



National Clothesline



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Cleaners turn up, catch up at Clean '22

The Clean Show made its highly-anticipated comeback in Atlanta recently and nearly 10,000 attendees showed up to participate in the four-day event.

While that attendance number is less than those tallied in recent years, it was almost on par with the total from the 2009 Clean Show in New Orleans which drew just over 9,900 people.

Clean 2022's exhibit hall at the Georgia World Congress Center included 347 exhibiting companies altogether that filled up 216,400 sq. ft. That number is 8,500 sq. ft. less than the last Clean Show held in 2019 in New Orleans, but 20,000 sq. ft. more than the previous Clean Show hosted in Atlanta seven years ago.

"These industries have been through a lot these last two years and Clean's goal is to serve as a global platform for knowledge and idea sharing so that companies may walk away with tools they need to recover, and ultimately, thrive," noted Greg Jira, show director from Messe Frankfurt. "With the feedback we are receiving from this year's event, it is clear that we were able to accomplish that and so much more."

Show organizer Messe Frankfurt also said that exhibitors reported being pleased with the overall attendance of the event, as well as the quality of the attendees present on the show floor.

Meanwhile, the show floor contained aisles of offerings showcasing innovative technology and tools for the drycleaning, commercial laun-



ATTENTIVE ATTENDEES showed up to Clean 2022 (above) in Atlanta with smiles and serious agendas in search of all the latest industry technology, tips and tricks (top left). Educational sessions at the Georgia World Congress Center were often overflowing with onlookers (center left) to see speakers such as Sean Abbas (bottom left) who pointed out that U.S. business have spent \$24 billion in the past decade on employee culture and engagement. "Culture is not something you can go out and buy," he told the audience.

dering and textile care industries. In fact, this time out, there were 51 first-time exhibitors, a record number topping any previous offering of Clean.

Of particular interest to attendees was any piece of equipment capable of helping them improve efficiency and significantly reduce labor hours, or — even better — virtually eliminate labor in cases where automation technology is possible.

The energy on the show floor continued after exhibit

hours as rooms full of drycleaners recharged and reconnected at the joint reception hosted by DLI and the Textile Care Allied Trades Association and various other social events for attendees in Atlanta.

Crafting a Work Culture

Overall, about 34 hours of educational sessions were hosted during Clean 2022. One highlight was a program on workplace culture by Sean Abbas of Threads, Inc.

"We know that culture is big business, and here's a hard

truth to swallow: in the last 10 years in the U.S., spending on culture and engagement in businesses have increased \$24 billion," he noted.

"So, the problem is this: we all want good culture, but we also know this... those of you that have it or have had it in the past know it takes hard work, clear objectives, selflessness, honesty, humility and time," he continued. "Culture is not something you can go out and buy no matter how many times you've been told

that you can go buy the favor of your employees, you simple can't do it. Here's the truth, frankly, most people are unwilling to give the time and effort necessary to do this."

The keys to creating a culture is to begin with a set of core values for your business, define clear expectations from employees and make sure there is accountability for the whole team. Also, don't copy another company's culture; they should reflect what you

Continued on page 8

NEFA plans Profit Fest conference this Fall

While the drycleaning industry has hosted a few virtual "Fests" during the last couple of years, the upcoming Profit Fest offered by the North East Fabricare Association next month will definitely be an "in-person" event. It is set to feature tabletop exhibits and numerous educational sessions geared toward helping cleaners run their businesses more profitably.

"We changed the name slightly from the more traditional "Fall Fest" to reflect the need to focus on certain man-

agement areas," noted NEFA Executive Vice President Peter Blake. "I know every attendee will benefit from the program."

Guest speakers for the conference, set to take place in Wakefield, MA, from Oct. 28 to 30, will include: Jason Loeb of Sudsies's, Dave Coyle from In the

Bag Cleaners and Maverick Drycleaners, and a representative from Puzzle HR, a firm that specializes in Human Resources.

This year's Drycleaner's

Spotlight will be Rechelle Balanzat, the CEO and founder of Juliette's Cleaners in Manhattan, NY.

"This is exciting to bring live programs back to the membership," noted NEFA President Larry Fish. "It has been too long, and we really want to provide a great experience for all of our members. This will be one of the best programs yet, and I think it will be one of the best attended. I am sure

most drycleaners and small businesses are feeling isolated and need to rekindle the strong sense of community. This will be the perfect opportunity."

In addition to the educational sessions and tabletop exhibits, the association plans several social events, including its popular silent auction, a cocktail reception and a brainstorming lunch session.

More details about the event, including information on registration, will be made available on the association's site, www.nefabricare.com.



Dave Coyle



Jason Loeb



Rechelle Balanzat



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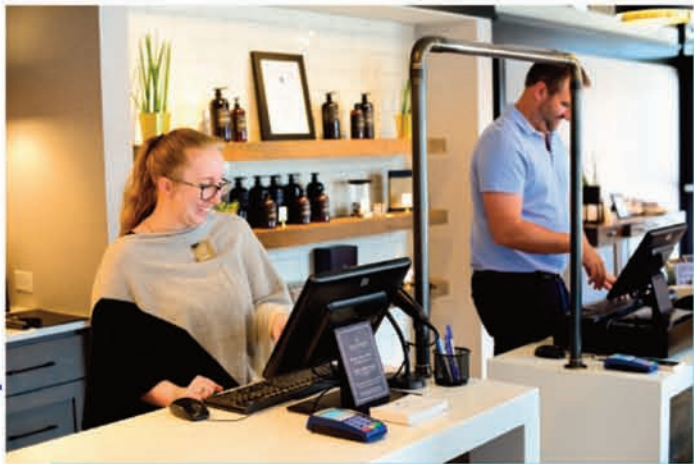
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The flip of a coin

At 14 years old, life was pretty good for Sassan Rahimzadeh, who grew up in Tehran, Iran. After finishing 8th grade, he and his family went to visit his older brother who was studying engineering at college in San Diego. Sassan's father stayed behind, running his construction supply company.

"That was in May of 1978," Sassan recalled. "Literally, by the end of August — a couple of weeks before we were supposed to go back — dad called and said, 'Hey, it's a getting a little weird here. Why don't you guys hang just a little bit longer and let's see what'll happen?' And the next thing you know, there's a revolution."

