

# SERVICE INNOVATION TRUST

By Marc Gillotti





### In the popular book

'Outliers', the author discusses the "10,000 hours rule" which states it takes about 10,000 hours of dedicated practice for a person to achieve mastery in their profession. For the average person that equates to about five years. Now imagine the expertise of a person that has tirelessly worked nearly seven days a week for forty years, has continually innovated new design ideas, and has provided a level of service unparalleled by competitors. You have now described why home owners and businesses alike have sought Michael Covillo to design and take care of their yards, gardens, and grounds.

Covillo states "I love plants." This is not an understatement and this passion has never diminished. Working for his father's produce company at the age of 10, he worked from 4 a.m. to 4 p.m. and his father demanded perfection. His grandfather, whose yard and gardens were his passion and Michael's proving ground, taught Michael the foundation and his work ethic was also passed down. "When you see a property that we take care of today, it looks much the way it would have been taken care of by my grandfather. Furthermore, the commitment to service that we have today is based on family traditions that were brought from the 'old world' and passed from generation to generation."

Covillo's early childhood activities revolved around exploring their family's property, digging up plants, and bringing them back to the house to be replanted and nurtured. This led to a degree in Landscape Horticulture from CSU which connected the visually pleasing appearance of designs that came to him naturally to understanding the biology of the plants. Unlike current landscape degree recipients who are more graphics specialists, Co-



Michael Covillo

villo's designs account for how the plants will interact and grow over the course of time. "College was astounding because it put scientific knowledge behind what I innately knew how to do. This was mind boggling and made me better and drove me further."

Other companies may have similar levels of skill and knowledge in creating attractive designs on paper but Covillo's rounded skills

come in designing projects that will still look good in twenty or thirty years, for unparalleled levels of service, and trust by clients to care for properties without having to be monitored- "people know it will be done correctly and fairly based on need."

Over the 40 years, Covillo's sustained success has been the result of innovation. Most people assume technologically - "Yes, computers make it easier and faster in some ways to design, but you cannot replace the human element." Only a human's mind, passion, and understanding of plants can really lead to beautiful design that will seamlessly endure cohesively. You have probably witnessed this yourself. How many plants in your yard have been overpowered by others or grown together because they were not selected or oriented correctly from the start? Other innovation has come in the form of complementary services that make a big impression on a client such as blowing off the patio, drives, and sidewalks that are done gratis.

Often you hear of landscape architects who want to force their signature style on a project and strong arm people into going a certain direction - "I think that is wrong", Covillo says, "I have never done that. Working with a client is a fusion of their ideas along with my knowledge. I may help lead them down a path once I understand the direction they want to go but it's their deal." The one thing Covillo



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is firm about - “Don’t rush the creative process or you will sorry that the best ideas did not come out. We will build designs lighting fast but it takes some time to be creative.”

As well as being sought after for design ideas, Covillo’s maintenance operations for residential and commercial properties have grown rapidly over the years and continue to because he applies that same level of knowledge and commitment to service in that area too. Some people have the passion to create but then they wash their hands of it. Covillo knows with the level of investment people put into their property, they need and want the care to be just as thoughtful.

To this day, Covillo is fully engaged in the design of his firm’s projects. “What drives me after 40 years is that I am still learning. Nothing gets old because each client is a new personality to get to know and each design is specific and never repeated.” He may no longer dig and install the plants, but he either designs or approves every concept and does the final onsite inspection before releasing it. In combination with his passion for perfection is his reputation built on trust: one of the reasons Covillo has so many repeat clients and references is that “We are very fair and honest in billing. We always have the client’s dollar in mind, not in how to take it, but in how to best use it on their behalf.”

Possibly the company motto sums up Covillo’s capabilities best; “Envision, Establish, and Endure.” Envision equates to the ability to see and design the project, Establish refers to the actual construction of the project, and Endure means the maintenance aspect that will make the project last and be beautiful forever.❖

Please contact Covillo Landscape for help designing your next project or maintaining your existing design at 303.477.4964 or see examples of their great work at [www.covillo.com](http://www.covillo.com).