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Cleaners face the coronavirus challenge



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Along with the rest of the world, the drycleaning industry is confronting a public health threat of yet unknown dimensions that has brought a host of rules, restrictions and advisories that have brought most normal activities to a halt, including business as usual.

How can cleaners cope? Already struggling in the face of declining piece counts, the shuttering of businesses and schools seriously disrupts the usual flow of customers and work, yet cleaners, who in some cases have been designated essential businesses by governmental authorities, must carry on.

In California, several counties in the Bay Area invoked a "shelter-in-place" order, telling people to stay home except to take care of essential errands. This means that all but essential businesses are to shut down. Drycleaners, laundromats and laundry service providers were among a short list of businesses deemed essential.

The list of businesses under orders to shut down and those listed as essential varies from one local to the next and is likely to be in a state of flux for at least a while.

For cleaners trying to operate in these circumstance both the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute and the National Cleaners Association have issued recommendations on how to proceed while ensuring the safety of employees and customers.

"We are operating on the premise that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure in stopping the spread of COVID 19," said NCA. "It is estimated that for every person testing positive for the virus, there are five to ten people carrying the virus without knowl-

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Corona threat brings cancellations

Several industry associations have canceled major events as measures to thwart the coronavirus ramped up in mid-March.

President Trump declared a state of national emergency to battle the virus on March 13; prior to that the Centers for Disease Control had advised that gatherings of large numbers of people should be canceled. State and city governments followed with similar proscriptions.

The first industry event to fall victim was Messe Frankfurt's Texcare International exhibition scheduled for Germany in June. The international gathering, planned for Frankfurt June 20-24, may be held in November, organizers said, but no firm dates have been set.

More immediately and closer to home is the Southwest Drycleaners Association's Cleaners Showcase that was to be this month in Ft. Worth, TX.

In a March 17 notice to exhibitors, SDA said, "While the preparations for the show have been excellent with fabulous speakers,

enthusiastic exhibitors and above-average pre-registrations, the Fort Worth mayor and many others have prohibited or recommended against large gatherings for health reasons."

SDA said that consideration was given to rescheduling the show "but for a number of reasons, including that many exhibitors have their schedules set for the future, the consensus was that we should not try to do this later."

SDA said it expects to refund all money that had been received for the show, adding that it hopes to have an even bigger and better show in Irving, TX, in 2022. The association's annual board meeting slated for Austin July 10-11 is still on.

Also scheduled for April and now postponed is the Textile Care Allied Trades Association's annual conference. The April 29-May 2 event in Hilton Head, SC, was to have been a celebration of the association's 100th anniversary.

In announcing the cancellation, TCATA

said, "The board considered rescheduling the conference for later this year, but in light of the uncertainty surrounding the timeline of the epidemic, it decided to postpone until an appropriate time in 2021."

"The board didn't take this decision lightly, especially since we were all looking forward to celebrating our 100th anniversary together. But in the shadow of the coronavirus, we believe this decision was necessary to protect the health and safety of our members, which we put first and foremost."

The International Drycleaners Congress has canceled its convention that was to be held in conjunction with the TwinClean conference sponsored by the Drycleaning Institute of Australia May 22-24 in Melbourne, Australia.

The Coin Laundry Association said it is still committed to its Excellence in Laundry conference planned for May 13-14 in San Diego, CA. But CLA said it is closely monitoring all coronavirus updates and that its

top priority will be the health and well-being of its members. The association will offer a full refund in case of cancellation. Even if there is no cancellation, CLA said it would refund registration fees for anyone who feels "uncomfortable" traveling to the venue.

None of the other industry trade shows slated for this year have yet been canceled but organizers were keeping a wary eye on developments. The South Eastern Fabricare Association has its Southern Drycleaners Shows planned for June 12-14 in Kissimmee, FL.

Later in the year are the California Cleaners Association's Fabricare in Long Beach, CA, in August and the Pennsylvania and Delaware Cleaners Association's Laundry and Drycleaning Expo in National Harbor Maryland in November. Other state associations have conventions or events planned for the summer months. Whether these events go on as scheduled will depend on how quickly the virus threat is abated.



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Getting through these difficult times

Less than two weeks before this publication was printed and mailed (and uploaded online), there were currently over 7,000 COVID-19 cases in the U.S. (with the death toll close to 100), and not one of the 50 states was exempt anymore. Worldwide, that figure has surpassed 230,000 cases with close to 10,000 deaths. Those numbers will undoubtedly be much higher by the time you read this.

The world might also be much different when you read this (much different than the much different we all are currently experiencing). After all, the spread of the virus is increasing speed.

Soon after the coronavirus was labeled a pandemic by the World Health Organization, things began to go haywire quickly. Within a week, the National Basketball Association, Major League Baseball and other sports organizations cancelled, postponed or suspended events. American institutions like Broadway, Disneyland and the Smithsonian museums closed down. Celebrities like Tom Hanks, Idris Elba and Kevin Durant tested positive. Restaurants, bars, coffee chains and a growing number of retail stores closed their doors in the wake of confinement, though many could still conduct business via drive-thru or delivery.

It's hard to single out one industry hit hardest by the coronavirus, but certainly the hospitality industry is in the running, as is the travel industry. Then, there is drycleaning and laundry, two services that are exceptionally important right now to help eradicate germs capable of clinging to clothing and sheets. However, with social distancing and bans on human gatherings in place, customers are increasingly opting to stay home, a wise choice to help slow the spread of a virus but not so great for your business's bottom line.

Like other industries, drycleaning and laundry will likely lean heavily on its pickup and delivery aspect. If you haven't done so already, don't waste any more time. You have the means and technology to ensure a safe pickup of dirty garments and home items and a return fully free of bacteria (see front page story for pointers). Some major delivery companies have begun offering "no contact" deliveries from their app as an extra level of security and reassurance. If any non-food industry can offer this type of service, it's drycleaning and laundry. (California has deemed it important enough to stay open, at least). There is no telling when the world will return to normal (and we must assume it will return to normal), so creativity and patience are your best friends right now.

Regardless, business will be anything but normal for the foreseeable future and many won't make it through these harsh economic times. Small business experts are encouraging entrepreneurs to keep cash flow going by cutting down on unnecessary expenses and to spend every dollar like it's your last.

Many industries are coming up with ways for remote work options. That doesn't work so well with drycleaning machines and pressers. Still, being flexible with employees and customers will go a long way in strengthening up relationships that you wish to keep when the world returns to normalcy. As an expert on all things clean, you are in a unique position to communicate with the public and help sway anxiety and fear.

Most important, don't treat this as a short-term problem; there are too many unknown variables at play. Revenue is likely down and you have time on your hands, so use it wisely to finish that list of projects that you need to complete but never seem to have any time to do. It will improve your business and help distract you from the overwhelming sense of helplessness that accompanies trying times like these. Obviously, every market in every city in every state will be facing different issues and regulations germane to their local region; so, keep informed on what is going on in your community so you can make an informed decision on how to proceed in the coming months. Additionally, many government programs are on their way so there may be many options for financial assistance for your business soon. You should also be aware by now of The Families First Coronavirus Response Act passed by the House and Senate in mid-March. It requires some employers to provide full-time workers with two full weeks of paid leave if they get sick from the virus. The new provision will expire at the end of the year. Currently, a third economic package is in the works seeking another \$1 trillion in relief funds.

The sad truth is that these efforts might not be enough. A lot of people will lose their homes, businesses and savings and this is shaping up to become one of the greatest challenges we will face in our lifetimes. However, these efforts are in place to save lives, something which is absolutely irreplaceable. It is a problem of such immense proportion that the best way to deal with it is day by day. This might run counter to your entrepreneurial instincts, but until the virus can be stopped or contained, what choice does anybody have?

Lastly, try not to forget: this is a difficult time for everybody. Nobody is unaffected by this and most people need help. The best thing we can do is genuinely help each other when we can. We must strive to practice civility and human decency at all times. Perhaps empathy and understanding can supplant this dark cloud of anxiety overhead.

There's only one way to find out.

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Down to a science

The business plan was solid because Colleen Unema spent a year preparing it. Her vision of a well-designed, innovative laundry with strong branding and marketing would require ten years. Then, she'd sell it.

She first opened Brio Laundry of Bellingham, WA, in 2013; now the finish line is only a few years away and the plan has worked well — so well that Colleen decided to add a drycleaning business across the street from her state-of-the-art laundry.

The whole mess first started with a comforter. Colleen looked everywhere in her area (and beyond) for a laundry where she could clean it. None existed. "I could prove that there was no place to go because I spent a year with laundry in the back of my car," she recalled. "I went through three states."

Then, she turned her search into a science project, hoping to uncover every hidden secret of laundry that she could find. She studied the market and found the market wanting.

"I did millions of pounds of laundry and took notes and took pictures," she added. "I talked to the owners. Everybody was aiming for that low-end customer. Everybody."

The reason Colleen picked laundry was not just because of its unaddressed niche market, it also met her criteria of the kind of business she wanted to run. "I wanted it to make money when I wasn't there. That was number one," she explained. "I needed something that had easy accounting. I needed something that I can build a business and not get stuck. I needed to be able to outsource things I didn't want to learn. To be honest, I started with the endgame."

While the Brio Cleaners plant was not part of her original plan, drycleaning has proved to be a wise addition, starting off strong in its first six months. Unfortunately, that's about the time the COVID-19 craziness really hit hard.