At that point, the fortune of the Rahimzadeh family took an abrupt detour. "Life went by the flip of a coin from the upside to the downside," Sassan recalled. "And, I didn't say goodbye to my friends or family. I just said, 'See you at the end of summer.'"

Unfortunately, things quickly got even worse. "After the revolution — after they took my father's entire livelihood from him — he actually suffered a heart attack. He needed immediate open heart surgery — this was during the whole hostage crisis — so as an Iranian, forget getting a visa, they wouldn't even let you inside an American Embassy," he said.

Meanwhile, Sassan and his family — who didn't speak the language or understand American culture — all stayed in America via student visas.

"The first few years were really... challenging, let's say, and then add to that the fact that we were from — at that time — essentially what seemed like an enemy country," he noted.

While the elder Rahimzadeh received medical attention and his health improved, the family adjusted to life in America. To this day, Sassan vividly remembers the first day that he truly wanted to become an American citizen. In 10th grade, he was called up to the principal's office where he was joined by the small handful of Iranian students among about 3,000 students in the school altogether.

"They're rounding us up," he thought.

Waiting for the worst, Sassan was surprised when his principal told them: "Kids, I know that you guys are going through a pretty tough time right now, and I want you to know that in this country, you still have rights. And, if anybody inside or outside of school gives you any kind of a hard time, I want you to know my door is always open for you and we'll protect you."

"I generally think that was the day I became an American," he explained. "Anywhere else in the world, that would not be happening. If the shoes were reversed, that would not be happening. So, that was the day I thought, 'This is the greatest country in the world.'"

In the 1980s, Sassan's parents opened up a literal mom and pop drycleaning store in San Diego County with occasional help provided by Sassan,

who worked with Kay's Jewelers for several years, and his brother, who had stopped studying engineering and became a licensed realtor since he was 19.

By the middle of the decade, the brothers renamed the business to be "Arya Cleaners" (arya means *noble person* in his native language), which also began with an "a" — a big factor in the

conscious initiatives. However, all of them had to pass the same test.

"Most business owners think that environmental initiatives are going to cost them money and it's bad for business — and it's not. Most of the time, it's not. You can actually save money," he emphasized. "I absolutely see the need for any initiative to be economi-

currently president of the California Cleaners Association, is very passionate about the industry and believes a much-needed evolution is underway.

"In my view, nobody has been worse for drycleaners than drycleaners. I think what we do — by our own doing — has not been valued properly," he said. "I do think the evolution of the in-



www.aryacleaners.com

**Sassan
Rahimzadeh**
Arya Cleaners
Chula Vista, CA

days when people used the alphabetically-listed Yellow Pages rather than an online search engine.

In 1988, though, the business reached a point where it was clear one of the two Rahimzadeh brothers would need to be on board full time.

"I went from a very nice, clean, cool and very professional business of corporate jewelry to the nice dirty work of a drycleaning operation," Sassan laughed. "What really encouraged me to get into the business was studying economics in school. I was looking at our competition. I saw what we were doing — even at that time — because dad was pretty adamant about making it a success."

From the beginning, Sassan knew that he didn't need to try to make sweeping changes overnight; the key was to focus on smaller goals.

"In my mind, I thought, 'All I have to do is just be 10% better than the others. That's it,'" he recalled.

After computerizing the front, he focused on gathering customer information. He also hired industry consultant Kenney Slatten, who rode to the rescue while donning his signature white cowboy hat.

"Kenney's the one who came and trained all of our pressers on proper pressing procedures, and then he would work with my dad on the spotting stuff even though he had already gone through the school. Chemicals and everything still change all the time," Sassan explained. "That's something Kenney taught me. *You can always be better.*"

In California, being better is a term that often includes the environment, and Arya Cleaners is no different.

Over the years, the company switched from perc to wetcleaning, hydrocarbon and GreenEarth, downsized to more efficient Honda minivans and numerous other environmentally con-

cally sustainable, as well, because if you cannot sustain it economically long-term, it will not be sustained environmentally either, because you can't afford it."

Another area where Arya Cleaners has excelled is in automation. The business opened its first 24/7 MetalProgetti store back in 2003 and has been modifying and upgrading the technology ever since. Sassan believes it will be more important than ever, especially at the front counter.

"I feel that the future of the industry as a whole is in automation," he said. "That's going to be the point of survival. If you can't automate more and more of it, then you won't be able to survive."

"In my lifetime, I don't think I'll see the cleaning and production side of things become fully automated. You can't," he continued. "There's way too many variables, way too many changes — you cannot possibly automate the actual cleaning and spotting — and even the pressing process — completely."

Over the years, Sassan has deeply embedded himself into his local community, serving as a board member for the Chula Vista Chamber of Commerce and the South Bay Family YMCA. The way he sees it, it's much more preferable to work with policy makers and leaders in the city rather than against them.

"They're the people who are setting policy and I want to get in on that conversation. Not being involved with them — not just turning our back but just trying to fight them all the time — defeats the purpose," he said. "They have to know where we're coming from; we have to know where they're coming from. We have to work together."

That philosophy also applies to the drycleaning industry. Sassan, who is

industry as a whole is about to happen, especially by the sheer fact that we see the need for professionalism is just there. You cannot stay in business anymore in the new marketplace without being a professional, without knowing what you're doing — because the marketplace demands it."

In the future, he believes the most successful cleaners will be those who customize their service to fit the needs of their customers. So far, Arya Cleaners has found success with this formula.

Today, the business is doing much better than it was almost a decade ago when it had reached 13 stores in 2013. "Today, we're down to three. We're far better today. We're far more profitable today," Sassan said.

Even during the most difficult times of the pandemic, Sassan never felt like the rug was being pulled out from under him. After all, he overcame a much more difficult situation when he was only 14 years old. He also never forgot about the kind gesture from his school principal that made him want to be a citizen.

That is why he feels a responsibility to give back to the same community that provided him with opportunities over 40 years ago. He's never forgotten what it feels like to have your fate flipped like a coin.

