

PMP Pest Management PROFESSIONAL

Stuart Aust, owner of Bird Doctor LLC, stands in front of one of his accounts: the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in Manhattan.

2016 BIRD MANAGEMENT REPORT

Big-ticket bird jobs

How to land and service accounts like the *USS Intrepid*, Yankee Stadium and Madison Square Garden.

2016 NPMA LEGISLATIVE DAY PREVIEW

recognize regional differences in cost of living.

● CLEAN WATER AND NPDES PERMITS

– The 1972 Clean Water Act (CWA) gives the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) authority to regulate all waters of the U.S (WOTUS), via authorization of permits for the National Pollutant

Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). WOTUS has historically been defined as “navigable waters” — that is, waters on which boats can travel. However, the definition of “boats” had never been keenly articulated. Therefore, last May the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers released the EPA’s

definition of navigable waters, which adds tributaries and adjacent waters if they significantly affect the chemical, physical or biological integrity of (in the EPA’s words) “traditional.” The new definition was considered unnecessarily expansive. Additionally, it magnifies regulatory oversight, which often burdens the industry in numerous ways. It should be noted, however, that this particular issue might be of greater concern to the agricultural industry than pest management.

● **POLLINATORS** – While it’s still unclear what is causing higher pollinator colony losses, known as colony collapse disorder (CCD), pesticides — specifically neonicotinoids — have been looked at as a potential cause. But most experts agree there is not enough evidence to prove pesticides are the cause of bee loss. The NPMA (and the industry, by extension) acknowledge and understand the importance of pollinators, and have made this a priority, going so far as to develop industry-approved best management practices (BMP) guidelines. Last year, the Obama administration’s White House Pollinator Task Force released a 58-page plan — “National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators” — in which the EPA acknowledged the importance of pesticides for the protection of food supplies and human health, and the importance of balancing benefits with risks by separating beneficial pollinators and pesticides in time and space. The EPA will soon propose binding language to the labels of 1,500 pesticide products, aimed at reducing exposure to managed honey bees and other pollinators. Pollinators topped last year’s Legislative Day discussions, but the issue is complex and ongoing. This year’s Legislative Day will likely be helpful for attendees who want to understand the details and implications of the issue. Check

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out *Pest Management Professional's* (PMP's) pollinator coverage in the August and October 2015 issues.

OPPORTUNITIES AND SPEAKERS

Highlights of this year's Legislative Day include educational sessions that touch on a variety of policy-related topics — only some of which are listed below:

- Pesticides 2016: Public Policy Forecast
- Business Opportunities for Women-owned Businesses
- Structural Fumigation: Where Are We Now, and What Does the Future Hold

In addition to these invaluable educational opportunities, attendees will also get to enjoy Legislative Day's lively roster of keynote speakers. Paul Begala, a CNN political commentator, and Ari Fleischer, author and former White House Press Secretary to President George W. Bush, will provide head-to-head keynote presentations on what to expect in 2016 from both sides of the aisle. There's little doubt



PAUL BEGALA



ARI FLEISCHER

the rapidly approaching presidential election will figure largely into this popular annual presentation, which occurs during Monday's ballroom lunch.

On Monday afternoon, Nicolle Wallace, a *New York Times* political analyst and former White House Director of Communications, will share an insider's perspective of the political news of the day, and offer her thoughts on upcoming elections.

Tuesday morning's breakfast keynote, "The State of Play: Politics, Media and 2016" will come courtesy of Sarah Elizabeth "S.E." Cupp, a writer and conservative political commentator for CNN. She'll discuss the current state and future of the GOP.

