ACROSS THE TABLE

BUSINESS CONSULTING

INDUSTRY STACK 10 · LANDSCAPING COMPANY

The Landscaping Stack

Seven systems for a business built on routes, crews, seasons and recurring maintenance.

Knowledge Article I10

AI Stack Series · acrossthetable.biz

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WHO THIS IS FOR

You run a landscaping, lawn care or grounds maintenance business. Some of your revenue is one-off installs and most of your stability comes from recurring maintenance.

This guide is for the owner managing crews across a map, who knows the routes could be tighter and the recurring customers could be stickier.

If you also do snow, irrigation or tree work, the same stack applies — the seasonality just gets sharper.

START WITH THE WORK, NOT WITH THE APPS

These are not twenty lists of AI apps. Each stack starts with the jobs a particular business performs, then matches AI and conventional software to those jobs. Treat it as a menu to evaluate, not a shopping list.

For this kind of business the work runs in one line, start to finish:

> **THE PATH THE WORK TAKES**
> Lead → Property → Quote → Crew → Recurring service

Broken into the steps a customer actually moves through:

- Lead
- Property
- Estimate
- Schedule
- Crew
- Photos
- Invoice
- Recurring maintenance

Read that line left to right. A lead comes in, you look at the property, you quote, you schedule a crew, the work happens, you invoice, and the good version of this business is that the last step repeats every month without another sale.

The two numbers that decide a landscaping year are route density and recurring retention. Everything in this stack is in service of one or the other.

THE STACK, PIECE BY PIECE

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Every tool below is matched to one of those steps. You do not need all of them, and you should not buy all of them at once. Read the “What it is” column first and find the step where your business is losing the most time or money.

Tool	The step it covers	What it is	Price
Jobber	Scheduling and jobs	Quotes, scheduling, dispatch, invoicing and payments for home services.	Per month by users.
CompanyCam	Property photos	Time-stamped job-site photos organized by property, shared with the office.	Per user/month.
QuickBooks	Accounting	The small-business accounting standard — books, invoicing, reporting.	Per month by plan.
HubSpot	Leads	Customer records, marketing, sales and service in one platform.	Free CRM; paid hubs per month.
Canva	Before and after marketing	Design everything else — decks, social posts, flyers, simple video — with AI help built in.	Free tier; Pro per user/month.
ChatGPT	Customer communicatio n	OpenAI’s general assistant — writing, analysis, research and, with Agent mode, multi-step work.	Free tier; paid plans per user/month.
Zapier	Automation	Connects thousands of apps and AI models with no code.	Free tier; paid by task volume.

The first three rows are the business. The rest are growth tools and seasonal marketing.

What to watch out for in each one

None of these are reasons not to buy. They are the things owners tell us they wish they had known first.

- Jobber — Per-user pricing limits big crews on low tiers.
- CompanyCam — Crews have to take the photos.
- QuickBooks — Only as clean as your categorization habits.
- HubSpot — Costs step up sharply by tier and contact count.

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- Canva — Easy to drift off-brand. Lock a brand kit.
- ChatGPT — It sounds confident when it's wrong. Check anything that touches money, law or a customer.
- Zapier — Task-based pricing climbs fast once it works.

WHERE AI ACTUALLY FITS IN THIS BUSINESS

Estimate descriptions, route and operations analysis, seasonal campaigns, customer reminders, photo-based marketing.

In plain terms, that means:

- Writing estimate descriptions that explain what the customer is actually getting, which reduces the haggling.
- Looking at last season's jobs by area and travel time to find where your routes are inefficient.
- Drafting the seasonal campaign — spring cleanup, fall leaves, irrigation shutdown — at the right time each year.
- Writing the reminder messages that keep recurring customers booked without a phone call.
- Turning before-and-after photos into marketing posts without a designer.

What AI does not know is your soil, your climate or your crews' actual pace. Use it to write and to analyze; keep the operational judgment with the people who do the work.

WHAT TO SET UP FIRST

Do these in order. Finish one before you start the next. Most owners who try to do all of it in one month end up using none of it.

1. **Put jobs and schedules in one system** Routes, crews and recurring visits on one calendar everyone can see. Running crews from a whiteboard breaks at about the third truck.
2. **Photograph every property, every visit** It proves what was done, settles disputes about damage, and becomes the marketing library.
3. **Invoice automatically on recurring work** Recurring maintenance should bill itself. The whole value of recurring revenue disappears if someone has to remember to send the invoice.
4. **Connect to accounting** Stop entering the same jobs twice.
5. **Then add lead tracking and seasonal marketing** Worth doing when you have more inbound than you can personally track, and when you want to fill a slow season deliberately rather than hope.