He also never forgot about his heritage, and he never felt any pressure to change his given family name.

He likened it to what his sociology professor once said. "She called America more of a salad bowl than a melting pot — where the lettuce is allowed to be lettuce, and a tomato is allowed to be a tomato, and a cucumber is allowed to be a cucumber," he said.

In Sassan's case, that means a Rahimzadeh will remain a Rahimzadeh. "My heritage is my heritage. That will never change," he said.



Yash, Bobby, Kate, Dave & Alexa
at the Clean Show 2022 in Atlanta



THANKS YOU FOR A GREAT SHOW & HELPING US CELEBRATE TEN YEARS!

We just wanted to send a huge thank you to everyone who visited us at the Clean Show this year in Atlanta! Hope your time there was both educational and fun! It is always great seeing old friends and making news ones. Looking forward to the next one!



Cleaners turn up, catch up at Clean '22

Continued from page 1

want. “Your core values are your core values and they should be spoken in your language,” Abbas added.

He provided an example of a core value that has been successful in the past. “There’s a core value called learn and apply and it simply says this: ‘I want my organization to learn new skills and to apply their knowledge,’” he said. “I want you to be personally curious in the area you work at. I want you to own what you do.”

To COG or Not to COG

Many cleaners curious to try a new profit center have considered expanding into industrial commercial laundry, the topic of an afternoon educational session on the show floor that featured Dan Campbell of Wash Around the Clock, Monika Manter of Balfurd Linen Services and Kelly Dixon of St. Croix Linen.

One cog in the wheel for anyone doing so is to decide whether to offer COG (customer-owned goods) service or to rent the textiles to customers in addition to cleaning them. Of course, you can offer both, but it complicates things.

“It’s really tough to have a mixed plant, so if you have customers renting and some doing COG, you’re having to keep orders separate for the COG customers. Your washers aren’t filled to capacity,” noted Manter, who prefers rental.

“We have found that [COG] customers don’t replace their



EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS AT CLEAN 2022 were consistently packed with focussed attendees throughout the four-day event. Nathaniel and Frank Dubasik from MetalProgetti (left photo) addressed ways to make automation work for you. Another popular session took place on the exhibit hall floor as (right photo, left to right) Dan Campbell of Wash Around the Clock, Monika Manter from Balfurd Linen Service and Kelly Dixon of St. Croix Linen, offered tips for those considering entering into the commercial laundry industry.

inventory as often as they probably should — and who gets blamed for lost inventory that their employees are taking home? The laundry,” she added.

However, offering COG has one definitive advantage. “When you start with COG, there’s no real upfront costs other than the equipment, so if you have laundromats, you have the equipment already,” Dixon said. “As you scale and grow, that’s when you have to get more of the specialty equipment.”

According to Campbell, having the equipment already is not enough — though he

highly recommends purchasing an ironer. If he could do it all over again, he would focus more on learning about how to better utilize chemistry to help better overcome the cleaning limits of a laundromat

As he pointed out, “Typically, laundromat operators don’t have the hot water capacity that you need to do certain types of commercial accounts. So, if you get a restaurant that has a greasy mop and you just keep your water at 120°, which is great for a laundromat, but you’re never going to get that stuff clean.”

Automatic for the People

A popular morning session

by DLI on automation featured Frank Dubasik, director of operations for MetalProgetti, and his nephew Nathaniel, sales and support manager for the company, both discussed the trials and triumphs they faced when adding automated kiosks to various locations of underperforming drycleaning stores located in Colorado.

The Dubasiks learned quickly many customers were initially reticent to try the kiosks, requiring a bit of prompting to give the self-serve check-in screens a try.

“Once a customer uses the kiosk, they become consistent patrons of it, which we knew

because as soon as someone used it, they loved the convenience and the ability,” noted Nathaniel Dubasik.

Some more than others. Frank Dubasik admitted there were quite a few funny surprises with kiosks, like the time a customer picked up 97 pieces at once or when a couple fascinated by the technology picked up wedding outfits.

“Our big takeaway through this whole thing is that, using technology, you can redirect your customer’s behavior and transform your business,” noted Nathaniel Dubasik.

Look for additional Clean 2022 coverage next issue.

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Tide tops drycleaning franchise brand list

Recently, Tide Cleaners celebrated being the number one drycleaning franchise brand in America.

Tide, after releasing year-end 2021 franchise disclosure documents, sat on the top spot of total drycleaning franchise units.

The total franchise figures for the end of 2021 added up to 177. Since then, Tide has continued to expand and now have a total of 188 locations in more than two dozen states.

“The credit for becoming the number one brand in drycleaning goes to our franchisees,” explained Tide Cleaners President and CEO Andy Gibson. “The Tide Cleaners brand is powerful in the hearts and minds of our guests, and our franchisees in partnership with our franchisor team bring this brand to life every day.”

“It’s an honor to be part of such a hard-working industry — we’re excited for the brand to continue its climb in franchising within and beyond the

drycleaning industry,” he added.

Earlier this year, it was announced that the Tide drycleaning franchise was ranked #76 in the 43rd annual Entrepreneur Franchise 500 ranking.

It was the third consecutive year the brand has placed in the top 100 of that list.

Franchisees such as Jon Kas-solis, CFO of Consolidated Cleaners, Inc., have found success even in the wake of the pandemic.

“We’re excited about our growth and performance over the past two years,” he said. “Even in the throes of the pandemic, due to the power of the brand and our partnership with the franchisor, we built and acquired seven units since 2020.”

Tide Cleaners was first launched in 2008 by Agile Pursuits Franchising, Inc., and is headquartered in Cincinnati, OH. For more information on the franchise, visit the site at www.tidecleaners.com.

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THE SPOTTING BOARD



BY DAN EISEN

Evaluating your cleaning quality

Drycleaners should be interested in what their customers think of them. Neil Schroeder, wrote an intreating article in *National Clothesline* on obtaining complimentary customers' testimonials for your business [Editor's Note: "Getting testimonials from customers," May, 2013].

I frequently receive phone calls from my clients wanting me to evaluate the quality of their business. In order to evaluate their spotting, I send them a spotting and stain evaluation which goes like this:

1. They receive a new white

garment with several stains on it.

