



National

Clothesline

April 2018

Volume 59 Number 7

www.natclo.com

He's going cashless at the counter



Brian Butler stands outside his Dublin Cleaners where the sign on the door give customers a heads-up — the store is cashless. With less than two percent of his sales coming in cash, he decided that it just wasn't worth the trouble of dealing with cash transactions and began experimenting with the no-cash approach a few months ago. Customer complaints? None.

Many might call it a little crazy. According to Dublin Cleaners President Brian Butler, other plant owners with whom he's discussed the idea of going completely cashless have expressed doubts, to say the least.

"I have talked to other cleaners, also in nice neighborhoods — not just in lower socio-economic situations — where they say they do as much as 25 percent of sales cash," he explained. "And that I can't even understand because we weren't discouraging it. It's just people get all the points and miles or rewards... no change in their pockets, no stopping at the bank, just hand you a card."

For the third-generation family-owned business in Columbus, OH, however, the numbers for cash transactions just didn't add up to being worth all of the effort: only 1.8 percent of sales were cash.

"Making change orders and balancing drawers became tedious when maybe one to two people were paying cash," Butler said. "When my administrative assistant went out on an emergency medical leave, our bookkeeper and our customer service manager and even myself were just trying to help take care of some of her tasks."

"When you realize she gets 35 deposit bags a week from six stores and to try to get all of those in one organized

deposit for the bank — it's only a couple of grand... three or four thousand dollars across a multi-million dollar business. I was thinking: 'She spends half a day or more a week on a few thousand bucks. This is so stupid.'"

As Butler sees it, credit cards usually take about 2 to 2.5 percent for transactions, but he estimated that the time it took for CSRs to come in early and leave late to open and close their drawers and make sure they balance to the penny could cost a much higher percentage of the cash transaction.

So, he opted to do a test run at some of his locations at the start of this year. Lettering that announced "Cash-LESS" were placed at the counters and on the front door. He knew it was a risk that he could lose cash customers, but he also realized he could always repeal the new policy if it caused more problems than it was worth.

Besides, having cash on the premises has always been an invitation to would-be robbers over the years, as any cleaners can likely testify. In fact, the company's Worthington location had a bit of a problem with that... and it even happened routinely: three Christmas Eves in a row they had late night break-ins.

"Every time I got the video of them coming in and getting to the floor safe,

Continued on page 8

Clean Show listed among fastest growing

Clean 2017 has been named by *Trade Show Executive* as among 50 fastest growing shows of 2017.

The show, held in Las Vegas last June, was included in all three categories of the awards competition: net square feet of exhibit space, number of exhibiting companies and total attendance.

Trade Show Executive magazine presents the Fastest 50 awards annually to trade shows that have excelled in each of the three categories. Though 50 shows are named in each category, Clean 2017 is one of the few trade shows that exceeded the level of growth to be named in all three. Recipients of the 2017 Fastest 50 will be honored at an awards and summit June 13-15 in Chicago.

The 2017 Clean Show had 227,000 square feet of exhibit space, 472 exhibiting companies and 12,563 attendees. That was up from about 195,00 square feet at the two previous shows, Atlanta in 2015 and New

Orleans in 2013. The Atlanta show had 437 exhibiting companies and 11,264 attendees. In New Orleans, 422 companies exhibited and 10,300 people attended.

Next year the Clean Show will return to New Orleans, June 20-23.

Formally named the World Educational Congress for Laundering and Drycleaning, the Clean Show is sponsored by five industry associations: Association for Linen Management; Coin Laundry Association; Drycleaning and Laundry Institute; Textile Care Allied Trades Association; and TRSA, the association for linen, uniform and facility services.

The exhibitor prospectus and floor plan for the 2018 show will be released next month.

For more information, visit the show's website, www.cleanshow.com, or contact the show's management company, Riddle & Associates, (404) 876-1988.



The 12,563 attendees who flooded into the Clean Show in Las Vegas last year helped boost the industry show into the ranks of the 50 fastest growing trade shows, according to the publication *Trade Show Executive*.



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When is it time to give up on winning a new customer? Never, says James Peuster, who tells how to keep trying.



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Amazon and Uber used new business models to disrupt traditional industries. Are you ready for similar disruptors in drycleaning?



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Do shirts seem like they are more trouble than they are worth? Recognize them as an integral part of your business.





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for drycleaners and launderers
April, 2018
Volume 59, Number 7

So who is going to clean the clothes?

If your customers could clean their own high end garments made of leather, velvet, silk, cashmere or fur at home, would they? Certainly not all of them, as laundry remains an unpopular household chore and it is quite the devourer of spare time. In a survey from 2015 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, it was discovered that, on average, men spend five minutes a day doing laundry while women typically spend 17 minutes. Eventually, that adds up to a lot of time people would rather be spending doing something they enjoy. Still, there will always be a percentage of your customer base that would consider doing things at home if it proves to be more convenient and/or cost-effective.

Even as laundry lockers and pickup and delivery routes and other services aim to keep cleaning services as simple and easy as possible for consumers, there are still (and always will be) so-called “home drycleaning” options that range in capabilities and price. Appliances that dewrinkle clothing and make them smell fresh, even if there is no actual cleaning involved can cost upwards of several hundred dollars. On the other end of the scale are items such as Dryel that have never reached the desired sales volume but refuse to die. Recently, it was announced that Provision Interactive Technologies, Inc., will oversee a Dryel ad campaign for a few months with plans of a 3D holographic display and 2D interactive screens to be placed at various retailers.

Making matters worse, the pernicious competition keeps coming up with other methods. Some believe self-cleaning clothes that use nanotechnology to keep garments clean with the aid of light exposure will be a trend of the future. And now the latest developments by companies such as the Haier Group have unveiled home washing machines aided by air washing technology that utilizes fiber-grade, micro vapor molecule care that purportedly doesn’t harm the garments it cleans, including, the aforementioned leather, velvet, silk, cashmere and fur ones.

Attempts to steal away drycleaning dollars have failed to make a huge impact over the years, but not for lack of trying. Each product shaves off some potential revenue for the industry and those efforts will clearly continue. All this means is that drycleaners must step up their own efforts in the years to come, trying to be more convenient, more quality-oriented and more valuable to customers by saving them the most important thing of all: time. Drycleaners will always have that advantage. After all, they can do the dirty deed that nobody really enjoys doing and they can remove all the pains and hassles that are associated with it.

Are you ready for a cashless counter?

Not so many years ago, drycleaners were debating the merits of accepting credit cards for payments. For years, the drycleaning business had been mainly cash-only and credit cards posed issues — mainly having the technology in place to accept them and those processing fees that took a small bite out of every transaction.

Fast-forward a few years and credit card acceptance has become nearly universal among cleaners. Now the debate is being turned on its head by Brian Butler. He’s gone cashless at his Dublin Cleaners in Columbus, OH, and explains his reasoning in a story on the front page of this issue. He noticed that cash-paying customers had declined to small percentage of his business, yet the costs of handling cash — and the exposure to theft and robbery because of it — remained the same. So he began an experiment, posting notices on his door and counter that Dublin Cleaners is now a “cashless” business.

The decline in cash usage that he noticed is part of a trend throughout all of retail. Previous predictions of a quick move to a cashless society were premature, but cash payments have been plummeting in recent years. A 2016 Federal Reserve payments study found non-cash payments increasing at an annual rate of 5.3 percent between 2012 and 2015. We can only imagine that pace is continuing. A 2016 Gallup poll found that far fewer Americans are using cash than five years previously. Only 10 percent reported using cash for all their purchases, down from 19 percent in 2011. Still, just 12 percent said they never use cash.

The no-cash trend has been growing among restaurants to the point that a Chicago alderman wants a new law that would prevent businesses from refusing to accept cash. Alderman Ed Burke introduced an ordinance last fall that wouldn’t allow restaurants or stores to refuse cash. You know something is a growing trend when a politician thinks it needs to be stopped.

We doubt that many cleaners are willing to tell cash customers to take their business elsewhere, but as Brian Butler noticed, those customers are becoming fewer as time goes on. At some point, it becomes a matter of cash just not being worth the trouble. Let the debate begin.

BPS

communications inc.

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NATIONAL CLOTHESLINE is not owned or operated by any national or regional trade association. Advertisers are solely responsible for statements made in their advertising.

NATIONAL CLOTHESLINE (US ISSN #07446306) is an independent trade newspaper published monthly by BPS Communications Inc. Periodical Postage paid at Willow Grove, PA, and at an additional mailing office. Postmaster: Send address changes to: The National Clothesline, PO Box 340, Willow Grove, PA 19090-0340.

•Subscription price for anyone actively engaged in the drycleaning and laundry industry in the United States: \$35; Canada \$40 (US); All others, \$75 (US).

•This newspaper is published in two separate sections. If you do not receive all sections, please notify our office.

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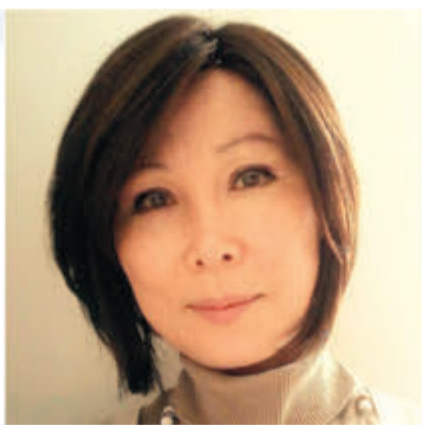


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Cleaners of champions

Many Philadelphians would probably love to be surrounded by the actual football jerseys of the recent NFL Super Bowl champions all day long, but it's a little different for the two brothers who own Lattanzio's Linn Cleaners.

After all, it is their responsibility to clean and mend them for the hometown Eagles all season long and return them in tip-top shape for their next use. For older sibling Joe, it can be a source of high anxiety.

"I don't want them in the building," he confessed. "I'm afraid of someone breaking in. I've got an alarm system and all that."

Typically, Vinnie will pick up the uniforms from the team on Monday, following a Sunday game, along with the other big delivery accounts for many local theaters and venues.

On such a week, the ball club needs everything back by Wednesday, which includes uniforms for 52 players plus all of the clothing for the coaches and ball boys that comprise another 50 or so outfits approved by the league.

"The NFL wants everyone to look the same," Joe pointed out. "Everybody has to wear black uniforms and all that — the black pants match the team's shirt."

The first thing Joe and his crew do when they arrive at Linn Cleaners is to sort them by use.

"When they come in, what we do is we separate the players who didn't play from the ones who did," Joe explained. "The players who didn't play... there's no dirt on them."

"We have troughs with soap and water in them. We soak the uniforms that are the dirtiest and then in the meantime we start with the other ones that are half-dirty and start scrubbing. We put soap and water on them, scrub them with a brush, put them in a machine and wash them. When they come out, we dry them. We start all over again. This is done anywhere from three to five times for each pair of pants or jersey."

The uniforms are anything but an easy job. After all, they are dirty, sweaty, bloody and muddy. Plus, there is often paint transfer from opposing teams' helmets whenever they perform a bone-rattling hit or tackle on an Eagles' players.

"Paint transfer is a nightmare," Joe emphasized. "The hardest part is getting the helmet marks clean and the paint off of each other's jerseys. You either pick it off or we use the steam gun."

"That's a lot of work. That'll take us over two days. You get one, you take it off the hanger and you just attack it."

Linn's Cleaners also sews and repairs any rips or tears. As for the blood and mud smeared all over the jerseys and pants, that's a fairly easy part of the process. The grass, on the other hand, is a lot more difficult to get out. That's why Joe prefers when the team wear their dark green uniforms as opposed to the classic home white-on-white tops and bottoms.

So, naturally, whenever Joe watches the Eagles play on television, he tends to be anxious about the welfare of the team, as well as how they look. He can

be pretty vocal at times.

"I am always yelling at the TV: 'Run out of bounds! Don't fall down!'" he laughed. "If they don't fall down, they don't get as dirty."

After spending a lifetime rooting for the Eagles, the Lattanzios have come to expect disappointment at the end of every season. After all, Philadelphia hadn't won a Super Bowl during its first 51-year history. Even when the Eagles started this past



season with a 10-1 record, Joe wasn't exactly filled with confidence.

"At the beginning, I didn't think they were going to win because they were not playing good teams," he noted.

In fact, in the first eleven games, they only faced two eventual playoff teams (the Kansas City Chiefs and the Carolina Panthers); collectively, they played against opponents with an overall 80-96 record for the season.

"They were just average teams they were playing," he added. "Everybody's making a big stink about it, but let's just see what happens in the playoffs."

The team started the season at 50-1 odds to win the Super Bowl, and opened as a 5 1/2-point underdog against the Patriots, but for the city that birthed Rocky Balboa, that role only seemed fitting.

It also seems fitting that the Lattanzios were picked to handle the Eagles' uniforms as they are underdogs themselves.

Joe and Vinnie's parents, Vince and Marie, first launched the small drycleaning operation in 1947.

They named it "Linn Cleaners" simply because it was located on Linn Street. The couple, whose parents had immigrated from Italy a generation before, had no secret to success.

"It was hard work. That's about it," Joe laughed. "They put three kids through school and college. They just worked every day. My mom became the tailor and then my father was the drycleaner."

In 1953, they moved a block away to their current location at 15th and Snyder.

"They paid \$600 a month in the 1950s, for 30 years, for their mortgage," he added. "They put a lot of money in the business all the time."

Both have passed away, but their

memory is alive every day in the lessons they taught their children.

"My father taught me to spot. My mother taught me to sew," Joe said. "He taught me how to use the cleaning machines."

"The business end — moneywise — my mother had me sit down every Thursday with her and the accountant and I was taught how to do the books and learn from there."

Joe is certainly the cleaning expert; but Linn's Cleaners works so well be-

cause customers know the secret.

"Before this, we were basically nobodies," Joe declared.

Everybody in the city seemed to celebrate after the Eagles' Super Bowl win over the Patriots and Linn Cleaners had a front row seat.

"I lucked out because the parade was one block from my store," Joe recalled. "Across from my cleaners is a diner and at 5 o'clock in the morning there were people lining up in front of it."

Joe & Vinnie Lattanzio

"By the time the parade did come, there were just so many people. It was just a madhouse."

Such fans are also a nice boost for business. In addition to the actual Eagles' uniforms, the store receives a lot of fan jerseys to be cleaned. Ironically enough, Joe has to be careful not to do too good of a job on those.

"The ones of the Eagles sometimes have the guys' signatures on it," he laughed. "So, you know, I know how to get it out but I try not to. You want to clean the jersey but you can't take that out. They end up putting them in a glass case. They basically just want the perspiration out of the thing."

Fortunately, there are not too many jobs that are counterintuitive like that; most times, Joe seeks perfection.

"The job is giving the customers back a clean garment. I try to turn it back into the way it was when they bought it if it's something that they really enjoy," he said.

