

Cover story

There's no better investment than a lush landscape by James Landscaping, Inc. *Specializing in low-maintenance landscaping*

By Tammy Adams

With 14 years in the business and coming off of several of their best seasons yet, the team at James Landscaping, Inc. could easily choose to take on as much work as possible and churn out landscape after pond after irrigation system after patio, and do quite well at it. But instead, president Rhonda James and her team choose to take every opportunity to distinguish themselves in the industry by offering more to their clients in the areas of support, education, services and products.

James Landscaping has streamlined the process of developing a computerized design by having the technical expert meet with the clients, evaluate the site, and take digital photos of the area that are later used for reference during the creative process. This new process has decreased design development time by 50 percent.

Cassie Cole, director of design, has spent considerable time in the last year developing a plant description database that gives each client a customized list of the plants that are used in their own landscape design. "It describes each plant and gives its maintenance requirements," Cole explained. Information on when and how to cut back perennials are included in the fully customized list.

Another area where James Landscaping goes beyond the industry norm is in the detailed watering schedule each client receives with the purchase of an irrigation system. "We do this utilizing the TexasWaterWise Council's Irrigation Calculator. The schedule is based upon plant water requirements, average effective rainfall, and the precipitation rate of each zone of the sprinkler system," Cole said.



A final area where James Landscaping is set apart is the "As Built" Design for irrigation work. A computer-generated detailed plan of each irrigation system shows exactly where the pipes are laid and heads are located. Valves are noted as well, since most repairs require locating them. "We do a really good job with sprinkler systems and you get a lot of extras with us," Cole said.

"The business relationship we have developed with James Landscaping over the last two years proves two things my father taught me," said customer Rodney Steman. "He said 'Find the best at what they do and patronize small businesses. It may cost you a little more up front, but the payback in service and quality is worth more in the long run.'"

And the folks at James Landscaping work hard every day to live up to that standard. For example, at no small cost to the company, James Landscaping takes part in H2B, an