Following this her presentation, attendees will depart for appointments on Capitol Hill — where they'll have the opportunity to share important information and articulate concerns to members of Congress. PMP

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NICOLLE WALLACE



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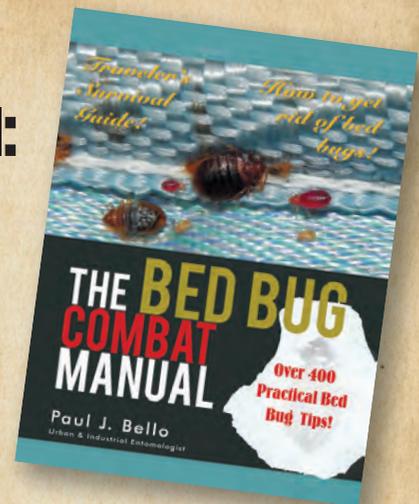
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Big-ticket bird jobs

How to land and service accounts like the *USS Intrepid*, Yankee Stadium and Madison Square Garden.

BY **STUART AUST** | Contributor

I always say you should walk before you run. Our first installation 20 years ago involved cleaning bird droppings off an exterior window air conditioner, and then installing bird spikes. That job was for a couple hundred dollars. Nowadays, we provide installations in the five-, six- and seven-figure range. We've learned what we're doing the old-fashioned way: by working hard and making a study of what we do. Allow me to share some of the insights we've gained along the way.

THE *USS INTREPID*

As a young man, I was always intrigued when I passed the *USS Intrepid*. I'm not sure whether it was the enormity of the vessel, or the fact that it appeared indestructible. The battleship was built during World War II for the U.S. Navy and was nicknamed "The Fighting I." Two Kamikaze suicide planes tried to bring the *Intrepid* down in 1944 — but failed.

The *USS Intrepid* made its way around the world, serving in locations such as Pearl Harbor, Okinawa and Vietnam. It also served as a recovery vessel for NASA. In 1982, the ship became the *Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum*.

In 1996, I happened to notice an invasion of pigeons attacking the iconic battleship. I couldn't stand by and do nothing, so I summoned my courage and placed a cold call to the museum, requesting to submit a proposal to eliminate their bird problem. Interestingly, the staff granted us the pest management contract first, and added the bird management services shortly thereafter.

The main bird issue was pigeons, which is quite common for New York City, particularly for locations along bodies of water. We installed

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The author stands in front of one of his favorite accounts.

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an electrified track system on top of the parapet ledges of the Intrepid's visitor center. The pigeons were initially flying back and forth from the visitor center to the battleship. Once we installed our bird deterrents, however, they began to relocate completely.

BIG-TICKET TIP: ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER. *One key to our success in bird business is first, obtaining the pest management contract, then proving ourselves so we eventually win the bird management contract. We've been very successful in marketing and cross-selling our various add-on services, the main one of which is Bird Doctor.*

Aust and his son Dan stand in front of another big-ticket account Trump Place.



HENRY HUDSON PARKWAY

In 2001, when the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation contacted us on behalf of the Trump Organization for bird netting on new construction under the Henry Hudson Parkway in Manhattan, I knew it would be big. Our Bird Doctor team installed 0.75-in. bird netting on the underside of the highway to prevent pest birds, primarily pigeons and sparrows, from perching over the new basketball and handball courts. We also performed an extensive pigeon guano cleanup, which is typically an important first phase of any large bird deterrent installation.

This particular job was a defining moment for our company and me. It dawned on me that this six-figure-revenue job was not an anomaly. There were plenty of large bird-deterrent installation jobs like this one, just waiting to be proposed.

I refuse to compromise or cheapen the quality of our work. This becomes an issue of integrity and consistently providing excellent quality service. We always appreciate the investment our clients make to ensure a long-term bird control solution.

After the Trump job, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation called us again to install bird netting underneath portions of the Brooklyn Bridge that correspond to Drumgoole Plaza Public Park.

BIG-TICKET TIP: CHARGE WHAT YOU'RE WORTH.

While we may propose larger-scale projects on a regular basis, we only accept the jobs whose objectives align with ours. Our clients expect excellent quality service — and not necessarily at the lowest price. Although profitability is crucial for the health and stability of any organization, ensuring we provide service that exceeds our clients' expectations often requires charging more than those who might undercut their prices to win bids.

