STRETCHLEARN · WORKBOOK

Landscaping & Lawn Care Business — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into the numbers and contracts your own business will run on. Work through each section with your real market figures: your wages, your routes, your equipment, and your customers. By the end you will have a defensible price, a denser route, a signed-agreement template, and an upsell plan you can deploy this season.

Pricing Services for Real Margin

Build your man-hour rate, learn to estimate jobs by production rate, and set tiers and minimums that protect your profit floor.

Worksheet: Build Your Man-Hour Rate

Fill in your real numbers to calculate the single billing rate every estimate will use. If you do not yet employ anyone, use the wage you would pay a competent crew member.

Base hourly wage you pay (or would pay) a crew member

Labor burden percent (payroll tax, workers comp, benefits; typically 18 to 28 percent)

True labor cost per hour (wage times 1 plus burden percent)

Total annual overhead (insurance, truck, trailer, fuel, software, admin)

Estimated billable hours per crew member per year (often 1,000 to 1,400)

Overhead per billable hour (annual overhead divided by billable hours)

Cost per billable hour (true labor cost plus overhead per hour)

Target net profit margin percent (aim 20 to 30 percent)

Final man-hour billing rate (cost per hour divided by [1 minus margin])

Exercise: Bid Three Real Properties by Production Rate

Pick three actual properties in your area (or your own and two neighbors). Measure turf area with a measuring wheel or Google Earth Pro, then bid each using your production rate and man-hour rate.

• For each property, what is the turf area in square feet after subtracting house, driveway, and beds?

• Using your machine's production rate, how many total man-hours does full service (mow, trim, edge, blow)

take, including obstacle time?

• What price does your man-hour rate produce, and what clean number will you actually quote?

• Which property is least profitable per hour, and why? Would your stop-charge minimum even allow it?

Worksheet: Define Your Three Service Tiers and Add-On Prices

Write the scope and per-visit price for each tier, then price your five most common add-ons at man-hour rate plus marked-up materials.

Stop-charge minimum (the lowest price you will start an engine for)

Basic tier — scope and per-visit price

Plus tier — scope and per-visit price

Premium tier — scope and per-visit price

Add-on 1 (e.g. aeration) — man-hours, material cost, marked-up price

Add-on 2 (e.g. mulch install) — man-hours, material cost, marked-up price

Add-on 3 (e.g. leaf cleanup) — man-hours, material cost, marked-up price

Add-on 4 (e.g. hedge trimming) — man-hours, material cost, marked-up price

Add-on 5 (e.g. overseeding) — man-hours, material cost, marked-up price

Checklist: Pricing Readiness Checklist

[ ] I have calculated overhead per billable hour from real annual costs
[ ] My man-hour rate produces a net margin of at least 20 percent
[ ] I have timed at least one real job to verify my production rate
[ ] I have a written stop-charge minimum and will not bid below it
[ ] I have three named tiers with escalating, profitable scope
[ ] Every add-on has a price equal to man-hour rate plus marked-up materials
[ ] I have a reminder set to recalculate my rate every six months

Route Density and Daily Throughput

Measure your windshield time, cluster customers into day-zones, and sequence stops into loops that raise revenue per truck-day.

Worksheet: Measure Your Current Drive Time and Revenue per Truck-Day

Track one real working day. Capture every stop, its billing, and the drive time between stops to expose how much of your paid day is unpaid driving.

Total paid hours in the day (clock-in to clock-out)

Number of stops completed

Total drive time between stops (sum of all legs, in minutes)

Drive time as a percent of paid hours (target under 15 percent)

Average minutes between stops (target 5 to 10)

Total revenue billed for the day

Revenue per truck-day (total billing for one truck and crew)

Number of additional stops you could add if drive time were halved

Exercise: Map and Day-Zone Your Customer Base

Plot every current customer on a map (Google My Maps with colored pins works free). Assign each to a service day by location, then find your densest cluster.

• How many day-zones can your service area support, and where are their rough boundaries?

• Which neighborhood or street holds your densest cluster of customers right now?

• Which customers are stranded off-zone, and what incentive would move them to the right day?

• Where will you aim your next door-hangers or yard signs to deepen saturation around an existing account?

Exercise: Sequence a Day into a Loop

Take one day's stops and order them into a single continuous loop or one-directional sweep, then compare against how the crew currently drives it.

• What is the current stop order, and where does it backtrack or re-cross a main road?

• What loop sequence minimizes total distance from shop, through the zone, and back?

• How many minutes of drive time does the optimized sequence save versus today?

• Which routing tool (Jobber, Service Autopilot, RouteSavvy, or Google Maps multi-stop) will you use to lock the sequence?

Checklist: Route Density Checklist

[ ] I have every customer plotted on a map and colored by service day
[ ] Drive time on my measured day is below 15 percent of paid hours (or I have a plan to get there)
[ ] New leads are quoted the day that matches their zone, not their preference
[ ] I have identified my densest cluster and a marketing target around it
[ ] Each day's stops are sequenced as a loop with no needless backtracks
[ ] I track stops per day and revenue per truck-day every week

Seasonal Contracts and Recurring Revenue

Convert one-off customers into annual level-pay agreements and pre-book next season before competitors start calling.

