

The Vegetation Manager

Serving the vegetation management industry

MARCH 2013

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The Future of Industrial Vegetation Management

**2013 Annual General Meeting
and Trade Show Details and
Schedule.**

Together We Stand: 35 Years of the IVMAA
Award Essay on Industrial Vegetation Management
Business Insight from Neil Thiessen
Spring AGM Agenda
Reports from Committees

Spring Edition



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Featured Article

Together we Stand: 35 Years of the IVMAA

Industries are like playing fields – where players compete, give and take ground, and make their names and fortunes. Their success is limited only by the size of the field, which depends on the efforts of the individual players and outside pressures. Shifts in the consumer market, tougher taxes, negative public perception, excessive regulation – all have the power to constrain and shrink the field.

When used properly, pesticides and herbicides are our best friends – they make the modern world possible. However, when misused, these products can have disastrous consequences for the environment. When this happens, tough regulations and steep penalties are not the only tools in the government's arsenal, but they come into force under public pressure. This shrinks the field for everyone in vegetation management – from large corporations to independent contractors – who would have to pay extra taxes, fill out extra paperwork, and submit to greater regulatory scrutiny.

Unless an industry can show itself to be environmentally responsible, the spectre of regulation is always around the corner. From the government's point of view, every past misuse of pesticides is an argument in favour of regulation, and the industry is often judged by its worst offenders. This is inevitable in any industry with potential

environmental impacts – after all, the most famous oil tanker in history is not the thousands of ships that successfully completed their voyages, but the Exxon Valdez.

As I wrote in the last issue, chemical bans in Central Canada have moved forward despite the opposition of solid scientific evidence – pesticides in Ontario, herbicides in Quebec. While these bans are misinformed and wrongheaded, they score points for politicians looking for chemical bogeymen. The only way to secure the future of the vegetation management industry – and to preserve its standing in the eyes of the public – is to strengthen every member of the chain through education, advocacy, and engagement.

Since it was founded in 1978, the IVMAA has been the leading voice for industrial vegetation managers at the tables of government. Like other non-profit industry associations, it works to raise the playing field – building a thriving industry based on mutual cooperation among competitors – and shield the industry from a blanket of red tape.

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Featured Article Continued...

Together we Stand: 35 Years of the IVMAA

It has also served as a common platform for all contractors in industrial vegetation management. Members can share information, raise issues, and voice their concerns. Committees work with the government to develop smarter, leaner regulations. Biannual seminars and tradeshow feature speakers discussing issues of the day. Tradeshow showcase the latest technologies and provide a space for networking and forming partnerships.

One of the biggest achievements of the past few years has been the 5th edition of the Industry Standards and Good Practices – a critical resource for every industrial vegetation manager in Alberta. The IVMAA has been a champion of safety certifications such as UTW/UTT. It has also established an online member registry, and maintains job postings, event announcements, a newsletter, and publications like Vegetation Manager. As the IVMAA celebrates 35 years, executive director Neil Thiessen says it “is on the cusp of a transition to a more important and influential organization.” He hopes to expand the association’s focus to include a broader spectrum of

the industry. The client base of the IVMAA membership – such as the oil and gas industry – is one major set of stakeholders that needs to be brought into the field. “The end users leave it to the contractors, when in fact they should be partners in the quest and goals of the IVMAA.”

Even more crucially, Thiessen also wants to reach out to smaller operators. “Too many consider the IVMAA for the ‘elite’ large companies,” he says. “The IVMAA continues to preach to the converted, or at least the partially converted. While this is not a bad thing, engaging the other 400 licensed applicators and stakeholders remains a challenge. Owner/operators that operate on the fringes can cause this industry a lot of grief, and the IVMAA needs to engage them for the sake of the industry.”



Alex Colgan, Freelance Writer for The Vegetation Manager.



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Committee Reports

Public Relations Committee

If any Members wish to use the IVMAA Displays to promote the Registry, stewardship etc. it is now being stored at Red Deer County. Give me a call @ 403-505-9066 if you have an opportunity.

