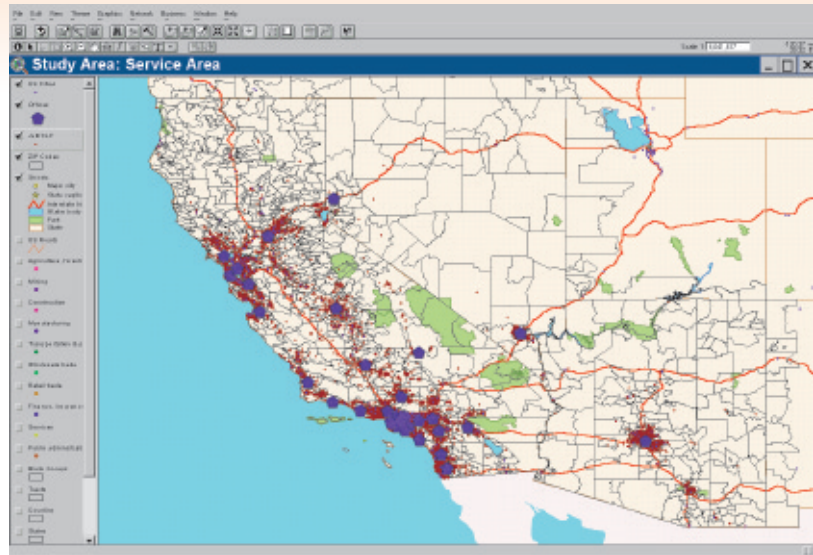


Leading Pest Control Company Redefines Marketing and Sales Efforts with GIS

Western Exterminator Boosts Business with ESRI ArcView Business Analyst

The world of pest control and management is more high tech than many might believe. For Western Exterminator (WE), based in Irvine in Southern California, it is not enough to wait for customer service calls. WE, one of the largest pest control firms in the nation, keeps its leading market edge by proactively seeking new business opportunities and expanding its current customer service base.



WE has more than 650 service employees based in 33 service centers in the California, Nevada, and Arizona region.

WE first acquired ESRI® ArcView® in 1996. Prior to this it used paper maps and documents to realign service territories when opening a new service center.

“Doing this manually was a nightmare,” says Mike Lawton, vice president of sales and marketing for Western Exterminator. “It involved district managers and trainers and exchanging paper maps and documents with edits made by hand, scribbled somewhere on the text. The time involved was extensive.”

With ArcView, WE had a new, automated method for managing data, and the software’s functionality gave the company a better method for turning raw data into information. The organization could better balance territories not only by demographics and aggregate income but also by drive times for service calls. When including five-year area growth projections data in its analysis, a GIS-based determination of staff reassignment based on future growth potential became possible.

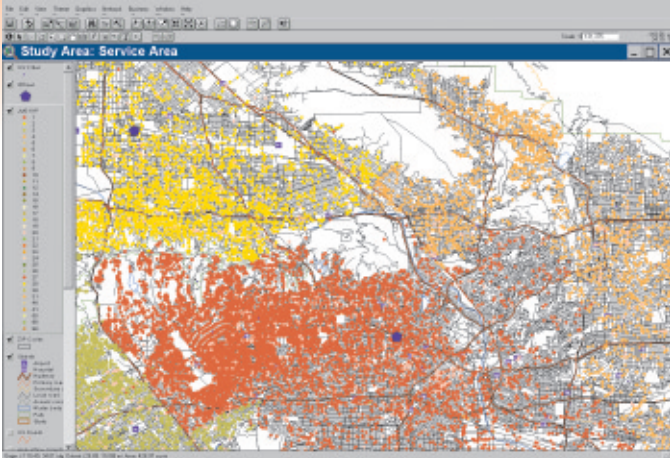
“ArcView software’s ability to sort, query, and link gave us a new way of looking at data,” says Lawton. “We had an exact method for evaluating potential new service centers, and then, if we acquire those centers or build a new center, we could more accurately create the best new market areas.”

It was the success of ArcView that led to the acquisition of ArcView Business Analyst, which the company acquired to better understand who its customers were and where they were located to create new marketing opportunities and align marketing territories. The improved methods are giving the company and its 33 service centers a better way to market and sell its services.

“With ArcView Business Analyst today, we have an even richer array of data to work with and accurately make assessments,” says Lawton.

The benefits, according to Lawton, were quickly realized. Various data management mistakes were virtually eliminated. What once took several different people hours on end is now managed by one person, Lawton, with an approximate 80 percent time reduction in creating new service centers and analyzing geographic market opportunities.

ArcView Business Analyst



The ArcView Business Analyst wizard-driven interface, functionality targeted at the business sector, and detailed data set gave Western Exterminator Company a better method to explore new marketing opportunities.

“We were spending many thousands of dollars on data, and when we discovered ArcView Business Analyst, it was a marketing analysis solution for the entire nation that would after one year save us thousands of dollars,” says Lawton.

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ArcView Business Analyst has been in use at WE since January 2000 and has become an important factor in its business plan. Existing customers are classified and geocoded and the results are used for target marketing.

An example is the underground baiting service for subterranean termites called “Sentricon,” which is a relatively expensive treatment for termite elimination. With initial costs ranging from \$600–\$2,000 and monthly fees of \$40–\$75, this service is primarily marketed to those ZIP Codes in areas prone to subterranean termite infestation, which would be the most likely to purchase such a service. WE can pinpoint ZIP Codes that meet these qualifications and then target strategies for garnering new business.

The company also looks at quarterly house sales since the purchase of existing homes requires termite inspection and leads to termite treatment, which can mean sales for WE. If many houses in a ZIP Code or service area have been bought and sold in the previous quarter yet WE is not capturing new business, sales and marketing can be shifted to address this need, and the local manager and district manager are made aware of the new opportunity.

With the customer and demographic information derived for each service area, WE can better locate potential new customers. ArcView Business Analyst includes ACORN™ data, which is ESRI Business Information Solutions Lifestyle Segmentation database. More than 70 percent of WE’s pest control customers fall in the top 10 ACORN groups. WE targets these top 10 ACORN groups because it is most likely that these customers gravitate to WE services.

“It’s important to know who your customers are, where they are located, and where potential customers can be found,” says Lawton. “Our customers typically are in the top ACORN data groups, and they typically have more discretionary income. Because we know our customers and their demographics, we can better succeed in our business.”

Western has now incorporated GIS reports in its sales training for account representatives. The use of demographics mapped by ZIP Code helps sales staff target marketing efforts based on mapped ACORN data.

“I purchased my software from Retail Profit Management (RPM), an ESRI business partner in Northridge, California,” says Lawton. “Steve Lackow, one of the principals, is always ready and willing to help with any ArcView Business Analyst questions. RPM also possesses a wealth of marketing and demographic knowledge.”

Future GIS applications include routing and Internet applications. “We’re looking at how to better route service crews, and we’re in an ongoing assessment and evaluation period. We like what we see, and that’s potentially our future direction,” says Lawton.

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