



# National Clothesline



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## Exploring the *why* behind Generation Y

While some programs from WinterFest EXPO 2022 in January predicted better economic opportunities for the year ahead (see our coverage in our February 2022 issue), others indicated that the path for success will require connecting with Generation Y as both employees and customers.

Jennifer Whitmarsh of the Route Pros (read her profile on page 6) tackled one of the toughest problems facing the industry today: keeping fully staffed. She offered several ideas on how to attract and manage a whole new generation of workforce.

Since 2016, Generation Y (those born between 1981 and 1996) have become the largest generation in the U.S. workforce, comprising 56 million or about 35% of the labor force

then, and it continues to grow.

Generation Y — who Whitmarsh emphatically noted *do not enjoy* the loaded term *Millennial* — have been saddled

with a number of negative stereotypes like being entitled, distracted and lacking in communication skills, among others. However, her experience

with the generation is that they actively seek personal improvement in all facets of their lives.

“They will rise to the standards of your company,” she

said. “They will end up succeeding and doing what you need them to do if you are encouraging them and treating them the same. If you put that spotlight on them, they tend to burn out.”

That same generation is also tech savvy, well educated (about 40% have bachelor’s degrees or more) and are big communicators, she explained. “Our younger generation want to share their ideas. They want to tell you what’s wrong — sometimes a little too much, I get that — but, it’s still not a bad thing. I’d rather get too much than nothing.”

Whitmarsh also gave tips on how to entice Generation Y to come work for you, including being very creative with benefits by offering some of the fol-

*Continued on page 10*



Jennifer Whitmarsh





Kelby Sankey



### Maintaining a Full Staff

The labor shortage lingers on, but so does the good advice from WinterFest EXPO 2022 on how to approach the issue. During her presentation, Jennifer Whitmarsh cited the top reasons employees leave today (graphic left), revealing poor communication is a much bigger problem than money, no recognition and lack of trust in most cases, as is “employee culture” which, essentially, encompasses the other four reasons together.

## DLI plans March slate of virtual programs

Even with its School of Drycleaning Technology back open for in-person classes in Laurel, MD, the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute remains committed to continue offering its virtual educational programming as an added convenience for its members.

“Our goal, as always, is to give members more value than the cost of membership,” explained DLI CEO Mary Scalco. “DLI will continue sharing educational and networking opportunities on a weekly basis. We are focussed on helping members communicate and grow.”

This month, DLI will host educational sessions at 1 p.m. on March 13 and 30, each will

focus on different topics of interest.

The first will feature Dave Coyle of Maverick Drycleaners who will advise attendees on “How to Use BizLeads to Acquire Target Professionals.”

For those not in the know, BizLeads is a cloud-based employee prospecting service designed specifically to help small or mid-sized businesses.

Later in the month, DLI has enlisted the aid of Frank Briercheck of Seitz, The Fresher Company, to deliver a presentation on wash-dry-fold.

Additionally, DLI will con-

tinue hosting its weekly peer-to-peer Zoom meetings, which take place at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesdays.



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“Members learn how other cleaning business owners and operators are adapting to the changing business climate, share ideas, get answers to questions, and even just vent,” Scalco said. “DLI’s doors are always open. All drycleaning business owners and operators are invited to participate in our programs and events by joining DLI.”

Members are also given complete access to DLI’s growing library of on-demand videos, which currently has archived over 100 programs on its website covering a wide range of topics, including: diversification, maintenance, management, marketing, production, finishing, stain removal and business sales and acquisitions.

**Comprehensive Classes Online, In-Person or Both**

Throughout 2022, DLI will be hosting more in-person classes at its school, including its comprehensive one-week introductory and two-week

advanced courses for drycleaning which will meet three times each this year (for specific dates, see graphic).

Next month, DLI will host the first session of its Virtual Stain Removal class, which meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from April 26 through May 17. The class will also run later this year from Sept. 13 through Oct. 4.

Later this summer, the association will host a new kind of course — one that is blended between virtual and in-person training sessions for the association’s Introduction to Drycleaning course.

There will be seven virtual visits throughout June and an on-site visit scheduled to take place from July 14 to 15.

Tuition for the blended introductory course is the same as its completely in-person counterpart: \$1,595, which is prior to factoring membership discounts that reduce the cost to \$1,195 for Budget members all the way to free for Premier members. Tuition for the advanced class is \$2,195, prior to membership discounts.

For details of all of DLI’s educational offerings, including course curriculum, visit them online at [dlionline.org](http://dlionline.org).

### Drycleaning & Laundry Institute 2022 Educational Schedule

#### **Introduction to Drycleaning (On Site):**

March 7-11  
Aug. 8-12  
Oct. 17-21

#### **Advanced Drycleaning (On Site):**

March 14-25  
Aug. 15-26  
Oct. 24-Nov. 4

#### **Stain Removal (Virtual):**

**Spring:** April 26, 28, May 3, 5, 10, 12 and 17  
**Fall:** Sept. 13-15, 20, 22, 27, 29 and Oct. 4

#### **Introduction to Drycleaning (Blended):**

**Virtual:** June 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23 and 28  
**On Site:** July 14-15

## Sneak Peek Inside

### 6 Killing with kindness

Whether working as a CSR, plant owner or consultant, Jennifer Whitmarsh tries to spread positivity.

### 14 Employment Law 101

From the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to GINA in 2008, there are numerous labor laws that you need to know.

### 18 Finding better balance

Drycleaners need to find that sweet spot where they can achieve happiness and profit with their business.

### 20 Sharing the wealth

Knowledge is the foundation of strength, and the industry has many excellent sources available right now.



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Ultimately, though, Generation Y is looking for a compatible company culture,

In terms of customers, the key words are a lot more complicated. As Kelby Sankey noted during WinterFest EXPO, many factors determine your ranking in online organic searches. For starters, Google will rank your website higher if you update content frequently. When you consider that 75% of organic searches end up clicking through on one of the first three results, this is an area many drycleaners could stand to do better. Understandably, discussions of things such as search engine optimization, meta tags and URL inspection tools may sound like another language to you, but that is the point. That is the language the highest number of potential employees and customers speak fluently and, like it or not, your company has to find a way to communicate it on their terms.

## News & Features

## Columns

- 8 Don Desrosiers** Cutting labor is a great idea, but when it is done badly, it can actually cost you money
- 12 Kermit Engh** Why is the Switzerland Structure so important to determining your business's value?
- 14 Frank Kollman** There's a lot more to achieving EEOC compliance than many owners/supervisors realize
- 16 Bruce Grossman** This month, we conclude our look at your cleaning machine's solvent heating section
- 18 James Peuster** If you cannot find your business's sweet spot, it's easy to work too hard and burn out
- 20 Peter Blake** What have you done to adapt your business to today?
- 24 Dan Eisen** What should you consider when choosing the safest and best stain removal agents?

Visit [www.nationalclothesline.com](http://www.nationalclothesline.com) for additional coverage of the drycleaning industry, plus access to numerous industry resources and links and archives of ***National Clothesline*** issues going back to January of 2018.

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# How Many Dry Cleaners Has Your Insurance Agent Handled? One or Two? Three?

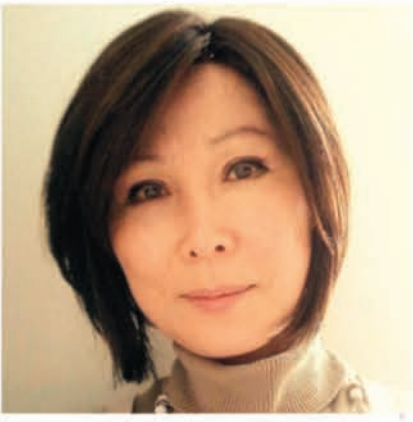


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# Spreading positivity

**F**or Jennifer Whitmarsh, the former co-owner of Executive Cleaners in Buffalo, NY, who recently joined The Route Pros as an industry consultant, taking a break from the chaos of life to go fishing in Florida helps her recharge her batteries. Unfortunately, life tends to follow her there. While on a trip two years ago, she'd heard rumblings about Covid spreading but wasn't prepared for what she learned next.