I had a chance this fall to give a report on IVMAA activities and promote the March Conference to Ag Fieldmen, Assistants and staff at their annual In Service Training, (IST) in Edmonton. All IVMAA members keep in mind that one day of IST Training is open to the Industry so all can obtain Pesticide Applicator Licensing and Certified Crop Advisor credits. In 2013 IST is hosted by the South Region in Calgary and usually takes place the first week of Dec. Contact your County Fieldman for details.

In addition the display was set up at the Ag Service Board (ASB) Conference. Approximately 500 Councillors, Farmer Members Fieldmen and staff attend the yearly meeting. This year, 12 resolutions were passed and will be reviewed by Alberta Agriculture, and Minister Verlyn Olson. Some of the Resolutions that were passed were ;

- Weed Control in Provincial Waterways
- Inclusion of all Invasive Hawkweed Species as Prohibited Noxious under the Alberta Weed Control Act and Regulation
- Pesticide Container Collection
- Continuation of the Prairie Shelterbelt Program
- Agricultural Pests Act Review / Invasive Species Act and a Wild Boar Eradication Initiative.

The IVMAA also got some good exposure, offering the ASB door prizes of free admission to our IVMAA Conference in March.

See You At the Conference!!

Art Preachuk, Director in Charge

Government Liason

Since the IVMAA's fall general meeting and event, I have had the opportunity to attend and participate at the OVMA, IVMA Man-Sask, and IVMABC industry conferences which were all excellent learning opportunities. Our industry continues to step forward in positive, proactive ways which will continue to make us stronger as a collective group.

For example, one of the more relevant new initiatives is the Continuing Education Accreditation program being adopted in Saskatchewan for industrial applicators, being driven by

IVMA Man-Sask. This program is much like Alberta's, and will offer applicators the opportunity to obtain credits towards their licences' through continuing education. This will give Alberta the chance to apply for Saskatchewan credits, and likewise, for industry events so relevant credits are given to applicators working between provinces, or travelling to other association meetings to simply attend, network and learn. As always, finding ways to educate and collaborate between industry associations is beneficial to advancing our industry.

Recently, I had the opportunity to speak to the Canadian Land Reclamation Association in Red Deer, AB with Gary Godberson. It was an exciting opportunity to share our industry's message with stakeholders involved in reclamation. I want to acknowledge Gary for his dedication to sharing the value our association brings to industry and for leading our registries program.

Effective the March Annual General Meeting, I will be stepping down as a board member due to my new role within Dow AgroSciences Canada. I want to thank the IVMAA membership and current/past board members for the opportunity to contribute to this great association. I have learned a lot and have had the chance to work with some great professionals. I look forward to being part of and witnessing further advancements in our industry in the years to come.

Mark Alberts, Director in Charge

Membership Committee

Current membership consists of 47 individual, 53 group and 20 corporate registrations for a total of 120 members.

Membership, and the revenue stream that it provides, has remained static for a number of years. It was suggested during a meeting with a consultant last September, that it is probably time to re-visit our membership structure, as well as our corporate sponsorship. Some ideas have been generated, and there will be an opportunity at the AGM March 6th to learn more about what changes are being considered and to vote on by-law amendments in this area.

Ron Standish, Director in Charge

Committee Reports

Seminar Committee

The seminar committee has been very busy lining up speakers to give our members a quality seminar with current presentations that will keep us up to date with industry and technology. We will have a presentation on social network, this is new for many of our members and has become a new way to be contacted for business purposes and will increase in years to come with Twitter, Facebook and other social media sites.

There will be something for everyone including your opportunity to have your picture taken with the Grey Cup at our meet and greet as well as Mantracker during the meet and greet and the following night at our banquet, so bring your cameras. We look forward to your attendance at this event to support our industry our association and your seminar committee for all the hours put in. The request for 9 CEC's for licensed applicators and up to 9 CEU's for our UTT/UTW group should make this an event that is well worth attending and cost effective for all our members. The committee would like to thank you all in advance for attending and supporting our association.

I would personally like to thank the seminar committee for all their hard work organizing this event without their time this would not be possible. I would also like to thank their employers for allowing them the time we need to put together an event like this.

Maurice Pelletier, Director in Charge

Website Committee

The website committee was busy working on several initiatives this winter. We continue to have increased traffic to the website. In 2012 we saw a record number of hits to the website totaling just over 3000! We set a 'hit record' for the website last fall with 50 hits in one day.