"It's unbelievable how, in the last 36 hours, things are changing pretty quickly. We are an hour north of Seattle and so the legislation just keeps moving north, sequestering and quarantining, and no large groups, and social distancing," she said in an interview in mid-March. "There are some cases north of us, south of us, east of us, west of us — all around. They've got kids at home because all the schools are shut down. The universities are all shut down, so I have labor issues. Yesterday was the killer. We do a lot of sheets at the cleaners. We know a lot of resorts. There's no gatherings anymore. There's no concerts. There's no Rotary meetings. Everything is canceled."

The timing couldn't be much worse, but then, that's part of being a business owner, something for which Colleen may have a genetic predisposition.

"My dad and uncle owned an appliance store that is still in business [De-Waard & Bode, The Appliance and Mattress Giants]. I have to tell you, my dad was one of 12 [children] and every one of them own their own businesses," she laughed. "What's fascinating is, of my first cousins (of which I

have 65) — when we hold reunions, we figured out that over half of us own our own business. Of my five siblings, four of the five own a business. We don't say, 'How are you doing?' We say, 'How's the business?'"

She grew up with a strong retail background and saw the dedication her father brought to his company up close.



"At 5 a.m., my dad was pasting newspaper ads together," she recalled. "On a Saturday night, my parents would take us all out for hamburgers. On the way home, we always drove past the store so dad could make sure the door was locked."

Despite such an upbringing, it took Colleen a little longer to be bitten by the entrepreneurial bug than many in her family. Prior to starting Brio in 2013, she had spent a quarter of a century teaching science to college and high school students.

"I taught everything from Human Anatomy to Cell Biology to Plant Taxonomy," she said. "I loved my career. I really did."

With a young family at home and the prospect of teaching the same course multiple times a day, Colleen was ready for a change (though she wasn't ready to give up the scientific method).

While conducting research, she put together several notebooks of information and detailed control books to make sure that everybody in the business has a checklist of all the things they need to do daily. "I did three years of marketing for the laundry because I want to get to that sales point. I don't vary. Then you don't become distracted," she said.

When Colleen opened up her brand new business in a brand new location, she didn't have a lot of brand new customers. In fact, she didn't have any. So she came up with a brilliant idea that haunted her for years to come: she offered a "\$5 Finish" promotion that was creative, but perhaps not well thought-out.

"Start your laundry. Start your wash, then hand us five bucks and we'll put it in the dryer and it will be folded and ready for you the next day," she recalled. "It got people in and it was easy to say. It was easy to explain. People loved it. But, we did it for exactly five days."

Following a hectic week of chaos

and confusion, she followed her own advice: "If it doesn't work, stop. Not all good ideas work," she said. To be fair, though, it worked, just much too well. People asked about it for years.

Still, her business plan worked well despite complications and her laundry is anything but typical. It boasts top-of-the-line Electrolux machines that text customers when their wash is done. In all she has 39 washers and 36 dryers.

goal — everything for me is my people. We work hard. They actually make a commitment in writing when I hire them that when they leave my employment, it's to a more complex environment where they make more money."

The name of the businesses — Brio — is an appropriate one. It means "verve" and "vitality" in a number of different languages, words that

Colleen Unema

From the start, Colleen has hired architects, interior designers, consultants, and brand and logo designers to craft a spotless image and suave sense of style not typically associated with laundromats or drycleaners.

Even the production area appears more like a work of modern art than the lean manufacturing philosophy that guides it. Separate production areas are marked with lines on the floor that dictate clockwise or counterclockwise work flow direction. Different colored clothing carts are used in each section to avoid confusion or mistakes.

"It's very interesting to watch. Once you end up in a clean area, we've got a big flatwork iron and we've got folding tables," she said, describing the laundry facility. "I had an ergonomics expert come in. How high should they be? How big should they be? It's a very nice, beautiful space."

After seven years in the laundry industry (and six months in drycleaning), Colleen spends her weekends similar to the way her father once did. "Our [she and her husband Barry] Friday nights are dinner at Applebees and fix machines," she laughed. "That has been our Friday since I've opened."

Not one to stray from her own meticulous business plans, Colleen expects the same of her employees. She admits she demands a lot from her employees, but she also pays them well. In addition to a \$15 an hour minimum wage, there are incentives on the sales of items like upscale soaps and prepaid wash cards. Colleen estimates they add another \$4 to \$12 an hour. "So, I have little turnover," she said.

Not a typical owner, she heavily invests herself in her staff's success and provide them with tools they will need.

"I pay for financial advisors to meet with all of my employees every year," she added. "A lot of these kids are making poor decisions regarding student loans, cars, that kind of thing, so my

could describe aspects of Colleen.

When she speaks (quickly and candidly) about her business philosophies, she is brimming with kinetic energy, which makes sense because that seems to be the way Brio operates.

"Speed is a big thing," she explained. "I turned a lot of things on their heel. My machines are very fast. There's no children's play area because I don't want kids. I want people to come in, start the load and leave. You've got a life to live. Don't get stuck here."

She will willingly cost herself business in hopes of increasing customer loyalty. Case in point: "When people come in and ask, 'Can you do this for me?', we'll say 'We can show you how to do it and save yourself some money,'" she noted, pointing out the margins are on the machines, not on drop off.

"We couldn't stop drop off laundry," she laughed. "I tried."

In fact, she got so many requests from men to launder shirts that she started the Brio drycleaning business to meet the need. Then, it became a matter of focus.

"Keep your feet on the ground. Keep your finger on the pulse," she noted. "The thing is, you've got to be there and you have to pay attention to everything. It never quits. It's not like you clock out on a Friday and you don't think about it. You're on all the time."

Now, in the wake of the current coronavirus crisis, it has been an enormous challenge. According to Colleen, however, that's just fine with her.

"The timing could not be worse, but you know what? Part of being an entrepreneur is sailing the ship through the rocks," she explained. "It might be weird things. It might be coronavirus. It could be a death in the family. Sailing the ship through the rocks is part and parcel of owning your own business."

"If I don't take joy in leading a business through the rocky times, then I'm in the wrong line of work," she added.

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Facing the coronavirus challenge

Continued from page 1

edge. Just following the arithmetic, the chances are reasonable that *one* of your customers could have the virus. Since you don't know who that customer may be, we recommend taking all the precautions necessary to protect your team and your facility."

Some of the advice should be familiar to everybody by now: wash hands regularly, cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbows, use hand sanitizers.

But what about specific precautions to take at a drycleaning plant?

As far as cleaning garments from the general public, DLI said, "There is no need to take any special precautions *at this time*."

That comes with a caveat, however. No one knows for sure how long the virus can survive outside the body.

"Transmission of coronavirus occurs much more commonly through respiratory droplets than through objects or materials which are likely to carry infection, such as clothes, utensils, and furniture," DLI said.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) said the virus may remain viable for hours or days on some surfaces, but at this time testing has only been done on hard surfaces.

"As more information regarding textiles becomes available we will be sure to get information out to you," DLI said.

Cleaning kills viruses

DLI noted that the CDC has advised that the drycleaning process, which includes cleaning and pressing, is effective on most viruses.

"As is true with other viruses, laundering in hot water, 160°F

This information is based on what was available in mid-March. The situation is changing rapidly and new information is certain to come.

and with chlorine bleach is the most effective method for sanitizing laundry," DLI reported. "If hot water and chlorine bleach are not safe for the items, then laundering with a disinfectant product is an option. The CDC states that laundering with detergent alone is an effective method."

As to concerns employees may have, DLI said that since the virus lives only for a short time outside the body, there is very little chance that employees will contract the virus from touching people's garments.

Making disposable gloves available, allowing time to wash hands and using hand sanitizer frequently can reassure staff, DLI said.

NCA provided procedural advice for specific aspects of the drycleaning process.

At the counter

At the counter, for example, NCA said that all surfaces that come into human contact or contact with uncleaned clothing or textiles should be cleaned routinely and periodically throughout the day using a disinfectant wipe. This would include the mark in/inspection table, front door handles, telephones, keyboards, touchscreens, pens, staplers, etc.

NCA suggests wiping down and disinfecting the counter after each transaction with a client and wear disposable surgical style gloves when handling client's belongings.

The gloves should be removed and disposed after each transaction.

Other precautions NCA sug-

gested include not offering same-day service, not shaking clothes, placing items in a high mil plastic or densely woven nylon bag.

Identify the bag with customer information and wait 24 hours before removing to mark in.

"This is a very conservative time-lapse to ensure surface contamination is not a concern," NCA said.

After marking in, carefully dispose of any plastic bag that contained garments or be sure to clean the nylon bag before reuse.

Plant precautions

In the plant, NCA said not to use the same baskets for loading and unloading clean and dirty items. Label baskets for specified use and disinfect plastic baskets periodically.

"Be sure the cleaning/washing system is properly charged with soap," NCA said.

"The CDC reports regarding textiles states that soap will disrupt/kill the virus by disrupting the lipid. It is reasonable that our processes charged with soap will eliminate virus concerns, as well. Be sure to isolate clean garments from those that have not been processed."

The CDC recommends that all textiles be thoroughly dry, NCA noted, so do not short cycle.

Also, NCA suggested, wipe down the door opening rim prior to unloading the cleaned clothes in the machine.