Of course, customers often don't always care about their clothes like they did in the past.

"Clothes are disposable nowadays," he added. "I ended up going to pay-in-advance this past July because everybody has tons and tons of clothes stored here that they didn't pick up... that they just don't want anymore. They just end up buying new clothes. It changed the sales a lot. It cuts down on some of the sales, but in the long run, it works out."

Speaking of the long run, the Lattanzio brothers plan on running the business for the foreseeable future.

"When me and my brother get old and tired and can't do it, then we'll probably retire," Joe said. "I'm so proud of what I do. I really do like it. People think, 'Aw, it's just drycleaning.' But, to me, it's work I'm really proud of."

cause the two siblings have different strengths they bring to the business. Vinnie handles the delivery end, but he also brings the personality.

"My little brother has the greatest gift of gab of any person you're ever going to meet," Joe boasted, then added: "I always say when Vinnie arrives, it's 85 percent talking and 15 percent drycleaning. His customers love him so much that if I happen to lose or ruin one of their garments, they don't even want payment. That's how much my little brother is liked by the customers."

Over the years, Linn Cleaners landed many prestigious accounts and they mostly did it the old fashioned way: by simply picking up the phone and calling. For decades they have handled the work of the Walnut Street Theater, the Pennsylvania Ballet, Opera Philadelphia and the Arden and Wilma Theaters.

The theater work requires a delicate touch, often needing to be hand cleaned with care and patience. One of the more difficult jobs that Joe can recall is cleaning a Scrooge costume for A Christmas Carol.

"I would have to take the chains off and sew them back on," he noted. "After so many years of doing it, I eventually got to the point where I look for the exciting things to do, a challenge. The theaters are more of a challenge than the Eagles. With the Eagles, it's a system you get down and follow the system. You get them done in time and you get them back. Sometimes they don't even wear them the next week. They rotate."

Still, it was the Eagles' account that has brought them into the spotlight... all because a baker acquaintance recommended their business to the equipment manager for the team about 20 years ago. Now, most of their cus-

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Puerto Rico to host TCATA conference

The Wyndham Rio Mar Resort in Puerto Rico will be the scene for the Textile Care Allied Trade Association's annual conference May 2-5.

The opening day of the convention on Wednesday will consist of a board meeting in the afternoon and a reception in the evening.

Thursday will feature a golf tournament in the morning followed by a golf luncheon in the afternoon. A spouse/guest program is also planned for Thursday.

A reception and dinner will take place Thursday evening at the Hacienda Siesta Alegre.

Getting down to business on Friday morning, the convention will first hear from Nils Stolzlecher, general manager of the Wyndham Rio Mar who will speak briefly about the island's recovery from Hurricane Maria.

He will be followed at 8:30 a.m. by Gene Marks of the Marks Group, who will update attendees on the latest political, economic, tech and management trends that will affect business in the coming years. Marks is a prolific writer and can be seen regularly discussing business issues on Fox News, CNBC and MSNBC.

His company provides technology and consulting services to small and medium sized businesses. Marks will review the three major areas that will have the greatest

impact: Washington and the economy; your people; and your technology.

Next up will be Bill Graham of Graham Communications. He focuses on helping leaders become more likable and memorable, skills that are often not included in traditional leadership training. Graham has a varied background that includes teaching at the New York University and Seton Hall, and with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Institute for Organizational Management.

He will offer usable likability skills that improve relationships and help communications. A key to likability and communication, he believes, is using an emotional connection through telling a good story.

TCATA is organizing an optional event at the hotel on Friday afternoon for those who want to volunteer their time in helping the people of Puerto Rico recover from the aftermath of the hurricane.

Volunteers will put together baskets of much needed supplies for delivery to local people in need. Details will be on the website and in the final mailing to attendees.



Gene Marks

The business program resumes on Saturday morning with Herb Meyer, former vice chair of the CIA's National Intelligence Council under President Reagan. It will be a return engagement for Meyer whose presentation at the 2010 conference was well received.

He will discuss a variety of worldwide trends, including demographic changes, the balance of political and economic power, terrorism and many other issues and explain why these issues affect everyone who runs a business.

He believes that biggest under-reported news story in the world is the emergence and exponential growth of a global middle class which means that each year the total customer base for all products and services grows by 50 million to 100 million new customers.

Meyer is widely credited with being the first senior U.S. government official to forecast the collapse of the Soviet Union — a forecast for which he later was awarded the U.S. National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal, which is the Intel-



Bill Graham

ligence Community's highest honor.

A closing reception and dinner will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. on Saturday evening.

Registration for the conference costs \$775 if received by April 5 and \$825 thereafter.

Spouse registration is available for \$350 through April 5 and \$400 thereafter. A registration form is available on the TCATA website.

The website also includes a registration form for the golf tournament, which must be completed by April 12. The fee of \$185 per golfer includes greens and cart fees, prizes and lunch.

The room rate at the resort is \$179 per night for single or double occupancy. Ocean view and junior suite upgrades are available for an additional charge. A link to the hotel for reservations for conference attendees is also available on the TCATA website. Reservations by phone can be made by calling (800) 474-6627.

For more information on the conference, call TCATA, (813) 348-0075 or visit www.tcata.org.



Herb Meyer

No more cash in counter transactions

Continued from page 1

buried in concrete, then getting dejected and looking around the place. The tills were open to show them... don't tear them apart, they're empty."

The decision to forgo cash had one immediate benefit. Two weeks after one store went cashless, a masked man with a note in his hand entered the premises.

"He must not have seen it [the "Cash-LESS" sign] on the door where we had it nice and big, but he saw it on the counter as it stands out more," Butler recalled, noting that his CSRs hid behind a one-way partition, terrified, and the man immediately removed his mask. "They weren't coming out to talk to him. So, they spoke to him around the partition.

"He said, 'My girlfriend sent me out to pick up some cleaning. I think this is the right cleaners. Will you tell me if her stuff is here?' It was a story. It was garbage."

After they told him "no" he left the store, but according to Butler, he had other places to be.

"He ended up robbing seven other businesses that night and the

next day in the neighborhood, successfully on all of them, but then got caught fleeing the final one. We turned the video over to the Columbus police," he said.

Going cashless hasn't just been a deterrent to masked robbers; so far the employees have enjoyed not making change.

"The staff is so happy to not do that," Butler said. "If you've ever worked a job where you have to balance the register at the end of the shift, the anxiety builds in that last hour. 'Oh man, I've got a date tonight.' Or, 'I got to get my

kids to practice.' And if that drawer doesn't balance, you count it and recount it."

As for customer complaints, there haven't really been any. On the rare occasion where a customer prefers to work with cash, Butler has worked out a solution. He will allow them to buy Dublin Cleaners' gift cards with cash, but he won't make change from the transaction. That way they can immediately go deposit the cash and not keep it on site.

"Very rarely do we have cash in the store," Butler noted.

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Marvel	2870	30 lb. Transfer Washer/Extractor	\$3,995
Marvel	2916	100 lb. Transfer Washer/Extractor	\$12,995
DRYCLEANING PRESSES			
✓Forenta	4771	Triple Puff Iron	\$1,100
Forenta	4569	Utility Press	\$2,950
Hoffman	4721	Mushroom Topper	\$3,600
Forenta	4570	Triple Puff Iron w/Dual Pedals	\$1,200
LAUNDRY WASHERS & DRYERS			
✓Unimac	8143	75 lb. Reversing Gas Dryer	\$2,200
Speed Queen	3680	30 lb. Stacked Gas Dryer	\$2,500
Milnor	3689	45 lb. Washer	\$2,995
Speed Queen	3695	125 lb. Washer	\$7,500
LAUNDRY PRESSES			
✓Hoffman	3711	Double Topper	\$3,350
Unipress	9833	NT2 Double Buck	\$18,500
Fujistar	2816	Double Buck w/unloader	\$14,000
✓Forenta	3806	54" Apparel Press	\$3,300
Unipress	3761	ABS Sleever	\$5,995
Unipress	3812	DAYV Double Buck	\$7,500
OTHER			
Fimas	6903	Finishing Board	\$1,695
Superstarch	6922	Starch Cooker	\$2,995
Ingersoll Rand	6871	5 HP 120 Gal. Compressor	\$995
NEW ** EQUIPMENT			
DRY CLEANING			
Easysec		40 lb. Hydrocarbon Dry to Dry	\$29,600
Forenta		Triple Puff Iron	\$1,849
Hoffman		Dry Cleaning Mushroom Topper	\$5,795
Lattner		20 H.P. Boiler	\$12,995
LAUNDRY			
Forenta		Single Topper	\$5,999
Forenta		19VS Topper	\$4,450
Ipsos		50 lb. Gas Dryer	\$3,195
Bantam		Body Press	\$3,995
✓Forenta		51" Single Legger	\$6,300
Wascomat		83 lb. Gas Dryer	\$3,525
✓LG		35 lb. Soft Mount Washer	\$2,395
Ipsos		75 lb. Washer	\$9,800
Electrolux		62 lb. Washer	\$7,995
Hoffman		Double Topper	\$5,795
Forenta		53" Laundry Legger	\$6,695

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Brian Butler stands behind the counter that reminds customer that the store is cashless. A would-be robber missed the "cashless" sign on the door, but when he saw it on the counter he changed his plan and left, going on to rob other businesses that night.

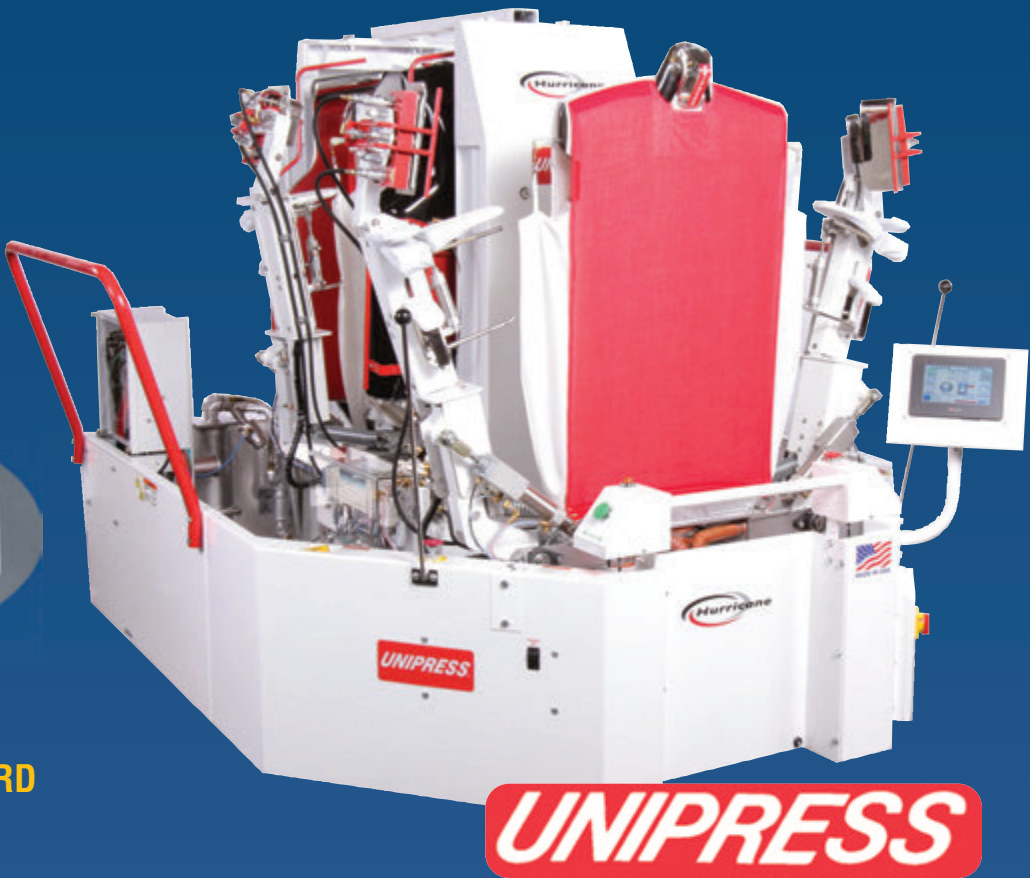
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THE SPOTTING BOARD



BY DAN EISEN

Understanding and using digesters

Digestion is one of the four methods of stain removal. The other methods are solvent action, lubrication and chemical action.

Digestion uses different enzymes to remove protein stains such as milk, eggs, perspiration and blood. Some enzymes remove starch, food, grease and oil.

Enzymes associated with cleaning are proteins that act as catalysts in a biological reaction.

A catalyst is defined as a

substance that causes a reaction to take place at a faster rate but does not change itself.

An enzyme can be identified by its name, typically ending with “-ase.” Enzymes found in detergents include protease, urcase, amylase.

Enzymes have the ability to change the staining into a soluble substance which can be flushed or washed away.

Some enzymes can be mixed with chemicals and high heat. Other enzymes must be neutral and used at

lower temperatures.

When I was a consultant to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, we introduced low temperature enzymes for the cleaning of the textiles and artifacts. The enzymes effectively remove protein matter and starch which helps soil. They were absolutely safe to the fabric since they were neutral and used at low temperatures.

Low temperature enzymes

These powdered enzymes

are the safest of all products. They are completely neutral and can be used on all fabrics including silk, wool, rayon and other similar fabrics. They are considered as safe as water.

Spotting method

1. Put a quarter teaspoon of enzymes in a clean six-ounce bottle.

2. The water temperature is between 90°F and 120°F. Over 120°F destroys the enzyme.

3. Add one-half teaspoon of glycerin.

4. Apply to stain.

5. Wait a half-hour and re-apply.

6. Flush area.

You can make up the enzyme formula at the start of the day. Even if it cools it will still work.

After one day, the enzyme formula can not be used and a new one is then made up.

Bath method

1. One teaspoon enzyme to a gallon of water in a clean bucket.

2. Water temperature 90°F to 120°F

3. Add a teaspoon of salt as a dye setter except on silk.

4. Soak one-half hour.

5. Rinse.

Do not cover container. A covered container causes dye bleeding.

Detergents

Enzymes are used in all types of detergents. They are used with detergents containing acid, alkali, and bleach. They work in hot water up to 140°F.

Liquid enzymes: spotting agents

There are some products that are enzymes mixed with detergents. They are used for a substitute for alkaline-based protein formulas. They offer a little more safety to delicate colors and silk. They do not set tannin stains.

Alkaline-based enzyme products

There are some alkaline-based enzyme products. They are used to remove protein stains in a soaking action. They are very effective since water temperature can be used up to 140°F. However, they may not be safe to some dyes, especially wool and silk. They are especially effective on cottons, linens and most synthetic fibers.

Enzyme and bleach

These products are effective for removing mold and mildew on white colored linens, cottons, rayons and synthetics. They can not be used on wool and silk.