However - in January of this year we are already over 1000 hits and beat the fall hit record with close to 80. We continue to add services to the website that members can benefit from. We started a monthly update 'industry updates' that highlights some of the major events taking place. If you are not on the IVMAA mailing list you can subscribe on by enter your email address on the home page of the website.

If you didn't know we have posted a .pdf of the 5th Edition Standards and Good Practices manual on the website. You can find it by logging into the member area of the website and locating it on the left hand side of the screen. If you forgot your username or password it is easy to retrieve or send a email off to the committee and we will set you up.

We began production on a better Job Board for the member ship to use. With the majority of the website traffic going to the current job board we see this as a great opportunity for membership to benefit. We soon will also have advertising opportunities on the website for those wanting to capture on the traffic.

We would like to feature some more pictures of our membership out working. If you have any great pictures send them to info@ivmaa.com.

Operating Protocol Committee

Another hectic 4 months have passed since I submitted my last report. It has been hectic on 3 fronts which is very good for myself and the association. The board of directors have been very busy with many meetings, actions and plans over the past 4 months, you will see this in the others reports. Secondly as the chair of the Operating Protocol committee has been busy as well.

Now that we have a new government and Jock's replacement has been named it is time to move ahead with a re-write of the document. This document is very critical to our association as it is also the foundation of the Registries Program. Due to the importance of this document the BOD has decided to get third party (Outside help) vs. calling on members to do the work. Members will be contacted by the people that are redoing it for input and clarification but no direct time at the computer for our members. I also sit on the seminar committee.

If you have not sat on this committee you should consider it. It is very fast paced, you work with a great group of people and you help fund the association for the following 24 months. Finally, I would like to let everybody know that I am stepping down from holding a BOD position. I will remain active in the association as the Chairperson of the Operating Protocol Committee.

Darrell Chambers, Director in Charge

Committee Reports

President's Report

Another busy winter at the IVMAA. Your IVMAA board and committee members have been working hard on various initiatives within the organization.

The majority of the time this winter was spent on the 2013 IVMAA Seminar and Tradeshow. The committee met a couple times but most was spent on conference calls - due to the poor road conditions on the days that we had booked meetings. I would like to thank all the committee members and their employers. The amount of volunteer work everyone contributed sure paid off.

As a IVMAA member you have the opportunity to join committees or run for an IVMAA board of director. You can contribute to industry through work done at the IVMAA. If you have any initiatives or want to get involved please contact the IVMAA office. All of the committees could use a few more individuals and with other initiatives ready to go we could really use the help. If you are interested let one of the IVMAA board members know or contact the IVMAA office.

Looking forward for the association we continue to have some great initiative to work on. Some of the great agenda topics are: strategic plan, operating protocol update, membership structure, by-law review and updates, further website developments, expanding our registries program, directors guide update, seminar procedure updates, advertising and sponsorship review... just to name a few.

With spring right around the corner many of you will be gearing up for another summer season. Good luck and may you have another prosperous season. If anyone has any comments or concerns send me an email: Brandon.tupper@marksmeninc.com.

Brandon Tupper, President

Awards Committee

The IVMAA membership really took our scholarship program and ran with it. We received the most applicants that we have had in years. The winner as selected by the board of directors was Kurtis Rassmussen. We have featured the winning essay in this issue of the Vegetation Manager – congratulations! The IVMAA offers a annual \$1000 scholarship and admission to our spring seminar. It is a great way for employers to engage their summer staff during the off season.

Our bursary winner was Graham Standish – congratulations Graham. The IVMAA offers two bursarys of \$500 each year to qualified candidates.

