Selling emotion through DynaScape's landscape design software

Dan Cachelin isn't trying to sell a landscape design. Instead, he's trying to sell a concept, an idea, and an emotion.

The owner of Karma Landscapes London has more than 20 years of experience in the landscaping business and has designed plenty of beautiful designs for clients worldwide. He first started his business in Los Angeles before moving his design and build high-end landscape design company to London, England.

After years of hand drawing all his designs, Cachelin understood it wasn't the best option for his business, especially if he wanted to continue to scale Karma Landscapes and invoke that emotion in his customers when they first see his designs.

He would make the transition to auto-CAD software, but Cachelin found that these software solutions didn't understand landscaping and that when he presented designs, it looked more like he was presenting an architecture project than a landscaping one.

"Drawings by hand can be beautiful, but the time required to do them and do revisions is problematic and economically unviable," said Cachelin. "The auto-CAD program was mainly an engineering program interface. The drawings were incredibly detailed, but they didn't resonate visually. You do a presentation, and it looks like you're trying to sell the homeowner an engineering drawing. In custom landscape design/build, you're trying to sell them an emotion. And I could never get that across in auto-CAD."

Cachelin tried many different landscaping software solutions, but the detail wasn't up to the level he wanted. Drawings could look amateur, which was not the impression the experienced designer wanted to give his customers after decades in the landscaping industry.

Finding a landscape design software built for landscapers.

Needing a better software solution, Cachelin discovered DynaScape at a trade show event and immediately recognized the value Design could bring to his business. Compared to other solutions he had tried, DynaScape came with an extensive graphics library of trees, shrubs, and flowers, with plenty of different sizes and varieties.

Other landscaping software he had tried had only minimal graphics included, with a limited range in sizes. As a result, they didn't look like what the customer was looking for. That made it difficult to sell his designs because the customer wasn't getting an accurate representation of their landscape due to the lack of depth in those software solutions.

Cachelin decided on DynaScape's Design solution because of the breadth of graphics the software already had built into it. For example, the software includes multiple subsets and sizes of the same plants, trees, and flowers. Cachelin also said you could mix and match different styles together and create your own symbols that you drop into every design depending on the drawing style.

He was even able to quickly add gradients to large pool or lawn areas in DynaScape with fades and different shades of color. The other software programs couldn't do that, which meant he had a large single green box representing grass that lacked any sort of small detail.

"Other software packages were really basic drawings, and there was no ability to draw gradients. If you're drawing a turf area, it's just one solid green, and you can't do a fade. It just wasn't possible," said Cachelin. "It's all those kinds of small details that DynaScape can do that add up that other software products can't compete with."

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> **"**

Addressing business management needs.

Along with using DynaScape's landscape design package, Cachelin also uses Manage360 to help manage the business side of Karma Landscapes. He has kept his business small, running at most 15 people at one time for his design/build projects.

Cachelin said that many landscapers don't have a business background and are focused on the creative side of what they do. Of course, being creative and drawing is exactly why they got into the business in the first place, but it also can be a struggle for smaller businesses to earn a profit if they don't have that background in management. With Manage360, Cachaelin said he could excel at business areas without hiring someone to do it for them.

"In this industry, you aren't looking at huge profit margins," said Cachelin. "You can't make mistakes, and to be successful financially over the long term, you have to be very smart about analyzing the cost of materials, cost of labor, your margins, you have to be very fluid with changes. Manage360 has been great because it has given me, someone who hasn't had an interest in business principles, a software package that has addressed all my needs in a specific way without me having to do the learning about it, or paying someone else to do it."

Landscaping software for people who work in the industry.

From a landscape design perspective, Cachelin said he hadn't found any other software solution that came close to the design and color capabilities that DynaScape's package of Design, Color, and Sketch3D have.

"DynaScape has been my solution for the past 15 years," said Cachelin. "I don't think there is anything better out on the marketing as far as being a custom-built interface to sell high-end custom landscape designs. It has the visuals and the different line weights. The emotional impact, especially with the Color drawings, is far superior to a hand drawing."

When he used other software programs that weren't specifically for the landscape industry,

Cachelin could tell they didn't really understand what landscapers needed in CAD software. It felt like an extension of engineering and architecture software rather than something built specifically for those working in the industry.

"DynaScape's software is being updated and written by people in the industry," said Cachelin. "Other software programs don't understand the industry, so the final result is you have a product that doesn't meet your needs. They just don't understand what your needs are and how to meet those needs. DynaScape has always been great with that."

As a long-time user of DynaScape, Cachelin continues to win more jobs because of the designs he puts in front of customers. It has removed the tedious exercises designers face, like making edits, stacking elements in a visually compelling way, and drawing with the end goal of making the customer emotionally connected to the drawing. For Cachelin, that has led to him winning more bids over his competition and enabled him to grow his business for the last 15 years.

"I'm not sure where I would be without DynaScape," said Cachelin. "The ability to be able to take ideas that are in my head, put them on paper, and then translate those ideas to the customer through DynaScape is priceless. Once you take the customer through that visual journey with you, and they see the end product, you would have to try real hard to lose the job."