Dan Eisen, former chief garment analyst for the National Cleaners Association, can be reached at (772) 340-0909 or (772) 579-5044 or by e-mail at cleandan@comcast.net. He offers garment analysis and consulting services. His website is www.garmentanalysis.com.




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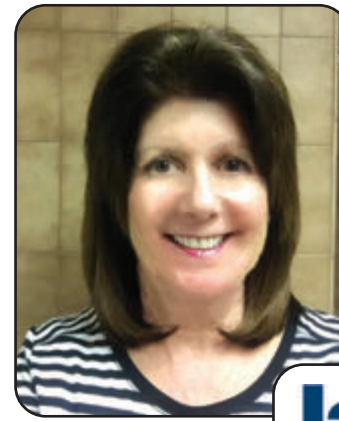
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~ Jan Caon Barlow, CED, CPD, CPW
Jan's Professional Dry Cleaners

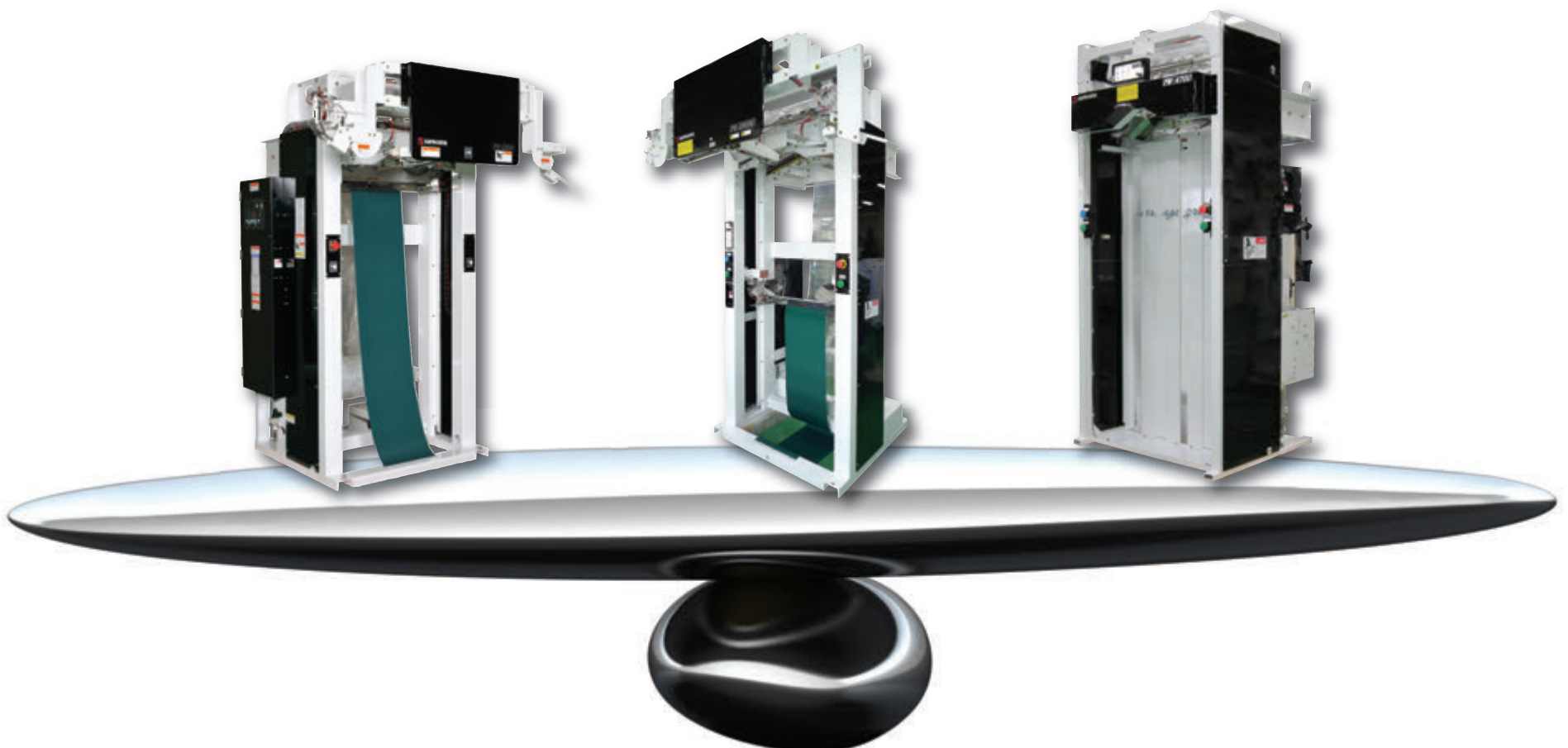


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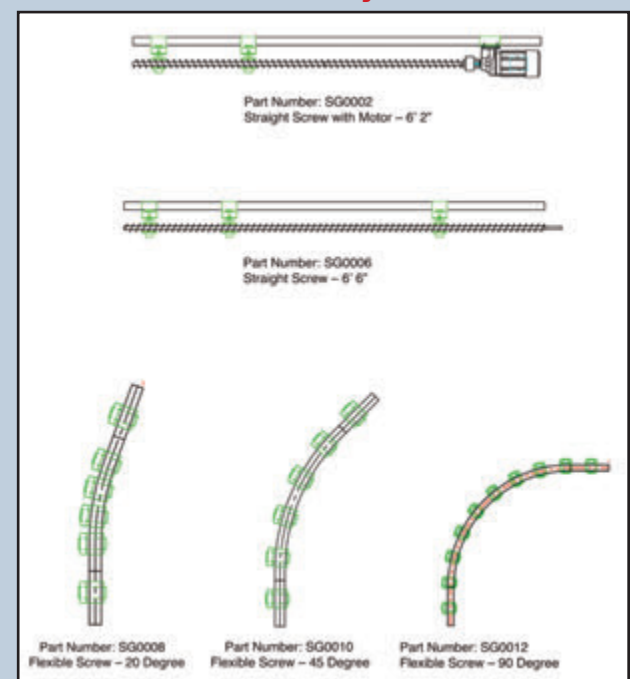
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NORTHEAST



AMERICAN CLEANERS in Middletown, NY, installed an 80-lb. Columbia drycleaning machine, the first in New York to use SafeChem's Sensene solvent. Pictured from left are Inaki Barrenechea of SafeChem, Erez Haleah, owner of American Cleaners, and Tobias Bertram of SafeChem.

NEFA to host route development workshop in Oxford this May

Those wanting to develop their pickup and delivery routes will want to mark May 4 and 5 on their calendars.

That is the date the North East Fabricare Association will host a one-and-a-half-day workshop on the subject that will be headed by James Peuster, The Route Pro.

It will meet from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday and from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday.

The workshop is geared to help owners, managers and all sales staff as Peuster draws on his years

of drycleaning industry experience to demonstrate some of the essential strategies of route development.

"We are excited to be able to present this opportunity to NEFA members," noted Peter Blake, NEFA's executive director. "Routes are becoming more and more of a necessity for businesses to grow and thrive. James is known nationwide as the leading expert on route development and route sales, and we are excited to be able to present our members

with this opportunity to learn from the best."

Peuster will cover a lot of ground on route development, including: how to get and keep staff motivated; how to hold your team accountable; ten things to increase sales; and effective marketing materials and tools.

The cost to attend is \$179 per person for NEFA/DLI members and \$279 each for non-members. There are additional discounts available for plants that send multiple attendees.

Seats are limited so NEFA recommends signing up soon.

NEFA Night at Fenway

Also coming up in the near future is a fun social event offered by the association that will take place at Fenway Park on June 6.

NEFA has secured 85 tickets for when the Boston Red Sox host the Detroit Tigers. The first pitch will take place at 7:10 p.m.

The seats are all located together in the same region of the ballpark: the rightfield roofbox area, which is close by to the Refreshment Pavilion.

Already, there have been many pre-registrations for the event, so the association recommends signing up as early as possible before they all sell out.

The cost for the game tickets are \$65 each and are available on a first-come/first-serve basis. Contact Peter Blake at the NEFA office at (800) 442-6848 or email him at peter@nefabricare.com to place an order.

For more information visit online at www.nefabricare.com.

Anton's Belle of the Ball drive begins its 14th year

Since its inception in 2005, Anton's Cleaners Belle of the Ball gown drive has helped hundreds and hundreds of young girls be able to dress fashionably for their high school proms.

The company collects, cleans and helps distribute prom dresses and accessories, culminating in a Boutique Day each year where volunteers help shoppers pick out the perfect fashion choice of their choosing free of charge.

This year, Anton's Cleaners, along with Jordan's Furniture and Enterprise Bank, will open up several locations to collect gently-used dresses from Feb. 5 until early April.

Fiscal donations are also accepted to help with shoes, jewelry, makeup and other things. For more information, visit www.anton.com.

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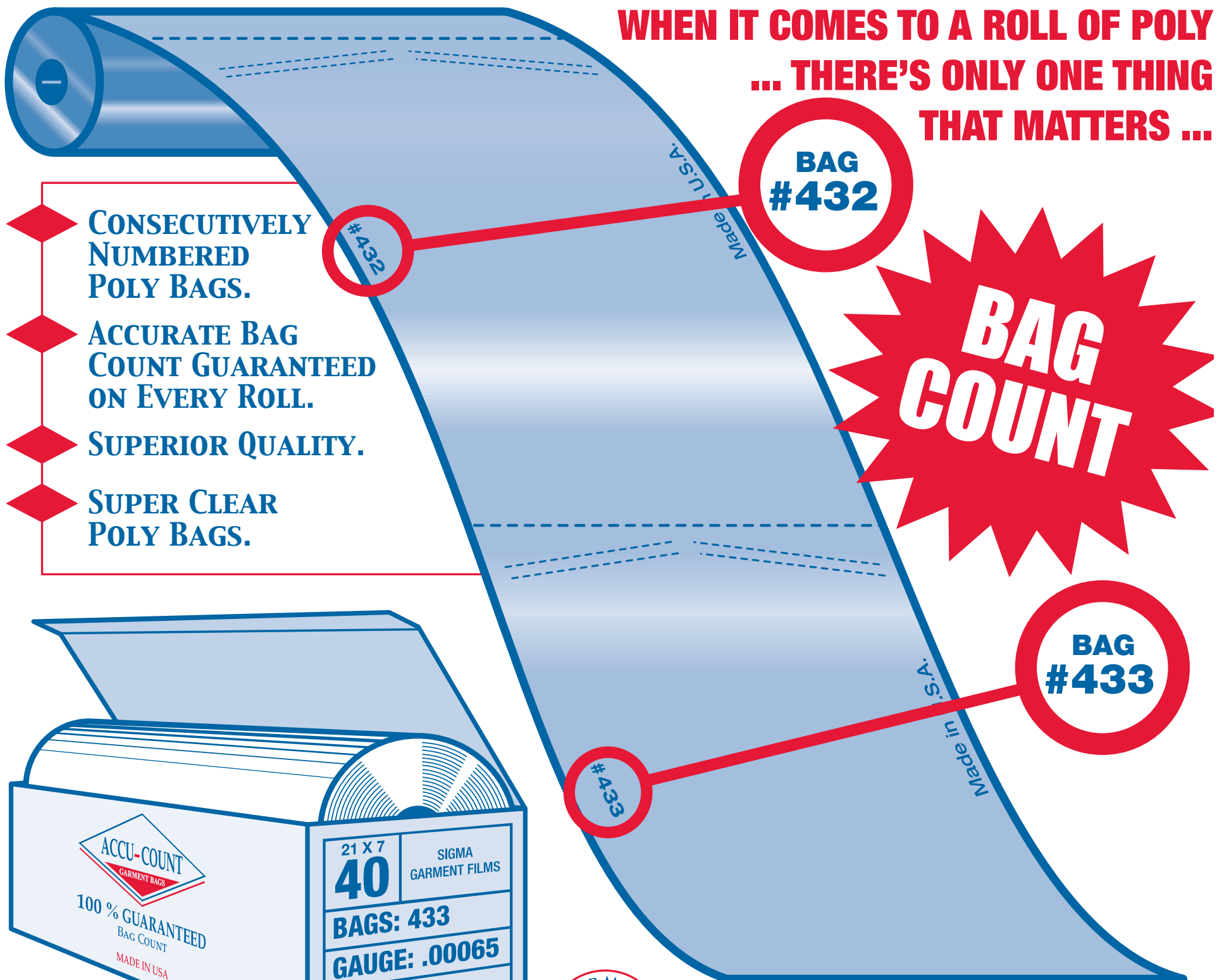
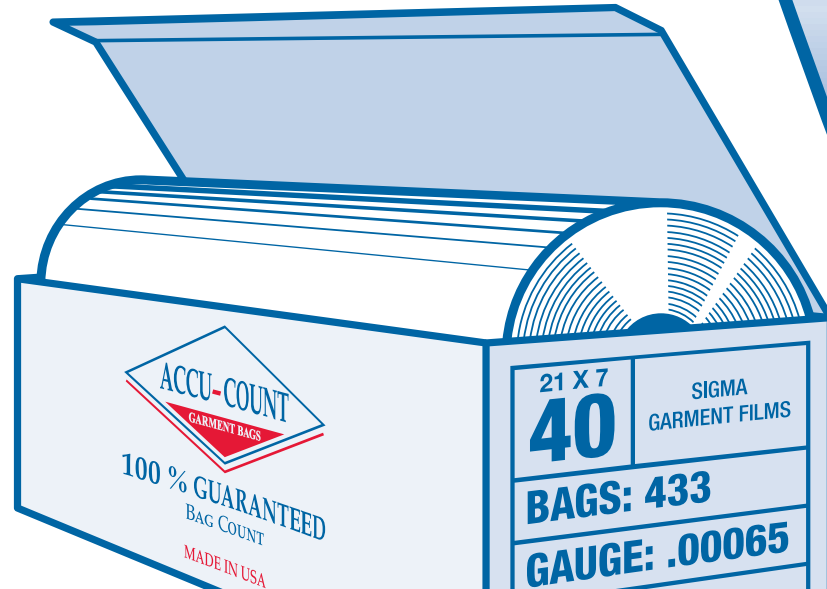
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THE ROUTE PRO



BY JAMES PEUSTER

Don't give up; Keep following up

We live in a follow-up or fail world. Over 80 percent of sales successes come from some form of following up. The problem is that most people give up after the first attempt — thus the prospect gives up as well. Route development is a journey or marathon, not a sprint. As an owner, patience will lead to route growth. If you are someone who does the selling or manages one, here is a list of rules on how to ensure follow-up success.

