

# Selling Field X Field®

IN THIS ISSUE

- p1** **Creating a Culture of Hospitality**  
*John Latham*
- p2** **3 Tips for Making High-Impact Customer Visits** *Amy Rohe*
- p3** **The Front Lines & The Greater Team**  
*Ryan Schon*
- p4** **Understanding Customer Buying Habits, Needs and Wants** *Laura Cunningham*
- p5** **"Made for This" T-Shirt Feature**



## JULY 2021



THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR SEED SALES TIPS AND INFORMATION

## CREATING A CULTURE OF HOSPITALITY

In my newsletter column last month, I wrote about how Latham® dealers will experience “culture” at our Kickoff meeting on July 7-9 in Sioux Falls, SD. Some people might associate “culture” with the arts like a Broadway musical or a performance by the Boston Philharmonic.

We believe “culture” is a collection of shared values and practices – even expectations – that guide the actions of all team members. Because of our culture, Latham team members and customers alike should know what to expect when working with us.

Latham’s culture is hospitality and personalized service. This is one reason why we look forward to hosting both dealers and your families at our annual Dealer Kickoff event.

Latham Hi-Tech Seeds is known for making its face-to-face meetings “eventful.” I believe our personalized approach to business has been an especially differentiating factor during the COVID-19 pandemic. We know several of our competitors have not been able to see customers in person until recently. Many major companies are not allowing their employees to travel through the remainder of this calendar year. The ability to travel freely is a differentiating factor for us right now, so let’s reestablish those strong relationships with our customers. I encourage you to help scout their Latham fields all growing season long – and help grow your Latham business!

Many farmers across Latham Country are experiencing dry conditions and are concerned about 2022 seed supply. We spread our risk by planting our corn and soybean production seed across the Midwest, so



**Latham®**  
**HI-TECH SEEDS**

by **JOHN LATHAM**  
PRESIDENT

1-877-465-2842 / [johnl@lathamseeds.com](mailto:johnl@lathamseeds.com)

we will be in a better supply situation than many of our competitors. See your customers early, so they may order the product that is right for their farm while our supplies are strong. In the meantime, we will pray for rain. No product is resistant to a drought, but the genetics and traits that we offer at Latham offer a great level of protection.

We will talk more about products and product placement during our 2021 Latham Dealer Kickoff event. You also will hear Latham Seeds Vice President Shannon Latham unveil our company’s new mission statement. Information gathered through a series of research projects, including a 2020 customer survey, was used to craft Latham’s mission statement. Latham Marketing Manager Laura Cunningham will share how findings from this same customer research project can help you target customers, and Sales Manager Amy Rohe will explain how these same findings can be used to strengthen your business plan.

**An organization’s culture will always trump its organization’s strategy because culture determines how we execute, says best-selling author and professional speaker Scott McKain.**

We’re especially looking forward to hearing Mr. McKain share how creating memorable and relevant customer experiences conveys a company’s culture and ultimately builds sales.

**Thanks for all you do. Let’s make 2021-2022 our best season ever at Latham Seeds!**

## 3 TIPS FOR MAKING HIGH-IMPACT CUSTOMER VISITS



by **AMY ROHE**  
SALES MANAGER

1-877-465-2842 / [amyr@lathamseeds.com](mailto:amyr@lathamseeds.com)

Hello JULY!

July is one of my favorite months because a new sales year gets underway. Now is the time to think through how you captured sales in the past: What worked? What would you like to improve? What do you want to accomplish this year? Take all those great ideas, write them down and start putting your plan into action!

We want to help our dealer network grow, so we have spent more time this year really getting to understand what our top dealers do. Top Latham dealers deliver service that creates customers for life. They have a deep understanding of their farmer customers.

That's why we spent time during the past year getting a better understanding of what our farmer customers expect from their seed company and their salesperson as Laura Cunningham wrote in her newsletter column last month and again this month. Here are some customer findings to keep in mind when putting together your business plans:

**1 Provide service throughout the entire sales year.** What does your service model look like? What do you want to be known for? How are you intentionally creating customer experiences? Do you have multiple touchpoints throughout the sales year? Touchpoints will be covered in more depth during Kickoff because we want to ensure you have the tools needed to make high-impact visits throughout the entire sales year. NOTE: Seven is a key number of customer touchpoints. We can't wait to share these with you at Kickoff... Stay tuned!

**2 Leave a lasting impression.** Are you listening to your customers' wants and needs? Do you take time to really understand each customer's goals? What is preventing your customer from reaching those goals? Walking fields is a highly impactful way to get to know a customer better. Ask a question and give your customer time to answer. Really listen to understand him/her. Take notes. The big difference between good and great salespeople is the great ones take time to understand the entire farm account, and then they make a customized recommendation based on what they learned. Placing products field-by-field helps you learn more about each customer.