2. They must identify each stain and write the procedure for removing it.

3. Then, they must remove the stain.

4. They clean the garment.

5. They mail it back to me.

I evaluate the stain identification, process for removal and whether the stain is set from incorrect spotting processes used. The concept is that a good spotter removes 95 to 98% of all stains successfully without damage to the fabric.

Whenever stains remain in the fabric, it becomes a topic

for customer's complaints. Proper stain removal requires a knowledge of chemicals, procedures, bleaches and fabrics.

A good spotter removes 95-98% of all stains successfully without damage to the fabric.

White Fabrics (Drycleaning)

There are several things you can do to check the quality of your cleaning system and brightness of a fabric.

When marking in work, cut a white fabric in half and at-

tach it to the garment to be drycleaned. If the fabric sample — after cleaning — is not as bright or white as the origi-

nal, it means that your cleaning system is faulty. This sets up the problem of redeposition of soil, which causes a gray and streaky garment.

Milky solvent in the sight glass means water in the sol-

vent. Check for dye in the solvent, which causes the solvent to discolor. Tell your employees to always check the sight glass when they pass by the drycleaning machine. Another thing to check is high filter pressure, which is another indication of poor cleaning.

Service

Make sure your service is up to par. The fastest way to lose a customer is by not having the garment ready on time.

This requires cooperation between the counter and cleaning department. Heavily soiled and stained garments require that the customer be told that more time is needed. The best time to check service is at the busy time of year, rather than the slow time.

Wetcleaning

The wetcleaned garment should not come out the same way as if you drycleaned it. The garment shows no color loss, stiffness or fading. If you have to dryclean it to restore luster or softness, it was not properly wetcleaned.

Properly wetcleaned garments require the right choice of detergent, dye setting agents, finishers and drying. Many cleaners such as Firs Class Cleaners in Orlando, FL, and Bates Troy in Binghamton, NY, changed their wetcleaning systems and have been able to achieve this with the recommendations that I gave to them.

Finishing

The finisher provides the proper look at a garment, making it ready to wear.

Common problems that customers have are shine, pocket impressions, double creases and puckering.

The finisher has the ability to add stiffness and body to a fabric with either starch or sizing. A starch is used on cotton and linen. A sizing agent is used on silk, rayon and even wool at times. Wool should be brushed and pills should be removed.

Packaging

The packaging sells the garment and your image.

There are many packaging aids available that can give you the ability to create a finished product individualized by your company's image.

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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WRENCH WORKS



By BRUCE GROSSMAN

Getting to know about solvent flow

This month, we will explore solvent flow, valves, and some of the problems associated with them in the drycleaning process.

To begin with, what is solvent flow, and what is solvent? In the drycleaning sense, a solvent is a liquid that is moved or flushed through the garments to remove dirt and debris.

What does solvent do?
Solvent accomplishes at least two major tasks:

1. Solvent dissolves oils, waxes, grease, and a long list of soluble soil also called non-volatiles (dissolved compounds that will not evaporate with the solvent). Generally, the solvent itself can dissolve these compounds. However, another common soil family is sugars (often called sweet stains), which don't dissolve in pure solvent but readily dissolve in water.

Unfortunately, most common solvents are not miscible with water (won't mix, similar to oil and water) in their pure form. To over-

come this immiscibility, a detergent (sometimes called soap) is added to allow the solvent to carry enough water to dissolve the sugar stains.

2. Solvent flushes what's known as particulate soil for the garments. Particulates are dust, lint, hair, and more or less any solid matter that doesn't dissolve in the solvent.

Once the particulates are released from the garment, it is essential to keep them suspended in the solvent so they don't fall back onto the fabric. (This undesirable condition is called redeposition or greying). Detergent is vital in keeping these particulates suspended until they can be removed from the system through filtration or distillation.

Why is solvent flow important?
Think about the qualities of solvent enumerated in the preceding paragraphs. Both are deeply dependent on the volume of solvent circulated through the garments.

1. The more solvent that

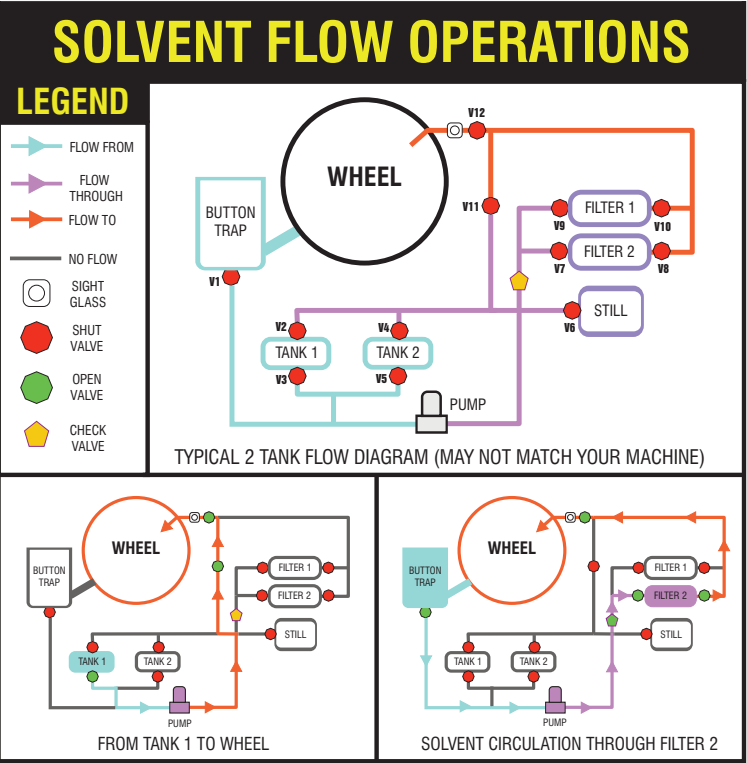
comes in contact with the dissolved soil, the greater the amount of soluble soil dissolved and removed. Think of how much sooner sugar will dissolve in the coffee if the coffee is stirred rather than sitting still.

This process is called the flow rate, or solvent changes per minute moved through the drycleaning system and depends on the solvent volume over a measured period of time passed through the garments.