Worksheet: Build a 12-Month Level-Pay Agreement

Take one real customer and annualize every service they need across a full year, then levelize the bill into 12 equal payments.

Number of in-season mows times per-visit price (annual mowing total)

Fertilization rounds times price (annual fertilization total)

Seasonal cleanups (spring and fall) total

Mulch, aeration, and other recurring add-ons total

Annual contract value (sum of all lines)

Level monthly payment (annual value divided by 12)

Annual escalation clause percent (e.g. up to 10 percent at renewal)

Autopay method (card or ACH) and cancellation notice period

Exercise: Calculate the Value of Going Recurring

Estimate how shifting from per-cut to contracted revenue changes your stability and your customer lifetime value.

• What percent of your current revenue is under signed contract, and what is your target?

• What does one new customer cost you in marketing, and how much longer does a contract customer stay versus a one-off customer?

• How much cash would level-pay deliver in your slowest off-season month if half your customers were contracted?

• If you sold the business, what would a buyer pay for your recurring agreements at 0.5 to 1 times annual contract value?

Worksheet: Plan Your Off-Season Renewal and Pre-Book Campaign

Design the campaign that locks in next year's revenue during the slow months, starting with renewals and layering in early-bird offers.

Renewal send date (6 to 8 weeks before season start)

Auto-renewal terms and opt-out window

Early-bird incentive and its sign-by deadline

Referral ask wording for each renewing customer

Target percent of routes pre-booked before spring

List of open route slots to backfill, by day-zone

Checklist: Recurring Revenue Checklist

[ ] I have at least one 12-month agreement priced and levelized into monthly payments
[ ] Every agreement includes scope, exclusions, an escalation clause, and cancellation terms
[ ] All contracts are on autopay by card or ACH
[ ] My renewal campaign has a date and is scheduled during the off-season
[ ] Agreements auto-renew with an opt-out so retention is the default
[ ] I know my current percent-of-revenue-under-contract and my season target

Equipment ROI and the Maintenance Upsell Ladder

Justify equipment by payback and hourly cost, set a replace-versus-repair rule, and build the upsell ladder that grows account value.

Worksheet: Run a Payback and Hourly-Cost Analysis on One Machine

Pick a machine you own or want to buy. Calculate how fast added productivity pays it off, then its true hourly operating cost.

Machine purchase price (or financed cost)

Extra lawns or hours per day the machine enables

Added daily revenue (extra lawns times average price)

Added annual revenue (daily times season weeks times days)

Payback period in seasons (price divided by added annual profit)

Annual fuel cost for the machine

Annual maintenance and wear-parts cost (blades, belts, tires)

Annual depreciation allowance (price divided by expected life in years)

Hourly operating cost (sum of above divided by hours operated)

Exercise: Apply the Replace-versus-Repair Rule

Review your oldest or least reliable machine and decide whether to keep repairing it or replace it this off-season.

• What is the machine's current replacement value, and what would the next major repair cost as a percent of it?

• What did you spend on repairs for this machine over the past year, and how does that compare to a payment on a new one?

• How many revenue-days would you lose if this machine failed during peak season?

• Buy, rent, or repair: what is your decision for this machine and your reasoning?

Worksheet: Design Your Maintenance Upsell Ladder

Map each rung of the ladder for your business and pick the on-site trigger that justifies offering each service.

Rung 1 service and price (recurring mowing)

Rung 2 service, price, and on-site trigger (fertilization)

Rung 3 service, price, and on-site trigger (aeration and overseeding)

Rung 4 service, price, and on-site trigger (mulch and bed maintenance)

Rung 5 service, price, and on-site trigger (pruning and cleanups)

Bundled annual plan price (top rung)

Current average annual revenue per customer

Target average annual revenue per customer for next season

Checklist: Equipment and Upsell Checklist

[ ] Every core machine has a calculated payback period under about two seasons
[ ] Occasional-use equipment is rented rather than bought to avoid idle capital
[ ] I know each major machine's hourly operating cost and folded it into overhead
[ ] I have a written replace-versus-repair threshold (e.g. repair over 50 percent of replacement value)
[ ] My upsell ladder lists every rung with an on-site trigger and a price
[ ] I track average annual revenue per customer and push it up each season

Your Action Plan

1. Calculate your man-hour rate from real wage, burden, and overhead, and confirm it holds a 20 to 30 percent net margin.
2. Time two or three real jobs to set your true production rates, then re-bid your existing customers at the corrected price.
3. Set a stop-charge minimum and publish three service tiers with itemized add-on pricing.
4. Plot every customer on a map, assign day-zones, and identify your densest cluster to market

around.
5. Sequence each day's route into a loop and run it through a routing tool to cut drive time below 15 percent of paid hours.
6. Convert your three highest-value customers to 12-month level-pay agreements on autopay.
7. Schedule an off-season renewal and early-bird pre-book campaign to lock in next season before spring.
8. Run a payback and hourly-cost analysis on your primary mower and set a written replace-versus-repair threshold.
9. Build your maintenance upsell ladder and train the crew to spot and quote upsells on site.
10. Start a weekly scoreboard tracking jobs per day, revenue per hour, percent under contract, and average revenue per customer.