**3 The value you bring to customers earns your way on their farm – and keeps you on their farm.** Latham Hi-Tech Seeds is known for its high-quality standards and a broad product lineup. We sell what is best for each customer, not our shareholders. Family-owned Latham Hi-Tech Seeds only succeeds when our farmer customers succeed. We show up differently by making recommendations based on customers' needs and wants and then following up with personal service throughout the year. We care that our customers have the best seed solutions to meet their individual needs. How are you showing up differently this year? What value do you bring throughout the entire year?

Getting out in the country early and making high-impact customer visits throughout the entire sales year sets you apart from all the other seed reps. Remember, you have an entire team behind you at Latham Hi-Tech Seeds! As always, please work with your RSM on your business plans.

**HAPPY PLANNING AND HAPPY SELLING!**

**A GOOD PLAN  
VIOLENTLY EXECUTED  
NOW IS BETTER  
THAN A PERFECT PLAN  
EXECUTED NEXT WEEK.**

**GEORGE S. PATTON**

# THE FRONT LINES & THE GREATER TEAM



by **RYAN SCHON**  
GENERAL MANAGER

515-868-6214 / [ryans@lathamseeds.com](mailto:ryans@lathamseeds.com)

***“That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”***

***-- Neil Armstrong.***

In May 1962, President John Kennedy delivered a lengthy speech to Congress that included this new and lofty challenge for the country, “I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the Earth.”

In September 1962, Pres. Kennedy delivered another famous line at Rice University, “We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard.”

That commitment was met July 20, 1969, as Neil Armstrong descended the steps of the lunar module Eagle onto the fine powder of the Sea of Tranquility. Some also know that Buzz Aldrin joined Armstrong on the surface of the moon, and fewer know that Michael Collins was left behind to fly the command module Columbia. These three men were the visible front line of the race to the moon.

We remember the inspiring challenge from one president and the achievements of three astronauts, but there’s more to the story. It’s estimated that 400,000 people worked on the space program from the first unmanned rockets in the late 1950s to landing on the moon in 1969. Neither Kennedy nor Armstrong could have made the same impact without all the behind-the-scenes support.

Similarly, we salute the front lines of the military – the soldiers who put their lives on the line for our freedom. The front lines of emergency response – the fire, police, and EMT personnel who serve and protect to keep us safe. The front lines of health care – the nurses and doctors who take care of us. Even the front lines of sports – the linemen who block and protect their quarterback. All of them are willing to act boldly

for a greater cause. And none of them could do what they do without the teams behind the teams. Imagine being perfectly trained, perfectly positioned, and ready to attack but without food, water, ammo, or intelligence. Or being in the ER with the best doctor but without the necessary equipment, medication, or blood. Great support teams make great front lines even better.

At Latham Seeds, we salute you and all our dealers who serve American farmers every day. You are our front lines. You live among your farmer customers and many of you are farmers yourselves. No one is in a better position to help farmers succeed.

You have your own team-behind-the-team. In addition to our regional sales managers (RSM), you have support from several teams. Our product and agronomy teams develop and support the products you sell. The marketing team helps communicate how Latham uniquely meets customers’ needs. Our finance team helps manage the cash flow and investments that drive the business. And certainly not least, our operations team produces and moves all that seed.

**Together, we are a great team. I’m glad you’re part of it!**



# UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMER BUYING HABITS, NEEDS AND WANTS



by **LAURA CUNNINGHAM**  
MARKETING MANAGER

1-877-465-2842 / [laurac@lathamseeds.com](mailto:laurac@lathamseeds.com)

Last month I shared a few high-level insights from a two-year research study my team conducted to better understand how our top customers perceive the Latham® brand and what they expect from their seed representative. In part two of the study, we analyzed sales data to determine the average share of farm captured (by each of you!) for all customers in our database. We also matched our sales data with additional market data to identify buying habits and trends of our average customer to create a customer persona, or profile, if you will.