2. After the particulates are flushed from the garments and held in suspension, moving them out of contact with the garments is essential to avoid redeposition. The particulate-laden solvent is pumped through a filter of one type or another or into a still for purification.

The more that passes through the filter or the faster the solvent moves, the less chance exists to redeposit the soil.

What are common symptoms of solvent flow issues?
The following is a list of



common symptoms associated with problems with solvent and solvent flow affecting cleaning quality and how to diagnose them:

1. Poor spot removal and excessive redeposition.

There are several causes of this type of inferior cleaning performance.

- **Detergent charge.** A low concentration of detergent commonly leads to this problem. In most cases, it's unlikely to be able to test for detergent concentration, so add an extra detergent dose manually to a load and look for any improvement.

Also, monitor the performance of the detergent injector to be sure it's adding the proper volume.

- **Flow rate.** Low flow rate is likely the foremost cause of this type of problem. A rule of thumb for checking the flow rate is that it should take one minute to fill the wheel until operating level.

A method I've always found handy is to set up the flow path so solvent is pumped from a tank back to the same tank while watching the spray pattern across the tank sight glass.

The area the spray fans out over the sight glass is a good barometer of the solvent pump performance. Often lint, staples, safety pins, and all kinds of detritus clog up vanes on the pump impellor, degrading but not entirely stopping, the solvent flow — which affects the solvent spray pattern.

2. High filter pressure. As I wrote earlier, in most cases,

solvent is pumped through some type of filter to remove particulate soil. High filter pressure indicates poor filter performance and results in poor cleaning results. The following are common causes of this type of fault:

- **Excessive debris build-up on filtration surfaces and excessive moisture in the solvent.** More frequent filter replacement in the case of cartridge filters or spinning disk filters often may rectify this problem.

If the previous procedure didn't correct the situation, try cleaning large loads of towels or comforters to adsorb moisture. If the filter pressure drops, excessive water in the solvent is likely the cause, and its source must be determined and repaired.

That's it for now. In the next issue, I'll be continuing with this subject. The accompanying illustration is intended as a guide to the typical solvent flow path, which will be used more extensively in later chapters on this subject.

Bruce Grossman is the Chief of R&D for EZtimers Manufacturing. EZtimers manufactures machines that make your machines run better. For those needing to replace Zero-Waste or Galaxy misters, see our SAHARA model. For those with boiler problems, check out our EZ-Level and EZ-Dose machines. For more information on EZtimers products, visit www.eztimers.com. Please address any questions or comments for Bruce to bruce@eztimers.com or call (702) 376-6693.

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SHIRT TALES

BY DON DESROSIERS

The old and new at Clean 2022 — Part 1

Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of three articles highlighting shirt equipment featured at Clean 2022.

The Clean Show landed in Atlanta for the third time since 1987, and if you looked hard enough, you saw some rather amazing things.

Over the next few months I'll share them with you, but I will tease you a bit right now. Suppose I told you that there is a new shirt unit that is a true game-changer. There is! How about a line of presses that can be raised or lowered to accommodate those particularly short pressers on your staff? Some-

body has them now! Unipress made two terrific changes. One of them will make your mechanic smile from ear to ear (or whoever changes your pads and covers), and the other will make you think, "Why didn't someone think of that years ago?" I was in Pompeii years ago.

While there, I was fascinated to learn that the ancient Romans invented indoor plumbing over 2,000 years ago. But when Pompeii — a city that had indoor plumbing — was wiped out in 79 A.D., the plumbing technology (which obviously didn't spread like the Internet) was decimated and lost, just like the city.

Herculaneum, Pompeii's much less famous neighboring city, had even more people, buildings, and, well, plumbing. All of it is lost for 800 years before indoor plumbing was invented *again*.

I have a point here. Unipress is now offering you the option to buy a double buck shirt unit with one buck smaller than the other, allowing you to do those smaller shirts on the shirt unit rather than require hand finishing on the hot head.

hands, seconds flat. The buck on the body press was available in a number of widths. Because of the flat heads — which was unique at the time — any width buck would work. Few people even knew about these various bucks.

My uncle explained that at lunchtime when the staff went to lunch, he and his wife would swap the bucks to small ones and do the small shirts and blouses themselves.

This entire thought, this entire philosophy, this entire brain wave *has been lost for 60 years*.

Unipress was wise enough to color-code the buck, too. The small buck will come covered in red Nomex and the larger buck will come covered in white Nomex. I


This entire thought, this entire philosophy, this entire brain wave has been lost for 60 years.




Herculaneum is a city located near Pompeii that was also wiped out in 79 A.D.

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The Pompeii reference is that this idea is not new! This idea is as old as the hills.

In fact, Unipress had to dig deep to find this gem. Frankly, I'm embarrassed that I didn't think of this first. Unipress, you get no credit from me for thinking of this, but you're a genius for bringing it back!

Back in the 1960's, my Uncle Ulric owned Star Shirt Service. He had a double-buck Ajax shirt unit. Ajax had a unique feature. The body buck was not heated (!) and had quick-disconnects for air and two Allen screws.

A couple of quick motions and the buck is in your

suggest that you stick with that color scheme. My mind goes right to work with things like that. "What is a good memory aid for that?"

Small buck = small word! Red (or rojo) is the small buck, so this is the buck that can take a small shirt and any shirt.

White (or blanco) larger word = larger shirts, not the small ones.

The presser instantly knows what size shirt will best fit on the buck that is waiting to be dressed. And to be clear, this is a very simple thing.

Both bucks take the same pads and covers. What is different is the width of the shoulders and the inner workings.

As a direct result, the small buck can still do any size shirt.

The large buck is 21" at the shoulders and 17" at the middle of the buck while the smaller buck has 18" shoulders and 14" midriff.

It has been several years since Unipress introduced their tail plate. This is a passive device that automati-



The long-forgotten, brilliant idea brought back to life by Unipress.

Continued on page 16

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Don Desrosiers

The old and new at Clean 2022 — Part 1

Continued from page 14

cally pulls down on the back of the shirt to yield perfect backs. They say that no good deed goes unpunished. The thorn on this rose? Changing the pads and covers on this tail plate was a bear. There were springs to break and screws to loosen and new swear words to learn.