YANKEE STADIUM

Bug Doctor and Bird Doctor have been providing services to Yankee Stadium since 2001. At one point, we were servicing both the old and new Yankee Stadiums simultaneously.

We initially installed more than 25 miles of bird spike, tens of thousands of feet of electrified track, and 0.75-in. bird netting to the entire loading dock. There wasn't a bird issue at the new stadium, so this was all preventive work. Currently, we provide an ongoing maintenance program to ensure a bird-free environment.

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Having Yankee Stadium as an account has led to more bird work around the country for Aust and his team.

Steps for submitting big-ticket bird jobs

What's most important in pursuing big bird management accounts is realizing the proposal process is dictated by the magnitude and complexity of the job. The bird management proposal process is much more detailed and layered than a small pest or bird control job. Here's our basic process for submitting big bird management proposals:

1 PERFORM AN ON-SITE ASSESSMENT. Whether it's a referral, an existing account or a cold call, we generally make an appointment to meet with the facilities director or appropriate personnel for assessing the issue. If it's an exterior problem, measurements are taken (or if pre-construction site, architectural plans and drawings are used) and bird deterrent options are discussed. If it's an interior problem, different options are offered.

2 SCHEDULE A TARGET DATE FOR PRESENTING THE PROPOSAL, AND GET STARTED PREPARING IT RIGHT AWAY. This entails:

- calculations of measurements;
- cost analysis of products;
- labor costs, including union and prevailing wages and overtime;
- weather considerations — because a snowstorm, for example, can not only cause down time and lack of production, but many of the bonding agents used to attach bird deterrents will not work in temperatures under 50°F;
- specialty equipment rental and/or transportation, such as for swing stage scaffolding, lift equipment, rope access or bosun's chair, etc.;
- targeted completion time; and
- travel costs.

Additional costs can include state licensures, Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC), Secure Worker Access Consortium (SWAC) lift certification, U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) compliance, scaffold certification,

insurance, permits, specialty tools and accessibility. Your desired projected profitability is added to the final cost of the job.

3 PRESENT THE PROPOSAL, ENSURING THAT ALL DECISION MAKERS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND. When presenting a big-ticket bird proposal, our Bird Doctor house rule states that any proposal valued in excess of \$10,000 is to be proposed in person. We prepare and give a proposal presentation for everyone in attendance, and use a digital format to present each phase. A typical presentation for a big bird job may take about an hour. These in-person proposals often require product samples, a list of references, photos of previous comparable jobs, and marketing material.

The client's budgetary restraints often drive the products or methods chosen to control birds (see "The phase approach," p. 64).

We review our measurements and our recommendations for various areas of the structure. Often, multiple methodologies are recommended for different areas. Along with explaining the varying types of methodologies, apprising them of the dangers, structural damage and health risks associated with bird infestations are valuable conversations that also need to take place.

4 ONCE AWARDED THE CONTRACT, MAKE SURE YOU'RE AWARE OF ANY PERTINENT LOCAL LAWS. Every state and district has its own permitting and fees associated with it. For example, large cities like New York have an embargo during the holiday season, where you cannot obtain permits from the Department of Transportation for lifts to be used on the street from Thanksgiving until January each year.

5 LET YOUR INSURANCE PROVIDER KNOW OF YOUR PROJECT. Last but not least, your commercial liability carrier should be apprised of the type of work being performed, and the type of access equipment used to install bird deterrents. — S.A.



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Dan and Stuart Aust take pride in the fact that no bird deterrents are readily visible on their Madison Square Garden account.



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When I go to Yankee games, I notice pigeons on many neighboring buildings in the Bronx. We take a lot of pride in working at Yankee Stadium and I personally feel it's my duty to keep birds off and out of it.