"When I got back into the office — I think it was Monday, March 16 — and I looked at our sales from the weekend... I had never seen sales drop so drastically so quickly," she recalled. "I grabbed my assistant manager at the time and I said, 'Hey, let's make a video.' I don't even know what I was thinking."

Her instincts were just to stay positive, especially as time passed and the pandemic worsened. "Like, when we were in the thick of Covid — nobody was coming to work, everybody was staying home, people were very, very scared — I wanted to put a smile on everybody's faces," she explained.

Topics of the videos typically aimed to educate customers about laundry lessons, but mostly Jennifer tried to offset all of the bad news and anxiety proliferating at the time by focussing on more optimistic messages, even including her blooper reels to give people more reasons to smile. She also proactively began filming training videos at the end of each day, strengthening her company's resources in slower times.

In fact, it seemed like the perfect time for Jennifer and her business partner — Arthur Fuerst, who started Executive Cleaners — to make a deal for her to be sole owner. "We just couldn't come to an agreement," she said. "I ultimately left."

The decision to leave came in 2020, though Jennifer stuck around with the company until February of 2021, logging in about 17 years there altogether.

**G**rowing up in Buffalo, Jennifer was eager to work, but she didn't like her first job at a pizza place because of a mean manager. So, she applied at Executive Cleaners knowing it had a convenient location.

"I had a car but I could have walked to the plant from my high school," she recalled. "But then I had to work at a location that was like, say, about 20 miles away. I just find it comical that I had my choice. It was either there or I don't get to work there. It's comical because, very often in my adult role hiring people, if they couldn't work at a certain store, they were like, 'Oh no. I'm not interested.' I never understood that."

Jennifer started at the front counter and immediately realized it was a perfect fit for her. Her mother, who had always encouraged her to smile, taught her how to "kill people with kindness."

"It's quiet when no one's around. All of a sudden, a customer comes in and you can engage with them," she explained. "I can tell multiple stories of being a 16-, 17-, 18-year-old listening to what a customer was sharing with me, and I would think, 'This is crazy that

you're sharing this with me,' — but sometimes that's what a customer needs."

While Jennifer studied human behavior closely at the front counter of the plant, she also studied social science at the University at Buffalo with the intention of counseling youth in some capacity in the future.



## Jennifer Whitmarsh

The Route Pros  
Buffalo, NY

However, her plans changed when she was offered a bigger role at Executive in 2009, managing the office and overseeing finances, employee productivity and customer satisfaction. Three years later, she also became a partner in the company.

"What was great about my old partner — one of the things — was that he was fair. He was able to see through the lens of family," Jennifer noted. "Now, don't get me wrong. He valued family very, very much, but he was also able to see that even though I'm not family I could still add value to the team."

**W**hen Jennifer became the general manager of the business (now called Arthur's Executive Cleaners) in 2018, her duties included overseeing production.

In order to advance her knowledge on the subject, she attended the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's one-week introductory course and its two-week advanced offering.

"I'm not saying I want to do it or have to do it, but I've got to be able to understand how everything works if I want to run a successful cleaners," she explained. "I went to school so I could learn it the right way, understand it and know the why, and then I can teach it."

She finished the advanced course right before Covid exploded during her fishing excursion. One year later, she had said goodbye to Executive Cleaners and went fishing in Florida again.

Once again, life followed her there, this time in the form of James Peuster and Mark Albrecht of The Route Pros calling to persuade her to join their consulting team. While she still wants to own her own plant again someday, Jennifer has no regrets of saying "yes" to the offer during last year's fishing trip — and, yes, she said as much from the beach in Florida during her most recent fishing trip last month.

"It worked out pretty well because,

in a couple of months, I'll be a year in and it's been amazing being part of The Route Pros' team, meeting our members, seeing other people's plants, helping them grow their front counters," she noted. "I'm certainly learning every day, whether it's because I've seen a new operation or a new piece of equipment or a new process that somebody does...

if you're not learning, you're not growing — and if you're not growing, you're shrinking. I learn from members all the time."

**W**hether it's her first day in the industry behind the front counter back in 2004 or it's her most recent day on the job as a consultant, Jennifer believes every moment can be a learning moment — and that applies to everybody from employees to leaders and managers. "You learn from everything around you as long as you're open to learning," she said.

**"I just try to spread positivity because life isn't always rainbows and butterflies."**

More importantly, though, leaders must remain proactive even in the most difficult of times, she emphasized. "It really helps to be proactive all the time because real life gets in the way, real fires happen, real people quit, real issues happen," she said. "That's why it is so important to have a leadership plan — with yourself, with your leaders, with other team members."

"That's why I encourage people — no matter if you have a full staff or not — to always be looking to hire up, promote within or hire," she continued. "You're putting processes in place so whether you're short-handed or you've got your full team, you're OK."

Even with a full team, it's going to be hard to keep them in the future. Jennifer hopes the industry will work hard to improve its employee culture.

"We have to invest in our people," she said. "I'm not saying I haven't heard some great stories from some

great cleaners who do invest in their people — but, just as a whole — we need to invest in our people."

Perhaps the most crucial quality a leader can possess, however, is to be positive as much as they can. When that isn't possible, perhaps it's time to lock yourself in the office. After all, negativity won't improve the situation.

"I just try to spread positivity because life isn't always rainbows and butterflies," she said. "Just because I'm positive all the time doesn't mean I'm walking around with a smile plastered on my face. It's just that I know there's better things ahead."

**I**n addition to consulting for the better part of the last year, Jennifer has also appeared at various industry events delivering presentations on finding, hiring, training, engaging, managing and keeping employees — popular topics, to be sure.

As Jennifer sees it, cleaners would be wise to be at full strength in the future, especially if historical economic patterns repeat.

"I've been saying this for a couple of years now... I believe we are in the 1970s, so to speak. Our 2020 was the polyester 1980s. Now, I'm hoping it's sooner than later, but in the 1980s, we got our rollback. I'm hoping our next three, four, five years — hopefully sooner — we start to get our rollback," she said. "It's a cycle. It's a roller coaster. You can look at it in fashion. You can look at it in any factory."

One thing, however, that will not roll back, is the consumer craving for convenience, which is good news for drycleaners.

"People want convenience and that's one thing that we can always provide," Jennifer said.

With a brighter future forecasted ahead, Jennifer currently plans to keep consulting cleaners with kindness, preferring the positive approach even when things don't go as planned.

"Companies have to rise to the occasion when we get thrown a curveball," she said. "Rise above and don't lose faith. Reinvest where we need to reinvest and fine-tune the really great things that you know you've got going in your company... because you lasted this long. Don't give up now."





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# Exploring the *why* behind Generation Y

*Continued from page 1*

lowing: rollover vacation time, retirement contribution, student loan payback assistance, gym memberships, fur baby insurance, daycare contribution and specialty time off to volunteer. Keep in mind, this generation is motivated by much more than money.

"Money is a short-term fix. The dollars are a band-aid," Whitmarsh said. "Don't get wrapped up in thinking money is a motivator. Advancement is a motivator. They will rise to the occasion when you motivate them."

## Optimizing Online for Organic Searching

In addition to offering a work culture that appeals to Generation Y, drycleaners are increasingly trying to find ways for the younger generation to find them online. The days of simply putting up a website and waiting for visitors are long gone.

Today, it's all about search engine optimization (SEO), explained Kelby Sankey of Morellis Cleaners in Indianapolis during her session on "Taking Advantage of High Yield Marketing Approaches."