Unipress will have many a pad guy smiling when they get a load of this. And, best of all, you don't need to buy a new machine to benefit.

You can upgrade your old machine to this new tail plate upgrade.

To see how simple it is, just click on this QR code.

And, while you're upgrading... the new cuff clamps on the Unipress Cyclone line are something that you can buy to convert your existing machine, too, but you want to just buy the whole thing!

This is one heck of a machine! (See top right of page)

Unipress has made these cuff clamps available as an upgrade to those customers who already have equipment with older cuff clamps.

This could be worth considering, especially because this device assures consistently excellent sleeve pleats, as well.

I spent quite a while pressing

ing on this machine in Atlanta, and I also videoed Liz Davies pressing. To watch us both, utilize these QR codes.

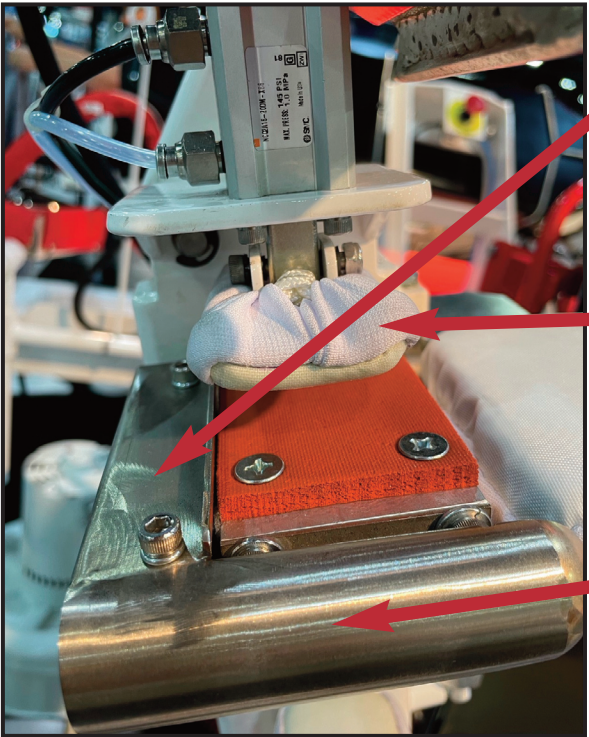
Unipress also changed the control unit on their double buck unit. Unipress found that the features on the fancy TV screen were nice but expensive, and customers did not use them; therefore, they were paying for features that they did not use.



Unipress elected to keep the price of their equipment down and go for a simpler design. The result is functional and excellent.

Itsumi once again demonstrated their BT550 double buck shirt press. I always like pressing on this unique machine.

Its half-moon shape is completely original and a joy to operate.



erate. They have improved the vacuum, increased the blower power by 40%, upgraded the heat chamber to be hotter thereby reducing the cycle time by 30%.

Also, the sleeve angle adjustment moves more quickly and the angle is improved so that ladies' blouses come out better.

To see Sammy Ahn and I use this unit, click on these QR codes.

But, wait!

There's more! This is only the beginning of my coverage of Clean 2022. There is still so

This plate keeps the presser from placing the cuff at the wrong place. It keeps the cuff straight and even; not over-pressed or under-pressed. In a word: consistent quality.

There is a clamp here and another one underneath to hold the cuff in place, but the top clamp comes down first, allowing the operator to get their hands out of the way. The bottom clamps closes a little later, so it won't bite your fingers.

After the clamps have gripped the cuff, this part advances to put tension on the cuff, assuring a rounded cuff and it forms a tight seal so that all of the super-heated air that is blown into the sleeve remains in the sleeve and only escapes through the fabric, thereby drying it quickly.

much to show you. Hi-Steam, Sankosha, Forenta, Pony and more will be coming in the next two issues.

And I have a surprise in the coming months.

I was given a private tour of an equipment manufacturing plant a little while ago and I will be sharing that with you in a few months, so be sure to stay tuned.

"If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you always got."

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 laundries 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 13131 Elissa Lane, Central, LA, 70818, by cell phone (508) 965-3163, or email to: tailwind.don@me.com. The Tailwind web site is at www.tailwindsystems.com.

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2022

September 11-18 National Cleaners Association's New York State DEC course, Aphorpe Cleaners, Bronx, NY. For more information, call (212) 967-3002.

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.

September 16-18 Michigan Cleaners Association's annual convention, Crystal Mountain Resort, Thompsonville, MI. For more information, call (877) 390-6453.

September 18 National Cleaners Association's Advanced Stain Removal including Bleaching one-day course, Bronx NY. For more information, call (212) 967-3002.

September 22 Illinois Professional Drycleaners & Launderers Golf Outing, 5 to 7 p.m., Top Golf, Naperville, IL. Cost is \$75 per person. For more information, visit www.ilpdl.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.

October 2 National Cleaners Association's Basic Spotting 101 and Alternative Solvents one-day class, Bronx NY. For information, call (212) 967-3002.

October 14-16 North Carolina Association of Launderers & Cleaners 2022 Annual Convention, Cambria Downtown, Asheville, NC. For more information, visit 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.

October 21-24 EXPOdetergo International, Fiera Milano convention center, Milan, Italy. For more information, visit expodetergo.com.

October 28-30 North East Fabricare Association's Profit Fest conference, Wakefield, MA. For more information, visit official site at www.nefabricare.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.



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- Janet Garman
Glyndon Lord Baltimore Cleaners
Glyndon, Maryland

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BY KERMIT ENGH

BUILDING VALUE

Your business needs an exit strategy

In the past number of months, we have discussed **8 Drivers of Value** and how you can affect each of them. During the upcoming months, I would like to bring **6 Silver Bullets** to grow your business. To start, let's pose an unusual question:

1) Are you in prison?

That might seem like a strange way to begin an article about helping you grow your business, but if you are like many business owners I have worked with over the years, you probably have a sense that you are trapped in your own company from time to time.

