Buying a Landscaping or Lawn Care Business

By BVC Research Team | January 2026 | 10 min read

Landscaping and lawn care businesses combine the appeal of outdoor work with surprisingly strong economics. The green industry generates over $130 billion annually in the US, and the combination of recurring maintenance contracts, relatively low barriers to entry for buyers, and strong demand driven by commercial and residential property management makes this an attractive acquisition category.

The Landscaping Business Model

Most landscaping businesses operate on a seasonal model with three distinct revenue streams: recurring maintenance contracts (mowing, fertilization, seasonal cleanups), design/build projects (hardscaping, plantings, outdoor living spaces), and snow removal services (in northern markets). The ideal business has a strong base of maintenance contracts that provide predictable revenue, supplemented by higher-margin design/build projects.

What Drives Landscaping Valuations

Factor	Impact on Multiple
Maintenance contract base	Higher base = higher multiple
Commercial vs. residential mix	Commercial is more stable, commands premium
Equipment condition	Modern fleet increases value; aging fleet decreases
Workforce stability	Reliable crews are the scarcest resource
Geographic concentration	Route density improves efficiency and margins
Snow removal capability	Year-round revenue in seasonal markets

Landscaping businesses typically sell for 2.5x-4.0x SDE, with maintenance-heavy businesses at the higher end and project-dependent businesses at the lower end.

KEY INSIGHT: Route density is everything in landscaping. A business that services 50 properties within a 10-mile radius is far more valuable (and profitable) than one servicing 50 properties scattered across a 50-mile area. Map every account during due diligence.

Landscaping-Specific Risks

- **Seasonality:** Revenue can swing 70-80% between peak season and off-season, creating cash flow management challenges
- **Labor dependency:** H-2B visa workers are critical for many landscaping operations, and visa availability fluctuates with immigration policy
- **Weather sensitivity:** Droughts, excessive rain, and mild winters directly impact revenue
- **Low switching costs:** Residential customers can change landscapers easily, so retention requires consistent quality
- **Equipment capital requirements:** Trucks, mowers, and trailers need regular replacement, which impacts free cash flow

Growth and Modernization Opportunities

Landscaping businesses respond well to technology investment. AI-powered route optimization reduces fuel and labor costs by 10-15%. CRM systems with automated billing and communication reduce administrative overhead. Drone-based property measurement and design visualization tools can win more design/build projects. And expanding into complementary services like irrigation, tree care, or outdoor lighting increases revenue per customer.

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