"You can spend every penny you have on a website, but it will be for nothing if nobody knows it's there," she said as she outlined numerous free methods cleaners can employ to improve their rankings in organic online searches. After all, she noted that 75% of people using Google searches end up clicking through one of the first three listed results. But, what determines that order?

"This is how Google sees your website... the algorithm tells its *spiders* to go out and crawl different websites. It also tells how often they should be going to these websites and they're specifically looking for links and pages," she said.



**During WinterFest EXPO 2022, Dave Coyle (top left) hosted a panel discussion on pricing strategies where drycleaners Ron Sacino (top right), David Edricks (bottom left) and Jonathan Bence (bottom right) relayed how their ideas of pricing drycleaning items have evolved over the years — but only after they overcame their reluctance to raise prices.**

"Updated content on those pages regularly encourages them to come back and crawl your website more frequently."

In other words, if you do not update content often, it negatively affects your ranking placement in organic searches. Sankey also provided numerous free tips to improve other factors that appeal to Google's search algorithm, from URL inspection tools to help you become aware of SEO issues on your site to modifying your site elements for better ranking.

## Panel Discussion Ponders Pricing Strategies

On the final day of WinterFest EXPO, Dave Coyle of Maverick Drycleaners invited several drycleaners to speak with him during a panel discussion on "How to Analyze Your Pricing Strategy." With the labor and supply shortages creating financial hardships for drycleaners, Coyle believes the answer is to remain aggressive with price increases.

"Over the past two years, I've seen that people really fall

into one of two camps. One is those who crawl into a bit of a turtle shell and do a bit of wait and see — waiting for things to go back to normal, waiting for things to get better," he explained. "Then, there are other people out there who are constantly learning, constantly trying to learn those new skills so they can take their business and themselves personally to the next level."

Huron, MI; and David Edricks of Edrick's Fine Drycleaning in Farmington, CT.

Edricks has worked to take his company and pricing to new levels by offering his company's Total Client Satisfaction program. "Our approach to premium pricing and specialty items is more than just charging more money for an item," he explained. "For us, what we're trying to do with pre-

## When told he needed to raise his prices 36%, Jonathan Bence was terrified. "I almost fainted. I couldn't sleep for days," he recalled.

"If you are very nervous, very trepid about the idea of raising your prices, it would probably be very helpful for you to hear from someone who is in that same exact position."

Instead of one, Coyle brought along three: Ron Sacino of Sacino's Cleaners in St. Petersburg, FL; Jonathan Bence of Troy Cleaners in Port

mium pricing is to create that client relationship and a program for our clients to earn their trust so that we can consider them a partner."

"When they trust us and they experience what we're able to do with their shirts and blouses and their regular day-to-day stuff, it makes it a lot easier for them to automati-

cally think of us when they want to do the specialty items," he added.

In Florida, Sacino's Cleaners had historically set their prices based on the competition's — a common method by cleaners. "That wasn't a good strategy at all," laughed owner Ron Sacino. What has been a good strategy for him — starting last July — is raising prices across the board one percent every month *until* the top 20% of their customers complain too much. However, the cost does come with extra effort. "We try to do things to make them love us," Sacino added.

For the final panelist — Jonathan Bence — the idea of raising prices was the last resort, even when it was clear that the business needed to do so to become profitable. Bence was convinced if he raised prices he would lose his customers to his competition.

When Coyle told him to raise his prices 36%, Bence was terrified. "I almost fainted," he confided. "I couldn't sleep for days — my wife could tell you. I didn't want to gouge customers. I didn't want to come across as some mean, rich guy."

Most of all, though, he didn't want to close his doors, so he finally relented. "To the best of my knowledge, we didn't lose any of our top 20% clients," he recalled, and even when some of the bottom 80% left, the business still became profitable due to the price increases. "Volume went down, but money went up," he added.

"I still remember those nights of that sick feeling to your stomach, but it was the right thing to do, and since then, we've raised prices twice just because of supplies and wages in our area," he continued. "Our team member pay has gone up about 30%, as well. So, you just have to do it."

# TCATA conference to move forward next month

When the Textile Care Allied Trades Association meets at the Wild Dunes Resort at the Isle of Palms next month, it will officially be 102 years old;

however, that will not stop the association from finally celebrating its 100th anniversary after Covid cancelled original plans in 2020.

The celebration will now take place at the association's 2022 Educational & Management Conference, scheduled from April 3 to 6.

The keynote speaker for the event will be John R. DiJulius, III, president of the DiJulius Group, a customer service consulting firm that has worked with companies like Starbucks, Chik-fil-A and Nestle.

He is also co-founder of John Robert's Spa, which has been named as one of the top 20 salons in America.

He is the author of several books relating to the customer service industry, including *The Customer Service Revolution: Overthrow Conventional Business, Inspire Employees and Change the World*.

Other speakers scheduled to speak at the event include Ian Heller and Nancye Combs.

Heller is a founder and senior partner at Distribution Strategy Group and has gathered more than 30 years of experience executing marketing and e-business strategy in the wholesale distribution industry.

Combs is a trusted adviser, remarkable educator and a voice of authority on Human Resources and Organizational Management.

In addition to being a speaker, she consults, writes and offers witness testimony on workplace issues.

Prior to the business sessions on Monday and Tuesday morning, TCATA will host a

board meeting from 4 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, followed by a welcome reception and dinner that evening.

Registration costs are reduced for those who sign up prior to March 25. The cost is \$700 for members and \$300 for spouses. After the March 25 deadline, however, the cost goes up to \$775 for members and \$400 for spouses.

To sign up, visit [tcata.org](http://tcata.org) and click on the "2022 Annual Conference" link from the top of the page.

Also on the site is a link to make reservations at the host hotel, the Wild Dunes Resort in Isle of Palms, SC. TCATA has reserved a rate of \$249 per night for those who make reservations from there.

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John DiJulius

Nancye Combs

Ian Heller





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# BUILDING VALUE



BY KERMIT ENGH

## How the Switzerland Structure drives value

**T**his month we are going to look at another driver of value for your company. This one is called the Switzerland Structure. You may be asking yourself why. Let's look at the history of Switzerland — a little country deep in the heart of Europe — and you'll find there's an interesting background.

Switzerland did not join either of the world wars despite being in the epicenter of the fighting. They decided not to cozy up to any of the geopolitical factions that were forming and decided to remain independent.

They did not send troops to Iraq during the Iraq War; they wanted to remain independent. When the Eurozone started to use the euro currency, they opted out and kept their own currency. In fact, they did not even join the United Nations before having an entire countrywide referendum on whether to join.

They are obsessed with remaining independent, and so we use the name of the Switzerland Structure to define how dependent your company

is on anyone... customer, employee or supplier.

Those who become the best at the Switzerland Structure attribute find a way to remain independent like the country of Switzerland from any one of those so they do not have a reliance on one customer, are too dependent on a single employee and are not too dependent on a single supplier.

### More Customers Means More Value

The most valuable companies that we see are the ones where the owners have no personal relationship with the customers because they have good customer diversification. They have hundreds of customers, not dozens of them.

To go back to the statistics, as we have discussed in previous months, we know the average multiple offered the businesses that have gone through our scoring assessment in Value Builders is 3.76 times their pre-tax profit.

This is from thousands of cases researched. However, when we isolate those that know each of their customers

by first name, those companies are seeing a significant discount — less than three times pre-tax profit.

### Those who become the best at the Switzerland Structure attribute have found a way to remain independent like Switzerland.

Again, if you know each of the customers by first name, it is going to be difficult to extract that business out of your hands and acquirers are going to look at that and say, "...but it's too dependent on this one employee, the owner and just a handful of customers."

There is too much customer concentration and too much employee dependence, so it will perform low. If you look at those businesses where the owner rarely gets involved in dealing with a single customer — in other words, there is a lot of customer diversification — those businesses are getting much higher values.