The use of disposable gloves is recommended but optional, NCA said. "The finishers are handling clean garments and the cleaner/spotters are handling dirty clothes that have been isolated for 24 hours."

On the route

Pickup and delivery may become more popular under these circumstances and NCA offered advice for that aspect of the business, too.

- Drivers should use disinfectant wipes to periodically wipe down the steering wheel, the door handles, tablets, cell phones and any other frequently touched surfaces in the van/truck.

- Drivers should use hand sanitizer after every transaction.

- Vans should be capable of keeping dirty clothes bags separate from cleaned clothes.

- Plastic bins in vans should be wiped down at least daily, as should van surfaces coming in direct contact with uncleaned textiles.

- If drivers request gloves, supply them.

DLI said that some cleaners are having counter staff wear disposable gloves.

"This not only gives peace of mind to your staff but also sends a signal to your customers that you are aware of the situation and taking precautions," DLI said.

DLI also suggests taking time to reassure customers on the hygienic measures being taken in the store.

"They will appreciate that you are wiping down the counter and having staff wash their hands or use hand sanitizer frequently," DLI said.

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KEEP IT LEGAL



BY FRANK KOLLMAN

From COVID-19 to bikini baristas

As I write this, March is almost half over, and Coronavirus fears are escalating.

By the time this is published, I hope the situation is under control. If not, employers may be dealing with acute workplace outbreaks.

This month's article will deal with things to consider when creating an infectious disease outbreak plan. It will end with two recent legal cases a little on the lighter side.

All employers should be ready to respond to a COVID-19 outbreak in the workplace. The three most important things to consider are (1) requiring sick employees to stay home and away from the workplace; (2) hand hygiene and etiquette for sneezing and coughing; and (3) cleaning surfaces that are commonly touched by employees and customers.

Actually, many companies and their employees were doing this before the virus scare.

It would be good idea to involve your employees in preparing any plan.

In addition to preventing panic, it will allow you to hear suggestions on how you can staff the workplace if multiple

employees get sick.

One of the key questions you may have to answer alone is how to compensate employees for absences, both volun-

sons with disabilities. You probably have a designated parking space for persons with disabilities in your parking lot.

Over the years, the courts

paired individual has filed a class action claiming that the lack of closed captions on movies provided on websites such as Pornhub and Youporn

nance required that "bikini baristas," namely scantily clad servers of coffee, had to cover up or be charged with lewd public conduct.

Involve employees in preparing a plan. This can prevent panic and will allow you to hear suggestions on how you can staff the workplace if multiple employees get sick.

tary and involuntary. For example, if the business has to close for a short period of time, will anyone be paid?

I have no good answer for this, but how will you deal with sick customers, especially ones you do not want to lose?

In any event, you do not want employees being rude to customers, and you do not want conflict at the cash register. This may be one area where discussing options with your employees is essential.

Now, on the lighter side. The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits employment discrimination, but it also requires public accommodations, such as wheelchair ramps and Braille lettering. Places of public accommodation must be accessible to per-

have had to deal with whether websites are "places" of public accommodation. Several federal appeals courts have taken the position that they are not, unless they are integrated into a business' physical location.

For example, many brick and mortar stores carry a larger online inventory than they stock on their floors, and their ordering websites have to accommodate persons with disabilities.

Other federal appeals courts have held that websites themselves are, in fact, places of public accommodation. A lawsuit filed recently in federal court in New York City could decide whether website-only businesses, in this case erotic film sites, are places of public accommodation. A hearing-im-

discriminates against deaf or hearing-impaired individuals in violation of the ADA. (Suris v. Mindgeek Holding SARL, d/b/a Pornhub.com et al., Case No. 1:20-cv-00284-CBA-RML (EDNY 2020).)

The complaint alleges that Suris and similarly-situated disabled individuals are denied equal access to the facilities, goods, and services provided by these adult websites. Specifically, the complaint states that such individuals cannot access the websites on the same terms as others to enjoy the dialogue and sound descriptions through closed captioning on films such as "Hot Step Aunt Babysits Disobedient Nephew" or "Sexy Cop Gets Witness to Talk."

Despite the somewhat amusing aspects of this case, access to the Internet and online services is a central element of the controversy. How the ADA will be applied to online services will become more important as the economy moves away from physical locations and toward digital goods.

Moreover, accessibility options may be required for any business using a website to promote its products and services if the ADA is read broadly.

Finally, in another case, the U.S. Supreme Court has decided not to hear an appeal involving a city ordinance in Washington State. The ordi-

Apparently, in addition to having coffee shops on every corner in Seattle, people are finding ways to differentiate their service from their competitors. The baristas contended, however, that the ordinance violated their constitutional rights of freedom of expression, as well as female empowerment and body confidence.

The ordinance itself requires servers in quick service facilities to cover "minimum body areas." Some of the servers' idea of "minimum" meant that they were practically nude.

Rejecting arguments under the First Amendment, an appeals court in San Francisco had upheld the law.

In conclusion, let's hope that the bikini barista phenomenon stays out west, and that it doesn't extend to other service businesses, like drycleaners. If it does, and you put it on your website, make sure that any videos are closed captioned. Finally, wash your hands, cover your mouth when you cough, and stay home if you are sick.

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. It has articles, sample policies, news and other information on employee/employer relations.

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-Mike Astorino, Fabricare Cleaners

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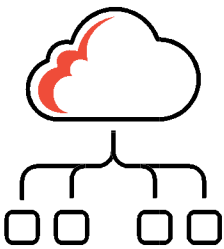
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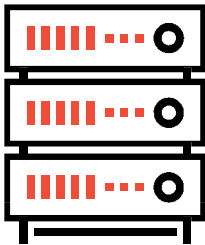


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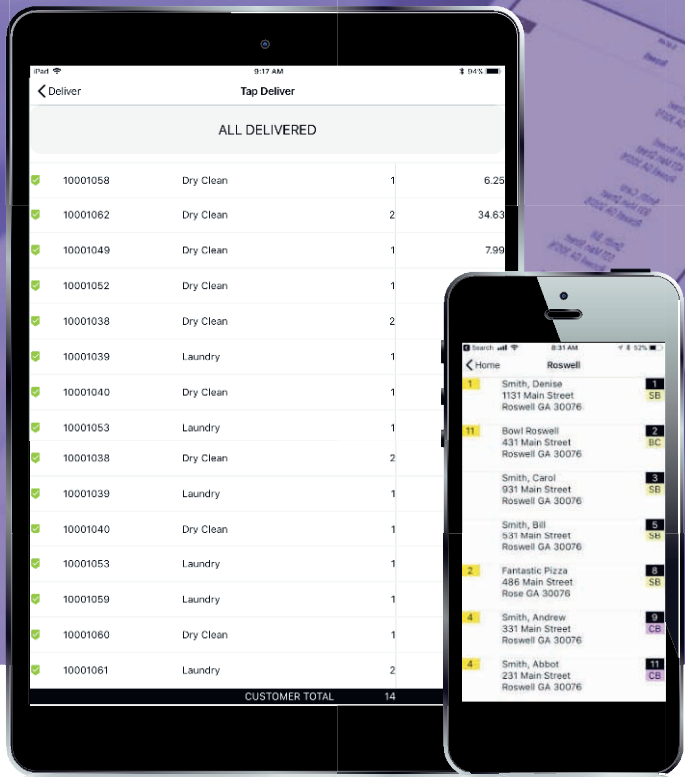
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THE ROUTE PRO



BY JAMES PEUSTER

Getting through these trying times

It was interesting as I prepared for this article that the coronavirus has overtaken our thoughts, distractions, prayers, attention, perceptions, whatever you want to call it

right now.

My article of “trust versus fear” was originally about selling and trusting in yourself while overcoming the fear of rejection as well as trusting in

your employees and yourself. The article was intended to assist many in their endeavors of route development and management.

However I feel like it’s

timely to adjust it accordingly.

Drycleaning has withstood the test of time through many decades. But nothing changed the game more than 2008. With the no-smoking policies, in-

creased work at home, business casual, the recession and other variables, our piece counts dropped down and never really recovered.

The industry as a whole has witnessed many store closings in the past 10 years. If you go to YouTube, I recently did a Vlog that included many store closings.

However, now we are dealing with a virus that can directly and indirectly affect our business. I’m sure more information and cancellations of events have dramatically increased concerns and decisions since I wrote this March 12.

Well, I always believe that the media induces fear on a daily basis; we also must trust the decision makers. An NBA basketball player was mocking the virus but now he has it. Tom Hanks has it as well. I don’t think it’s the disease; it’s the unknown transfer factor that gets us all affected and potentially infected.

Now back to the consulting part. Running a business is very similar as quite often a business owner plays the “what if?” game too much.

This industry tends to breed negativity and affects the decision making process while preventing growth. While dealing with this coronavirus is a risk, taking a chance on your business is one as well. Relying and trusting your staff goes a lot farther than fearing their mistakes.

