

CASE STUDY

2018

ARA Conference



CREATING AN AWARD-WINNING PRECISION AG PROGRAM



Valley Agronomics

TYPE Ag retail & service provider

LOCATION Rupert, ID

SERVICE AREA Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Utah, Wyoming and Nevada

CLIENTS 3,500+

EMPLOYEES 350+

"Using tools like Agworld helps us engage with our clients at a deeper level and become a partner with them on their farm."

Connor Lankford
Precision Ag Manager



CHALLENGE

Up until 2015 Valley Agronomics was using legacy software that did not fulfill the needs of the organisation. The agronomy team was not happy with the tools they had, and they did not offer any opportunity for client interaction either.

SOLUTION

Valley Agronomics decided to adopt Agworld into their organisation as of the spring of 2016. In that same year they launched the "Platinum Precision Subscription" program for their clients, of which the Agworld grower subscription is one of the centerpieces.

RESULT

Fast forward to 2018 ARA Conference: AgPro magazine names Valley Agronomics as the recipient of the Precision Impact Award in recognition of being an industry leading retailer for the precision ag products and services offered to farmers through their "Platinum Precision Subscription" program.



Providing agronomic services in the Pacific Northwest

Valley Agronomics LLC is one of the largest agronomic services providers in the Pacific Northwest with 24 branches throughout the states of Idaho, Oregon, Washington and Utah with over 350 employees of which 80 work in agronomy roles. The focus of Valley Ag is to provide their clients with all the inputs and knowledge required to grow their crops and help them maximize their profitability. In order to further enhance their service offering, Valley Agronomics hired precision ag manager Connor Lankford early in 2016. Together with three precision ag specialists, Connor helps the Valley Ag agronomy team to put a plan together and create a customized offering for the grower that's going to help them be successful.

Connor Lankford explains: "I come from an agronomy and precision ag specialist role with an independent consulting company. When I got the opportunity to join Valley Ag in my current role, I immediately jumped at it; you don't often get the chance to join an organization like Valley Ag in a role that has such a profound impact on the future of that organization as a whole. When I started in January of 2016 Richard Lloyd, Valley Ag Chief Operations Officer, and his team had just made the decision to adopt Agworld into the organization and so it was my first job in this role to facilitate that adoption and to make sure we had a smooth transition to Agworld within our organization. What I immediately liked about working with Agworld is their ability to deliver and their willingness to engage with us in our strategy; this truly turned the implementation project into a partnership and made everything run very smooth!"

Creating a compelling offering

After implementing Agworld into their own organization during 2016 and getting Valley Ag employees more familiar with the program for roughly 9 months, the 'Platinum Precision Subscription' (PPS) program was introduced (fall of 2016). Connor elaborates: "When we were discussing what to include into our new PPS program, we felt like a grower subscription of Agworld would be a really great piece to have as a part of that. So, we went out to our growers and immediately got about 200 growers signed up in that first year, which was really great to see.

"The way we positioned the PPS program and Agworld to our growers is not just like selling software to them but it's all about what we do with it ourselves as a company as well. So in the winter of 2017 we spent more time on training and in the 2017 season we went full steam with our program. So, when we now start a fertilizer job or a chemical application, we start them all in Agworld so it's immediately part of the digital workflow tools. By bringing growers into the workflow, Agworld highlights the Valley Agronomic's services they are receiving. We work very hard for our customers and Agworld is just another way we commit to exceeding our customers' expectations."

"From that point, the information gets pushed from Agworld into Agvance automatically. This is another great feature of using Agworld: a fully integrated

connection between Agworld and Agvance. So now when you've started a job in Agworld, the grower immediately has visibility in Agworld as well as our operations and accounts team in Agvance, so that really makes the whole process a lot easier."

Gaining traction

From the 2017 season onward, the Valley Ag team has continued to build their PPS program and has broadened the adoption of it. An increasing number of Valley Ag growers are using Agworld to communicate with their Agronomist and create their plans, records, budgets and performance reports.

Valley Ag agronomist, and plant manager of the Paul & Hanson, ID locations, Scott Freiburger adds: "Basically the PPS program offers our growers the benefit of all our best tools which enables them to maximize their return on investment. Agworld is a cornerstone of the PPS program and focuses on providing our growers with the resource that helps them manage all their digital farming needs. Our growers can now see and realize the value that using a program like Agworld offers to them, and the uptake and responses I'm seeing in the field is clear proof of the success we are achieving."

Connor adds to this: "Offering value-adding services like Agworld also helps us keep competition from price-focused (online) suppliers at bay; they only have an opportunity to get business when we have a transactional relationship with a grower. As soon as we work with a grower on their agronomy, get them engaged and provide a valuable service to this grower, we are able to insulate ourselves from that threat."

Achieving success

Having a well-defined precision ag program has helped Valley Ag achieve success in lots of different ways. Scott explains: "The relationship between our agronomists and growers hasn't changed because of the introduction of digital tools, it has just gotten a lot stronger and more sophisticated by using Agworld as a platform to communicate on. "

Connor elaborates: "Using tools like Agworld helps us engage with our clients at a deeper level and become a partner with them on their farm. We have had instances where we've seen increases in sales because of the way we are engaging with a grower on Agworld. We have been able to follow that through and see an increased share of wallet, picking up business from growers that we didn't have previously, they were getting their products and services from somewhere else."

"We've also seen increased loyalty from our growers because of Agworld. We've had conversations with growers who've said, you guys were out of the market a little bit on some of these things, but because of what you're doing for us, we're going to buy it from you. It is because of what we're bringing to the table, in particular with Agworld, that we've been able to have many of those conversations."

The biggest confirmation for Valley Ag that they are leading the field in the right



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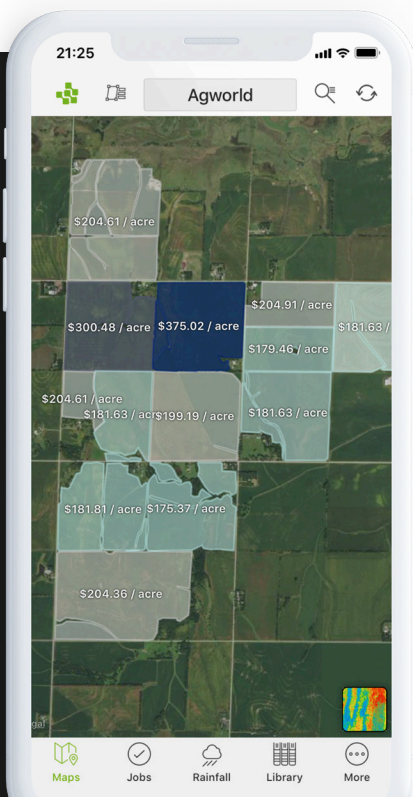
Valley Agronomics, Rupert, ID





direction, was of course when they received the 2018 ARA Precision Impact Award. Connor: "This award really shows that what we are doing is the right thing and to get national recognition from our peers for this, that means a whole lot to me. The comment that came back to us about our approach is that it's really pretty unique compared to what other retailers are doing. And Agworld is obviously an integral part in how we're trying to do that, how we're trying to engage our customers and how we communicate with them."

"I could never have envisioned being on that big stage in Florida in October of 2018, but because we have followed a diligent process and have built our offering with partners like Agworld, we were able to achieve this success. By including everyone in this journey, from farmers to agronomists to logistics and admin staff, we have are really making a difference for all of us!"



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