Brandon Tupper, Director in Charge

Committee Reports

Registries Committee

The momentum continues to build with the new IVMAA Registry! Our current focus is to build public and client program awareness. With reclamation consultants being a significant user of vegetation control services, and considering they need and appreciate professional services and records – we have really been targeting this group. The CLRA (Canadian Land Reclamation Association) is therefore where our current time and efforts are being directed. We have run 2 of 4 advertisements in the CLRA magazine to introduce the registry. I am also very happy to report that Mark Alberts and myself presented the Registry to the CLRA membership in Red Deer. With approximately 750 people in attendance – we couldn't ask for a better opportunity to talk about the importance of hiring a IVMAA Registered company! One of the bigger issues as related to me by the association, is the wide variance in application records. Many are simply not even legal with Alberta Environment standards and/or have poor maps and accuracy as well. With this in mind, I was asked by the CLRA representative "How do we know a registered IVMAA company will give us the proper application records at the end of the job?" This is why the application record review and survey was sent out to all registered companies and organizations. As promised, the registry will continue to improve on self-regulation and accountability to the end users and public. I NEED all registered companies & organizations to really look at their 2012 application records. It will be tough to get a phone call from a reclamation consultant in the upcoming season reminding me and the IVMAA of our promises and benefits of hiring a IVMAA Registered company. It is not as simple as signing off a few documents and throwing some stickers on the trucks! Let's make the IVMAA registry something that our association can be really proud of! With your support, the registry momentum will continue to build.

Garry Golbertson, Director in Charge

Industrial Vegetation Management

An essay by Kurtis Rassmussen

Vegetation management is often either overlooked or undervalued by the unenlightened masses, and it has become somewhat of a personal agenda of mine to increase awareness of the importance of this issue. Frequently, I am confronted with the statement 'who cares, they are just weeds'. This opens up the debate and allows me to address three primary points. First, weeds on my side of the fence do, in fact, affect my neighbours. Second, the invasive qualities of introduced species are not to be taken lightly. Third, weeds impact profitability for a number of reasons. Furthermore, industrial vegetation management is important for roadside visibility, reduction of fire risk, and minimization of security concerns. These last three points do not warrant further detailed discussion, but it is important to note that they exist.

Good relations with neighbours can often be taken for granted, but when tensions arise, it can become impossible to re-establish these positive relationships. During my two summers with Mountain View County, I frequently dealt with landowners complaining about each other. Usually, they wish to do so confidentially so as to avoid the souring of future dealings with each other. When a group of landowners team up to tackle a weed issue in an area, it can bring them together, as they have a common cause. If an individual chooses not to participate, I will usually hear statements such as 'Why do I bother spending all this time and money controlling weeds when Joe Blow does nothing, and his weeds end up in my pasture/field?' This is a difficult situation and must be handled delicately to avoid pitting one neighbour against another. I also frequently hear the statement 'What about all the weeds in the County ditches?' This is a statement I can act on with relative promptness and return the ball to their court. Since vegetation management is so frequently a point of contention, I try to contact entire communities rather than one or two individuals. This approach brings people together, rather than driving them apart.

The intrinsic value of native species cannot be overstated. Equilibriums in nature are fundamental to the functioning of natural cycles. When a given species loses a competitive advantage because of the introduction of a non native species, this equilibrium is thrown out of balance. As an example, if a population of deer are accustomed to browsing on Dogwood along a rivers edge and an invasive plant such as Purple Loosestrife moves in, the frequency and abundance of Dogwood will decrease, and therefore the deer will be forced to look elsewhere for their food. This in turn will disrupt another ecosystem whose equilibrium equation does not include having deer browsing in it. This could lead to increased competition for browsing species which would then affect additional species that depend on that ecosystem for either food or habitat. If the lack of food were severe enough, it could lead to an unnatural reduction in deer populations. This could in turn lead to a lack of food for predator species such as coyotes. Lacking a natural food source, the coyotes could then become pests by either preying on livestock and pets, or by feeding on urban garbage. This is only one theoretical example, but it serves well to illustrate the 'snowball effect' which can be initiated by seemingly miniscule changes, but have exponentially larger effects.

Ultimately, the majority of people are not willing to make significant changes in their lifestyles unless they are affected financially. Smaller producers often cite cost as a reason for not controlling weeds. Education of such producers should include examples of weeds acting as alternate hosts for crop pests and carrying capacity calculations that clearly indicate the detrimental effect of having weeds in a crop or pasture. Several weeds of the Brassicaceae family act as alternate hosts for diamondback moths, flea beetles, root maggots, and many others. The cost to control said weeds can easily be recouped if one could reduce the incidence of these and other yield robbing pests.

Continued on next page...

