

VALUE PACKED

Sustainability and sticking to values are key for Treeincarnation's success and growth.

To run a successful business you have to be in touch with customer needs and expectations. Some aspects never change. We all want a high quality of work, diligence, punctuality and value. The modern world has a few more expectations too, with sustainability and reducing our carbon footprint increasingly at the forefront of clients' minds.

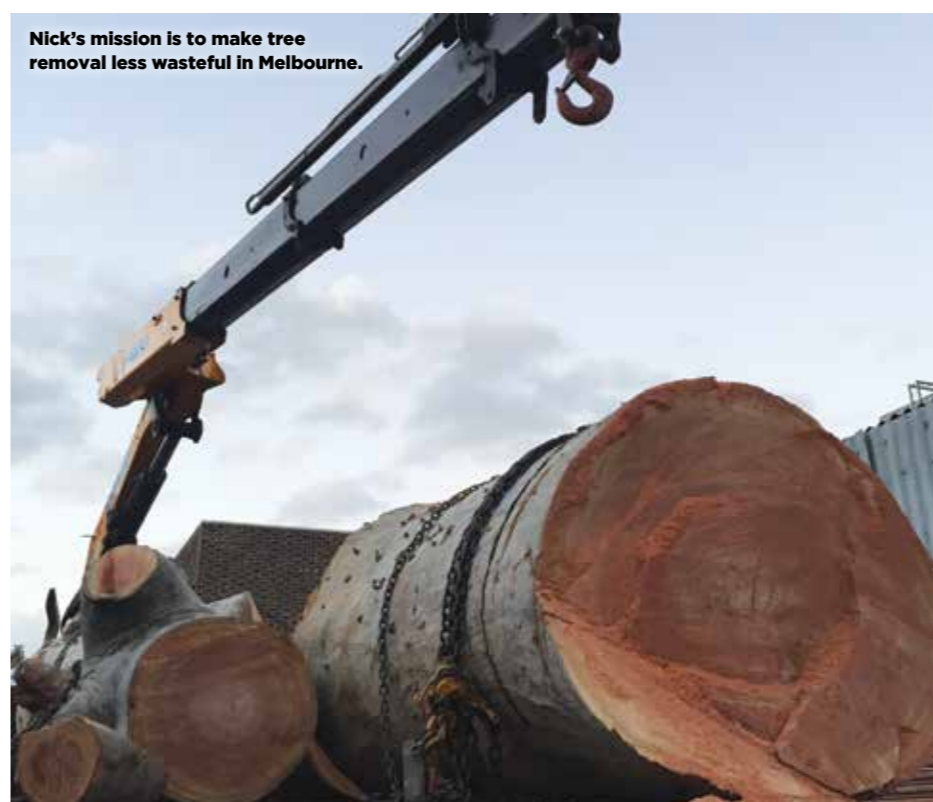
Why should the tree industry be any different? If a customer has the choice between firms and only one has a sustainability ethos, in today's informed times, plenty will most likely pick the more eco-aware business.

Talking to Nick Peardon, owner of Treeincarnation in Melbourne's Malvern East, it's clear his drive to have a 100 per

cent sustainable arborist firm has reaped rewards. Aged only 27, he fronts a team of seven carrying out tree removal, pruning and arborist reports predominantly for private clients. "We aim to be genuine, to be fun, to be the best," he explains, while sticking rigidly to the company's core values and focusing on having a growth approach where learning is key.

The mission, a noble one, is to make tree removal less wasteful in Melbourne. Once a tree is removed or pruned the wood is up-cycled for furniture to give the tree "a second life," rather than just used as firewood or mulch. Highlighting the variety of work, besides more typical furniture jobs, the team is currently putting together a coffin with timber from a removed tree.