In my early days nearly 30

years ago, I worked extremely hard to learn my customers' names, especially those over the counter.

payments, ordering, payroll, HR functions, bank reconciliations or marketing functions.

Can you document your standard operating procedures so there is an employee manual that people can follow? This would allow a "plug and play" guide for employees so that they could follow your procedures. Think of McDonald's as the ultimate procedure maker.

### Diversifying Your Suppliers Reduces Vulnerability

Lastly, suppliers are the third area where you may become overly dependent. Having only one key supplier could have a major impact for your company.

What we want to do is diversify the suppliers to the point where no one supplier is dominating your supply chain. Different parts of the country struggle with this very situation. You may have only one viable supplier for your core supplies. This puts you in a very vulnerable position.

At least two of our Methods for Management members experienced this in the past year because the one vendor closed their doors.

Now, what is your backup? What would a potential buyer think of that situation?

We have looked at numerous factors in the value of your business over the past number of months. If you are curious as to how you would score, I encourage you to take the Value Builders Score to see where you stand currently. There is no cost or obligation. Please go to the link below and engage.

Until then, enjoy building value.

For your free Value Builders Score, visit our site online at: [mfmbusinesscoaching.com](http://mfmbusinesscoaching.com).

**Kermit Engh has been an owner/operator in the drycleaning industry for over 29 years and has been a Methods for Management member for over 24 years. His positions as managing partner of MfM and as a Certified Value Builders Coach allow him to share his extensive background in strategic planning, finance, process improvement, packaging and branding, employee training programs, profitability, cost analysis, acquisition analysis and succession planning. To find out more about how Kermit can help you maximize the value of your business, contact him by email at [kengh@mfmi.com](mailto:kengh@mfmi.com).**

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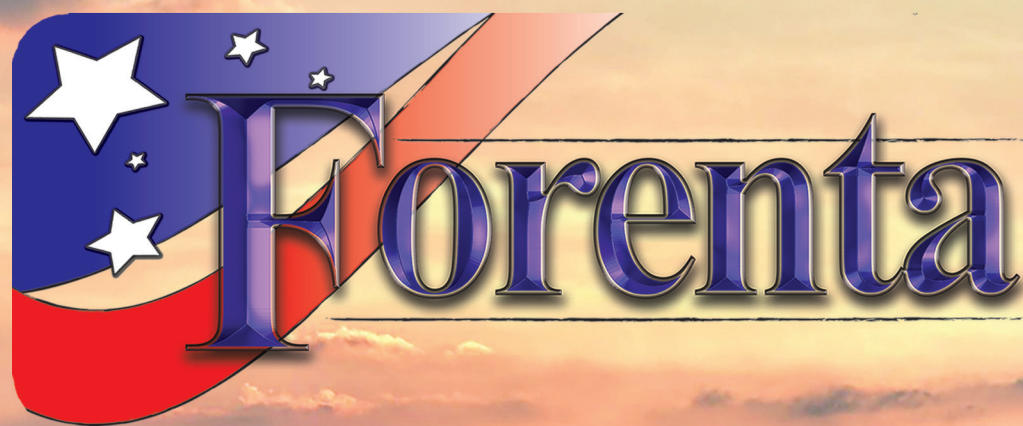
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# KEEP IT LEGAL



BY FRANK KOLLMAN

## Employment Law 101 is now in session

I am doing a training session tomorrow for an employer on Equal Employment Opportunity laws. I wish I could say that the company willingly engaged me to do the training, but the employer was ordered by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) — as part of a settlement — to conduct supervisor training on EEO compliance.

I thought I would share some of the presentation in this month's column.

Here are the laws administered by the EEOC in order of their enactment by Congress: **Equal Pay Act of 1963, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1991, the Genetic Information Non-discrimination Act of 2008, and the ADA amendments Act of 2008.** I know. You are exhausted already, but read on.

Before I summarize each law, keep in mind that each has anti-retaliation provisions.

Even if you are not violating any of these laws, you cannot retaliate against any employee who raises questions about employment practices under these laws. It is the rare employee complaint made in bad faith that can result in disciplinary action. Otherwise, complaints of discrimination should be addressed, even if untrue, without retaliation.

The **Equal Pay Act** says that employees must be paid equal pay for substantially equal work without regard to their sex. Exceptions unrelated to the employee's sex, such as seniority, skill, effort and responsibility, are permitted. But, if the wage is based on sex, it is illegal.

The **Civil Rights Act** prohibits discrimination based on race, color, sex, national origin and religion. Eventually, it was amended to include pregnancy-based discrimination.

The **Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)** prohibits discrimination against persons 40 years or older. Some state laws make age discrimination at any age improper.

The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** requires reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals who are employees or applicants for employment, unless to do so would cause undue hardship. In general, an accommodation is any change in the work environment or in the way things

successful claimants, provided for attorney's fees, and made jury trials possible. Prior to 1991, only judges could decide these discrimination lawsuits.

The **Genetic Information non-discrimination Act, a.k.a. GINA**, made it illegal to discriminate against employees or

panded to include same sex harassment, which was not the case when the anti-harassment regulations were issued. Words matter in the workplace.

Under the ADA, employees with disabilities are entitled to what is called the "interactive process" to discuss with their

**Employers have to understand that they are responsible for training their supervisors on these laws because they are responsible for the conduct of their supervisors.**

are customarily done that enables an individual with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities. Amended in 2008, the ADA now covers virtually every physical or mental health condition that could affect an employee's life activities, including temporary conditions.

The 1991 changes to the civil rights' laws added compensatory and punitive damages for

applications because of genetic information. Genetic information is basically any information relating to DNA, but it has been interpreted to mean information about relatives that could show, for example, that an employee's family is prone to particular diseases. GINA prohibits the use of genetic information in making employment decisions, restricts employers from requesting, requiring or purchasing genetic information, and strictly limits the disclosure of genetic information.

These laws have resulted in numerous interpretations by regulation or court decision. For example, decisions made on racial stereotypes or decisions based on who a non-minority employee associates with can be illegal (such as white employee with a non-white spouse). Racial and ethnic slurs, in addition to being evidence of discrimination, can themselves be challenged as creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Even where there is no conscious effort to treat an African American or woman differently in the workplace, if there is no legitimate business reason for the disparate treatment, that is evidence of discrimination (in these cases, race or sex).

Religious beliefs must be accommodated unless the accommodation would create undue hardship. While dress codes can be enforced, those dress codes must be modified to deal with religious requirements unless it can be shown that it would create an undue hardship for the employer.

The laws against sex discrimination also prohibit sexual harassment. In fact, sexual harassment laws have been ex-

employer or prospective employer if there is an accommodation that will permit them to do the job. Even if an employer is convinced that there is no accommodation and the effort would be a waste of time, there must be an interactive process to discuss the problem. The theory is that perhaps the employee will come up with a reasonable accommodation the employer has not considered.

Under the ADA, health questions prior to hire are generally prohibited. In addition, medical information must be kept separate from personnel files, and it must be treated as confidential. The EEOC, for example, takes the position that a positive Covid test is confidential medical information.

Finally, employers have to understand that they are responsible for training their supervisors on these laws because they are responsible for the conduct of their supervisors. As I have said at countless seminars, companies will require a supervisor to get permission to spend \$25, but permit them to make employment decisions — without training — that could cost the company hundreds of thousands of dollars. Many cases turn on whether the person who engaged in the potentially discriminatory conduct was, in fact, a supervisor. Know who your "legal" supervisors are and train them.

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](http://www.kollmanlaw.com). It has articles, sample policies, news and other information on employee/employer relations.



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# WRENCH WORKS



By BRUCE GROSSMAN

## Evaporating the cleaning solvent — Part II

In this issue, we conclude the series on solvent heating covering different components of your drycleaning machine's distillation system (see LEGEND in graphic for color indications and illustration for corresponding numbers).

