry will survive even when the old geezers like me are ready to enjoy their beach time. I have included Miss Rose's Essay. I was quite impressed.

*In a world experiencing global climate change and added stresses on limited resources, the Pest Control Industries have an enhanced role to play. Changing weather patterns have created and will continue to create, new and unforeseen problems; many which will undoubtedly be related to increased pest, weed and disease problems. The up-to-date knowledge and training obtained by professionals in the industry not only ensure that the best and most current solutions are provided, but also that common misconceptions and misinterpretations are prevented. Homeowners and DIY's sometimes have an approach to pest control that might be based on an unclear understanding of changes in pest management and application methods. The environmental costs can be devastating, especially if done on a large scale. This not only applies to the incorrect use of a chemical but also on the incorrect identification or inaction when faced with a pest. Read Penny's entire submission [here](#).*

#### 4 Ways to Handle Negative Customer Reviews

Service customers often rely on the opinions of their family and friends to make purchasing decisions. In fact, Zendesk says 88 percent of customers have been influenced by an online review when deciding what to buy.

That's why getting positive reviews is essential.

However, when you open your business to reviews on websites like Yelp and Angie's List, you open your business to negative as well as positive reviews. While negative reviews can adversely impact your

business and drive down your overall rating on customer review sites, they also present opportunities. “Negative reviews can benefit your business,” explains Paul Chaney, author of “The Digital Handshake: Seven Proven Strategies to Grow Your Business Using SocialMedia.” “If every review is positive and abounds with four- and five-star ratings, potential customers could become suspicious, feeling that the reviews are ‘manufactured’ rather than being left by real customers. As paradoxical as it sounds, the fact that negative reviews appear can contribute to building trust, rather than diminishing it.”

And, “while dealing with unhappy customers has always been a challenge for business owners, in today’s age, negative reviews are for everyone to see, which makes handling the situation properly even more important,” explains Alain Parcan, director of marketing, Market Hardware.

Here are four ways to deal with negative customer reviews.

#### **How to Handle Negative Customer Reviews #1: Monitor your online mentions.**

To respond to reviews promptly—both the good and the bad—you first need to know what customers are saying and where they are talking about your business.

Online reputation monitoring tools like Social Mention (which is free to use), Reputology or Review Trackers (the latter two require a small fee) can help, Chaney shares. Also, set up Google Alerts to track your business name so you don’t miss anything.

Social media management tools such as Hootsuite or Sprout Social also have built-in monitoring capabilities, Chaney adds.

#### **How to Handle Negative Customer Reviews #2: Be polite, respond promptly and take the issue details offline.**

Responding to positive and negative reviews alike shows customers you are attentive and care enough to address customer concerns.

To craft the best response, first “remove emotion from the equation,” Parcan says. “Reacting emotionally tends to lead to an over-the-top response, which usually just adds fuel to the fire. Instead, take some time to relax and think about where the customer may have felt slighted (whether they are right or wrong).

“Also, you never want to air out an entire conversation in a public forum, so start with a simple, generic response,” Parcan advises. “Be as polite as possible. A positive attitude will help get a positive result.

Rebecca Hussey, Market Hardware’s director of account management, suggests the following responses:

- Thank the customer for voicing his or her concerns. Say you are looking into the customer’s account and will be in touch to work toward a resolution.
- Apologize and say, “I’m sorry to hear that you weren’t happy with your service. Can we contact you directly to try to resolve the error?”

“Communicating with an upset customer in a more personal manner, such as over the phone or in person, can help eliminate any misunderstandings and speed up solutions,” Parcan says. “It will also show the disgruntled customer you are aware of the situation and are working to sort it out.”

#### **How to Handle Negative Customer Reviews #3: Encourage positive customer reviews.**

To combat negative reviews, consistently encourage your happy customers to leave positive reviews.

Since only a small portion of your total customers may take the time to leave reviews, the people who do certainly have the strongest feelings toward your business—whether positive or negative. “Get in the habit of encouraging your customers to leave you reviews online or even consider sending out an email blast with a link to different review sites (Google being a priority),” Parcan says. “Chances are you have many happy customers who would be happy to take a minute or two to leave a review.

“One blemish won’t have much of a negative effect when surrounded by several glowing reviews,” Parcan adds. “And the fact that reviews boost your search rankings makes this an added bonus.”

#### **How to Handle Negative Customer Reviews #4: Share reviews with your employees.**

At a company or team meeting, share positive and negative customer reviews with employees. Positive reviews provide great momentum as your team goes into the field that day.

And with negative customer reviews, internal communication can “help ensure you prevent similar problems in the future,” Chaney says.

#### **Become Review Worthy**

A PowerReviews study says 97 percent of consumers consult reviews before making a purchase. Eighty-five percent of them seek out negative reviews specifically. The majority of consumers read between one and 10 reviews before making a purchase and 50 percent of consumers write reviews for products and services they’ve purchased, the study further revealed.

Commercial customers are also reading reviews. A State of B2B Procurement study from Acquity Group says 94 percent of buyers do online research before making a purchase. Seventy-seven percent use Google search, 84.3 percent check business websites, 34 percent visit third-party websites and 41 percent read user reviews.

Your online reputation is vital to your business’ success. “It affects your online marketing strategy, so don’t take it lightly,” Parcan advises. “Monitor the popular review sites regularly. Make sure you follow these directions closely if you do happen to run into a negative review along the way.”