Industrial Vegetation Management

An essay by Kurtis Rassmussen

While this essay may seem to have a focus on agricultural vegetation management, it is important to remember that many weeds originate from industrial sites. Industrial sites such as oil lease roads, logging sites and even urban industrial or commercial operations act as a huge source of weedy propagative materials. Because there is usually heavy traffic associated with these types of sites, a small weed problem quickly spreads beyond the property lines. Roadside ditches often end up becoming home to these problematic vegetation types, and further serve to aid in their spreading. Furthermore, it has been my observation that the majority of weed problems (and insect/disease problems) tend to occur at approaches into fields or near areas where there has been a disturbance. Since we now know that problematic vegetation can be a source of strife between neighbours, impact natural ecosystems and raise the costs associated with producing food, it is obvious that industrial vegetation management is of the utmost importance.

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2013 IVMAA SPRING SEMINAR & TRADESHOW

CHALLENGE OF CHANGE: SHAPING OUR FUTURE



March 5 - March 7, 2013

On behalf of your 2013 Seminar Committee and the IVMAA's Board of Directors we would like to welcome you and thank you for attending our 2013 Seminar and Tradeshow taking place at the Marriott River Cree Resort and Casino located in Enoch, Alberta. The agenda for the seminar will prove to be informative and we have loaded this year's agenda with 8 CEC's and as many CEU's. As with past conferences we encourage you to spend some time in our tradeshow area visiting the different booths and displays. You will be able to meet the booth attendants to hear about and view what new technologies, equipment and products that are available to help your everyday operations.

We would also like to thank all of our wonderful association members and industry organizations that have donated a host of great silent auction items. These items will be on display all of Wednesday March 6th in the Enoch room/ Tradeshow area for you to browse and of course bid on, the bidding will be all day until the banquet is complete at which point we will start to close down items and notify the successful bidders. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our many sponsors. Without the support we receive from all of them this seminar would not be possible. We would also as an association like to thank them for their continued support and involvement it is we greatly appreciate and required for our continued success. To wrap up I would like to thank the 2013 Seminar Committee, the IVMAA Board Members and our volunteers for their support of this Seminar. We hope you find the conference informative and enjoyable.

Thank you
Maurice Pelletier Conference Chair

March 5

- 10:00AM – 4:00 PM Trade show set up
 4:00PM – 7:00PM Registration
 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM Meet & Greet – sponsored by Dow AgroSciences & True North Specialty Products
 7:00 PM Grey Cup Appearance & CFL Alumni Speaker sponsored by Dow AgroSciences

March 6

- 6:45 AM – 7:45 AM Breakfast/Registration
 7:45 AM – 8:00 AM Opening Remark – Brandon Tupper President of IVMAA
 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM Evolution of Integrated Vegetation Management from Integrated Pest Management
 - Kevin McLoughlin
 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM Reliability-based Tree Management - Richard Johnstone
 9:30 AM – 10:00 AM AB Environment update - Laura Hammer
 10:00 AM – 10:20 AM EXHIBITOR BREAK
 10:20 AM – 11:30 AM Pesticide Ban Hour – Update on the pesticide ban in Ontario, as well as the
 proposed pesticide bans in Edmonton, & Manitoba. Geoff Gordon – president of
 the OVMAA, Jon Froese – True North Specialty Products,
 Chris Saunders – City of Edmonton
 11:30 PM – 12:30 LUNCH
 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM The Social Media Dynamic - Steve Warne
 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM Project Management & Collaboration - Dr. Dale Christenson
 2:30 PM – 2:50 PM EXHIBITOR BREAK
 2:50 PM – 3:30 PM Where are we going- Doug Unger
 3:30 PM- 4:00 PM CPR Spray Train - Dave Spata
 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM Resistance Management – Dr. Linda Hall
 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM EXHIBITOR BREAK
 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM Banquet
 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM Entertainment: Man Tracker – sponsored by DuPont
 8:00 PM – 9:00 PM Silent Auction

March 7

- 7:00 AM – 8:00 AM Breakfast
 8:00 AM -9:00 AM Vegetation Management and Biodiversity in Forest & Agriculture systems -
 Tom Sullivan
 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM Integrated Vegetation Management and Partnerships - Richard Johnstone
 10:00 AM – 10:20 AM EXHIBITOR BREAK
 10:20 AM – 12:00 PM AGM & Elections
 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM LUNCH
 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM Tree pest management - Taz Stuart
 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM Driver Attitude – Mel Mottram of The Attitude People
 3:00 PM – 3:10 PM Closing remarks & grand prize draw (must be present to win)

"The IVMAA Registry Program"

Be an 'IVMAA Registered Company' The vegetation management industry needs more professionalism and accountability. The IVMAA registry is being offered to companies that believe in higher standards and the IVMAA "Code of Conduct".