**1a Steam Trap.** Similar to any other steam-heated device, there is a steam trap installed at the outlet of the steam jacket on the bottom of the still.

### Common Problems

• **Trap Stuck Shut.** If the trap is partially stuck shut, the still will prevent proper heating. This will stop or greatly slow the rate of distillation, even preventing any distillation from taking place at all.

• **Trap Stuck Open.** This condition is harder to diagnose since, in most cases, there will be no change in distillation performance. However, in situations where the boiler power is limited, the extra steam load caused by a trap stuck open may drop the steam pressure, reducing or greatly slowing the rate of distillation.

**4 Steam Sweep Valve.** Found on perc machines, this valve is used to admit live steam into the still at the end of the distillation cycle. The steam mixes with the solvent being still in the still bottom and forms what is known as an azeotropic mixture. This mixture boils at a lower temperature than perc, thereby boiling off (evaporating) most of the solvent left in the still bottom.

### Common Problems

• **Valve Open Too Much or Left Open.** Normally, there is a restrictor in series with this valve

which limits the flow of steam into the still. However, on some machines this is absent, and the flow of steam needs to be controlled by adjusting the valve opening manually. If the valve admits too much steam into the still, it may overly pressurize the condensing system resulting in extreme surging. This forces contaminated and/or unseparated water (more to follow about water separation in this series) into the distilled solvent storage tank. Also, if excess steam enters the still, it is possible to overwhelm the water separation process and overheat the solvent/water mixture. The result of this is inefficient solvent/water separation.

• **Valve Leaking.** If the steam sweep valve leaks, the result is usually an overheated still condenser, a tendency for the still to boil over and excess water discharging from the water separator's discharge valve. The presence of water droplets on the still sight glass, throughout the distillation cycle — even after several minutes of the addition of the new solvent to the still — is a very accurate indicator of this condition.

**5 Still Pressure Valve.** This valve is designed to open if a pre-set pressure is exceeded. In this application it prevents exceeding the proper pressure required to assist in forcing solvent vapors up and into the still condenser. When the distillation system is operating properly, you will not even know this valve is there.

### Common Problems

• **Valve Stuck Open.** You will know if this valve is stuck

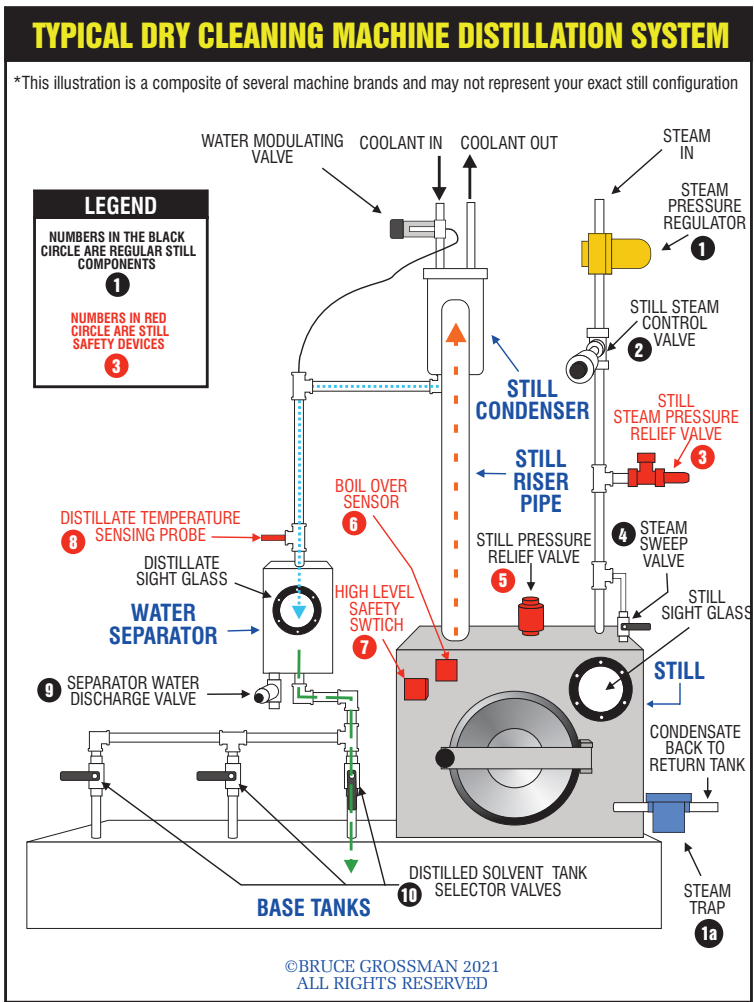
open as soon as the still heats up enough to evaporate solvent. Large quantities of solvent vapor will exit from the still area and you'll be able to smell solvent odor as well as see solvent vapor condensing around the outside of the still.

• **Valve Stuck Shut.** If this valve sticks shut and the still is operating correctly, there will be no indication at all. Should the still overheat or a blockage develops at the inlet or outlet of the still riser, there will be a very strong solvent odor and likely vapor or liquid solvent leaks at flanges and/or unions in the vapor path from the still as well as around any access to the still, like clean-out door and/or sight glass gaskets.

**6 Boil-Over Sensor.** This device is found mostly on the stills of newer machines that distill under a vacuum. It detects the height of the foam and/or solvent level inside the still, shutting off the steam supply and/or opening a solenoid valve connecting inside of the still to the atmosphere. On machines using vacuum and heat to evaporate the solvent, this will instantly increase the pressure inside the still, interrupting the distillation process and reducing the foam on top of the solvent. Usually, there is some error indication when this sensor is activated.

### Common Problems

• **Sensor Continuously Activated.** If this condition is present, you will be unable to pull a vacuum in the still. The vacuum pump will operate continuously without the distillation process starting. An error condition will



usually be indicated.

• **Sensor Fails to Activate.** If the still is working properly, there will be no indication of this device failing. However, if a still condition results in excessive foaming, there will likely be still boil-overs with the resultant contamination of the water separator(s) and distilled solvent storage tank.

**7 High-Level Safety Switch.** This is a float-operated switch monitoring the level of the solvent in the still. Inside the still is a ball float which is linked to

an electric switch on the outside of the still. If the level of solvent in the still exceeds a pre-set safety point, this device typically shuts off the solvent pump preventing any further filling of the still, as well as shutting off the still steam control valve, preventing any further heating of the still. There is typically some form of error indication when this switch is activated. The most obvious symptom will be the solvent pump will not operate, as well as an error message. Also, the still steam control valve will not open unless there is an override. This presents the problem of how to boil off the excess solvent in the still. I'll cover that procedure in another article. That's it for now. Next month I'll focus on the system that condenses the hot solvent into pure distilled solvent to be reused over and over again.

Bruce Grossman is the Chief of R&D for EZtimers Manufacturing. EZtimers is the manufacturer of the new EZ DOSE boiler compound manager and return tank level control which automatically adds the correct amount of boiler compound to the return tank, preventing oxygen corrosion and scaling, as well as replacing that troublesome ball float valve in the condensate return tank. Our SAHARA, high purity separator water mister/evaporators supply a thrifty, legal method to get rid of the separator water generated by your drycleaning machine. See our add in this issue. For more information visit online at [www.eztimers.com](http://www.eztimers.com). Please address any questions or comments to [bruce@eztimers.com](mailto:bruce@eztimers.com) or call (702) 376-6693.



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# THE ROUTE PRO



BY JAMES PEUSTER

## Finding better balance in your business

First of all — before we go any further — I want to eliminate any rumors that I am retiring, dying, divorcing my wife, looking for my lost cat, and all the other questions I’ve had to answer since announcing selling **The Route Pros** to Mark Albrecht recently.

Truly, it was a move designed to make things better for all of us involved, including our clients. However, I will continue staying on as a consultant, just like I did before. I appreciate all of the calls and concerns.