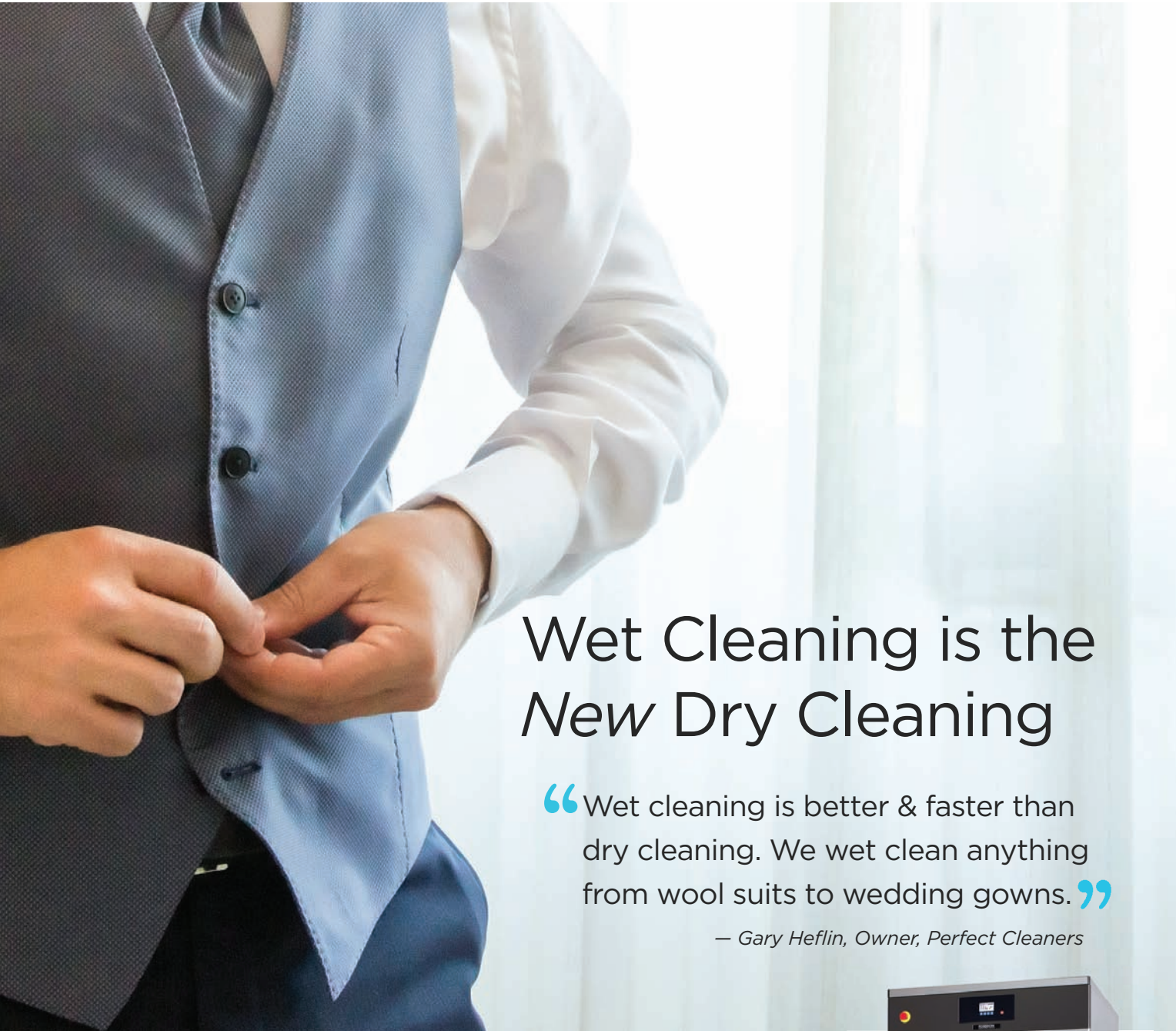
Trust in your staff, trusting yourself, trust in your customers is a path for success. The fear of failure, fear of disappointment and the fear of loss of piece counts will only cause you to go further back.

I watched in 2008 as many cleaners cut back instead of moving forward. I don’t know what will happen in the next few months as well as what is happening at the time of this article coming out.

Just keep your eyes moving forward and don’t be afraid what the future holds. I always believe you can still control your own destiny if you put your mind and business plan to it!

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 information, call (816) 739-2066 or visit www.therouteapro.com.

Trusting your staff, trusting yourself and trusting your customers is a path for success. Fear of failure will only cause you to go further back.



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WRENCH WORKS



By BRUCE GROSSMAN

Building a boiler, one part at a time

Boilers — talk about a device that is probably the simplest in concept yet most troublesome in your plant. In addition, it is also the most potentially dangerous. For this reason *never do any maintenance or repairs of any*

kind on a boiler that is hot or under pressure. As I am sure you are aware there are many different types of boilers and many subspecies of tube (water tube, fire tube, tubeless) and other configurations within each type. We are not going to get into

the FABs and FAQS of each type. Our purpose this issue is to gain an understanding of what a boiler is and how a boiler functions in order to generate steam. Take a pot of water, put it on a stove and heat it on a low flame. Put a thermometer in

the pressure in the pot would begin to rise. Since this increase in pressure is also pressing down on the boiling water it takes more heat energy (see BTUs from last month's article) to force the water to turn into steam.

This increase in heat energy is felt as an increase in temperature of the water steam mixture. The higher the pressure inside the pot, the higher the boiling point temperature of the water and steam.

There is a direct and unchanging relationship between steam pressure and temperature. It is built into the nature of water. That is why you heat your drycleaning presses with 80 lb. steam (324°F) and your laundry machinery with 100 lb. steam (337°F).

Now if you had some veggies in the pot they would cook to mush in no time because you have the kitchen appliance called a *pressure cooker* with internal temperatures much greater than 212°F.

In addition, the space above the water line and the lid is a built-in storage area for the contained steam.

At some point, unless you somehow release the steam or turn off the heat source, the pressure will increase until the pot ruptures (explodes). On pressure cookers there is a weighted or spring loaded relief valve in the lid which controls the internal pressure and

also a safety blow out vent if the relief valve fails.

Now let's start adding components to the *pressure cooker* in order to create a boiler. I'm going to use the example of a gas fired boiler for this article.

A. Let's put a solenoid valve in the gas supply line so that we can turn the gas on and off. This would be your gas supply system. At the end is the burner which distributes the gas evenly over the bottom of the *pressure cooker*.

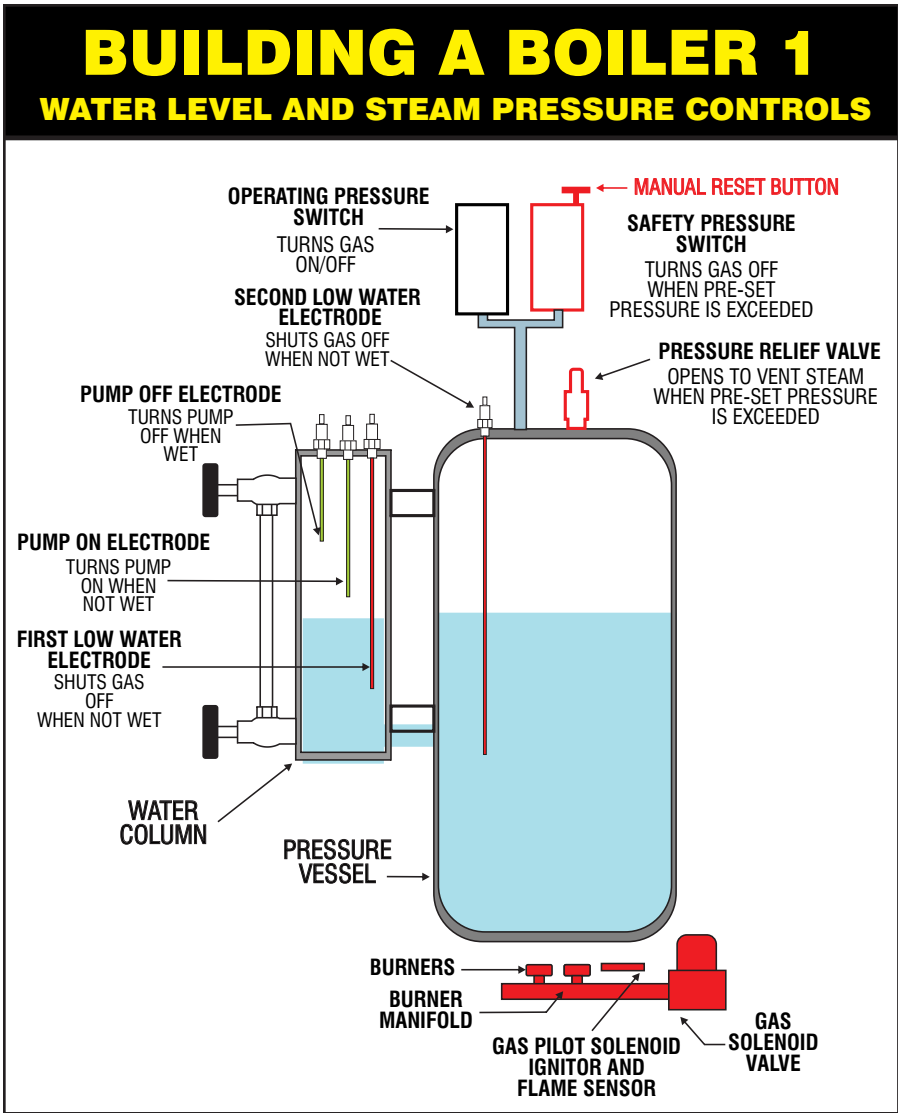
B. Now since we are dealing with gas we need to know that when the solenoid valve opens, the gas ignites almost immediately. If not we shut the solenoid, cutting off the gas flow. This is so we don't blow up the building or perhaps the entire block. We'll call this control system the ignition monitoring system.