After all, if you:

- Work longer hours, but never feel like you are getting ahead;
- Have to work more to make less;
- Worry that your competition is outperforming you — and that you cannot quite catch up;
- Spend more time dealing with business-related anger and frustration than celebrating success;
- Are looking for new ways to help you reach your goals;
- Need to add new customers fast;
- Wish you could spend more time growing your business instead of dealing with staff issues.

Then, chances are, you are committing one or more of

the six biggest mistakes I see business owners make repeatedly. Fortunately, this discussion will help you change all that. That is because there are proven, powerful ways to increase your cash flow and profits with less stress and strain and more free time than you currently think is possible.

And, this increase in profits will allow you to accomplish more of the dreams you have for your business, family, and life. All you must do is master the **Silver Bullets** I am about to reveal and you will begin to see immediate results. But be forewarned: These Silver Bullets are not *rocket science*. They are simple. Some may be tempted to write them off because they are *too* simple. Do not make that mistake.

In my experience collaborating with entrepreneurs, these Silver Bullets make all the difference in the world between businesses that grow month after month and year after year and businesses that struggle to keep the lights on.

I will open your eyes to the goldmine of possibilities sitting right in front of you. If you have the foresight to put them into action, you can be among the top tier of business owners who produce consistent, predictable, impressive returns.

Note: in order to get the most out of the Silver Bul-

lets, you have to actually implement the strategies shared. If this ends up on your virtual shelf, never to be touched again, it does neither of us any good.

For best results, turn off the phone, log out of your inbox, pour yourself a cup

of coffee and invest uninterrupted minutes with me to improve your business. You will be glad you did. As you read, you will have insights and ideas. Write them down. Or use a highlighter to mark those ideas that grab your attention.

Chances are, you are committing one or more of the six biggest mistakes I see business owners make repeatedly.

Set goals based on what you read. All the information in the world is useless unless you turn it into action steps, and more importantly, follow through. After you are done reading, take a few minutes to go back through your notes and set at least three to five solid goals as a result of what you have read.

Find an accountability partner. If you are like 97% of the business owners I work with, you understand intellectually what needs to be done but often lack the

est in your success.

Many of my clients discover that there is no one in their immediate circle who fits the bill. Surely, you cannot visit with your local competitor. This is just one of the benefits of being part of a peer-to-peer group like Methods for Management.

Now let us get started with **Silver Bullet #1**. It may sound very familiar. **No exit strategy.** Renowned consultant Stephen Covey says that all success starts in one place: Your mind. He calls it "beginning with the end in mind" — having a clear vision of what you want before you begin, just like a building follows a blueprint.

Nine times out of ten, when I work with business owners who are struggling, it is because they have neg-

lected to do this very important visioning work.

That is why **the first Silver Bullet you need is an Exit Strategy**. You must know where you are going if you ever hope to get there. To assist in this process, first allow me to introduce a powerful framework for understanding the phases of business growth. It is called the **Five Steps to Freedom**, and it will give you a road map to building a company that continues to progress and produce profits without your day-to-day involvement.

The **Five Steps to Freedom** include the following.

Step 1. Creation. This is when you are beginning as an unknown in the marketplace, researching a viable niche or approach for your business, developing a working prototype of your business model, and launching the enterprise. This step is called *creation* but sometimes even established business have not taken the time to put together a solid business model or research an exact market niche. If this describes you, one of the first things we will do together is lay a sure foundation because, until you do, you will be dramatically hindered in your ability to transform your business into a profit-producing asset. This is relevant in this post-Covid market.

Step 2. Disorder. This step is every bit as chaotic as it sounds! It is when you begin waging the often bloody battle of becoming cash flow positive. You do it by investing heavily in sales and marketing and other high-impact growth strategies. Your goal is to create effective marketing systems and build enough brand awareness to capture as much market share as possible, as quickly as possible. Sadly, only a handful of businesses ever make it past this step — and if you are struggling to find enough time to really work on your business, chances are you are stuck here. Still, there is light at the end of the tunnel, and if you can power through it, you will soon find yourself in the next phase.

Step 3: Control. This is when you convert cash flow into profit by stabilizing

Continued on page 20



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Kermit Engh

Your business needs an exit strategy

Continued from page 18 and organizing your operations, measuring your well-chosen performance metrics or KPI's (key performance indicators), and fine-tuning and adjusting the business model. To this day, I am dismayed at the number of operations in our industry who do not manage the numbers using a budget or posting production KPI's.

This step is all about systems: organizing the business in such a way that you are not needed for every decision, every sale, every day-to-day interaction with staff and customers.

Step 4: Prosperity. Your goal here is to solidify a position of dominance in your niche market by economizing and optimizing for efficiencies. This will allow you to continue to invest in growth and repay debt. When you have reached this point, you can really start to enjoy the fruits of your labors.

Step 5: Freedom. Your final act is to reproduce yourself and develop a strong core of leaders who will continue to grow the

business through partnerships, joint ventures and acquisitions. At this point, you will enjoy the luxury that comes from having free time and free cash flow. Of

I have seen dozens of business owners completely eliminate financial worry from their lives by navigating the 5 Steps of Freedom.

course, as valuable as the five steps are in and of themselves, it is not enough just to know them. You must understand how to apply them to your business and situation. There are five additional steps you need to take in order to make this happen. (I know, more work. If it were easy, everyone would do it.) But, look around and notice who is not around anymore.

1. Complete Your One-

Page Strategic Plan. This is one of the most effective planning tools in existence: on a single page, it allows you to identify your company's vision, values, KPI's, as well as long-term, short-term, and immediate goals — and much more. If you want to guide your business through the 5 Steps to Freedom, you need this resource. The next chapter will cover this in greater depth.

2. Understand the Current Value of Your Business. In order to get to where you are going, you have got to know where you are. You need a professional assessment of the current value of your business so that you understand exactly what it will take to reach your objectives. You are welcome to look around for a business appraiser on your own — or reach out to me and I will direct you to the evaluators I recommend for their speed, professionalism, and accuracy.

3. Hire a Business Coach to Help You Increase the Value of Your Business. A reputable business coach will help you make the

changes you need to eliminate waste, improve your cash flow and increase the overall value of your business so that you can prepare it for a successful sale and transfer. Most entrepreneurs simply need the expert attention and accountability that a business coach provides in order to make the fastest progress possible.