BIG-TICKET TIP: WORD GETS AROUND. *The success we've had at the Yankee Stadium account has directly led to work at more than 15 other sports venues around the United States. Four years ago, we proposed Gillette Stadium for the New England Patriots and when we were awarded the bird work, my son Nick asked, "How are we going to hate the Patriots anymore?" It's interesting how once someone becomes your client, all rivalry melts away.*

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

For more than a decade, Bird Doctor has had the privilege of servicing Madison Square Garden for bird control. It's known as the "World's Most Famous Arena," mostly because it has been the site of some of the greatest events ever in the history of sports and entertainment. Our job has been to keep pest birds such as pigeons and sparrows off of various parts of the building by using a combination of deterrents such as bird netting, bird spikes and an electrified track system.

We installed an electrified system years ago on the signage. It sits just 0.25-in. high on top of the signage, undetectable from the sidewalk or street below. Because these areas are busy with pedestrian traffic during the day, we provided the install at night, after all events were over. We also installed bird netting at some of the service entranceways, and bird spikes on top of horizontal flag holders at a breezeway that leads into The Garden.

BIG-TICKET TIP: THE BEST WORK IS INVISIBLE. *High-profile accounts tend to gravitate to the aesthetically pleasing materials that have low or no visibility from a distance. Many times, when a TV announcer is speaking before a game or at halftime, the camera pans to one of the entranceways that has the Madison Square Garden signage. I'm always relieved when I see there aren't any pigeons sitting on the signs.*

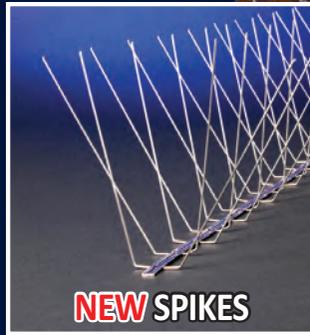
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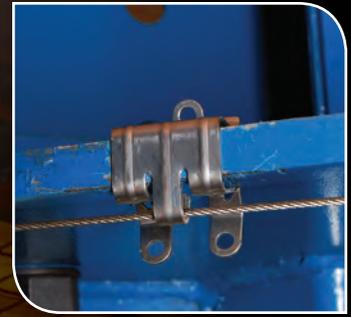
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SERVING ROYALTY

Another large bird deterrent installation job came from a phone call we received from a project manager at Jones Lang LaSalle, a professional services and investment management firm. When I first reviewed the architectural plans, I had no idea to whom the building belonged. Later, I learned the owners of this historic New York City-designated landmark building are Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani and Sheikha Mozah — the king and queen of Qatar. This is the largest single-family residence in all of New York City.

Bird Doctor was asked to provide shop and CAD drawings to the owners' structural engineering firm, Thornton Tomasetti. The product that was specified was an electrified track system to prevent pigeons from roosting and nesting on this beautiful building. We hired an architect to assist us with this phase of the project.

We installed more than 10,000 linear ft. of electrified track on the front and rear of the building. A 135-ft. articulating lift gave us access to the front of the building. A bosun's chair allowed us to reach all the ledges and access the rear courtyard. We obtained permits from the U.S. Department of Transportation to secure a lane closure for the lift. Upon the client's request, we installed a small mockup of our product prior to the full installation, ensuring the product was aesthetically pleasing. We performed the mockup and then performed the full install. We now provide ongoing annual maintenance of the electrified track system at this building.

We learned several new takeaways from this project. We can now provide shop and CAD drawings for our future clients. Mostly, I learned not to be afraid when encountering something unfamiliar.



Tim Periard, Bird Doctor's VP of operations, uses adhesive to secure an electrified track.

The phase approach

When we submit a bird proposal to a client, we break it down into phases. These phases highlight some of the methods available:

PHASE 1: Implementation of a bird trapping program

PHASE 2: Cleaning/disinfecting service for bird guano

PHASE 3: Installation of bird netting in appropriate areas

PHASE 4: Installation of bird spikes on all building ledges and appropriate areas

PHASE 5: Installation of an electrified tracking system on the rooftop parapet ledges and signage, or appropriate areas

These specific phases allow the client to pick and choose which of them it can complete. Sometimes our clients opt to have all phases completed immediately. Others choose to complete one or two phases at a time, either annually or some other way that fits into their financial budgets. — S.A.