C. Remember I mentioned that as long as water was in the pot the temperature would not rise above the boiling point of the water. Well if all the water boils away there is nothing to adsorb the heat energy. The temperature of the metal of the pot will rise until it glows red.

In a boiler this would destroy the boiler. So let's place a sensor in the *pressure cooker* that monitors the level of the water. If the water level drops too low we will shut off the gas supply to the burner. This is your boiler's low water control. Having the proper level of water is so critical there is usually a requirement for a second back-up low water control for safety.

Well, I'm up against space restrictions and this is a good place to end this month's article. Next month I will be discussing additional controls and valves required to build a boiler.

Bruce Grossman is the chief of R&D for EZtimers Manufacturing. EZtimers, 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 a drycleaning machine. For information on EZtimers products, visit www.eztimers.com. Address any questions or comments to bruce@eztimers.com or call (702) 376-6693.





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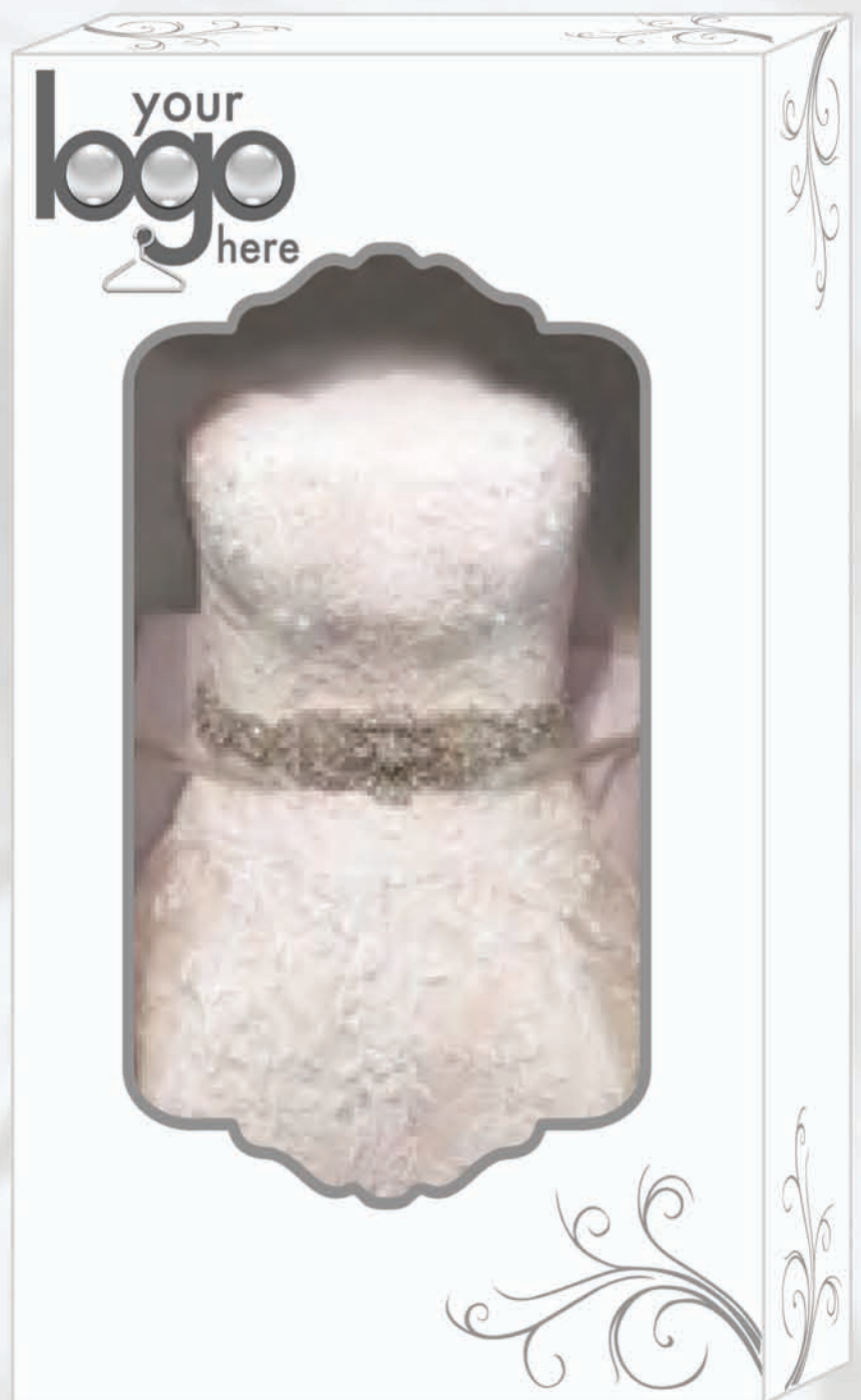
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NewsMAKERS

The **Tuchman Advisory Group** met Feb. 5-7 at Five Star Cleaners in San Antonio, TX, hosted by **Richard and Sharlene Thum**.

A tour of the Five Star Clean-

ers operation included visit to a recently remodeled drop store with lockers, the main plant, and the wedding gown division.

"It is very beneficial having other drycleaners evaluate what

you are doing right and what you are doing wrong," said Richard Thum, president of Five Star Cleaners.

"The fact that they understand the business helps when you are so deep in the forest you often cannot see the trees. It can be nerve-racking having fellow drycleaners go through your plant as they know exactly what to point out. I am thankful to Tuchman Advisory Group for their constructive input," he said.

The Thums arranged a tour of **Division Commercial Laundry Company** where they heard a presentation by **Patrick Garcia**, president and owner.

Other meeting highlights included **Bruce Frankel**, managing partner at **Eckhoff Wealth Management**, leading a discussion on

company numbers; **Ed Howie**, president at **BTY Creative**, speaking on Five Star Cleaners advertising and other marketing concepts; and all group members submitting their company 2020 goals.

Two new members attended their first TAG meeting: **Mike and Darlene Micciche** of **Mike's Eagle Cleaners** in Rochester, NY, and **Mark Porter** of **Porter's Cleaners** in Shreveport, LA.

Ellen Tuchman Rothmann, president of TAG was pleased to present a copy of the recently published book about industry leader and DLI Diamond Award winner, and TAG Founder **Sid Tuchman** titled, *Well Played! The Life and Times of Sid Tuchman*.

"Our family is honored that you have allowed the Sid Tuch-

man legacy to continue to grow and prosper," she said. "Our hope is that this book will be an inspiration for all."

Laundry Owners Mutual announced in March that policyholders received a cash dividend.

The company has been insuring laundries, drycleaners and other industries since it began in 1915. The company's mission is to provide low cost insurance usually only available to larger companies.

The Laundry Owners board considers the dividend a significant milestone as it celebrates 105 years in business. The board is made up of individuals involved in the drycleaning and laundry industry such as **Dale Kaplan, Garth Eck, John LaCarte, Dave Beatty, Richard Marusic, Barry Gordon** and **Craig Givens**.

The Pittsburgh-based company can be reached at (800) 590-4404 or on the web at www.lom1915.com.

Pilgrim Dry Cleaners is celebrating its 80th year as a Twin Cities drycleaner, now spanning three generations of family ownership and consisting of 26 branch locations with over 200 employees.

Don Rosen founded the company in 1940 on the principle that success is dependent on three key ingredients: convenience, quality, and service.

The company became a woman-owned and operated business when Rosen's daughter, **Bonnie Engler**, became CEO in 2004.

"We strive to improve and serve our customers and communities in the best way possible," Engler said.

She has maintained her father's commitment to family and community. Their employees' loyalty is apparent. More than half of the 200 employees have been with the company longer than 10 years and 22 have been with Pilgrim for more than 20 years.

Rosen founded the Pilgrim Cleaners Coats for Kids Program in 1986 and has since donated over 422,000 coats to help Minnesota families in need. Pilgrim has multiple community drives throughout the year to give back to children in our local community, including Costumes for Kids and Scouting for Uniforms, as well as donating thousands to local charities in need.

Derek Engler, grandson of the late Don Rosen and son of Bonnie Engler, is company vice president, representing the third generation at Pilgrim Dry Cleaners.

"One of our secrets to success is that we are easy to do business with," Engler said. "Pilgrim has invested in new technology and modern stores to continually serve our customers better."

Pilgrim offers same-day service at 26 locations, free home and office pick-up and delivery, on-demand pick-up through the Pilgrim Go App, drive-through locations and 24 hour kiosks.



Fabritec International has added **Roger Stevenson** to its sales force. He brings more than 30 years of experience in the drycleaning industry to the company and will focus his efforts in the Midwest as a regional sales manager.

"We are very excited to add Roger's level of expertise to our already knowledgeable sales team," said **Jeff Jordan**, vice president of business development at Fabritec. "We recognized that Roger has a lot of value to bring to our customers and

we know they will be very pleased with the addition."