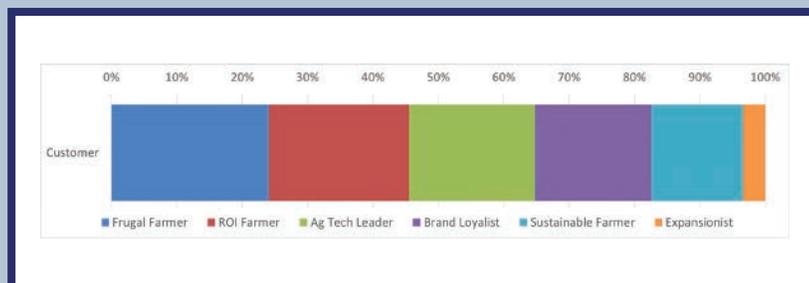
Latham's customer profiles can be summarized in six categories:

- 1 The Numbers-Focused/ROI Farmer** – It's all about the bottom line for these customers. They make decisions based on what will make the most profit and return on investment. They routinely evaluate the commodity markets, assess opportunity costs, monitor inputs and outputs for efficiencies, and regularly review financial data.
- 2 The Sustainable Farmer** – These farmers are driven by a desire to reduce environmental impact and keep the land in optimal condition. They often maintain crop diversity with rotation and will incorporate cover crops or no-till farming. They may use natural fertilizers and methods to reduce soil erosion.
- 3 The Brand Loyalist** – Winning over brand loyalists can mean growth together for the long-haul, but it's especially challenging to convert them to your dealership. However, for these farmers, the relationship with a seed company is just as important as the product. They often seek rewards for their loyalty in benefits for the farm (ex: volume discounts).
- 4 The Frugal Farmer** – This type of a buyer is a product of a routinely tough farm economy. They seek out good deals on all inputs and have a keen eye for unnecessary costs. If possible, they will go for a DIY approach to farm tasks. These farmers are 100% hands-on in the decision-making process but are less likely

to be early-adopters of technology.

- 5 The AgTech Leader** – These farmers live for the front lines of technology. They seek out every tool available to make their operations more efficient and productive. They understand how additional tools like satellite imagery, variable rate technology, and proper seed-to-soil placement improve productivity and reduces costs.
- 6 The Expansionist** – With their eyes on the horizon, they seek land acquisition opportunities via purchase or rent. These farmers are often well diversified between crops and livestock. Profits are invested back in the farm with growth for the future as the overarching goal.

So you might be thinking, "How did our customers fall in these categories?" Answer: It's a split!



In just a few days we will (finally!) gather together in Sioux Falls for an action-packed 2021 Dealer Kickoff event. On Day 2, I will host a special workshop with more insights from these two research studies and ideas on how you can leverage this data for powerful target marketing.

Target marketing helps you save time by narrowing your service and offerings to what different types of customers expect and appreciate. Bring your thinking caps because in one, power hour we're going to put together a solid plan for your best sales (and service) year yet!



# "MADE FOR THIS" T-SHIRT AVAILABLE ONLY IN JULY

Order one online at [www.lathamgear.com](http://www.lathamgear.com).

Just a reminder, your Marketing Co-op Dollars will expire on July 31!

**OVER  
70  
YEARS**

OF THE INDUSTRY'S  
BEST GENETICS, HIGHEST  
QUALITY PRODUCTS, AND  
HOMETOWN SERVICE.

**HELPING FARMERS FEED AND FUEL THE WORLD**

**Latham**<sup>®</sup>  
HI-TECH SEEDS

131 180th Street  
Alexander, IA 50420

**CALL 1.877.GO.LATHAM**

(1.877.465.2842)

641.692.3258 Office

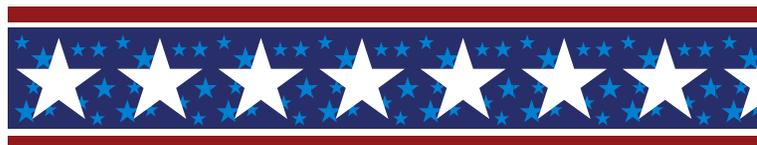
641.692.3250 Fax

**Selling FieldXField<sup>®</sup>**

Published monthly for Dealers of Latham Hi-Tech Seeds, focusing on seed sales tips, trends and information from around the seed industry.



## INDEPENDENCE DAY WORD SCRAMBLE



Unscramble the letters to find the Independence Day words from the list below.

### WORD LIST

BALLOONS  
BARBECUE  
CELEBRATION  
CONFETTI  
DECLARATION  
FIREWORKS  
GOVERNMENT  
HERITAGE  
INDEPENDENCE  
POLITICS  
SPARKLERS  
TRADITION

PCSTILOI	_____
AOSNLLBO	_____
GTREEOVNNM	_____
FTCTENOI	_____
OINITRTAD	_____
ECDENEDPNENI	_____
EKWIFRROS	_____
ARBEBUEC	_____
BIARNLECEOT	_____
RTLAEICANO	_____
RSLRPKASE	_____
TAGEHIER	_____