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WHAT IT COSTS TO START

Field-service software is per user per month, so it scales with crew size. Seasonal businesses should ask about seasonal plans — paying full price for twelve months when you run eight is a common and avoidable waste.

Photo documentation is per user per month and is the cheapest insurance in this trade against a damage claim.

The cost that is not on any invoice is windshield time. A tool that tightens routes by even a small margin outperforms every software saving on this list, because fuel and labor are your real expenses.

The price column in the table above tells you how each one charges — per user, per location, per contact, or a percentage of every sale — not what you will pay. That is deliberate. The charging model is what decides whether a tool stays affordable as you grow, and it is the part that does not change every quarter. Get the current dollar figure from the vendor's own pricing page before you budget.

THE RULES UNDERNEATH ALL OF IT

Legal · Privacy · Data protection · Security · Compliance · Records · Audit · Risk · Human oversight — underneath every one of the twenty stacks, not an afterthought.

Crew hours and scheduling are employment records. Know your state's rules on overtime and breaks before you let a system schedule automatically.

If you use chemicals, application records are regulated and must be retained. Keep them in a system, not in a notebook in a truck.

Photos of customer property are customer data. Have a rule about who can share them, especially on social media — ask permission before a property appears in your marketing.

Seasonal and day labor brings its own employment compliance. Get that right before you automate anything about it.

MISTAKES THAT COST THE MOST

- Running recurring maintenance on memory, then losing a month of billing.
- Quoting by the hour when you do not actually track how long jobs take.
- Scattering crews across the map because jobs are scheduled in the order they were sold.
- Paying twelve months for software used eight.
- Posting a customer's property online without asking.

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THE CEO DECISION

- What share of your revenue is recurring, and is it growing?
- How many miles between your average two jobs? Do you know?
- Does recurring work invoice itself, or does someone remember it?
- What is your plan for the slow season, and when do you start marketing for it?
- If a customer claims you damaged something, what do you have?

YOUR QUICK REVIEW

- ☐ Every crew works from one shared schedule.
- ☐ Every visit is photographed.
- ☐ Recurring work invoices automatically.
- ☐ Jobs flow into accounting without double entry.
- ☐ I schedule by geography, not by the order jobs were sold.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Tool	Where to find it	What it is for
Jobber	getjobber.com	Contractors, cleaners and landscapers running crews.
CompanyCam	companycam.com	Proving what you found and what you fixed.
QuickBooks	quickbooks.intuit.com	Clean books your accountant already knows how to read.
HubSpot	www.hubspot.com	Small businesses that want one system of record.
Canva	www.canva.com	Small teams with no designer who still need consistent-looking work.
ChatGPT	chatgpt.com	Your default thinking partner when you want one tool that does most jobs well.
Zapier	zapier.com	Your first automations, and the widest app coverage.
Across the Table AI Assessment	acrossthetable.biz/#assessment	Fifteen minutes. Tells you which job to start with before you buy

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Tool	Where to find it	What it is for
		anything.
The Scaling Edge	acrossthetablebiz.substack.com	Weekly newsletter for owners without a business background.

Go deeper on the pieces

Each of these is a full guide comparing the three tools that do that job:

- Ask and reason — acrossthetable.biz/knowledge-articles/ask-and-reason/ (covers ChatGPT)
- Make the deck — acrossthetable.biz/knowledge-articles/make-the-deck/ (covers Canva)
- Connect the tools — acrossthetable.biz/knowledge-articles/connect-the-tools/ (covers Zapier)
- Fill the pipeline — acrossthetable.biz/knowledge-articles/fill-the-pipeline/ (covers HubSpot)
- Manage the money — acrossthetable.biz/knowledge-articles/manage-the-money/ (covers QuickBooks)

CONTINUE LEARNING

The Across the Table AI Assessment takes fifteen minutes and starts from what the business actually does.

The guides above compare the individual tools for each job.

READ AND CONNECT WITH ACROSS THE TABLE

Across the Table website: https://acrossthetable.biz

The Scaling Edge newsletter: https://acrossthetablebiz.substack.com

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/@AcrossTheTableConnie

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