

Working Side-by-Side, a Thousand Miles Apart

Even though Brian Benfer, New Columbia, PA and Mark Rothermich, Mexico, MO operate two separate businesses a thousand miles apart, they each will tell you that their most important business partner is each other. And because of their Conklin connection, their two families have become best of friends.

“Brian will travel halfway across the country to help me out at a meeting,” says Mark. “Nothing is too much for Brian when it comes to supporting me. When he’s at my meetings, he’s instrumental in bringing IBOs into my organization.”

“Mark is the Lawn King,” says Brian. “He operates the most successful lawn care business model I’ve ever seen. When he presents at my meetings, he gives the most valuable answers to every question asked. His depth of knowledge and understanding of the lawn care business is impressive.”

Tim Carlson, Conklin Agricultural Senior Product Specialist, commends both Mark and Brian for giving so much of themselves to help other IBOs succeed in the lawn care business. They’ve assisted with designing curriculum for the lawn care training, presented at many key Conklin-sponsored agronomic trainings and events, and are representing Conklin at the upcoming Green Industry trade show in Louisville this October.

Brian and Mark became IBOs just a few months apart in 1995. Brian, 39, lives in the Allegheny Mountains, hunts rattlesnakes, rebuilds International Scouts and rides ATVs. Formerly a third shift supervisor for a major wood cabinet manufacturer, he worked an average of 10–12 hours per shift. Brian’s Conklin lawn care business enabled him to turn in his saw and sander for a mower and sprayer. His business, Envirocare Turf Management, beautifies nearly 300 lawns per season.

Conklin has changed the Benfer’s family life, too. “Thanks to Conklin, we are able to participate in mission trips to Guatemala and send our daughters Emily and Katie to private school,” says Brian. “I also have more time for family-related events.”



“We can develop our hobbies and take several vacations throughout the year...”

– Brian & Rachel Benfer

Brian’s wife Rachel assists with spraying and administration. “We can have hobbies and take several vacations throughout the year in the off-season,” says Brian. This never would have happened if I was still at the cabinet manufacturer.”

Mark, 44, once a farmer in the rolling farmlands of central Missouri, hunts waterfowl and is a former Scoutmaster. His business, Rothermich Lawn & Landscape, services nearly 225 lawns with spraying and an additional 100 or more with landscaping.



MARK ROTHERMICH
DISTRICT MANAGER
MEXICO, MO

He’s added a retail operation managed by his wife Kathy, which features Feast®, nursery plants and garden supplies. Kathy also assists with landscape designs and manages the business office. Due to the success of their lawn care business, Mark was able to sell their farm in 1998.

“Our affiliation with Conklin has expanded our horizons on how we think about life and opportunities,” says Mark. “Until we found Conklin, we never knew anything more was available to us than farming. Thanks to Conklin, we’ve branched out and become successful with our lawn care, landscaping and real estate businesses. We are able to travel with our kids and control our freedom with our daily schedule.”

“Mark and Brian are two outstanding examples of living the dream through Conklin’s lawn care business,” says Tim Carlson. “And there’s room for so many more to follow in their footsteps.”

“We’re constantly hearing from our first year customers that their lawn looks better with AgroVantage® than with any other program they’ve used.

Our retention rate is a solid 85 percent, considerably higher than any of our leading competitors.”

– Mark Rothermich



BRIAN BENFER
DISTRICT MANAGER
NEW COLUMBIA, PA

AgroVantage® Lawn & Plant Care System

» Cultivating a Lucrative Business Opportunity in the Lawn & Plant Care Industry

We've come a long way since Presidents Washington and Jefferson used sheep to keep their home lawns at manageable heights. Since the early 1900s, thanks to the American Garden Club, homeowners have understood their "civic duty" to maintain a beautiful lawn. We need little convincing: Having a lush, green lawn is one of Americans' top five obsessions (along with our cars). That driving desire creates a wide-open opportunity for you and Conklin's AgroVantage® Lawn & Plant Care System.

How big is your AgroVantage lawn opportunity?

Prospective lawn care customers are around every corner for the asking. More than 26 million US homeowners hire lawn care services every year. And that demand is growing as fast as Kentucky bluegrass after an April shower.

What kind of lawn care business fits you best?

Whether you are just out of college, looking to start a new venture or expanding your current business, a Conklin lawn care business can be tailored to fit your situation perfectly. Think through the following advantages:

- Be your own boss
- Low overhead
- Work from home
- Go solo or hire a team
- Run a profitable business
- Flexible hours
- Work outside

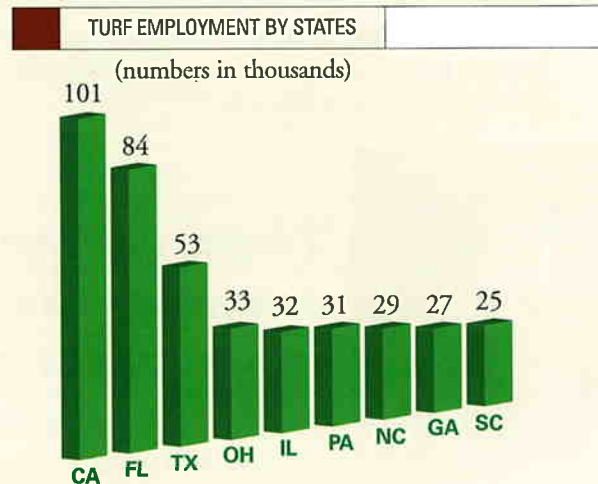
What does it take to get started?

New Conklin lawn care operators really appreciate how low the start-up costs are, compared to many other business opportunities. The equipment needed for lawn

applications is simple: A basic lawn rig includes a single 150–200 gallon tank, engine and pump, hose reel with 300 foot hose and a Teeject™ lawn gun. A good rig can be purchased for around \$2,000.

Want to know more?

You can get started by next spring. Every winter, Conklin offers a full-day Agronomics Lawn Pro Training that introduces the basics of starting and operating a lawn care business. For more information, call (952) 496-4286. Updates on lawn care training can be found online at www.conklin.com in the Agriculture/Lawn Care section.



Source: 2002 U.S. Economic Census Industry Report