This registry is for all companies in vegetation management - Herbicide, mechanical, arborists, consultants etc. Benefits of registering your company:

- Registration in the IVMAA Registries program
- Covers development costs of the program
- Costs incurred educating industry
- Aiding in the IVMAA branding initiatives
- A number unique to your company
- Enough decals to place (2) on each of your working units
- Includes one version of the IVMAA Standards and Good practices manual

Proudly display your own unique IVMAA Registration decal on your units! Please fill in the registration form and attach a signed code of conduct. Proof of insurance and service approval will be required for Truck Registry (if applicable)



Business Insight

COMPETING WITH OTHERS – LARGE OR SMALL

If you are a small company trying to compete for clients where there are a lot of larger companies, or a large company where there are a lot of small competitors, what can you do to sustain and grow your business? There may not be a simple cookie cutter answer to this but there are some things you should consider

By definition alone one can see that competition is a struggle between two or more entities looking to achieve or dominate in a given realm. To be successful in today's market companies are learning to strive for achievement, not domination. This, therefore, allows businesses to focus on what is realistic and what drives value for their customers. It does not matter if your competition is large or small, as long as what you are up to is realistic and focuses on your customers, you will achieve success.

Competing in most markets is both an art and a science. Sometimes you open your business and you are successful in growing it every year based simply on hard work, common sense, and providing customers with what they want at reasonable prices. Other times you can do everything 'right' and continuously battle just to survive. Clearly the marketplace in which you choose to compete has a significant influence on your business growth and sustainability. However, there are often things you do, or don't do, that affect whether you gain and retain customers.

Yes, customers want a competitive price, but price is not the only determining factor in their choice. Often your image and presentation influence a potential customer. Your credentials and professionalism as well as knowledge on the products and services you sell can influence a client. The one thing for sure that does not work in today's competitive market is focusing on all the negative aspects of the 'others' out in the marketplace. You are more likely to achieve success by focusing on what it is you know and are good at than you are to talk negatively about your competition.

Technology has changed the way we do our business. Customers never need to actually deal with a human being, yet they can procure a service from a company they know little about. Further, they can see the results of the work a supplier has done and pay for the work without actually ever meeting anyone in the company they hired. This condition makes it difficult to build a relationship with the customer. Anything you can do to ensure the customer has an opportunity to talk to you or your employees is an opportunity to build trust. It is this contact that allows for the building of a longer term and sustainable relationship.

I have observed in some organizations that the customer has fallen into the ranks of a 2nd class citizen. A few car dealerships come to mind! This is not a sustainable culture or practice. The customer is king and remains king for those who want to develop a trusting and sustainable relationship with a supplier, like you. Building a relationship with customers where they find your company to be reliable (do what you say, when you say), professional (technically competent) and reasonable (priced to show value for services) is no easy task nor is it ever to be taken for granted. Customers need to feel you have their interests at heart in all their dealings with you.

Always try to have your employees and equipment look professional. Clean and functional equipment add to the customers' image of your company. Everyone knows that working equipment gets dirty, but the effort to keep it clean helps you portray a positive image of your company. The IVMAA Registry Program is a way to show your commitment to professionalism. Employees that look and act professional while in the public eye, enhance the customer experience. We have all seen examples of the opposite, where it is obvious the company and employees just don't care.

Focus on what you and your company provide that is of high value and maybe even unique. Do it well and be a reliable and committed supplier and you won't get bogged down with trying to beat the competition. Frankly, you need to concern yourself with how you can best can supply your company's products and services in the most professional way at reasonable prices so the customer sees value, and you can forget about the 'others'.

By: Neil Thiessen, Able Business Consulting

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