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

Finally, a solvent that is comparable to perc in cleaning strength, but gentle enough to handle all of the beads, sequins and faux finishes that adorn today's clothing. **intense®** is clean smelling, incredibly reclaimable and easy to use. We are 10 weeks+ in a new Union hydrocarbon machine with **intense®** solvent and extremely satisfied with the results. We still haven't had to change the filters or have the waste picked up because there is so little of it, but we look forward to the savings there as well. Probably the wisest decision we've made yet. Thanks Ken for all your help.

Stephanie Barrero (*Door2Door Drycleaners / Bluffton, SC*)

I've been waiting for a solvent alternative to PERC. I look for companies that have a proven track record of longevity. What's important to me is to partner with a company that believes in constant innovation, technology advances and unparalleled support. I have always found this with SEITZ, which gave me the confidence to embrace and convert to their new solvent. It is performing fabulously and will allow me to make the necessary changes to continue to improve my service and my business.

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

For as long as I've been in dry cleaning, I've been using Seitz products. From their spotting chemicals to dry cleaning detergents, all performed beyond my expectations. So when it came time to make the switch from Perc to an environmentally friendly solvent, I turned to SEITZ. Their answer was **intense®**. It's cleaning and grease cutting ability made my transition from Perc very easy. I'm glad I chose SEITZ. Thank you for another quality product!

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

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NORTHEAST

Bronx cleaner racks up Instagram followers



Wally Santos, a.k.a. Mr. Positive, a.k.a. wallysworld8660, a.k.a. the owner of Wholesale Cleaning Outlet in the Bronx, has gathered quite an online following with humor-based posts on his Instagram account.

He’s a loud and proud native New Yorker who unabashedly loves the Mets, the Giants and, well, just about everything else including drycleaning, the Bronx and Instagram.

Over time, his online videos have made him a bit of a local celebrity, and he’s done it by releasing posts that try to spread positivity and laughter.

Wally Santos goes by the moniker “wallysworld8660” on Instagram (though everybody calls him Mr. Positive), but offline he’s just as gregarious with customers of his Bronx-based drycleaning drop store known as

Wholesale Cleaning Outlet. He’s a colorful character who is fairly hard to forget.

“I’m just a drycleaner with a good sense of humor who likes people, you know,” he said, adding that the clean clothes usually come with a joke on the side: “Sorry, my kid wore it out a bit when he put it on...”

“Every time they come in, I’m always laughing, smiling. People like to come to my store,” he emphasized.

His sales skills date back to his childhood when he accidentally dented up his father’s car. He needed a job to pay for the \$500

deductible. “Just think about \$500 back in 1977 — oh, forget it — that’s like a million dollars to a kid. Minimum wage was like \$2.65 an hour,” he laughed.

So, he worked for his father’s Kirby Vacuum shop, making about \$10 a day. He was never going to be able to pay for the damage.

Then he learned that salesmen made \$125 per sale.

“Anyway, I went in their class and I learned how to sell, and I was good at it,” he recalled. “I made a lot of money that summer, a tremendous amount of money.”

In his early twenties, he took over his father’s Kirby business after a fire at their residence resulted in tragedy. “My father didn’t make it out,” he said.

A quarter of a century later, when vacuum sales began waning (as did the video rental sales for the family video store), Wally worked with Kleener King before opening his own store in 2009.

In the beginning, he would hang out by the front door and try to acquire new customers with humor, calling out, “Hey, those clothes look wrinkly. You should bring them here.”

“It took me about a year to make a profit, but I did turn a profit,” he added. “Then, the building changed hands and [the new landlord] just raked me with the rent and the taxes.”

Months ago, he moved to his current location. “I feel like I’m doing it all over again, but you know what, I’m up for the challenge,” Wally said.

One way he has tried to get the word out on his business is through Instagram. He once paid homage to an old Seinfeld episode where Jerry suspects his drycleaner wears his clothes. It wasn’t a big production number, but it had a celebrity: Vincent Pastore, known for his role as Salvatore “Big Pussy” Bonpensiero on the *Sopranos*.

Wally certainly enjoys the attention his videos generate, but admitted they have yet to generate too many new customers.

“It’s not good for my business’s bottom line. Right now, with Instagram — I just counted today — I have 18 customers from Instagram. I’ve been doing it for like seven months, so I am getting three a month from Instagram, but you know what? It’s 18 people I would have never had,” he laughed.

Oftentimes, he’s recognized at Mets’ games — all because of an iPhone and some creative videos.

It probably helped that his cyber-shenanigans have also been the subject of stories recently from the *New York Post* newspaper and the local Channel 12 News affiliate.

“Every day it gets bigger and bigger. It’s really mushroomed,” he said. “It’s crazy. It’s a crazy phenomenon.”



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SHIRT TALES



BY DON DESROSIERS

A simple, no-cost improvement

I have a busy professional life. That must be obvious outwardly because I am very often asked; “When do you find time to write your columns?”

The answer is “On airplanes.” I usually have three or four columns in the works at the same time and, on occasion, an idea for a column comes to me and I defer the completion of the articles in progress and favor my latest brainstorm.

The works in progress are often general shirt-related subjects like “how to press a better shirt” or “Why aren’t my shirts getting clean?”

The brainstorms usually come from a particular incident that has recently occurred at someone’s drycleaning plant.

There is a third type and they tend to be more philosophical. They tend to be ideological webs that are far easier for me to think than to type. There have been two on my computer for well over a year. I am committed to completing them because I think that they are important.

This month and next month, I will carry on more about these philosophies that are more on the general side rather

than specific to shirt laundering. Still, they have value in your shirt department as well as your general day-to-day duties of running a drycleaning business.

A great deal of our day-to-day busi-

a means toward that end. The list of these things is endless. They range in scope from something as cosmetic as remodeling a store front and buying new counters to buying a video that will help your pressers do a better job

Fridays.

What I think is missing doesn’t cost a red cent. It is truly free.

We adopt company policies that theoretically enrich the bottom line. You know the type; greet each customer by

We work at doing a good job and adopt procedures and policies that are a means toward that end. But there is a something that we often neglect.

ness lives has to do with customer retention. Sure, we want to get new business and we may often say to ourselves that we do a “good job” so that this level of quality breeds new customers via the word-of-mouth advertising medium.

As true as that surely is, in fact the only reason to do a good job is so that our particular level of profitability continues into perpetuity. Otherwise, business life would be more like “take the money and run.”

So we work at doing a good job and adopt procedures and policies that are

of pressing shirts or pants or any other garment.

But there is a something that we often neglect.

We will spend thousands of dollars to visit the Clean Show — a very worthwhile investment — so that we can see the latest and the greatest that this industry has to offer. Maybe the secret to our success is that one piece of equipment that we have long managed to get by without. With that, we may hypothesize, we will finally be able to cut out overtime, trim back on the payroll and get out a bit earlier on

name to make them feel remembered, needed and important, for example.

We actually do lots of things like that to enhance our image. You might have a policy that requires someone who answers the phone to say “Good Morning! Thank you for calling Don’s Fine Cleaners. How may I help you today?”

Hmm. Before a customer gets a word in edgewise, you have greeted them (perhaps no one else has today), thanked them for their patronage and/or for recognizing you as the person to call, thrown in an adjective that

Continued on page 26



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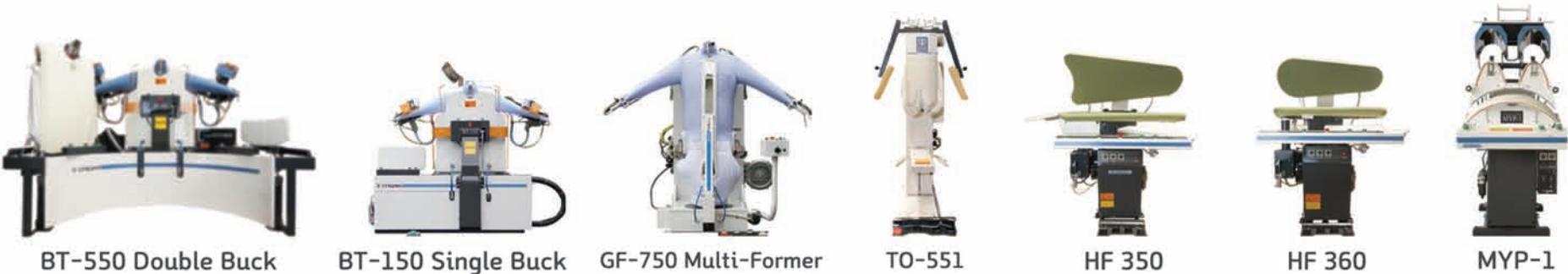
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Don Desrosiers

A simple, no-cost improvement

Continued from page 24
describes Don's Cleaners as a cut above and then you remove all doubt that you "can" help them by saying (in effect) "Of course I "can" help you... duh. But in all of the ways that I 'can,' which of those ways works for you at this moment?"

You probably already do something like that now. No, that isn't what I think many managers forget about or fail to do altogether. Sure, this isn't going to cost you a penny either.

Professionalism is key, to be sure. Anything that you can do to enhance the way that the public perceives you is important. It is cosmic and intangible and maybe even too snooty for you, but the less you look like Don's Cleaners and Live Bait

and more towards Don's Professional Clothing Care the better your public image will be. Don't you agree?

So you decree that all of your managers will wear business clothes and your customer service reps will wear clean crisp uniforms with a name tag and a "I'm thrilled to be here" smile. You probably do something like that now, but it's important to be reminded why.