- Rule 1: Be honest, polite and humble.**
Do not be upset with a prospect that doesn't get to you in a timely manner. Calling them out will only push them further away.
- Rule 2: Stay organized.**
Organize or agonize should

- be everyone's motto when it comes to selling and staying focused. We recommend some sort of a sales planner or online cloud option to assist you in tracking down leads while creating some sort of organization in the everyday sales effort. Post-it notes or scribbles on a manifest usually leads to losing leads!
- Rule 3: Be persistent, not pushy.**
Again, the harder you push the faster the prospect retreats. Drycleaning is a personalized service and most of us try to

- do it the easy way with one attempt or by forcing the prospect to sign up. Persistence is a virtue that most successful route developers have in their back pocket.
- Rule 4: Good time to ask for a referral.**
Since you already have a relationship with the customers near the prospect, get with your existing clients and ask for a specific referral concerning a neighbor you are approaching. This works well in business settings since many know the surrounding staff

- and personnel.
- Rule 5: Be memorable.**
Be creative in ensuring the prospect knows who you are and will remember you. This way if a phone call occurs, you can ask them about your first or second rapport building experience. Look for opportunities or situations that are common denominators between you and the prospect — sports teams, cars, etc.
- Rule 6: Establish a clear future.**
Make sure to set up expectations for the next visit. Usually this is based on the route days. Some are excellent at de-

Following up creates more trust and gives the prospect the sense that the harder you work to get them only means the harder you will work to keep them.

termining the temperature of the prospect in order to determine how quick to return. The longer you wait, the further the memory of the presentation is. If you follow-up too soon, you may push them away.

Rule 7: Figure out ways to mix it up.
Sometimes the disconnect will be ongoing and the prospect just doesn't feel comfortable with you. Maybe you could send another driver or the manager out to follow up. Maybe a random act of kindness will seal the deal. People ask me how many times should you follow up and I state, "Until they give you a firm no".

The bottom line is that following up creates more trust and gives the prospect the sense that the harder you work to get them only means the harder you will work to keep them. James Peuster is a consultant who specializes in route development, management and maintenance. He offers onsite consulting as well as ongoing coaching across the country. He also has cost groups to monitor route efficiency. For more information, call him at (816) 739-2066 or visit his website at www.theroutepro.com.

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Management Leadership Day

Friday, August 17

Get Noticed. Be Remembered
Brand Recognition, Create a Personal Brand; Strategy for Success
Speaker: Krista Clive-Smith
10:00am - 12:00pm

Business Valuation and Preparing for Business Succession
Lunch included
Speaker: Riaz Chauthani
12:00pm - 1:00pm

Smart Social Media Marketing
Digital Marketing on a Shoestring Budget and How Easy it can be
Speaker: Brian Rashid
1:00pm - 3:00pm

CCA Members - \$160
Non Members - \$250

Saturday, August 18

Maximizing Revenue Streams -
How to get Wash N Fold, How to Attract New Customers to New Services, Use of New Technology (Lockers/Apps)
Speaker: Chris Moreno
9:30am - 10:30am

Critical Update:
CA HR & Employment Issues - Explore Latest News on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, Minimum Wage Issues, Hiring & Firing Issues and More
Speaker: Jibit Cinar
10:30am - 11:30am

Sunday, August 19

Marketing for Profit
Speaker: Kyle Nesbit
10:00am - 11:00am

The Team Approach to Building Customer Service Excellence
Speaker: Jim Groshans
11:00am - 12:00pm

SHOW HOURS

Saturday: 10am - 5:30pm
Sunday: 10am - 4pm

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WEST



Wetzel's Quality Cleaners in Billings, MT, installed a Union HL860 60-lb. heated hydrocarbon machine. Pictured from left are Mark Bonsell, area manager for Fabritec Interational, Kim Wetzel, co-owner of Wetzel's, and Scott Wetzel, president of Wetzel's.

CCA brings Desrosiers for Management Bootcamp

Cleaners can now enlist in the California Cleaners Association's Management Bootcamp that will take place on April 20 and 21 at the office of BeCreative in Orange, CA.

Consultant and management expert Don Desrosiers will present his program that will examine "How to Run a Drycleaning Plant Easily, Efficiently and Profitably."

The two-day workshop will explore the necessity of monitoring labor and production and attendees will learn the basics of why they

need to track information and how to put that information to good use.

Also, the program will include an introductory version of Desrosier's proprietary tracking system, FlightPlan, that will help attendees understand the impact changes in operation can have on productivity.

Time management, problem solving and organizational skills will all be covered on the agenda, as well as: calculating cost per piece, boosting productivity, managing labor costs and interpreting

information.

It will meet from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Friday and from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday.

The cost is \$295 for the first member from a plant and \$195 each for additional members from the same plant. Non-members must pay \$395 per person to attend.

The cost of registration includes lunch on both days.

The BeCreative office is located in Orange, CA, at 1588 Batavia St. Ste. #1C.

For more information or to register for the program, contact the CCA office at (916) 239-4070 or visit them online at www.calcleaners.com.



Don Desrosiers



RECOVERY CLEANERS BLENDS CARING CULTURE WITH POSEIDON WET CLEANING SYSTEM — REALIZES QUALITY RESULTS AND BOOSTED PROFITS

The female-driven Recovery Cleaners makes a business of helping others by carefully recovering and restoring garments damaged by fires and floods. President and founder Jacqui Schaefer, who started the business 24 years ago as a one-woman operation, has since grown Recovery Cleaners into a company with 29 employees and a 14,700-square-foot textile restoration facility. The Poseidon Textile Care System handles 70 percent of the collected items and restores them via wet cleaning only. The remaining items are processed via dry cleaning.

"We are almost all women here, with an average tenure of 17 years," said Schaefer. "We go into homes that have been significantly damaged due to fires or floods, compassionately sort through the affected garments and linens, which are then brought back to our facility to restore. Our positive company culture enables us to go above and beyond on each and every claim. We truly have the greatest service team in the industry. That's what sets us apart."

"Here at Recovery Cleaners, we are always staying ahead with leading edge technology," added Schaefer. "Our commitment to quality and earth-friendly processing is what brought us to the Poseidon Textile Care System. Wet cleaning is often more effective than dry cleaning when it comes to removing soot, odors and fire pollutants."

Poseidon Textile Care System Boosts Productivity
Recovery Cleaners recently added new wet cleaning machines and dryers from

the Poseidon Textile Care System. "With these new machines we are able to increase productivity, cut utility costs and become more efficient. We estimate that we will

add an additional 52,000 pounds of laundry in one year alone," said Schaefer. Mike "Stucky" Szcotka, of Poseidon, in Troy, Mich., worked with Schaefer to retool her plant with appropriately sized Poseidon equipment. He recommended and installed one 90- and two 55-pound capacity soft-mount Poseidon

Wetcleaning Machines and two 80-pound capacity Poseidon Dryers.

"Poseidon machines supply us with the tools to make the wet cleaning process quick, efficient and profitable," said Schaefer. "There are many companies that cherry pick only the items they think they can

salvage. We process it all and are able to maintain a 95 percent salvage rate from wet cleaning and dry cleaning combined."

"Prior to the company's Poseidon Dryers, more items required air drying, which slowed production. Now, items are quickly dried with less wrinkling," said Schaefer, "reducing the time needed to finish them." "There are several companies in the textile restoration business," added Schaefer. "While our Poseidon machines make it more profitable and efficient, it is our caring staff and amazing company culture that completes the circle."

[Read full story at poseidonwetcleaning.com.](http://poseidonwetcleaning.com)



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Fabricare 2018 plans

A few months further down the road, CCA will also host its Fabricare 2018 show.

This year, the association will return to Long Beach from Aug. 17 to 19. The city has been a good host for the show in many years past; in fact, the last Fabricare show saw over 1,100 professional cleaners from six countries and 30 states attend the event.

Booth sales are currently open and the exhibit halls at the Long Beach Convention Center are expected to be filled with aisles and aisles of all the most recent technological innovations and equipment offerings for the cleaning industry.

Already, booth sales have filled up over half the available floor space and are moving at a rate faster than those of previous shows.

The exhibit hall will be open to the general public from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 18 and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 19.

Those who want to make reservations at one of the event's host hotels have a pair of options: the Renaissance Long Beach and the Hyatt Regency.

The Renaissance Long Beach will be CCA's host hotel. It is located across the street from the convention center. The association has secured a block of rooms at the rate of \$189 per night.

Call (562) 437-5900 to make reservations.

A small block of rooms is also available at the Hyatt Regency Long Beach, located adjacent to the convention center. The special show discount rate is \$219 per night. To make reservations, contact the hotel at (562) 491-1234.

When making reservations, mention the CCA Fabricare Show in order to obtain the special rate.

For more information on the show, visit www.calcleaners.com or call CCA at (916) 239-4070.



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KEEP IT LEGAL



BY FRANK KOLLMAN

Who is an independent contractor?

The company that cuts your grass or paints your walls is an independent contractor.

Your employee who cuts the grass after hours or paints a shed on the weekend is not. The employee must be paid wages, and he must be paid overtime if those “after-hours chores for cash” put him over 40 for the workweek.

A person you “hire” merely to cut grass or paint a wall can be an independent contractor, provided she can do work for other businesses (better if she does).

If that same person works exclusively for you, she is likely not an independent contractor. If she performs the core work of your business as any other employee would, she is almost certainly not an independent contractor.

Why would any business

want to hire independent contractors instead of employees?

Many small and medium businesses try to classify individuals as independent contractors for the following reasons:

1. Independent contractors are not entitled to minimum wage or overtime.
2. Employers can fire independent contractors without regard to anti-discrimination laws or wrongful termination laws.
3. Independent contractors get no benefits.
4. Employers do not have to include independent contractors in the employee census when calculating workers’ compensation premiums.
5. There is no tax withholding for independent contractors, and the employer does not have to pay matching FICA.

6. There is much less paperwork for independent contractors.

Unfortunately, if the so-called independent contractor is, in fact, an employee, the following could happen:

1. You could owe up to three years of minimum wage and overtime compensation.
2. A court could find you liable for discrimination or wrongful termination because you stopped using the person.
3. You might have to pay out-of-pocket for the employee benefits he did not receive.
4. Your workers’ compensation carrier could demand additional premiums.
5. The IRS could find you liable for not withholding or paying matching FICA, as well as any unpaid taxes on the amounts you paid to the “independent contractor.”
6. The absence of certain pa-

perwork, such as wage and hour records, could be a violation of the law and result in fines in addition to back pay.

In addition to these consequences for misclassification, employers rarely consider that true independent contractors can sue for injuries sustained in the workplace. Employees, however, cannot sue their employers for injuries sustained on the job because their sole remedy is workers’ compensation benefits.

An independent contractor can sue for damages, which is far more money than an employee is entitled to under the workers’ compensation laws for the same injury.

Even if the company tries to get that lawsuit covered by its general business liability insurance, the carrier might deny coverage on the grounds that the person was an employee. It would be the worst outcome imaginable: an uninsured claim and no recourse to the comp carrier.

So, what is an independent contractor? There are many legal precedents that describe the attributes of independent contractors versus employees. The factors considered are numerous, and courts, agencies, and insurance carriers make decisions based on the strongest factors favoring one status or the other.

I could list these factors, but the factors are subject to interpretation and exception. The principal question is “does the

company control the manner and means of the work being performed (whatever that means)?”

If the company does, the individual is an employee, not an independent contractor.

Before asking a lawyer to charge you hundreds of dollars to determine if a person is an independent contractor (or more likely an independent contractor), you do the following:

1. If you cannot convince yourself that the person is an independent contractor or an employee, she is probably an employee. Close calls do not go your way.
2. It is fine to misclassify an independent contractor as an employee because there are no negative legal consequences. The incorrect designation of an employee as an independent contractor, on the other hand, could have disastrous consequences. If you classify the person as an employee, you do not have to worry about it.
3. The more the person does work unrelated to your core business like plumbing, major renovations and repairs, and the stuff the “computer guy” does, the more likely he is an independent contractor. You might take a chance.
4. Every close call on whether a person is an independent contractor or employee should be resolved in favor of employee status. I know this is redundant, but it is worth repeating.
5. If the person is pressing shirts, greeting customers, or doing the core work of your business, don’t even think about classifying her as an independent contractor.

For the reasons stated earlier in this article, there may be almost compelling economic reasons to classify individuals as independent contractors. The word “almost” is not in the previous sentence by accident. The benefits of independent contractor status are far outweighed by the consequences of misclassification.

Use common sense; avoid trying to rationalize your decision. In the absence of commonsense, call a lawyer.

Frank Kollman is a partner in the law firm of Kollman & Saucier, PA, in Baltimore, MD. He can be reached by phone at (410) 727-4300 or fax (410) 727-4391. His firm’s web site can be found at www.kollmanlaw.com has articles, sample policies, news and other information on employee/employer relations.



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VILLAGE CLEANERS AND LAUNDRY in St. Louis Park, MN, purchased a Unipress Hurricane HS-2 double buck unit through Weinberg Supply. Pictured are Landon Ramsey (left), owner of Village Cleaners, and Richard Reese of Unipress.

WFI plans night at the ballpark

The Wisconsin Fabricare Institute will host a Brewers Baseball Outing at Miller Park, home of the Milwaukee Brewers on Friday April 20.

The park will open at 5:40 p.m. WFI members who purchase tickets at a cost of \$49 each can enjoy a seat in the Dew Deck for the game against the Miami Marlins, as well as a full buffet with food service from 6 p.m. until 9:10 p.m.

The Dew Deck includes a huge patio area that's great for enjoying the game with a private bar and restroom, seating area and a 25-ft. high rock climbing wall. It is located above the Loge Level bleachers in the right field portion of the ballpark.

As an added bonus, there will be drawings for raffle prizes, including cash, that take place every inning.

To join WFI's night at the ballpark, see the registration form at www.wiscleaners.com or call (608) 743-9696.

NCA's Spielvogel to lead MILD sessions

Alan Spielvogel, director of technical services for the National Cleaners Association, will visit Michigan this month for two courses under the auspices of the Michigan Institute of Laundering and Drycleaning.

He will discuss customer service on Saturday, April 14 at the MILD association office, 2123 University Park Dr., Suite 150 in Okemos, MI, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Spielvogel will cover technical training for customer service representatives, managers and owners to provide information and teaching skills to effectively communicate with customers. Through the technical knowledge gained in this class, students will be able to identify potential serviceability issues, maintain quality standards and learn how to sell services pertaining to the proper care and maintenance of the customer's garments.

Registration is \$75 for MILD members and \$150 for non-members.

On Sunday, April 15, Spielvogel will conduct an advanced pressing course at Jan's Profes-

sional Dry Cleaners, 130 Griffes St. in Clio MI.

This advanced class is designed to teach finishers how to avoid and correct shine, seam impressions and double creases and properly finish linens and silks as well as structured and lined garments.

The class will run from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and is limited to 12 participants on a first-come basis.

MILD is also planning its summer convention for July 20-22 at the Boyne Highland Resort in Harbor Springs, MI.