"What makes us different is what we predominantly do with the by-product of tree related services," Nick said. "As much of the timber gets up-cycled as practically possible and the mulch goes to a soil farm. So rather than it just being spread



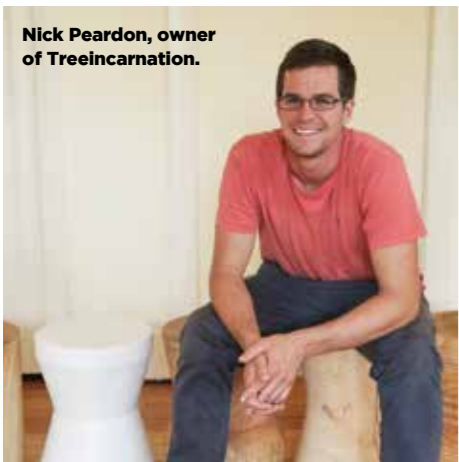
Nick's mission is to make tree removal less wasteful in Melbourne.

around a garden it's actually used and decomposed in a permacultural process in the most efficient and sustainable way."

Most would agree that minimising waste is for the greater good, but is it always practical in the real world of work? "The majority of comments and questions are on the logistics side of it," Nick explained. "If another tree company becomes familiar with what we do and asks questions we point them in the right direction, like connecting them with a timber up-cycler for instance. We're an advocate of other companies jumping on to collectively minimise waste."

It's commendable that Nick and his team aren't only thinking about growing their own business, but being part of and inspiring others to look at the arb industry a bit differently for the common good. "We're not going to significantly minimise waste if it's just us," he said. "A rising tide lifts all ships."

It's obvious Nick is a clear and impressive thinker with noble values and a strong business brain. And his concepts haven't



Nick Peardon, owner of Treeincarnation.



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just been dreamed up in a classroom with his head in a book. He grew up on a farm – his mother had a poplar nursery and his father a sawmill – and had labourer roles at arborist firms before deciding to strike out on his own. “I saw there was opportunity in the industry to do things a little differently,” he explained.

With a Cert III in arboriculture and mainly working as a contractor, Nick “started to identify there was a gap in the market as some customer needs were not really being serviced or touched on,” he said. “This wasn’t about the actual work that was being done, but around the way the businesses were conducting themselves.”

This takes us back to good old-fashioned work practices, something Nick identifies as core to attracting and maintaining customers. “Simple things like

rocking up to a quote on time,” he said. “Just sticking to your commitments really. Pretty much every business I worked for or with were dropping the ball majorly on that one. The whole customer journey and specifically communicating what was going on and when they can expect the problems to be solved.”



Nick was doing his own work on weekends and getting called back time and again for more work, citing his attention to detail as key. “It’s one thing to be an arborist, but it’s a completely different thing to run a business,” he explained. “A lot of companies have ‘values’ but it can just be writing on walls. Having



values is one thing, it’s another thing to live in and have your standards align with your values.”

So Treeincarnation was formed with its own core values. Safety is the priority; be outcome orientated; be a team player, be ‘Wow’; have fun; take initiative; have a growth approach. Having such defined values makes it clear all working at the company are swimming in the same direction. “Culture is very much aligned with safety, and as we work in the third most dangerous job in the country (behind commercial fishing and mining) if we focus on the culture, workplace incidents are going to be significantly reduced,” Nick said.

The fun aspect is championed, which is refreshing at a time when so many people seem trapped in jobs they don’t

enjoy. “What’s the point if you can’t have fun,” Nick said. This is exemplified with him naming his ‘Be Wow’ value ‘The Owen Wilson Factor’. The actor is famous for his use of the word “woooow” and Nick wants to produce the same reaction from clients. This means exceeding expectations in every area; not just the job itself, but presentation and also providing a perfect clean-up after work is done.

Nick hopes other businesses will follow Treeincarnation’s sustainability drive, but says if others aren’t open to recycling more waste then “the onus is on us to get bigger, get more work and make more of a difference ourselves,” he said. “When we’ve taken on new recruits they’ve been impressed that we genuinely live up to our values. We’d love to see more



arborists out there working for genuinely solid companies.”

If the phone keeps ringing and jobs keep coming in, a company must be doing something right, and clearly Nick’s focus on sustainability and sticking to his values is proving successful. Unselfishly, he wants other Australian arborists to follow suit and enjoy the benefits too.

For more information visit www.treeincarnation.com.au AA

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