And we do things to keep employees in line. We must have rules so that the inmates don't run the asylum. Be on time. Respect each other. Maintain production standards.

Ah! There's a good one. Maintain production standards. Hey, that's pretty important. Push the work out, but not to the "bang and hang" level.

So as a means towards that end, we have a couple of other

rules. No radios or mp3 players. Or maybe we want them to have personal entertainment, but you must have headphones so that the hip-hop fan doesn't drown out the soft rock fan. These kinds of rules exist so that workers work. That's not so cosmic an idea. In fact, we may prohibit cell phones in the plant. That makes sense to me.

It's important to have all of these rules. Rules are what we

adopt to live in a civilized society. Otherwise, chaos would prevail.

With those thoughts in mind, how about prohibiting (here it comes...) something that so many of us do and I believe is not only counterproductive, but a waste of time, energy and sound waves. Why don't we prohibit... get ready for it... sarcasm?

The use of sarcasm has no place in business. I hope that as you read this you feel that this doesn't apply to you. The more I write for this publication, the more plants that I visit, the more drycleaning and laundry employees I meet, the more I marvel at the power of words.

When I approach a shirt presser and say, "Hey, Betty, great job on this shirt," how often do you think that I get a quizzical look? How often do you think that I get a "What's wrong with it?" as a response.

I don't understand this. How do you pay a compliment? How do you really say, "Hey, Betty, great job on this shirt"? How do you encourage employees to continue to do a good job when your very words make them wonder if they're doing a good one or a bad one?

I understand that sarcasm can be a form of humor, but my statement stands: It has no place in business. The answer to my rhetoric is simple: How do you say, "Hey, Betty, great job on this shirt?"

Try English. It works. You will learn to marvel at the power of words. You will learn, once you break the cyclical hell that is a "yes" when you mean "no" and "good" when you mean "bad," that employees thrive on encouragement and support.

You will get startling results. You probably don't think that your employees would respond like they will because they have never understood your words before. Well, actually, maybe they have. But I'm not convinced that you used the right ones.

Prohibit sarcasm. I have learned to marvel at the power of words.

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.

How about prohibiting something that is not only counterproductive, but a waste of time, energy and sound waves. The use of sarcasm has no place in business.



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THE SPOTTING BOARD



BY DAN EISEN

Understanding acid-based products

The drycleaner has a choice of several different acid-based products that are effective for removing stains, neutralizing chemicals and accelerating chemicals. Not all acids react the same way on stains and mixing with other chemicals. Knowing the characteristics will allow the spotter to remove more stains and effectively treat fabrics in both spotting wetcleaning. All acids are affected by heat. Every ten degrees rise in temperature doubles the

chemical action. This means an acid that is considered safe may become dangerous when heated. Acid neutralizes salkali and vice versa. This means that if a color change occurs with an alkali you would reverse the color change by using an acid. Acids are often effective for setting dyes. Tannin formulas. The acids found in tannin formulas are mild but effectively remove tannin stains. The acids are usually not strong enough to

neutralize or accelerate other chemicals. Acetic acid. This is a very useful acid and has uses that other acids do not. It can be purchased in 28, 56 or 99%. It is safe to use at 28% since higher concentrations may damage fabrics such as acetate. It is also advisable to use acetic acid at 14% to avoid odor which can be objectionable. Acetic acid is effective for neutralizing a sodium perborate bath with two ounces per gallon of water. It can also be

used to restore a delustered area on acetate or silk. Spray a 14% solution on the affected area, hang to dry and then dryclean. It can also restore color change by applying to the affected area, heating and then flushing. To remove smoke odor, spray it on a garment while in a wetcleaning dryer. Oxalic acid. It comes in crystal or powder form and can be mixed with 15 parts water in a spotting bottle. It is

Not all acids react the same way. Knowing the characteristics helps in removing more stains and treating fabrics in both spotting and wetcleaning.

sold by manufacturers as a fluoride-free rust remover. Oxalic acid is effective for removing rust and metallic stains on fabrics and trimming when regular rust remover can not be used. It can be used to treat difficult tannin stains but should be tested before use. It can also be used in wetcleaning to neutralize sodium perborate and accelerate some bleaches. Since it does not produce odor, it has an advantage over acetic acid. Oxalic acid also can be used to neutralize the color discoloration produced by potassium permanganate. Hydrofluoric acid "rust remover." This is the strongest acid on the spotting board and can cause serious burns when it contacts skin. Wear gloves when working with this product. It will discolor and ruin glass and metallic trimming. It will also discolor some dyes on cashmere and camel hair fabrics. Hydrofluoric acid must always be tested before using on fabrics. It is also very important to flush the area thoroughly and apply a protein formula to the area to make sure the acid is neutralized and removed from the fabric. When working with titanium stripper, this acid will remove discolorations. In combination with titanium stripper, it accelerates the stripper making it more effective on difficult dye stains. Acid based oily-type ink removers. These products are highly effective on ink stains and in many cases effective on dryside stains such as nail polish, paint and glue. You can also use these products in combination with tannin formulas.

Dan Eisen, former chief garment analyst for the National Cleaners Association, can be reached at (772) 340-0909 or (772) 579-5044, by e-mail at cleandan@comcast.net or through his website at www.garmentanalysis.com.

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MIDATLANTIC

More courses in store at DLI school

The Drycleaning and Laundry Institute has hosted one round of its five-day Introduction to Drycleaning class and its ten-day Advanced drycleaning class but there are still a few opportunities left throughout the year.

The next class cycle will begin in July when DLI's signature Introduction to Drycleaning class is scheduled for the week of the July 13-17.

Typically, the five-day introductory course is ideal for newcomers to the industry or who have less than a year of production experience.

Students will learn how to

dryclean, starting with how to sort loads and how to operate the drycleaning machine. Other topics to be covered will include: cleaning silk, satin and other fabrics; removing coffee, ink, grease and other stains from clothing; pressing pants, coats and skirts; and using tensioning equipment to improve finishing quality.

Tuition for non-members is \$1,595.

Immediately following the introductory course will be DLI's signature Advanced Drycleaning that will meet for two weeks from July 20 to 31.

It's a good continuation for

graduates of the introductory class, as well as an ideal course for those in the industry who have basic stain removal and finishing knowledge and some hands-on experience.

The advanced outing will cover some of the same topics as the introductory one, though more in-depth, plus a lot of new ground: identifying cotton, silk, polyester and other fabrics; using bleaches without damaging fabric color; pressing blouses, dresses, ties, pleated garments, silks, velvets and corduroy; and wetcleaning wool, silk and more.

There will also be instruction

on maintaining cleaning equipment from changing filters to troubleshooting problems with the drycleaning machine.

Drycleaners who successfully pass this class will gain knowledge on: using tensioning equipment to improve finishing quality; current regulations facing the drycleaning industry; customer service techniques; getting clean, white laundry; cleaning and preserving wedding gowns; the difference between solvents, including perc, GreenEarth, hydrocarbon and SOLVONK4; pressing laundered shirts; and designing a drycleaning plant with

the most effective work flow.

Tuition for the advanced class is \$2,195 for non-members.

Students have the option of taking the two courses together for a discounted price of \$2,895 for non-members. DLI affiliates save \$499 when taking both together.

There will be one additional opportunity for both classes to be taken together later in the year with the introductory course running from Oct. 19 to 23 and the advanced course following from Oct. 26 to Nov. 6.

DLI will also offer a lone offering of just the introductory course this summer from Aug. 17 to 21.

In addition to offering both its signature drycleaning courses, the association also plans to present a two-day stain removal course from Sept. 23 to 25.

The class will teach the principles and chemistry behind stain removal including how to identify stains by type and how to remove them properly.

Topics will include: removing coffee, ink, grease and other stains from clothing; identifying cotton, silk, polyester and other fabrics; using bleaches without damaging fabric color; using specialty products such as digesters, amyl acetate and acetone in stain removal; and removing spotting rings and watermarks.

The cost for the class is \$649 for non-members.

Class hours for each offering by DLI run from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The course fees cover lunch, classroom instruction, notebook and other materials.

DLI's School of Technology, originally formed in 1927, is located in Laurel, MD, just outside of Washington D.C. and Baltimore, which makes it relatively close to three major airports: Baltimore Washington International about 20 miles away in Maryland; Reagan National located about 35 miles away in Virginia; and Dulles International of Virginia, about 50 miles away.

Those seeking financial aid to attend a course can take advantage of scholarships that are available to members located in the United States and Canada.

In addition to its classroom instruction, DLI also offers online self-study courses. Each course is divided into chapters and all included exams will be reviewed by the DLI staff. Those who successfully complete the course will receive certificates.

The association currently offers four classes: Fibers and Fabrics; Stain Removal Techniques; Wetcleaning; and Drycleaning Fundamentals. Each self-study class costs \$139 for members and \$249 for non-members.

For more information or to register visit www.dlionline.org or call (301) 622-1900.



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Three MfM bureaus hold meetings

International consulting group Methods for Management began 2020 with three group meetings and by welcoming five new operators into its membership.

MfM is up and running with a new financial analysis platform that incorporates member feedback that allows operators to immerse themselves in every aspect of their businesses to understand the what, where, when, how, and why of their bottom lines and inform decisions to better their operations.

The first three meetings of the year highlighted the sharing and review of processes. Each bureau conducted a thorough plant tour of the meeting host's production plant, which was followed by members giving the host constructive critiques, including praise, as well as suggestions for improvement and innovation to continue to provide high quality service for their clients.