Nora Nealis, the executive director of NCA, will be the keynote speaker.

In addition to her presentation on Saturday, MILD plans a solvent users panel on Sunday.

A board meeting and reception will be held on Friday and a golf outing, president's reception and awards dinner on Saturday evening.

For more information or to register for any of the events, call MILD, (870) 390-6453, or visit the association's website, www.mildmi.org.

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Angel 2.0

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Maximum motor: 6.37 kW

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Return outlet: 4" x 3 x 1/2"

Steam working pressure: 8 - 7 bar - 70 - 100 psi

Steam consumption: 24-27 kg/hr - 53-60 Lbs/hr

Compressed air supply: 1/4"

Air working pressure: 7 bar - 100 psi

Air consumption: 40 L/Minute - 1.5 cubic feet/minute

Circumference max in use: 2400x1200x1000 mm - 94.5x48.5x79 in

Net weight: 475kg - 1048 Lbs

Gross weight: 775 kg - 1710 Lbs

Overall dimensions: 1000x1200x2000 mm - 79x55x79.3 in

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STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT



BY DEBORAH RECHNITZ

Are you ready for some disruption?

Today many industries are experiencing disruptors — those events, features, people, or technology that significantly change the make up or direction of an entire industry. Recently, I was asked, by a very bright millennial, what the disruptors are for the drycleaning industry and, of course how to prepare for such disruption.

Disruptors. Over the last few years, many other industries have experienced disruption and are anticipating further disruption to the way they have always done business.

Amazon, its subscription service, product selection, and constantly improving delivery times has been a significant disruption in many businesses (books, retail, food, and maybe even health insurance).

With this disruption comes a variety of responses by individual companies. Some sell to Amazon such as Wholefoods. Others partner with them such as Kohls and still others build up their internal structure to better compete against them such as Walmart. Time will tell which, if any, of these strategies

succeeds.

Uber is another disruptor. Initially, it seems, that the taxi industry was taken by surprise. As a result, there was a lot of suffering from less business and loss of value in the price of the taxi license. Slowly, there is now some fighting back which has increased Uber's costs as well as improved technology for the taxi companies. Regardless, the industry will never be the same.

Now, what does it look like in the drycleaning industry? There is no clear, new disruptor being extremely successful in taking revenues away from existing operators, but that's really no different from other industry disruptors in the beginning.

The significance usually shows up after the disruptor has imbedded itself into an industry. Amazon, for instance,

has been around for over 20 years, but only recently became a household name. A further difficulty, in the drycleaning industry, is that there seems to be more than just a single disruptor impacting the industry.

The drycleaning disruptors

Initially, we are seeing garment drycleaning piece counts continue to drop, year after year. Casual fashion has reduced the number of suit coats, ties, and even dress shirts.

Fast-fashion is also causing disruption with the low replacement cost of garments being less than the drycleaning bill for existing garments. Even Rent The Runway may be impacting the industry as four million garments cleaned in 2017 has replaced some retail business.

Casual and fast fashion have also increased the wash, dry, and fold in the household and reduced the number of drycleaning garments coming into the industry.

In addition, we have a new demographic that makes decisions based on mobile phone marketing and applications — ease of use and convenience rather than loyalty and knowledge of quality.

This group prefers free time to be used in other ways than washing their clothes on weekends and have the disposable income to make these choices. This leads to an opportunity for those companies which are digitally adept to grow and take business away from others based on the demand for convenient and immediate response to pick

Continued on page 24

We are in the early stages of industry disruption. As Darwin stated, "It is not the strongest or smartest who survive, but those who are most adaptive."



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Deborah Rechnitz

Are you ready for some disruption?

Continued from page 22

up and delivery requirements.

Future disruptors are also approaching the industry as eco-friendly fabrics and smart clothing become more difficult to process and maybe even refused by drycleaning businesses.

The New York Times (Nov 12, 2017) covered the fashion industry's interest in alternative fabrics including the use of recycled fabrics, fabrics made from mushrooms and oranges, leather without cows, silk without worms, fur without animals and fabrics from recycled waste.

We already have garments imbedded with insect repellent and we're seeing the beginning of a huge demand for imbed-

ded technology of all kinds in the garments for the military, fashion, medical, protection, transportation, and naturally, sportswear markets for smart textile technologies.

An industry response

The responses I hear sound just like they came from other industries. As booksellers told us they couldn't be hurt from online sales and digital books because readers wanted to turn the pages, what happened to Amazon's growth?

We heard from the cabbies that customers won't get into private vehicles and yet the convenience is so great it overcomes any concerns there might have been.

Now I hear from drycleaners that customers won't wash

their expensive high tech garments and that women will continue to dryclean their fast fashion because they're used to coming to the cleaners. This may all be optimistic responses to real, growing industry disruptors.

In addition, I hear comments that primarily relate to the difficulty in processing and asking for releases which simply reduces the customers' confidence, maybe even refusing electronic textiles that is

predicted to be a \$3 billion market within 20 years. The focus must really be all about revenues in order to survive and prosper.

The key takeaway. We might think we know what to expect, but the future reality might be quite different. In general, it is hard to predict. For instance, in 1994, *Time* magazine said the internet would never go mainstream!

We are in the early stages of industry disruption, but as

Charles Darwin stated, "It is not the strongest or smartest who survive, but those who are most adaptive to change."

It is possible to grab some of this market now, such as the fantastic growth in athletic wear.

Learn how to efficiently process it and to be a part of a growing industry rather than counting the continual drop in garment drycleaning pieces. It can be an exciting time for those who recognize that the future will be different from the past and can learn new ways to communicate to our customers, to grow and to process effectively.

This subtle progress may not be dramatic, nor exciting. In fact, it can be quite frustrating. On that basis, it is easy to dismiss this approach because these disruptors generate almost as many new problems as new benefits.

Digital transformation may sound like a trendy phrase but companies are fundamentally changing how they do business in a world increasingly powered by pervasive technology. When combined with new products, new demographics, and different forms of communication, the challenge seems immense.

Today is the time to recognize these disruptors and plan for change.

A special thank you to Justin Bancroft, who has reflected on the next stage for this industry and thinking out of the box in the same way his famous grandfather, Roger Bancroft, was always able to do.

Deborah Rechnitz has been an independent management consultant to drycleaning industry members since 1980. She also held the position of chief operating officer of one of the largest USA drycleaning operations in 2008. Her speaking engagements have included the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute, the International Drycleaners Congress, the Japanese Fabricare Research Association and the Drycleaners Institute of Australia. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance and Personnel Administration; a Bachelor of Arts degree in Interpersonal Communications; and an MBA in Operations Management from Case Western Reserve University. She has also been a University Instructor in Finance. She can be reached by e-mail at drechnitz@gmail.com or phone at (253) 405-7043.



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April 7-15 Exam period for DLI certification tests. Register on line in advance or call (800) 638-2627.

April 14 Customer service course with NCA's Alan Spielvogel, sponsored by the Michigan Institute of Laundering and Drycleaning at the MILD office, Okemos, MI. Call (870) 390-6453.

April 15 Advanced pressing course with NCA's Alan Spielvogel, sponsored by the Michigan Institute of Laundering and Drycleaning, Jan's Professional Dry Cleaners, Clio, MI 48420. Call (870) 390-6453.

April 20-21 "How to Run a Drycleaning Plant Easily, Efficiently and Profitably," presented by Don Desrosiers, sponsored by the California Cleaners Association. BeCreative in Orange, CA. Call (916) 239-4070.

April 22 Alterations and tailoring seminar sponsored by the Pennsylvania and Delaware Cleaners Association, Camp Hill, PA. Call (215) 830-8490.

May 2-5 Textile Care Allied Trades Association Annual Management and Educa-

tional Conference. Wyndham Grand Mar Beach Resort and Spa, Puerto Rico. Call (813) 348-0075.

May 4-5 Route development workshop with James Peuster, sponsored by the North East Fabricare Association. Technology Learning Center in Oxford, MA. Call (603) 635-0322.

May 6 & 20 Department of Environmental Conservation classes, 16-hour course on two Sundays by the National Cleaners Association. Call (212) 967-3002.

May 16-17 Excellence in Laundry 2018, conference sponsored by the Coin Laundry Association, Naples Grande Beach Resort, Naples, FL. Call (800) 570-5629.

May 18-20 North Carolina Association of Launderers and Cleaners spring meeting. Courtyard by Marriott, Carolina Beach, NC. Call (919) 313-4542.

May 19-20 Midatlantic Association of Cleaners management conference and board meeting, Virginia Beach, VA. Call (800) 235-8360.

June 4-8 Introduction to Drycleaning course at the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute, Laurel, MD. Call (800) 638-2627.

June 8-10 Southern Drycleaners and Launderers Show, sponsored by the South Eastern Fabricare Association. Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Cen-

ter, Birmingham, AL. Call (215) 830-8495.

June 19 Fitzgerald scholarship golf outing, sponsored by the Wisconsin Fabricare Institute, at the River Club, Mequon, WI. Call (608) 743-9696.

July 16-20 Introduction to Drycleaning course at the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute, Laurel, MD. Call (800) 638-2627.

July 20-22 Michigan Institute of Laundering and Drycleaning summer convention, Boyne Highlands Resort, Harbor Spring, MI. Call (877) 390-6453.

July 23-August 3 Advanced Drycleaning course at the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute, Laurel, MD. Call (800) 638-2627.

August 3-4 Midwest Drycleaning and Laundry Association annual convention, French Lick Resort and Convention Center. Call (765) 939-6630.

August 11-19 Exam period for DLI certification tests. Register on line in advance or call (800) 638-2627.

August 17-18 Fabricare trade show sponsored by the California Cleaners Association, Long Beach, CA. Call (215) 830-8495.

September 21-24 International Drycleaners Congress annual convention, Jakarta, Indonesia. Call (403) 685-4755.

September 30-October 3 Independent

Textile Rental Association Annual Convention, Casa Marina Resort, Key West, FL. Call (706) 637-6552.

October 3-4 Midwest Drycleaning Expo, sponsored by the Wisconsin Fabricare Institute, Lake Lawn Resort, Delavan, WI. Call (608) 743-9696.

October 4-6 Success 2018 conference sponsored by Methods for Management, Hotel Boulderado, Boulder, CO. Call (253) 851-6327.

October 12-13 Canadian Fabricare Association annual conference, Holiday Inn Yorkdale, Toronto, ON. Call (416) 573-1929.

October 15-19 Introduction to Drycleaning course at the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute, Laurel, MD. Call (800) 638-2627.

October 16-18 Annual conference of the Textile Rental Service Association, Napa, CA. Call (877) 770-9274.

October 19-21 North Carolina Association of Launderers and Cleaners annual convention. Raleigh, NC. Call (919) 313-4542.

October 19-22 Expo Detergo International trade show, Fiera Milano, Italy. Call +39 024997.6214.

October 22-November 2 Advanced Drycleaning course at the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute, Laurel, MD. Call (800) 638-2627.



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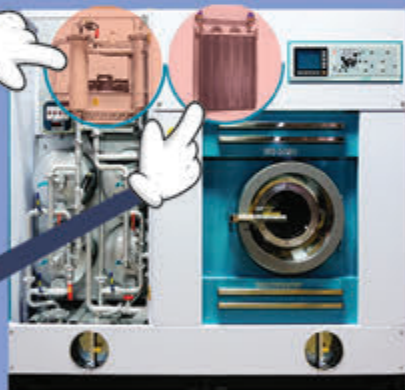


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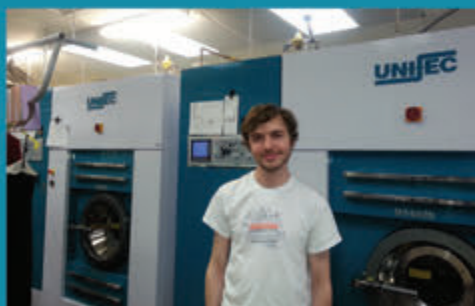
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SOUTH WEST



EASTLAND CLEANERS in Eastland, TX, installed a Union NOVA cleaning machine. Gene Conger, the owner, is pictured with Matt A. Lipman (left) of Union Dry Cleaning Products.

Cleaners Showcase offers free admission for SDA members

For members of the Southwest Drycleaners Association, there will be no admission charge for those who pre-register to attend the 2018 Cleaners Showcase to be held at the Shreveport Convention Center in Louisiana.

There will be over 100 exhibit booths at the show, featuring the best new equipment for cleaning, drying, pressing and finishing all things laundered and drycleaned, as well as any other services offered by those who are a part of the industry.

The event will be held from

April 5 to 7.

Non-members who wish to attend must pay \$35 with online pre-registration. The deadline for that is April 2; after that date, the price for on-site registration goes up to \$50 each.

Thursday will be a day of socializing and member meetings, beginning at 8:30 a.m. with an SDA Member Breakfast followed by the association's board and general membership meeting.

Later that evening, attendees can enjoy a Sneak Peak Exhibit Extravaganza from 5:30 to 8:30

p.m.

Otherwise, the official hours of the exhibit hall will be from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday and from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday.

In terms of educational programs, those will kick off on Friday morning with keynote speaker Bruce Hamilton promptly at 8:30 a.m.

Hamilton will bring many years of experience as a professional speakers, sales trainer, business owner, general manager of a television station and host of an internationally syndicated children's show to his program called "No Bad Days!" It is designed to inform, inspire and entertain the audience as they learn the key principles of success, achievement and happiness.

Next up will be a pair of classroom sessions that both begin at 10 a.m.; one will be presented by Route Pro James Peuster who will offer tips on hiring and retaining employees while Brian Wallace, CEO of the Coin Laundry Association, will unveil his forecast of the laundromat industry in 2018.

Later in the day, there will also be live floor sessions in the education area of the exhibit hall. Kermit Engh, a member of Methods for Management for over two decades, will pose the question "Do you know your numbers?" at 1 p.m.

Stain Wizard Jeff Schwarz of A.L. Wilson Chemical Co. will offer tips at 2 p.m., followed by a representative from R.R. Streets at 3 p.m.

On Saturday morning, Kyle Nesbit, vice president of development for MW Cleaners, will be the first classroom speaker of the day at 9 a.m. He will be followed by Jon Meijer, director of membership and marketing for the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute an hour later.

There will be three more floor sessions that day, including one by Dave Troemel from BeCreative360 at 11 a.m. discussing online reputation management. Jeff Schwarz from A.L. Wilson Chemical will be back for a second program at noon, followed by a representative from R.R. Streets for the 1 p.m. time slot.

Those planning on making reservations at the Shreveport Hilton can receive SDA discounts by calling (800)-Hiltons or reserve a room online at: <https://aws.passkey.com/go/CleanersShowcase2018>. There is a direct link on SDA's website at www.sda-dryclean.com.