4. Assemble Your Power Team. If you do not already have an accountant, financial advisor, and attorney on your team, it is time to begin shopping around for them. They will prove vital as you prepare your exit strategy. Again, this is where a peer-to-peer organization can be invaluable.


5. Begin Developing Prospective Buyers. Start on the inside: current staff members and executives are often prime prospects for buying your business once you are ready to sell. If there is no one internally, consider the services of a business transfer professional to help you find an external buyer. This could be the shortlist of prospects in your market. We com-

pleted the sale of one of our business units 3 months ago using this process. It works! Remember: this is not a pipe dream. I have seen dozens of business owners completely eliminate financial worry from their lives forever by navigating the 5 Steps to Freedom and leaving their business in the hands of competent leaders. You can do it, too.


Next month will be Silver Bullet #2. Until next time, continue building value.

Kermit Engh has been an owner/operator in the drycleaning industry for over 30 years and has been a Methods for Management member for over 25 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 at kengh@mfmi.com.

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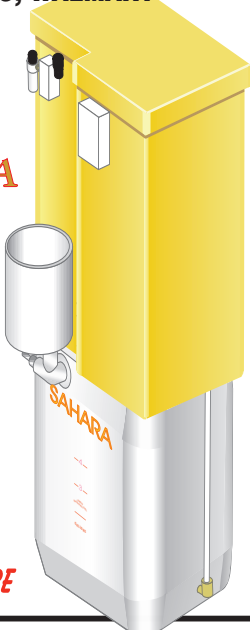
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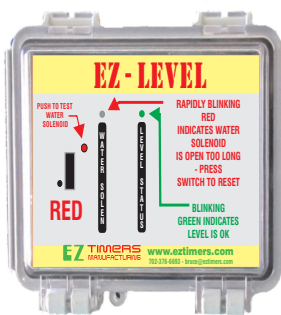
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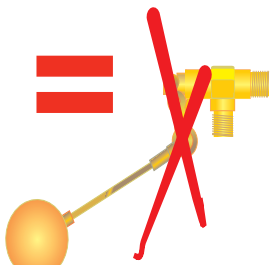
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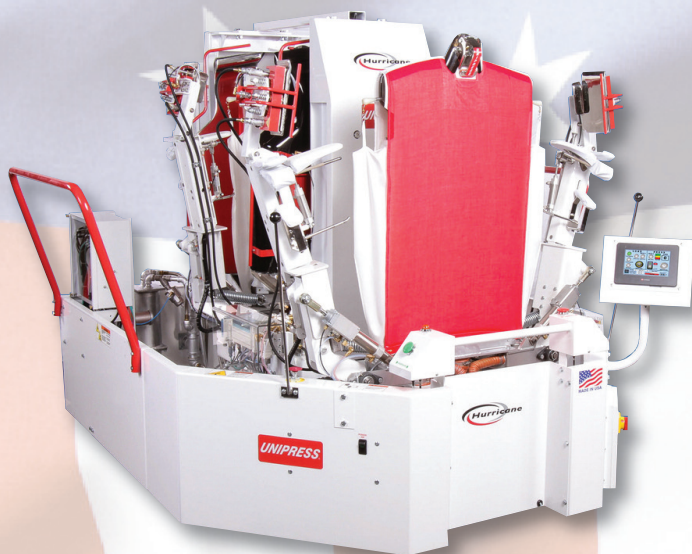
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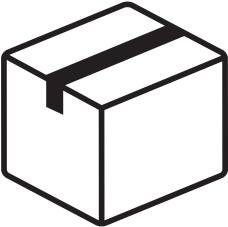
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NCL Profile
Life goes on
For the Bodin family, starting a cleaning business in Yonkers, NY, was an opportunity for a clean slate. Before that, 51-year-old Paul Bodin and his father, David, had been forced to flee their native country during the Russian Revolution, during which the family business in Kiev was confiscated. An old article from the *Heard* magazine only **Read More**

Industry balancing act to continue in 2022
As cleaners prepare to close the door on 2021 (and perhaps throw away the key), the last 12 months have proven to be another arduous challenge, heavily punctuated by shortages of every imaginable kind: hangers, plastic, computer chips, steel and other metals, lumber, packaging materials, zippers and **Read More**

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 **Read More**

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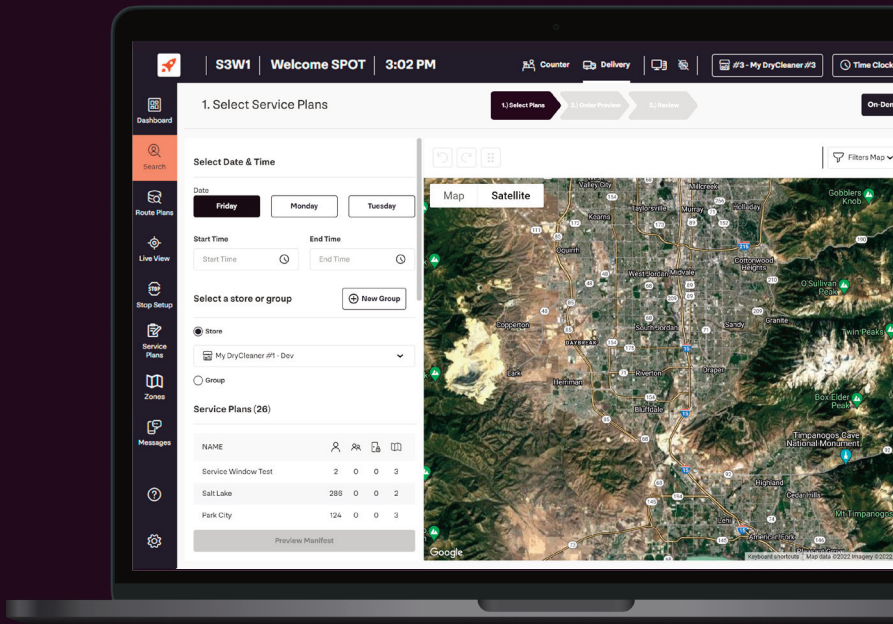
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