With that said, let us turn our attention to an underlying message that we often overlook when we run a business — and that is finding our sweet spot.

I personally define it as growing to a point where you’re making money, but not working harder and ultimately putting yourself in a position to implode.

**The biggest concern I usually have is the difference between your sweet spot and becoming complacent.**

Too often, businesses grow too fast and they’re not prepared or even have enough

staff. As an owner, you end up working 90 hours a week only to experience burnout — a loss of focus and energy which eventually leads the business back to an attrition of customers, which only places you where you were before the growth.

This does not mean you shouldn’t grow, just that you must find that spot where you can handle the growth, take care of the customers, raise your prices and continue to operate and run the business so that it doesn’t run you.

It’s probably one target that nobody looks at until they’ve actually experienced it.

The biggest concern I usually have is between your sweet spot and becoming complacent.

Too often, owners become too comfortable and take their feet off the gas pedal only to experience a loss in the business before it’s too late to rebound. The sweet spot can be different for every owner, as well. Some are more hands-on than others and truly enjoy it.

Others like to delegate, especially the things they don’t do well or might put them in the position of getting in the way. The bottom line when you run a business is that your bottom line is the bottom line!

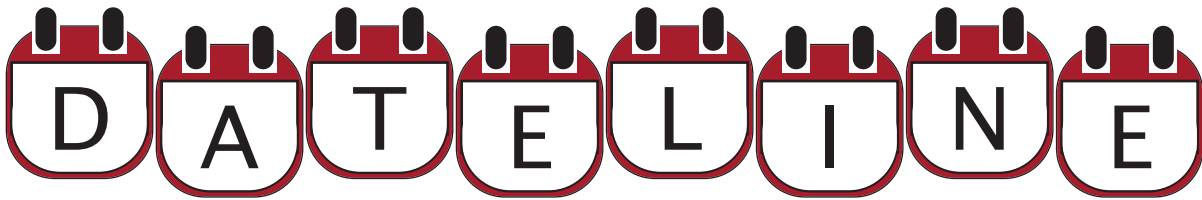
Do you want to make enough profit for a comfort-

able living and/or put yourself in a position to sell? Wealth does not always equal profit.

Remember, you can only handle so much of the business before you have too much on your plate.

Find your sweet spot and you will find happiness and profit. You will also have a better chance of survival over the next few years.

**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.theroutepro.com](http://www.theroutepro.com).**



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- 2022**
- March 7-11** Drycleaning and Laundry Institute’s “Introduction to Drycleaning” class, DLI’s School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. For more information, visit [DLIonline.org](http://DLIonline.org).
- March 13** Drycleaning and Laundry Institute’s webinar with Dave Coyle on “How to Use BizLeads to Acquire Target Professionals.” For more information, visit [DLIonline.org](http://DLIonline.org).
- March 14-25** Drycleaning and Laundry Institute’s “Advanced Drycleaning” class, DLI’s School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. For more information, visit [DLIonline.org](http://DLIonline.org).
- March 30** Drycleaning and Laundry Institute’s webinar with Frank Briercheck on “Wash-Dry-Fold.” For more information, visit [DLIonline.org](http://DLIonline.org).
- April 3-6** Textile Care Allied Trades Association’s 2022 Educational & Management Conference, Wild Dunes Resort in Isle of Palms, SC. For more information, visit [tcata.org](http://tcata.org).
- April 4** Wisconsin Fabricare Institute’s Milwaukee Brewers MLB Game 2022, Johnsonville Party Deck. For more information, visit [wisecleaners.com](http://wisecleaners.com).

- April 24** National Cleaners Association’s “Advanced Stain Removal” class, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST. For more information, visit [nca-i.com](http://nca-i.com).
- April 25-29** National Cleaners Association’s “Five-Day Drycleaning and Stain Removal” course, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. EST daily. For information, visit [nca-i.com](http://nca-i.com).
- April 26, 28, May 3, 5, 10, 12, 17** Drycleaning and Laundry Institute’s “Stain Removal” class (virtual). For more information, visit [DLIonline.org](http://DLIonline.org).
- April 29 - May 1** North Carolina Association of Launderers & Cleaners 2022 Spring Meeting, Blockade Runner Beach Resort, Wrightsville Beach, NC. For more information, visit [ncalc.org](http://ncalc.org).
- May 15** National Cleaners Association’s “Technical Training at the Counter for CSRs” class, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST. For more information, visit [nca-i.com](http://nca-i.com).
- May 21-22** National Cleaners Association’s “Two-Day Pressing and Finishing” course, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. EST. For more information, visit [nca-i.com](http://nca-i.com).

- May 17-19** Excellence in Laundry Conference, sponsored by the Coin Laundry Association. Rancho Bernardo Inn, San Diego, CA. Call (800) 570-5629.
- June 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23, 28 (virtual) July 14-15 (on-site)** Drycleaning and Laundry Institute’s “Introduction to Drycleaning” class (blended virtual and live), DLI’s School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. For information, visit [DLIonline.org](http://DLIonline.org).
- June 21** Wisconsin Fabricare Institute’s Fitzgerald Classic Golf Outing, River Club of Mequon. For more information, visit [wisecleaners.com](http://wisecleaners.com).
- July 29-30** Michigan Institute of Laundering and Drycleaning summer convention, Crystal Mountain, Thompsonville MI. Call (870) 390-6453.
- July 30-August 2** Clean Show 2022. Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, GA. Call (770) 984-8023.
- August 8-12** Drycleaning and Laundry Institute’s “Introduction to Drycleaning” class, DLI’s School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. For information, visit [DLIonline.org](http://DLIonline.org).

- August 11-13** TexCare Asia & China Laundry Expo, Shanghai New International Expo Centre in China. For more information, visit [texcare.com/brand](http://texcare.com/brand).
- August 15-26** Drycleaning and Laundry Institute’s “Advanced Drycleaning” class, DLI’s School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. For more information, visit [DLIonline.org](http://DLIonline.org).
- September 13-16** Textile Rental Services Association annual conference and exchange, Nashville, TN. Call (703) 519-0029.
- September 13-15, 20, 22, 27, 29, Oct. 4** Drycleaning and Laundry Institute’s “Stain Removal” class (virtual). For more information, visit [DLIonline.org](http://DLIonline.org).
- September 30 - October 1** Southwest Drycleaners Association’s annual Membership & Board meeting, Albuquerque Marriott Pyramid North, Albuquerque, NM. For more information, visit [sda-dryclean.com](http://sda-dryclean.com).
- October 14-16** North Carolina Association of Launderers & Cleaners 2022 Annual Convention, Cambria Downtown, Asheville, NC. For more information, visit [ncalc.org](http://ncalc.org).

- October 17-21** Drycleaning and Laundry Institute’s “Introduction to Drycleaning” class, DLI’s School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. For more information, visit [DLIonline.org](http://DLIonline.org).
- October 21-24** EXPOdetergo International, Fiera Milano convention center, Milan, Italy. For more information, visit [expodetergo.com](http://expodetergo.com).
- October 24 - November 4** Drycleaning and Laundry Institute’s Advanced Drycleaning class, DLI’s School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. For more information, visit [DLIonline.org](http://DLIonline.org).

- 2023**
- April 28-30** SDA’s Cleaners Showcase, Irving Convention Center, Irving, TX. Call (512) 873-8195.
- 2024**
- November 9-13** Texcare International trade show, Frankfurt Exhibition Centre, Germany. For more information, visit [texcare.com/brand](http://texcare.com/brand).





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# AN OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVE



BY PETER BLAKE

## How have you adapted to today's reality?

One of the things that has impressed me the most over the past few years is just how resilient our industry is. We have seen challenges and obstacles like never before, but we have risen to meet those challenges, looked forward and found ways to overcome those obstacles and are poised to take advantage of the opportunities that lie ahead.