The average nightly show rate is \$119 plus taxes and fees. That rate is good between the nights of March 31 to April 12.

For more information on the show or to register online, visit the association's web site or contact the SDA office directly at (512) 873-8195.

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9:00 am
*Smart Social
Media Spending*
Brian Rashid
CEO of A Life in Shorts

10:30 am
*Breaking the "I can't find
good people" Myth*
James Peuster
The Route Pro

• Sunday, June 10 •

9:00 am
*Achieving Customer
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Jim Groshans
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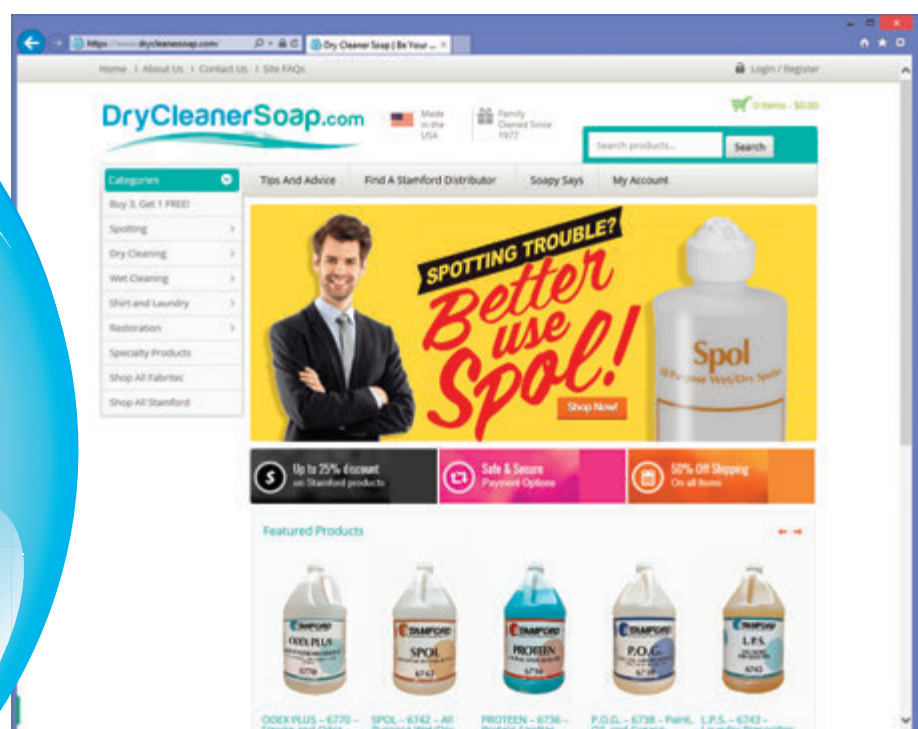
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WRENCH WORKS



By BRUCE GROSSMAN

Time to stop those expensive leaks

In a bygone era of cheap solvent, transfer machinery and Per Combo filters and cooker stills, a drip was generally no big deal.

However, the increasing costs of solvent and energy, coupled with environmental regulations, should markedly sharpen our maintenance and housekeeping practices.

In the following few articles I'm going to highlight some easily accomplished checks and procedures to identify and rectify common problems.

Stills have them, drycleaning machines have them, dryers have them, pumps have them, everywhere you look in a drycleaning plant you find them. They're everywhere. GASKETS, that's what I'm talking about!

With this in mind, I'm dedicating the next few articles to the selection of/and techniques involved, with maintaining and replacing that ubiquitous device often taken for granted, the "lowly gasket."

Beginning with the drycleaning machine we find what are probably the four most recognizable gaskets you deal with on a daily basis — the loading door, button trap door, lint trap door (on many drycleaning machines the lint and button trap are enclosed in the same housing) and still door.

These doors are opened and closed on a regular basis caus-

ing wear and failure of the gaskets that are designed to seal them shut. Even the most unaware operator cannot long ignore a solvent leak at the loading door.

However, you would be surprised at how few operators take the time to go behind the machine with a good flashlight and observe the still door during heavy distillation. In many cases a grungy still waste container sits under the still door and the surrounding area is often caked with old still residue.

Because of this, even large leaks can go undetected if the timing and lighting are not opportune (the price of solvent being what it is, these liquid type leaks cost you big time).

Also, because of the heat and chemistry, sight glasses in stills have a high rate of failure and when faulty can leak prodigious quantities of solvent.

Lint and button trap leaks are usually of the vapor variety and harder to locate.

Now that you are aware of the problem areas, let's explore them one by one and see how you can isolate the leaking area and stop the fluid loss.

When you notice a solvent leak at a door it will almost always appear that the bottom area of the door gasket is at fault. That's because gravity being what it is, the liquid solvent leaking past the gasket rolls down the surface of the

door and drips off of the bottom center.

When you see a leak like this you need to take action at the end of the load that is currently being processed or in the case of a still, the next time the still is cold.

Not to worry, chances are good a simple fix will get you back on track.

When the door can be safely opened, look at the surface of the gasket. Generally, there will be a slight groove in the gasket caused by the pressure against the raised rim portion on the drycleaning machine that the door seals against (see figure 1).

Often lint accumulates in this groove and prevents the proper mating of the gasket against the machine front. It is a vital to routinely clean this groove, keeping it free from lint.

Also, the surface of the raised rim (see figure 2) that the gasket seats on must be kept lint free.

On newer machines the rubber of this gasket is a solid robust type and can be cleaned easily with a small wire brush (if the gasket is a type of foam, use something more delicate like a spotting bone).

The photographs accompanying this article show the cleaning of the still door gasket. The same procedure holds true for all the doors on the machine.

A spotting brush is shown

PROPER GASKET MAINTENANCE

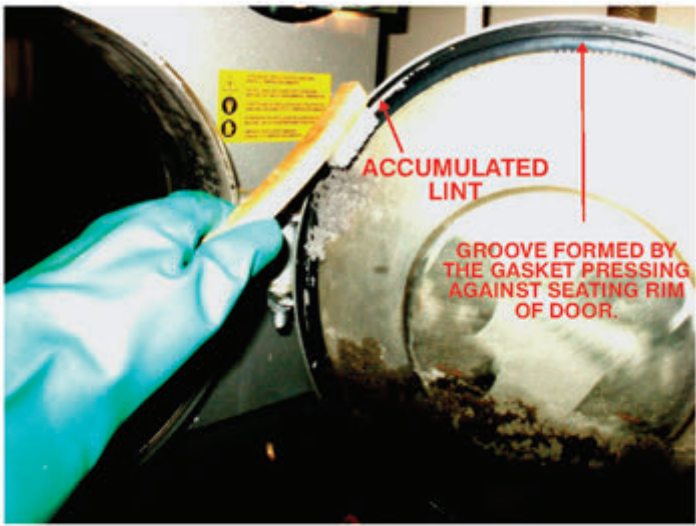


FIGURE 1



FIGURE 2

being used to clean the gasket. In many cases the bristles may be too soft to remove caked on lint. Brushes with brass or stainless bristles can be used

on solid rubber gaskets.

Operate the machine and see if the leak has stopped. If after cleaning the gasket, the door still leaks you have a choice to make. Do you want to order a new gasket for replacement or spend the time and effort to attempt an adjustment to the door and/or gasket in order to effect a repair?

Hate to leave you hanging, but that's it for this issue. Next issue I'll be covering how to adjust and/or replace these door gaskets.

Bruce Grossman is the Chief of R&D for EZtimers Manufacturing, maker of the EZ Level return tank water level control. To prevent boiler scaling and other damage, the EZ Level return tank water level control replaces that troublesome ball float valve in the condensate return tank. For saving money on handling waste the Sahara and Drop in the Bucket line of high purity separator water mister/evaporators provide a thrifty, legal method to get rid of the separator water generated by your drycleaning machine. For more information, visit www.eztimers.com. Address any questions or comments to bruce@eztimers.com or call (702) 376-6693.

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SHIRT TALES



BY DON DESROSIERS

Drycleaning's red-headed stepchild

Shirts are a pain because we treat them as the red-headed stepchild. Right from the start — when a customer comes to the counter with shirts — they are treated as an outsider.

There is one procedure for all of the items that we service — pants, dresses, sweaters, suits, coats, jackets, ties, gowns, blazers, etc. — and a different procedure for shirts.

In some plants, learning to mark in shirts is considered to be advanced training. It is something that you are taught after you've learned some of the more basic things like running the computer, waiting on customers and vacuuming the rug.

Shirts are a pain because we view them as the loss-leader. We think of shirts as the “dumb thing we gotta do” in order to get the drycleaning. Rather than trying to make them self-sufficient, we accept them for what we think they will always be: a pain.

This just isn't fair. When we do bother to analyze the department's income and expenses, we usually conclude that the remedy for whatever

ails it lies in either raising prices or cutting expenses or increasing volume.

The idea of raising prices is often quickly jettisoned because of competitive pressures. Expenses have already obviously been reduced to a minimum because the department runs short-handed and we steadfastly refuse to add personnel.

Increasing volume is the path we often take only to eventually learn that this either does nothing, magnifies our problems or causes us to lose even more money.

As an additional oddity, how queer is it that we sometimes reduce the price to get more volume? We settle on dealing with them as a loss-leader. After all, that's how we get that super-lucrative drycleaning.

Shirts are a pain because the equipment necessary to do them is expensive and specialized. There probably is one singular thing that is more frustrating than dropping \$50,000 or more on a shirt unit and that is finding out that you can't do as a good a job as the “professionals” at the trade show once

you get that shirt unit into your store.

I thought that we were the professionals? It is indeed aggravating to need to buy a new shirt unit so that we can make no money on them.

revenue that they generate is disproportional to the amount of headaches they cause. Shirts are a pain because they require 50 percent of our management time and only 20 percent of our gross revenue.

press job on a shirt, the touch up necessary may take longer than it took to press the shirt (correctly or incorrectly) in the first place. This is important and contributes heavily to making shirts a royal pain.

Shirts are a pain because we view them as the loss-leader — the “dumb thing we gotta do” in order to get the drycleaning.

Although we may not ever use our legger for anything but pressing pants, there is a comfort zone there in our hearts that says we could use it to press anything if we really had to.

Not so with the shirt unit. Try as hard as I might, but I still can't press a pleated dress on the shirt unit. It is for shirts only. Period.

Shirts are a pain because they take up an unfair amount of space in the plant. What about all that real estate? Just for shirts? Are you kidding? Two or three big pieces of equipment? Surely, you jest.

Shirts are a pain because the

Sometimes we subcontract the headaches to another person or party. Does that cure all? Hardly. Sometimes it's worse. And subbing out the shirts doesn't necessarily mean that we use a shirt wholesaler either.

Sometimes it just means that we have a manager in that department that deals with stuff that we don't want to deal with. Things like training, absenteeism, service, quality... uh, everything.

Somehow, we still feel the pressure though. Either because we see the myriad of issues that exist or because we know that customers still have complaints in spite of our efforts or because payroll is too high even when we are short-handed!

All of this would be a whole lot more acceptable if only we were able to charge more for our shirts. Perhaps our revenue per piece is \$2 less than it is for a drycleaning piece, but we spend just as much time administering issues with shirts as with drycleaning.

If we sub-out the shirts to a wholesaler, we have no sympathy for his plight. When a customer complains or when we need to double-check every shirt for missing buttons to head off complaints, we are suitably annoyed. We believe that we have delegated this chore and we really shouldn't have to do this.

Furthermore, we believe that we are paying a premium for this wholesale service, further reducing our revenue, not to mention increasing our personal work load. We reason that if we did our own shirts, they would be perfect, and our cost would be less.

Shirts are a pain because it takes a while to train a presser. Pressing shirts is more of a specialty than other items. So much so that we sometimes overpay a shirt presser just because we have found someone that is good and we want to keep that person on the staff.

If a presser does an inferior

Conversely, when an inspector finds a pressing defect on, say, a pair of pants, the touch-up necessary to bring the garment from unacceptable to acceptable often takes mere seconds. A quick pass with the all-steam iron or dancing the pants — still on the hanger — over a puffer and you're done. Try that with shirts. It will yield poor results.

We are in denial that they are an integral part of the clothing care business. They are, and we want them to remain so.

Shirt pressing can not be duplicated at home. It becomes addictive. Once your customer's cotton oxford has been starched and pressed professionally, it is difficult to accept the same garment spray starched and hand-pressed, however meticulously and lovingly.

We need to realize that some customers bring you drycleaning because they have to go to the cleaners anyway for the shirt service.

Not to be confused with one that is content with noticing problems and then leaving them as they are, I will discuss each of the issues over the next few months and see if there is anything that can be done about dealing with them.

I have a positive attitude. Nothing has ever been accomplished with a negative attitude.

Don Desrosiers has been in the drycleaning and shirt laundering business since 1978. He is a work-flow engineer and a management consultant who provides services to shirt launderers and drycleaners through Tailwind Systems. He is a member of the Society of Professional Consultants and winner of DLI's Commitment to Professionalism award. He can be reached at 186 Narrow Ave., Westport, MA 02790 or at his office by fax (508) 636-8839; by cell (508) 965-3163; or e-mail at tailwindsystems@charter.net. The Tailwind web site is www.tailwindsystems.com.

