

CASE STUDY

June 2018

COMPANY

Weed Man USA, Columbus, OH

CONTACT

Corbin Schlatter, Franchise Owner

PRODUCT USED

XCU Slow-Release Fertilizer



CASE STUDY PROFILE

CHALLENGE

Weed Man USA wanted a high-quality fertilizer that would not only differentiate the franchise from other lawn care companies in a very competitive market, but also make good economic sense.

SOLUTION

XCU slow-release fertilizer

RESULTS

XCU's slow-release properties have made it possible for Weed Man to apply less fertilizer to its customers' lawns while still achieving beautiful results. Since the franchise began applying XCU, its customer retention rates have steadily increased.



Central Ohio Weed Man Franchise Achieves Award-Winning Results with Help of XCU® Slow-Release Enhanced Efficiency Fertilizer

Few company names are more instantly recognizable in the lawn care industry than "Weed Man." Since 1970, Weed Man has grown from a single location in Mississauga, Ontario, to an international network of more than 250 franchises throughout Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. Although the company's original focus was on weed control, today, Weed Man emphasizes the development of thicker, healthier lawns through a well-balanced, high-quality fertilization program.

Corbin Schlatter's Weed Man USA franchise in Columbus, Ohio, follows the company's successful business model, offering fertilization, weed control, insect control and disease treatments. Schlatter and his wife, Audrey, own and manage their Central Ohio franchise, overseeing product and equipment purchases and marketing efforts. They currently have 25 full-time employees with that number rising significantly during the spring and summer months. In 2017, they received the Weed Man USA Award of Excellence, achieving net sales of \$2 million while expanding their territory into Greene County and Dayton, Ohio.

"We put a lot of time and resources into finding and purchasing quality products for our customers' lawns," Schlatter says. "From there, we really try to set ourselves apart from our competition by providing the absolute best customer service in our area. We also try to make scheduling our services as convenient as possible. We all live in a fast-paced, busy world, and calling your lawn care company isn't necessarily high on anyone's list of things to do. So, when you call us, you can speak to a real, live person. Or, if you prefer to send us a text, that's fine too. It's all about what makes our customers happy and satisfied."



QUALITY PRODUCTS, VISIBLE RESULTS

One of the quality products that Schlatter chooses for his customers is XCU slow-release fertilizer from Koch Turf & Ornamental. With the highest nitrogen (N) content (43 percent) and the lowest sulfur content (4 percent) of any polymer-coated, sulfur-coated urea (PCSCU) on the market, XCU provides gradual, steady nutritional uptake for up to 10 weeks of plant response. Lawn care companies that apply XCU can cover more area per application while using less fertilizer.

“We’ve been purchasing and applying XCU for about three years now,” Schlatter says. “I initially decided to give XCU a try because my distributor was offering competitive pricing. It seemed like a good time to try some new fertilizer technology and see how it worked.”

“Our customers really appreciate the benefits of XCU’s slow-release. We tell them about how it stays in the soil longer and offers greater benefit to the turf.”

Schlatter’s Weed Man USA lawn care program consists of six visits throughout the year. The first visit each spring includes an XCU fertilizer application with a grassy weed pre-emergent. Next comes a broadleaf weed control application plus crab grass prevention. Visits 3 and 4 are granular XCU applications with spot weed treatments; visit 5 is a liquid broadleaf weed control application. Visit 6 is a final granular XCU application in the fall.

“Our customers really appreciate the benefits of XCU’s slow release,” Schlatter says. “We tell them about how it stays

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in the soil longer and offers greater benefit to the turf. By explaining that and how our applicators are trained to correctly and safely follow label instructions, we’re able to reassure them that they’ll get great results while maintaining a lawn that’s safe for kids and pets.”

Thanks to XCU’s slow-release properties, Schlatter’s crews have been able to apply less fertilizer to their customers’ lawns while still maintaining beautiful, healthy turf. Because XCU lasts longer, they’ve modified their application rates to ensure optimal performance, applying heavier rates in the spring and fall and a lighter rate in the summer.

Schlatter’s technicians also appreciate XCU for its performance and the ease with which it flows from the spreader. And, it’s less dusty than other granular fertilizers, which further improves their working conditions.

“XCU has really been performing well for us,” Schlatter says. “In fact, our customer retention rates have improved by 1.5 percent each year since we started using it. We generate a good amount of new customer sales from referrals, so that’s definitely a positive reinforcement of what we’re doing. When you combine those results with ease of application, it’s been an easy decision for our Weed Man USA franchise to continue using XCU year after year.”