To recognize those opportunities and challenges, first you need to understand what business you are in. If you are a DLI member and have partaken in the DLI peer-to-peer calls lately, this topic has been discussed a few times. Common answers include: cleaning garments, cleaning textiles, keeping customers looking good, providing service, taking care of customers' needs and more. One of my favorites was "providing a positive experience for those who use our services."

This question is not a new one. One member recently sent me an excerpt from the *DLI Fabricare* from 2012:

*"Business is not merely about*

*making money or beating the competition or being your own boss, though those are nice benefits. Business means serving customers. Serving customers means making people happy, and when you make people happy they have a tendency to like you. People buy from people they like!"*

great service, great quality, a social conscious, and a business that is a part of your customers' community.

By recognizing that your main business is providing the services your customers and potential customers need and want is paramount to adapting

### Now is the time to take a step forward and position yourself in a place of strength.

In my opinion, the people who look beyond the technical aspect of our services — the cleaning of fabrics and textiles — and look more at the need to service our customers and make a positive impact in their lives are the ones who have adapted the quickest and have set themselves up for success. I don't think there is any better statement to sum up the consumer attitude that prevails today. You need to be a business that people like to buy from and use. That means

to the changes we have all faced. It is not just about cleaning shirts/blouses and skirts/suits; it is about helping them understand the benefits of the service you can provide. You are selling a good experience. It is a "people" business and how you make them feel is the pivotal attribute to your success. If they feel good, then your service will be successful regardless of the cost.

We have seen tremendous growth in the wash-dry-fold (or even the new wash-dry-

hang) programs many cleaners have tried. We have seen a growth in pickup and delivery routes as people have looked to adapt to their customers' need for convenience and contact-less service. While many of these things were brought about by Covid, most of these changes were already heading our way and the pressures just accelerated the changes.

#### How do you recognize the challenges?

If you are reading this, you are already ahead of the game. Publications like *National Clothesline* provide a tremendous service. They bring you free information on the latest happenings, news and columnists that help you understand the implications of that information. There are other free industry publications, as well, and they all bring a little different perspective. You should subscribe to them all.

One of the critical reasons our industry has been able to adapt so well has been the wealth of information that was made readily available. DLI and its local partners — like my groups, NEFA, SEFA and MAC — have all excelled at proving timely information and valuable insight for its members and the industry. Like the drycleaning industry, I, too, had to adapt to the new realities and change my focus on what we provided. We had to do more, not less. We needed to be out in front of the issues so people like our members, the trade press and consultants knew where to look for answers.

There is no better time to be a member. We are continuing these efforts and even strengthening them as we look beyond Covid and to new fashions and trends. Our programs will only grow stronger as we focus on the news, marketing, social media and technical information. We will provide you with all of the latest information on government and human resources programs. Trust me, there are still a lot of changes to come, and you will need resources to understand the implications.

#### Use all of the tools in your toolbox

Don't just rely on the free printed publications I mentioned, but use the other tools that are out there. DLI has a terrific Facebook Group designed to answer all of your

questions and concerns. *The Route Pros and Maverick Marketing* have great groups, and there are many more. Search out these social media groups so you can be kept up-to-date on the latest trends and information. Look to your vendors to keep you up-to-date on critical supply chain issues and timelines. Use their knowledge and expertise. They are valuable resources and provide great insight into the marketplace.

Now is not the time to pull back and wait out the changes; now is the time to take a step forward and position yourself in a place of strength. Knowledge is the foundation of that strength.

DLI has weekly peer-to-peer calls that are an open forum. Recent calls have featured topics like pricing strategies, marketing, hours of operation, drop boxes, POS companies, credit card fees and the biggest issue facing all small businesses — staffing.

If you are reading this and would like to sit in on one of these calls as my guest, let me know and I will personally send you a link and invite you to participate. Just call or email me.

#### Now is the time!

If you are not a member of DLI and its partners, now is the perfect time to join. Industry vendors understand the benefits of membership so much that they have joined together to reward people who join and renew their membership. You will see from the ad in this issue (page 17) that a new membership pays for itself just by these incentives alone. Act now. Try it for a year and learn how you can strengthen your business.

I am committed to your success. I firmly believe that if you succeed and I can play some role in that success, then I have done my job. I invite all industry members to reach out and let me know where your biggest challenges are coming from and I will see how we can work together to provide ways to conquer them.

Peter Blake serves as executive director of the North East Fabricare Association, the Southeastern Fabricare Association, and the MidAtlantic Association of Cleaners. He can be reached by email at [peteblke@aol.com](mailto:peteblke@aol.com) or by phone at (617) 791-0128.

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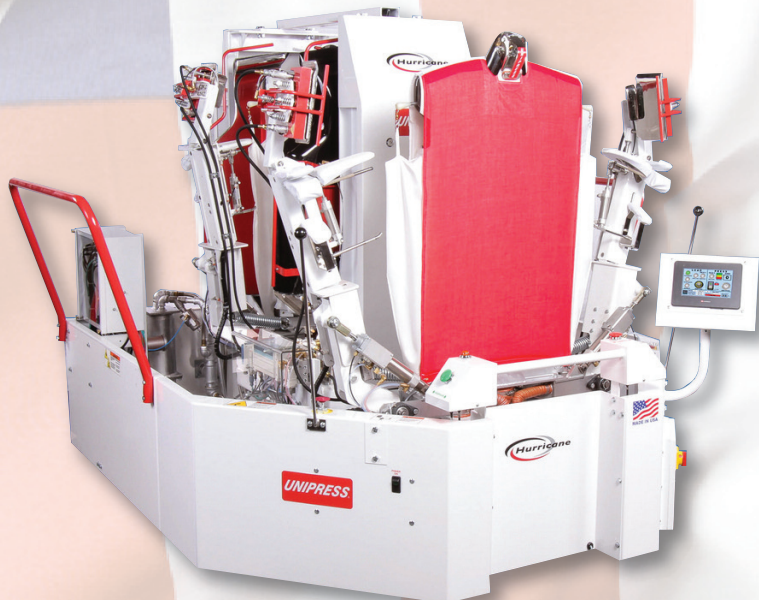
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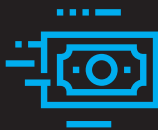
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# THE SPOTTING BOARD



BY **DAN EISEN**

## Choosing the best stain removal agents

**D**uring the course of my consultations and trainings I come across drycleaners using a large variety of different chemicals from different manufacturers. The chemical formulations offered by different manufacturers are not necessarily similar, and the drycleaner has to choose what works best for them. There is not just one manufacturer who has a monopoly providing all the best chemicals.

The drycleaner may use different products from different manufacturers. Drycleaners should jump at the opportunity of obtaining samples and trying different products in order to find out which one works best for them. Using products properly is a must for obtaining the best results.

**Neutral Lubricant**

This is one of the most important aids for successful wet side stain removal. The drycleaner who does not use neutral lubricant misses out on the opportunity to remove wet side staining without using tannin or protein formulas.

The quality of the neutral lubricant that you use and the way it is use are important factors. Neutral lubricant is used after the stain is flushed with proper mechanical action. The neutral lubricant not only protects the fabric from damage, it helps break up the stain, lifting the stain, so it can be easily flushed from the fabric.

**Protein Formulas**

The safest protein formulas are the ones that have the lowest alkalinity. The formulation is effective on protein stains and provides safety to most fabrics, including silk. The more dangerous protein formulas are the ones with a high alkaline content, and those containing ammonia.

**Tannin Formulas**

An effective and safe tannin formula has a mild acid content. Tannin formulas with a higher acid content and those containing acetic acid may not have the same safety properties.

**Ability to Combine Products**

Check with your chemical

company or sales representative whether you can combine tannin and protein formulas. I work with a chemical company who has shown me how a protein and tannin formula combination can be effective in removing some difficult stains. Although combining acid- and alkaline-based chemicals is not recommended, the results of combining some products can be beneficial.