Eastern Bureau Group members in front from left are Alan Wernick of Oakwood Cleaners, Rich Volk of Bowen Cleaners, Chris Brogdon of New Oriental Cleaners, Dave Nemec of St. Croix Cleaners, Janet Garman of Glyndon Lord Baltimore Cleaners and Mike Harris of Oceanside Cleaners. In back are Kermit Engh of MfM, Lana Lee Brogdon of New Oriental Cleaners, John Claude Hallak of Hallak the Couture Cleaner, Arthur Anton of Anton's Cleaners and Brian Cass of Martinizing.

Members of each group also shared their best ideas in technology, staffing, and the latest marketing and advertising efforts of their companies. The groups also enjoyed camaraderie and laughter over meals in each host city.

The Mid America Bureau Group met January 28-30, hosted by Ben & David Feingold of Fabricare Center in Atlanta, GA. With 18 members attending, the ideas and information exchange flowed as did the laughter. The plant tour of Fabricare Center proved informative.

David Meyer of Elite Cleaners in Phoenix, AZ, hosted the West Coast and Canadian Bureau Groups' combined meeting February 6-7. With 19 members and guests in the meeting, sharing ideas and information exchange and ben-



Members of the Mid-America Group in front from left are John Kim of Cleanpressions Cleaners, David Feingold of Fabricare Center Cleaners, Peter Kuchlik of American Cleaners, Lisa Sebastian of Ridge Cleaners and Tom Prionas of Fabric Care Center. In back are James Belt of Fabric Care Center, Ben Feingold of Fabricare Center Cleaners, Monika Manter of Balfurds Cleaners, Perry Bata of Pepper Square Cleaners, Greg Gunderson of Gunderson's Cleaners, Kermit Engh of MfM, Jeanne Meden of Charleston Prestige Cleaners, Courtney Wolf of MfM, Dave Weidenaar of Paris Cleaners, Kyle Matthews of Janet Davis Cleaners, Steve Leep of Paris Cleaners, Dave Matthews of Janet Davis Cleaners, and Amin Bata of Pepper Square Cleaners.

efiting from a plant tour of Elite Cleaners.

The Eastern Bureau Group met February 10-12, hosted by Mike and Amy Harris of Oceanside Cleaners in Jacksonville, FL. This group, too, enjoyed the camaraderie of ideas and a tour of the Oceanside Cleaners plant.

Methods for Management is an international consulting group facilitated by Kermit Engh for drycleaners who want to further their expertise and improve their businesses through shared industry knowledge, local community action, higher productivity and efficiency, and training for excellent quality in garment care and customer service. More information is available on the website www.methodsformanagement.com.



Members of the West Coast Group in front from left are Don Mungal of Drape Master Platinum, Nadine Rana of Drape Master Platinum, David Crouse of Crouse's Cleaners, Pierre Cinar of View Cleaners, Lisa Hiebert of Best Care Dry Cleaners, Derek Blaha of GreenEarth Cleaners, David Meyer of Elite Cleaners, Arturo Nanes of Tintoreria Bosques, Alberto Nanes of Tintoreria Bosques, Joe Blaha of GreenEarth Cleaners and Gary McCracken of Clothesline Cleaners. In back are Mark Scott of Bakkers Fine Dry Cleaners, Larry Tessier of Busy Bee Cleaners, Puzant Cinar of Tarzana Cleaners, Kevin Hiebert of Best Care Dry Cleaners, Chuck Horst of Margaret's Cleaners, Ramona Jaeger of Canyon Cleaners and Randy Jaeger of Canyon Cleaners.



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- Kleen-Rite 5 Ton with Tank & Pump
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 - Sankosha DP-420TU-V2 Utility
 - Sankosha DP-870U Double Legger
 - Sankosha DP-850U Double Legger
 - Forenta 421FOR Utility
 - Forenta 481FGR Auto Legger
 - Unipress ATT Tensioning Pants Topper
 - Sankosha DF-740U Tensioning Pants Topper
 - Forenta single/double & Triple Puff Irons
 - Hi-Steam Vacuum Spotting Board
 - Iowa Tech Sweater Board

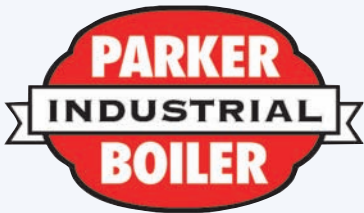
Laundry Equipment

- Unipress Mushroom W/Vac
- Forenta Mushroom W/Vac
- Forenta Mushroom
- Sankosha LP-185U Double Buck
- Sankosha CN-561 Single Buck
- Sankosha LP-690U Collar & Cuff
- Unipress NT Single Buck
- Unipress VASY3PC All-In-One
- Unipress DAYV Double Buck
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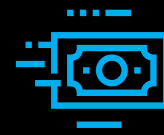
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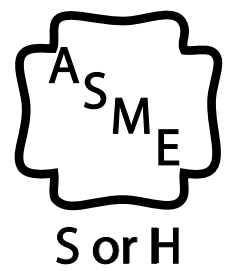


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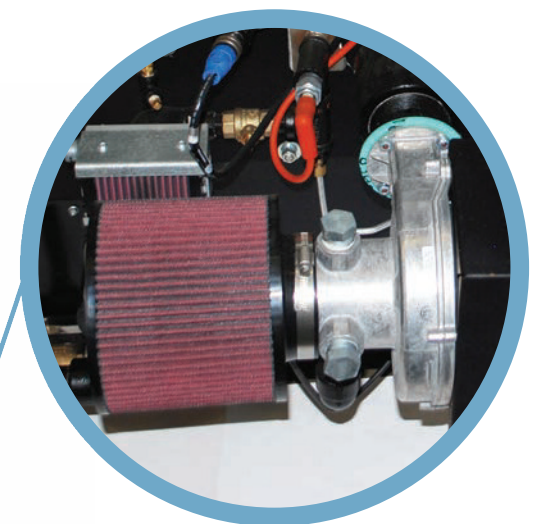
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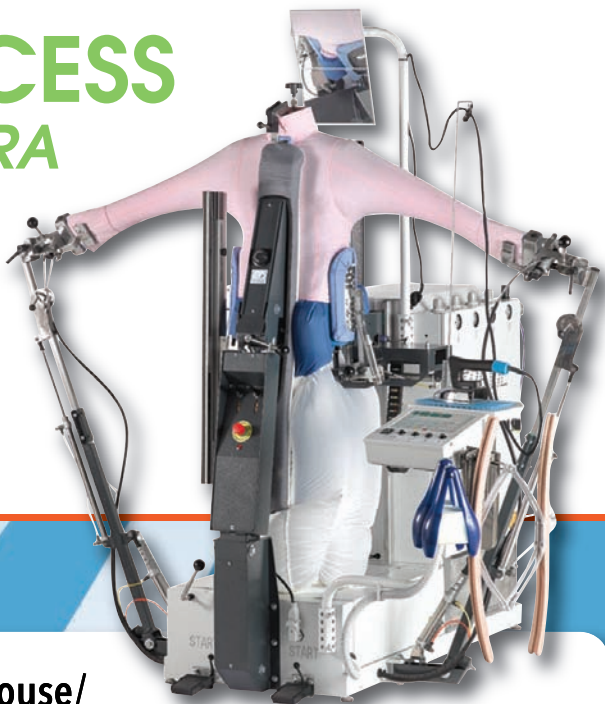
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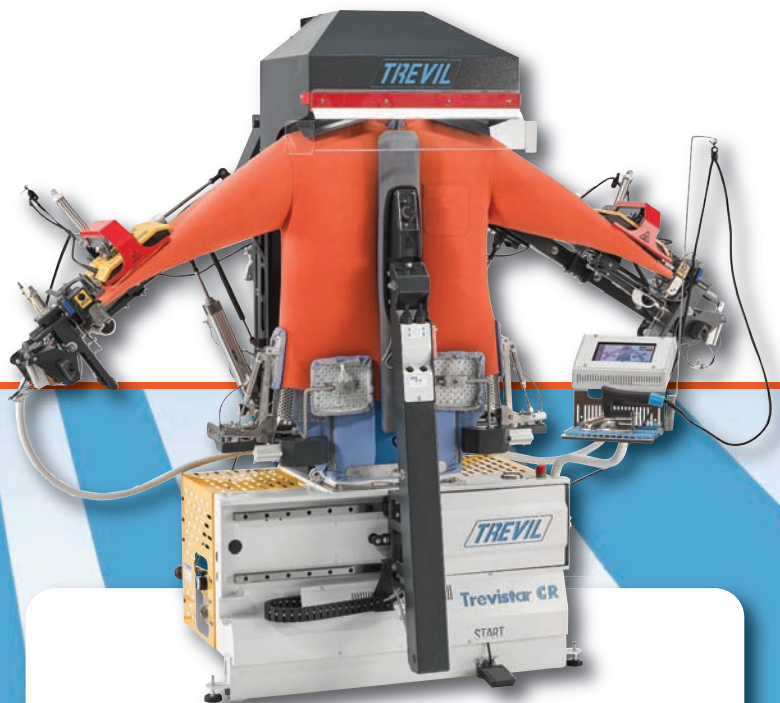
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