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Stuart Aust

Bug Doctor Termite & Pest Control, Bird Doctor Nationwide, Bedbug Doctor, Animal Doctor and Mosquito Doctor

Stuart Aust, president and CEO of Paramus, N.J.-based Bug Doctor Termite & Pest Control, Bird Doctor Nationwide, Bedbug Doctor, Animal Doctor and Mosquito Doctor, shares ant stories with *Pest Management Professional* (PMP).

Q: What's the largest ant infestation you've battled, and how did you win?

Aust: One of our first customers was a police officer. I remember going to his house where he and his wife were battling a significant infestation with carpenter ants. It was the first time I saw anything of this magnitude. We went back and forth and completed multiple services. They were patient with us. We also were learning as we were going.

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It was one of our first experiences with having to drill, which we did through a wood-shingled porch in the back of the house. There was an area of the roof outside the attic where we found the heart of the problem. After drilling holes, we used a dusting agent. You could hear the carpenter ants raining down on the rear patio. I was trying to mask my excitement



Stuart Aust's Do's & Don'ts

Do

- Properly identify the ants. Treatment and methodology varies based on the type of ant.
- Sell a recurring service for the different types of ants. It increases your chances of solving the problem — and your revenue stream.
- Make things personal. Get to know the customer and let them get to know you.

Don't

- Assume the pest is of one type, because then you're treating the wrong problem.
- Sell a one-time service. Make sure they think of you for all their pest problems.
- Forget to follow up with clients via courtesy and survey calls.

and surprise because I'd never seen anything like that. This went on for about a day.

Q: What was the most-difficult-to-find ant infestation you've encountered, and how did you get the best of them?

Aust: After our service technician had gone to the client's home a few times, the client, whom I knew, reached out to me and asked our branch manager to get involved. He went into the basement and removed ceiling panels with one of our technicians. Any time management makes a service call, we want to make it a learning or coaching session with our technicians. The branch manager was able to find the source in the ceiling, but had to return several times to provide service.

Sometimes it's like an Easter egg hunt. You have to know what you're looking for. Often you have to continue inspecting areas, lifting insulation and ceiling panels to get into nooks. Sometimes when you treat for ants, it's simple, but every now and then, you're going to have a difficult job. This was one of those. You don't have a big window of time. Not all clients have patience. Sometimes you have to move and work swiftly to find the ants and come up with the proper solution. **PMP**

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