**Digesters**

Digesters are enzyme-based products that convert protein into soluble sugar. Different manufacturers have different enzyme-based products with different properties and safety. You should understand the properties of the enzyme-based products and choose the one that is best for you.

**High Temperature Enzymes.** These enzymes are usually liquid and can be used at high temperatures up to 140°F and do not break down with other chemicals. They are used with mechanical action and have a relative degree of safety, but not entirely.

**High Temperature Alkaline-Based Enzymes.** These enzyme-based products can be used with soaking or mechanical action. These are not designed for safety on fabrics such as silk, or those with poor color fastness.

**Low Temperature Powder Enzymes.** These enzymes are the safest enzymes to use and are designed for use on silks and those garments with poor color fastness. They have the same degree of safety as using water. They can be used in a bath or for spotting board use. They must be used with temperatures no higher than 120°F, have no contact with chemicals and be allowed to work on a fabric for at least 20 minutes. These enzyme-based products require no mechanical action.

**Ink Removers**

There are several products manufactured for ink removal. Some have the capability of removing ink and are safe to the fiber and color. There are some ink removers produced that are more aggressive and may affect fabrics such as acetate

and tri-acetate.

It should also be noted that some ink removers have the capability of removing plastic-based stains, which has the benefit of eliminating amyl acetate which is prohibited in some states.

**Oxygen Bleaches**

Sodium perborate and sodium percarbonate. Both bleaches are alkaline by nature and I use for whitening fabrics in a bath. Sodium percarbonate offers a higher degree of safety since it dissolves easier in cool water.

**Rust Removers**

**Hydrofluoric acid and oxalic acid.** Both products are used as rust removers. Oxalic acid provides a higher degree of safety, especially on glass and metallic trimmings.

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](http://www.garmentanalysis.com).

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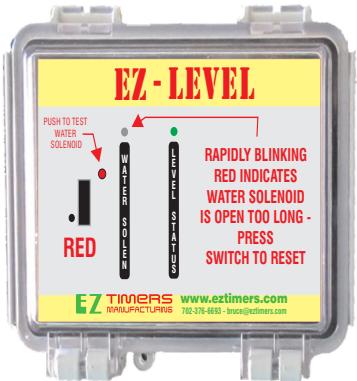
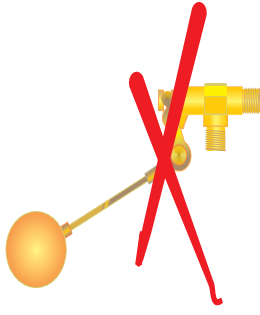
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**Plant for Sale:** Daytona Beach, FL area, long-time established drycleaning business for sale. Owner retiring. Business and building available. Staff well trained. Call (386) 547-1520 for details.

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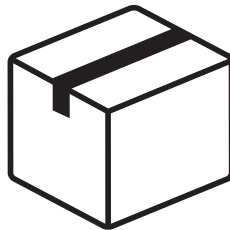
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Life goes on

For the Bodin family, starting a cleaning business in Yonkers, NY, was an opportunity for a clean slate. Before that, 12-year-old Paul Bodin and his father, David, had been forced to flee their native country during the Russian Revolution during which the family business in Kiev was confiscated. An old article from the Herald.

**Industry balancing act to continue in 2022**

As cleaners prepare to close the door on 2021 (and perhaps throw away the key), the last 11 months have proven to be another arduous challenge, harshly punctuated by shortages of every imaginable kind: hangers, plastic, computer chips, steel and other metals, lumber, packaging materials, zippers and

**FallFest EXPO pushes date back**

Even though interest for FallFest EXPO remains high, many cleaners are too short-staffed and overburdened to spend three days devoted to it in early December. As a result, the North East Fabricare Association, the South Eastern Fabricare Association and the Pennsylvania and Delaware Cleaners

**Light always follows darkness**  
by Peter Blake

It has been a long, interesting and challenging 18 months, to say the least. I know I have never worked harder or more hours than I have during the past year and a half. I also

**Don's wishlist to St. Nick: 2021 edition**  
by Don Deroulers

BH! Happy December! It is that time once again for my annual Christmas Wishlist. Every year, I send a plea to the great St. Nick for products that do not

**A Tribute to James Peuster**  
by Mark Albrecht and Jennifer Whitmarsh

As we round out 2021, let's recognize an achievement of a familiar personality in our industry. James Peuster, JP has many know him begins his

## Index of Advertisers March 2022

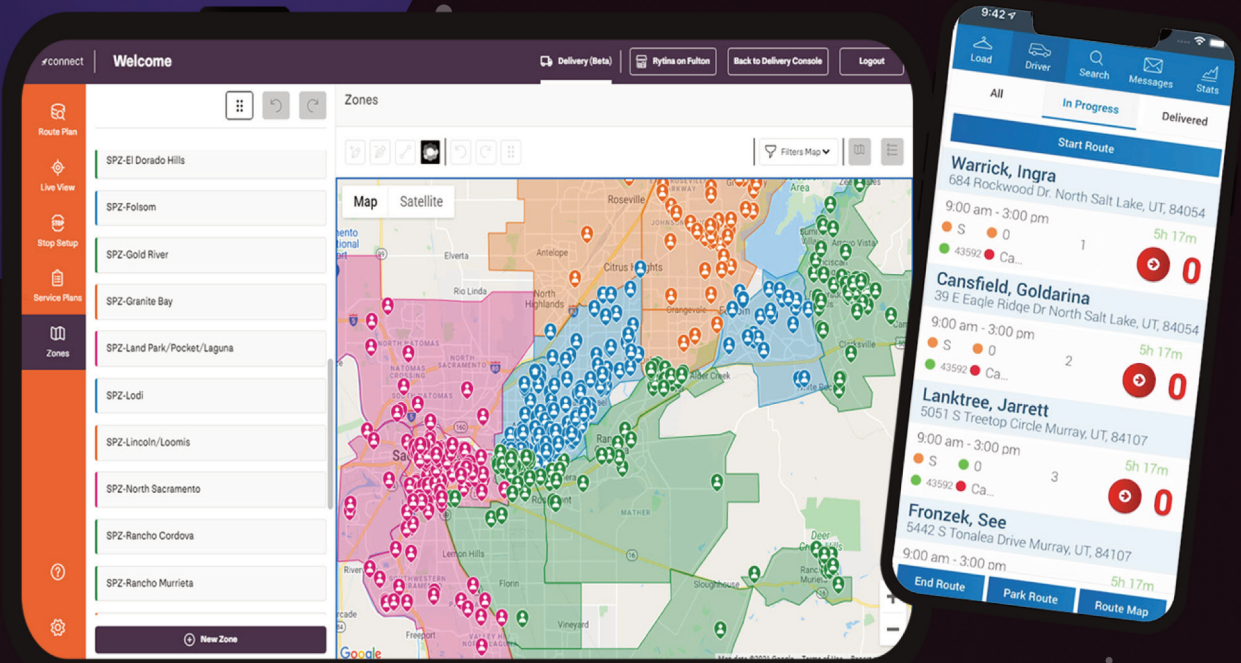
BeCreative 360 .....	7	Iowa Techniques .....	8
Clean Show .....	22	Methods for Management	14
Cleaner Business System ..	3	Newhouse Specialties .....	26
Cleaner's Supply .....	26	NIE Insurance .....	5
Columbia/ILSA .....	15	North American Bancard ..	23
DLI .....	17	Parker Boiler .....	2
Dryclean 101.com .....	25	Patriot Business Advisors	26
European Finishing ....	16, 28	PROS Parts .....	26
EZ Timers .....	24	Route Pros .....	20
EZProducts .....	24	Sankosha, USA .....	9
Forenta .....	13	SPOT Business Systems ..	27
Fulton Boiler .....	19	Tailwind .....	12
Garment Management ....	11		
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