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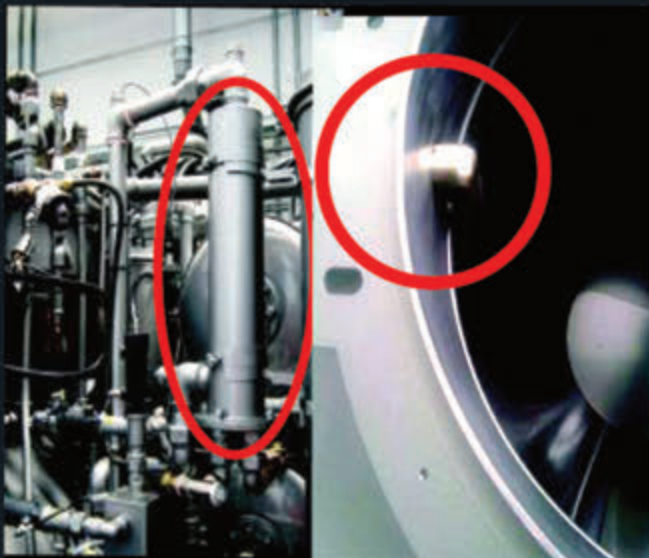
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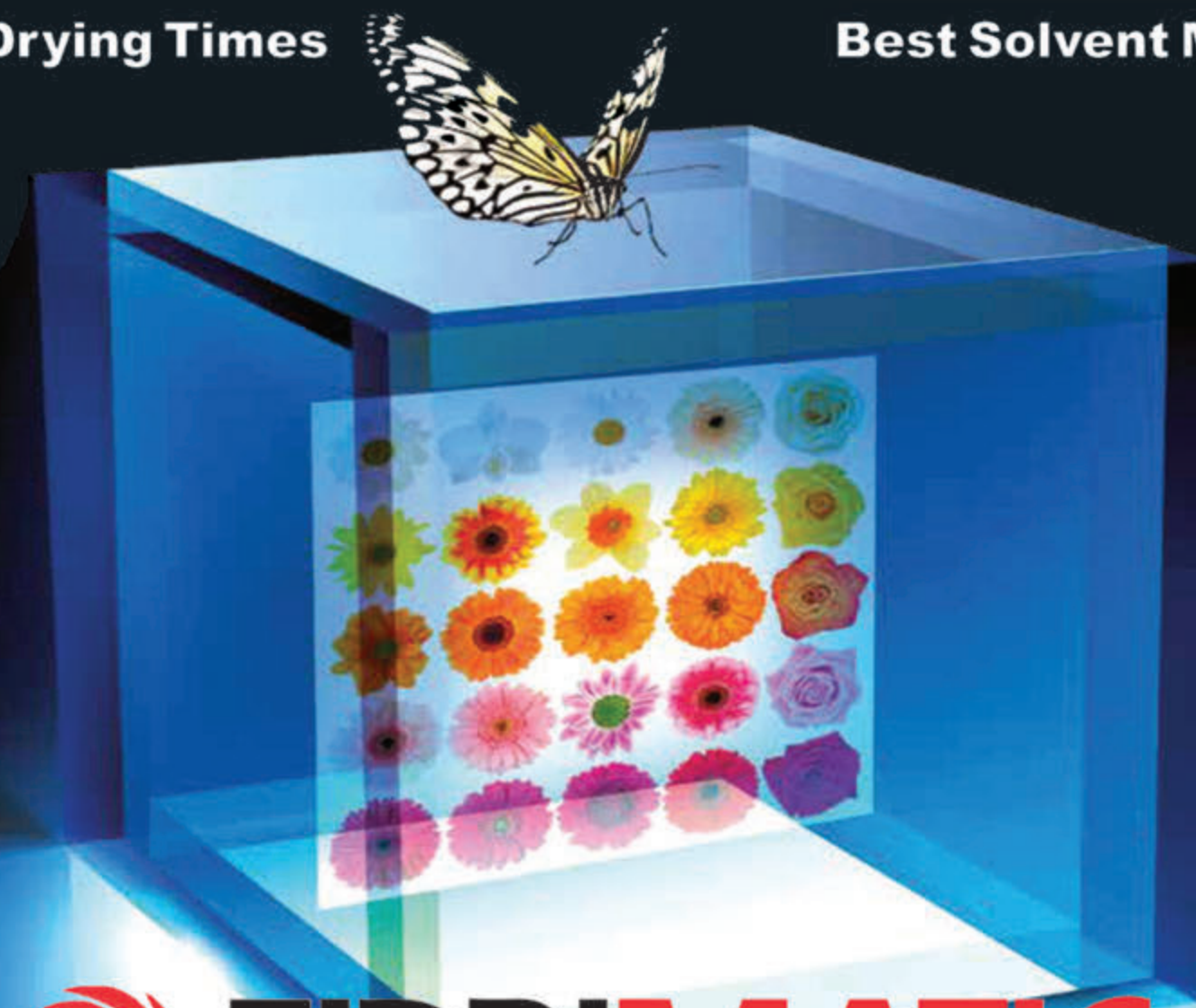
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ZIPS DRY CLEANERS of College Park, MD, purchased four new Multimatic Air Star drycleaning machines through Moore Services. Pictured from left are Tomas Balbuena and Lea Callahan of ZIPS and Alan Lawrence of Moore Services.

MAC sets speaker program for Leadership Forum in May

The Midatlantic Association of Cleaners have asked Krista Clive-Smith and James Peuster to headline its Leadership Forum set to take place on May 19 and 20 in Virginia Beach, VA.

The second annual event is designed to help attendees improve the management practices of their businesses.

“This is a really exciting program,” explained MAC President Mike McKay. “We have really brought in very talented knowledgeable speakers which makes this an incredible opportunity for

everyone.”

Clive-Smith has established herself as a friend to small businesses and is the author of the book *Get Noticed. Be Remembered.* which focusses on how to establish a company brand and philosophy and utilizing them to help grow your business.

According to Clive-Smith, “Many small businesses are in survival mode and they really have some great opportunities to thrive — not just survive. All businesses, large and small need to really take advantage of their

opportunities, focus on their business and they can overcome the challenges they face and exceed even their own expectations.”

In addition to being a featured speaker on Saturday at 10 a.m., she will also present a program on “The CSR: Cornerstone of a Successful Business” designed for owners, key management personnel and customer service representatives. It will be held on Sunday morning at 9 a.m.

James “Route Pro” Peuster will also be on hand to discuss “Breaking the ‘I Can’t Find Good People’ Myth.”

Many drycleaners agree that finding good employees is a challenge. Peuster will discuss ways to better your odds with advice on hiring practices, but the lesson will not end there. Proper training techniques are another key piece of the puzzle.

Peuster’s first session will take place at 1 p.m. on Saturday; he will also speak the following day at 10:30 a.m.

Additionally, there will be a program at 4 p.m. on Saturday on “Using Social Media to Build Your Business.”

Registration for the conference costs \$200 for members and \$300 for non-members. Those who wish to attend Saturday only pay \$150 (members) and \$225 (non-members), or Sunday only pay \$75 (members) and \$100 (non-members).

MAC has locked in a block of rooms at the Founders Inn and Spa which will host the event. The rate is \$130 per night. Call the hotel directly at (757) 366-5700 and mention your affiliation with MAC for reservations.

For more information or to register, call (800) 235-8360 or visit www.macassociation.org.

PDCA will host alterations and tailoring session

There is still time to sign up for an upcoming seminar on “How to Grow with Alterations and Tailoring” that will take place in Camp Hill, PA.

The Pennsylvania and Delaware Cleaners Association will host the event on Sunday, April 22.

The program will be conducted by Dale Kaplan, owner of Kaplan’s Careful Cleaners and who also works as vice president of government relations for the association.

He will discuss how cleaners can develop the service of alterations and tailoring into a major profit center for their business based on his own experience and history.

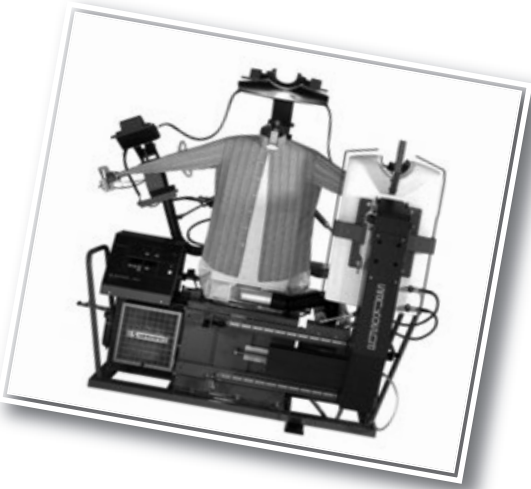
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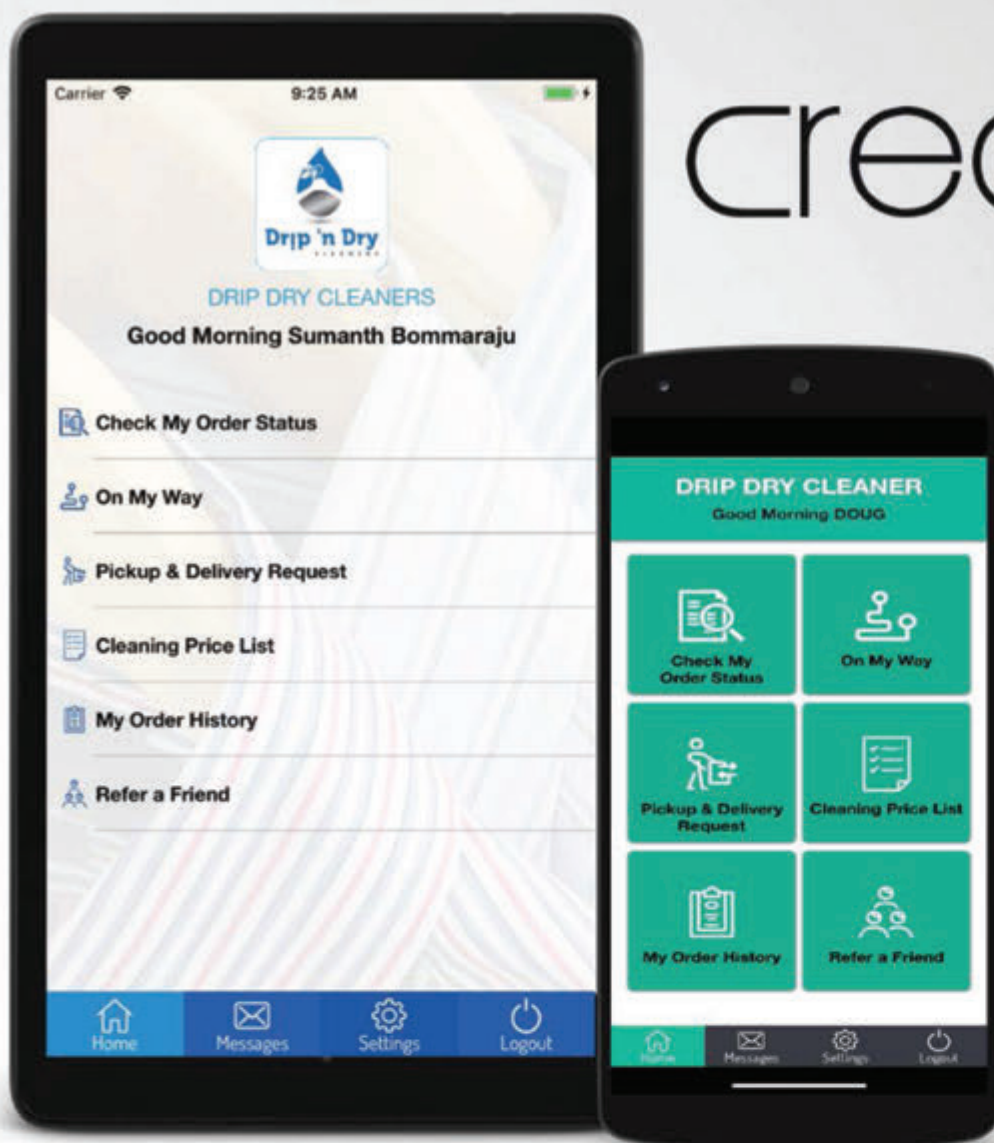
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SOUTH



SHARP'S CLEANERS in Middleburg, KY, purchased a Realstar KM218C cleaning machine through J&R Machinery. Pictured from left are Ron Ubelhart of JR Machinery, Bill Johnson of Sharp's Cleaners and Robert Brumback of J&R Machinery.

Live demos, expert speakers highlight SEFA's June Show

Registration is open for the Southern Drycleaners and Launderers 2018 Show that will be held at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex in Alabama from June 8 to 10.

Because the venue is a new one for the event, the association is expecting a high influx of first-time visitors to attend.

The convention center is located at 2100 Richard Arrington Jr. Blvd, located closely to the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame and the Birmingham Museum of Art.

The event will kick off on Friday with a tour of M&B Hangers Factory to see how hangers are made from 3 to 5 p.m. The company has been producing hangers in the United States since 1943. It is recommended that those wanting to take part in the tour to sign up quickly as it is limited to the first 70 people who do.

Later that evening there will be a Welcome Cocktail Reception at 6 p.m. where attendees can socialize and preview the exhibit hall and its many aisles of drycleaning

and laundry technological innovations and service offerings.

The show floor, which will host various live clinics throughout the course of the weekend including one on shirts and pants finishing, will be open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday.

The weekend will also be a chance to sit in on seminars presented by the experts, beginning at 9 a.m. on Saturday with a program on "Smart Social Media Spending" by Brian Rashid, CEO of A Life in Short.

Rashid's company emphasizes modern day branding in the digital age and focusses on helping his clients communicate their story like it's never been told before.

He will discuss how easily a business owner can digitally market their company on a shoestring budget.

Afterwards, James "Route Pro" Peuster will present "Breaking the 'I can't find good people' Myth." His advice will help plant owners and managers know what they can expect from candidates and the right interview questions to ask.

On Sunday, Jim Groshans of FabriCoach, LLC, will expound on "Achieving Customer Service Excellence" at 9 a.m. that will focus on defining and exceeding expectations.

Krista Clive-Smith will help attendees "Get Noticed, Get Remembered" in her 10 a.m. presentation. She is a writer, entrepreneur, philanthropist and speaker who has a passion for helping individuals realize their full potential as human beings.

Her training and management consulting firm has helped many business owners achieve high performance from their brands all throughout the United States and Canada.

Hotel accommodations at the event's headquarters hotel, the Sheraton Birmingham Hotel, can be made by calling (800) 325-3535 or (205) 324-5000 and mentioning SEFA's Southern Drycleaners and Launderers Show.

The cost is \$129 per night for single or double occupancy.

More information on the show, contact SEFA at (877) 707-7332 or visit the association's website at www.sefa.org. You can also email the SEFA office at: peterblke@sefa.org.

Site visitors can view an updated exhibit floor plan as well as various sponsorship opportunities and a full prospectus for companies who are considering exhibiting at the show and would like additional information.



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Bob Hamila (*Lighthouse Cleaners / Palm Beach Gardens, FL*)

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Bill Wright (*Royal Fine Cleaners / Northport, AL*)

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Julian Bulsara (*Prestige Cleaners / Lauderhill, FL*)

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NewsMAKERS

Jay Desai has been named Franchise Owner of the Year for 2017 by **Lapels Dry Cleaning**.

Desai is an owner of the Lapels Dry Cleaning of Beverly Hills at 31255-B

Southfield Road, Beverly Hills, MI; Lapels Dry Cleaning of Rochester Hills at 3038 Rochester Road, Rochester, MI; and Lapels Dry Cleaning of West Bloomfield at 6552 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloom-

field Township, MI.

“Jay is one of the most impressive individuals we have worked with over the course of Lapels Dry Cleaning’s 18-year history,” said **Kevin Dubois**, CEO of Lapels Dry Cleaning. “Within a few years, he established a network of drycleaning stores in the metro Detroit area and developed a system for expansion and growth. He’s coupled that effort with several community involvement endeavors. If that wasn’t enough, he’s also the owner of 19 Great Clips hair salons in the greater Detroit metro area.”

“I guess you could say I like to stay busy,” said Desai, who co-owns his Lapels Dry Cleaning locations with a partner from his company, Shambho, LLC.