Once this project was completed, the Jones Lang LaSalle project manager invited me to come to Doha, Qatar, to inspect two of the king and queen's palaces that were having pigeon issues. How could I say no?

BIG-TICKET TIP: TAKE THE LONG VIEW. *It's always important to offer a maintenance plan on installed bird deterrent products, as issues can occur. Sometimes material or connections come loose; other contractors may damage the systems; debris or bird defecation can short out the connection; and weather or other acts of nature can damage products. Don't be a "one-and-done" type of company. Instead, look forward to a long and healthy business relationship.*

NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

Make no mistake, not everyone can bring in these big-ticket bird jobs. You have to be willing to hit the pavement and put in the time and work. You need the drive, desire and ability to persevere.

My dad, Herb Aust, always said to me, "You go where other men in your industry don't go, and that's why you're a success." I've certainly made my mistakes, and I've had my fair share of failures in business. But walking through these very mistakes, failures and uncertainties has taught me invaluable lessons. PMP

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Looking up and down

While many retail chains and box stores differ in size, location and landscape, they all share one similarity: ideal conditions for pest bird activity.

BY DANIEL AUST | Contributor

Walk into just about any retail store and you'll find a wide variety of structures — large signs, support beams, parapet ledges and canopies around the exterior — that provide the protective elements necessary for many types of birds. You'll also often encounter rooftop heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems or cooling towers that serve as a good source of heat and moisture for pigeons, seagulls, starlings and sparrows. It's pretty much a given that you'll discover a rich history of bird activity at the property, which yields high-pressure zones of determined birds unwilling to move from their nest location. Plus, with main entrance or loading dock doors left open in these spaces, birds are able to find areas within the store to live.

Because of the great need these stores experience with various bird issues, tremendous opportunity for bird management exists in the retail arena.

BREAK IT DOWN INTO STEPS

The first step of the bird management process is to identify



Look up at the bird deterrents installed atop this store's support columns.

and define the store's bird problem. The best method is to look *up* to observe the birds flying around the customer's building and nesting on signs, and look *down* to see the bird droppings on the sidewalk. This allows you to move to the next step: scheduling and securing the bird inspection.

Retail stores might have vendor requirements at the regional, or even corporate level, but the best place to start is at the store. Usually, the store manager can guide you toward securing an inspection with the retail chain. Once a formal walkthrough is confirmed on the local level, observe the areas containing live birds, nesting material and bird defecation, with the store manager.

Share your collected evidence with the store manager, and take pictures and measurements of the height, length and width of the entire target or proposed areas. Capture quality pictures of the bird activity. They can be helpful when preparing your proposal, and will allow you to communicate to the regional or corporate facility team the level of bird activity at the retail location.

Finally, write and submit your proposal. Provide the scope of the proposed work and competitive pricing that includes labor, materials, special tools, insurance requirements, and lift equipment as needed.

THREE TACTICS TO TAKE

Three treatment techniques dominate the bird management arena:

1 BIRD EXCLUSION efforts are best installed in such places as over the exterior signage, under the loading dock, and other canopy areas to prevent bird harborage. Proper installation of a variety of exclusion products ensures birds are unable to penetrate the area.

2 BIRD DETERRENENTS are installed on exterior signage, parapet ledges and support beams to mitigate the immediate roosting and nesting population. Again, there are a variety of products from which to choose.

3 BIRD REMOVAL is used when birds are trapped or living inside the structure. Vertical netting and bird traps enable you to release and discharge captured birds after removing them from the property. Bird harvesting, on the other hand, ensures a quick, efficient and euthanized removal in accordance with state and local laws. This last-resort methodology typically is used when all other options have been exhausted.

The next time you're shopping at your favorite store, look up and look down. It could turn into a great opportunity for you and your business. PMP

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