Desai immigrated to the United States in the early 2000s. While working as an IT engineer, he began his career as an entrepreneur by purchasing investment properties in the metro Detroit area. He later branched out to franchising with Great Clips. In 2014, he and his partner at Shambho, LLC signed a development deal for up to 16 locations in the metro Detroit area.

The first store and drycleaning plant, Lapels Dry Cleaning of Rochester Hills,

opened in October 2015, as did their satellite location, Lapels Dry Cleaning of West Bloomfield. In 2017, the pair opened Lapels Dry Cleaning of Beverly Hills in 2017.

“One thing I’ve learned during my time as a business owner is you are often only as good as the team you work with. My partner and I have been very fortunate to have a great team led by our operations manager **Tiffani Probst**, whom I have worked with for 10 years” said Desai. “As for the Franchise Owner of the Year, it’s quite an honor and I do give credit to Tiffani Probst for her amazing leadership and her team. We’ve had a great relationship with Kevin and the Lapels team. Right from the start we had an instant rapport. We genuinely felt like we had a business partner who we would be working with, rather than for.”

For winning Franchise Owner of the Year, Desai received a trophy, plaque and cash award, which was presented by Dubois during a training dinner in Troy MI, on February 15.

In addition to Desai’s plant and stores, Lapels Dry Cleaning has more than 80 locations nationwide. To learn, visit www.lapelsdrycleaning.com.



Lapels Franchise Owner of the Year Jay Desai (third from left) is pictured with David Grippi, Tiffani Probst, and Kevin Dubois.

R.R. Street & Co. Inc. has announced a new and convenient online resource for technical support at support.4streets.com, a portal for professional drycleaners and launderers to submit a question, problem, product issue or service need.

“It’s crucial for our customers to get answers quickly so they can continue to be productive and efficient,” says **Mike Miller**, vice president of sales for Street’s. “We have a great network of Street’s representatives in the field who have tremendous knowledge but unfortunately they can’t be everywhere at once. This portal gives us a way to serve our many customers more effectively through a

broader customer team.”

With each submission, customers will receive a Request ID# that recognizes their issue and lets them know the Street’s team member who will be responding. In most cases a member of the customer team will be able to respond almost immediately by email or phone.

Kristen Vos, Street’s director of marketing, said, “This portal is part of our company-wide goal to make over 140 years of knowledge and expertise more easily accessible to our customers through expanded resources of service and training. Providing our customers with solutions is our priority.”



Behind the counter at their OXXO Houston store are, from left, Maria Eugenia Garcés, (Mary), Milton Vargas and Silvia Garcés.

As the owners of **OXXO Care Cleaners** in Houston mark the first anniversary of their store’s opening they are planning another to open sometime this year.

For the months of March and April, they are offering a 10 percent discount to local business professionals and to all local residential neighborhoods to celebrate the one-year anniversary.

Owners **Mary and Silvia Garcés** were former family business owners in Venezuela before migrating to the U.S. and are familiar with providing excellent customer service. OXXO offers 24/7 pickup and drop off through the ATM machine.

“We opened our doors a year ago. While Hurricane Harvey affected residents and all local businesses, during the last few months, we have seen tremendous interest and repeat customers from local professionals and residents,” said Silvia Garcés. “Many of OXXO Houston’s customers are in the oil industry, requiring them to connect with other time zones, daily. Many must arrive at work at 3 a.m. so, in this area, 24/7 service is not a luxury — it’s a necessity.”

Consolidated Cleaners, Inc., in partnership with Agile Pursuits Franchising, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of **Procter & Gamble** is opening its second **Tide Dry Cleaners** store in Naples, FL.

This will be the seventh Tide Dry Cleaners location for locally owned Consolidated Cleaners, Inc., which currently operates in North Naples, Bonita Springs, Fort Myers, Boca Raton, Parkland and the Wellington/Royal Palm Beach community.

“We are proud to open our second Tide Dry Cleaners location in Naples, and to continue expanding our services across South Florida,” said **Robert Lyons**, president of Consolidated Cleaners, Inc. “Each Tide Dry Cleaners site brings something unique to the market, and we look forward to sharing an unrivaled level of customer service and environmentally conscious cleaning with even more guests in Collier County.”

Located in the heart of Naples, the new location is managed by **Joyce Simmons**, who brings more than four years of customer service experience from the Tide Dry Cleaners in North Naples. The new multi-use building includes a drive-thru valet and 24-hour pick-up and drop-off services.



Robert Lyons

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Rent the Runway to build in Texas

Rent The Runway has announced plans to build a 300,000-sq.-ft. processing facility in Arlington, TX, that will employ 600 people. The company lets customers rent designer accessories, dresses, and other clothing with a monthly subscription fee ranging from \$89

to \$159. Customers can also rent items individually for a lesser price.

The Arlington City Council approved incentives for the company that include reimbursement of 65 percent of business personal property taxes for seven years or until the cumulative total reaches \$343,000.

Rent the Runway is required to keep at least 300 full-time employees but says it will employ 605 full-time with an average annual salary of \$33,426. The distribution center is scheduled to open by the end of the year.

According to a city staff report, Rent the Runway's estimated capital investment is just under \$35.2 million, with most of the costs tied to drycleaning machinery and related equipment.

Founded in 2009 by Jennifer Hyman and Jennifer Fleiss, RTR

pioneered the "closet in the cloud" and believes that women everywhere will soon have a subscription to fashion, making garment rentals an indispensable utility. RTR carries hundreds of thousands of pieces of apparel and accessories with options for work, weekends and special occasions.

The Arlington location will be the second distribution center in the United States, the first is in Secaucus, NJ. The facility will help the company scale operations and serve customers in the Southwest and West Coast.

It was also reported last month that Blue Pool Capital, a financial firm that principally invests the wealth of Alibaba founders Jack Ma and Joe Tsai, has invested \$20 million into Rent the Runway. Previously Rent the Runway had raised \$190 million in venture capital funding.

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Obituary

Gerald "Jerry" Butz

Wisconsin Hall of Fame drycleaner

Gerald "Jerry" Butz, a long-time drycleaner and member of the Wisconsin Fabricare Institute's Hall of Fame, died peacefully February 15 surrounded by family. He was 84.

He was born in St. Cloud, WI, the youngest of eight children and raised on a farm. His father, a successful farmer and entrepreneur, thought there were other ways of making money besides farming and set up his sister, Olive, in the drycleaning business as Royal Cleaners in DePere, WI. Soon, Jerry's brothers, Don and Ken, joined Royal Cleaners. Jerry, however, attended and graduated from St. Mary's Spring Academy in Fond du Lac, WI, and went to work for the Kohler Co. before serving in the U.S. Navy.

After returning from the Navy in 1958, he rejoined the Kohler Co. and married Karen Rohde, who knew she would end up in the drycleaning business when marrying Jerry. That day came when Jerry received a call from his brother, Gordy, looking for help with his Clothes Clinic operation in West Bend, WI.

On a cold New Year's Day in 1962, Jerry and Karen Butz moved from Plymouth, WI, to West Bend using a borrowed stake truck with no top cover, in the middle of a snowstorm.

The drycleaning business opened a variety of opportunities, especially in real estate, and Karen helped manage their properties. He joined the state association and the International Fabricare Institute along with the International Drycleaners Congress which he served as vice president of the North American Midwest Region.

A fire in 1985 destroyed the building that housed the Clothes Clinic but the family rebuilt the company, doubling the size of the building, and also enlarged the commercial laundry side of the business. They also built a second drycleaning plant. By this time, Jerry and Karen's son, Jim, had joined the business.

Growth continued and Clothes Clinic bought another building in an industrial park, and the commercial laundry went from 4,800 square feet to 25,000 square feet. The company branched out and established Clothes Clinic Linen and Uniform Rental to serve southeastern Wisconsin.

As president of WFI, he was a driving force for enactment of legislation that created Wisconsin's Drycleaners Environmental Response Fund (DERF) program. Active in local politics, he was a close friend of former Wisconsin governor Tommy Thompson and that relationship helped him advance the interests of drycleaners in the state.

He was a long-time WFI board member both before and after serving as the association's president, and always pushed for stringent fiscal management.

He was also an active member of St. Frances Cabrini Knights of Columbus, the West Bend Kiwanis Club and the West Bend and Fiddlesticks county clubs.

He is survived by Karen, his wife of 59 years; children, Kim (Louie) Fougere, James (Lisa), Karla (Greg) Butz-Bublitz and Johan (Kathleen) Daelemans; grandchildren, Colleen Fougere, Gabriella Butz-Bublitz, Amanda Wier, Jessica Cole, Jelle, Bram, Simon and Flo Daelemans; brother Kenneth and sister-in-law Ellie Butz; and by great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are appreciated to St. Frances Cabrini, Alzheimer's Association (620 S 76th Street, Suite 160 Milwaukee, WI 53214-1599) and Evan's Scholars Foundation and/or a charity of choice in Jerry's name.

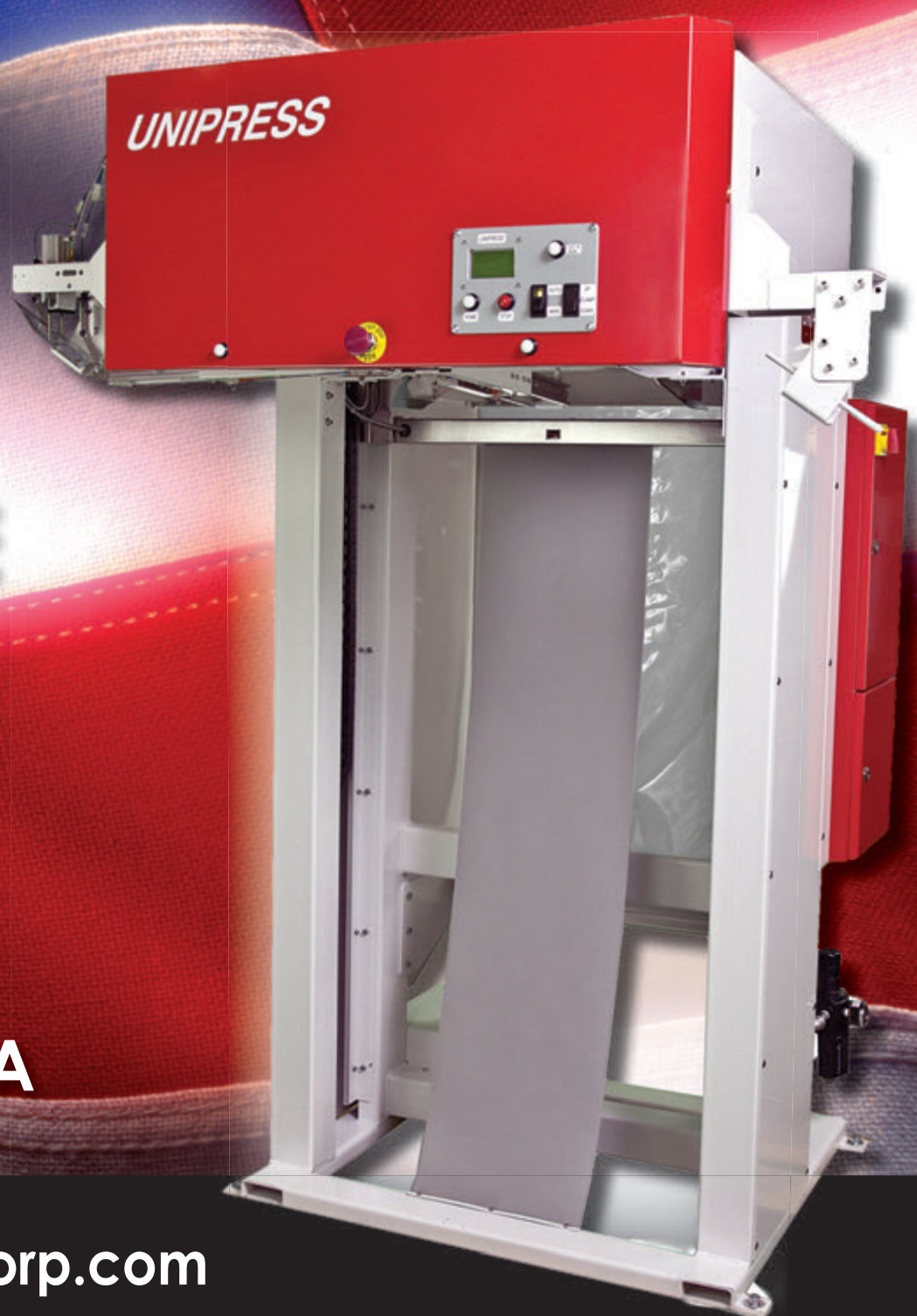
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Getting started. An extra session of the Introduction to Drycleaning course will be included in the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's resident source schedule for 2017.
Is a machine for you? Evaluating some premises offers is important for learning what your return on investment is. Truly Adams tells how to do it.
So, 2016. Many lawsuits turn on one word or document. Why-washie words and faulty documents are an invitation to a lawsuit, warns Frank Kullman.
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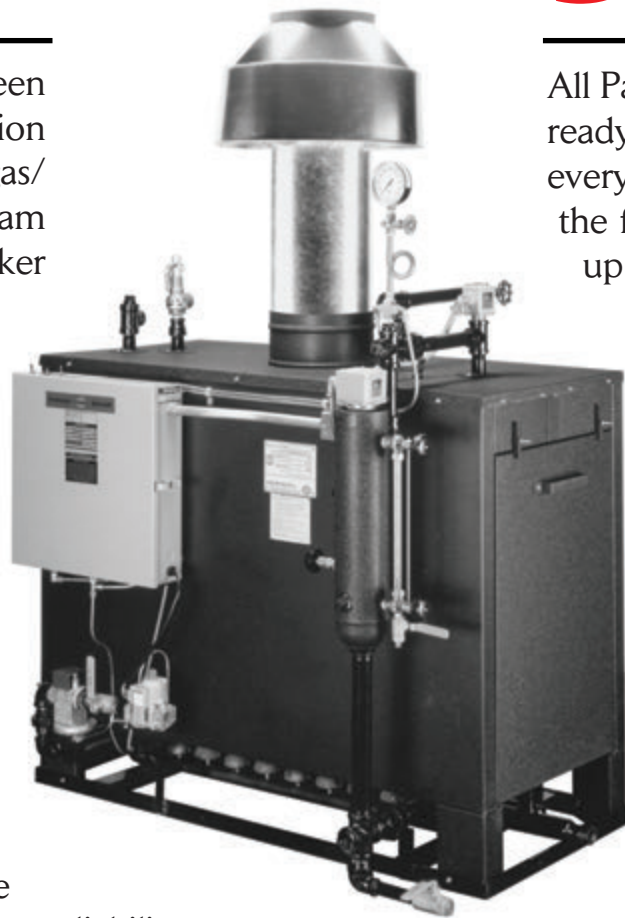
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