



National

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Education Extravaganza draws in drycleaners

Dozens of drycleaners showed up last month in Elk Grove, IL, for a full day of educational programs sponsored by the Illinois Professional Drycleaners and Launderers (IPDL).

Out-of-state attendees came from Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan and even Mississippi to hear from an array of expert speakers at the event, which was hosted at the Sankosha facility located in Elk Grove, IL.

The first program of the day was presented by Peter Blake, from the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute (DLI), who discussed the many programs and services DLI offers to

help members get more out of their membership with "How to Do More with Less and Using All the Tools in Your Toolbox."

He was followed by Dean Sheridan of Seitz Chemical who offered a hands-on demonstration of "Equipment Repair and Maintenance Techniques: How to Keep Your Plant Running Smoothly."

Chris Patten of A.L. Wilson showed attendees firsthand how "What You Don't Know About Spotting Can Hurt You." Another demonstration — led by Tim Hush of Pariser Indus-



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Last month, dozens of drycleaners headed to Elk Grove, IL, for an Education Extravaganza presented by the Illinois Professional Drycleaners and Launderers and hosted at Sankosha's facility.

Dates scheduled for Clean '25 in Orlando

Though it's still more than two years away, it's probably not a bad idea to mark your calendar from Aug. 23 to 26, 2025 — those will be the official dates of the next Clean Show. The four-day event will take place at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL.

The Clean Show is organized by Messe Frankfurt in collaboration with five industry-leading associations: Drycleaning and Laundry Institute (DLI), Textile Care Allied Trades Association (TCATA), Coin Laundry Association (CLA), Association for Linen Management (ALM) and Textile Rental Services

Association of America (TRSA).

According to Clean Show Director Greg Jira, plans are already well underway.

"The Clean Show has proven to be the ideal exposition for industry leaders to find the latest innovations in textile care, ranging from industrial machinery and conveyor equipment to computer software and business systems," he noted. "We're excited to bring these business leaders, decision makers, product designers and purchasers back together in 2025 to continue to drive innovation, collaboration and growth within this



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Pair of California bills may concern cleaners

It was not so long ago that California drycleaners cleared a legislative hurdle with the assistance of the California Cleaners Association (CCA) and the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute (DLI) — drycleaning poly remains exempt from the state's single-use plastic ban for the time being. However, on the heels of that victory comes another pair of bills that could concern the California cleaning industry.

Most prominently, the state's new Responsible Textile Recovery Act of 2023, introduced in February by Senator Josh Newman (D) as SB 707, was expected to go into committee for a hearing on March 29. If the bill eventually passes, California will need to adopt regulations for a

new textile stewardship program by Dec. 31, 2025. Such a program will facilitate the repair and reuse of clothing and the recycling of textile fabrics.

When announcing the bill, Senator Newman cited statistics that the average U.S. consumer throws out more than 81 pounds of clothing annually. With the rise of fast fashion this century, that number has increased by 55% since 2000. The U.S. EPA estimated that, in 2018, the recycling rate for all textiles was

only 14.7%.

As with the case of similar recycling programs for other industries — i.e. mattresses, carpet, pharmaceuticals — the new textile stewardship program

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Delivering a better way



Snedicator's Cleaners of Brighton, MI, closes in on its 110th anniversary next year. See page 6 to read about the company's history — from the poultry age to the digital age — as current owner Jim Gilligan discusses how he transformed the business into 100% pickup and delivery routes utilizing three vans, including a new electric vehicle (left).

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Trying to slow down the fast fashion trend

In the immortal words of Mark Twain, “Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence in society.” We have long been a society of book-cover judges, whether we want to be or not. We have a rich history of making decisions based on appearances, and we still have more confidence and trust in those who project a better image... especially when we have nothing else to go by.

Yet, despite this aspect of human nature, clothing trends have taken a turn for the worse this century and it’s creating environmental havoc. Since 2000, growth of clothing sales have doubled from 100 to 200 billion units a year (according to Earth.org), but it’s not fine articles of clothing that people are purchasing. It’s fast fashion — inferior made clothing that is meant to be trendy, which means it’s also more frequently disposable.

Thus, many of these fast fashion items gather dust in the closet before they are shuffled off to the landfill. It is estimated that more than \$500 billion is lost every year due to lack of clothing utilization and recycling. Instead, we discard 92 million tons of clothing waste every year (which also produces about a half million tons of microplastics). According to the EPA, 85% of our textiles are never recycled and end up in landfills. If that weren’t enough, fashion manufacturing now generates more CO₂ than aviation and shipping combined.

In Europe, they are combatting this fast fashion problem with the EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles — a program the European Commission adopted in March of 2022. The strategy proposes a plan for the entire life cycle of a garment by making fashion manufacturers much more responsible for the environmental impact of their textile production from its initial creation all the way to its demise.

Ultimately, the goal in Europe is to manufacture a much higher quality of textiles with longer lives — garments which can be repaired and recycled until the point they becomes unwearable. Then, the garments can be broken down into their base components and the materials can eventually be utilized to create new fashion garments that will continue that circular path all over again.

Of course, that regulation trend may be soon coming to the U.S., especially since California already has a bill in committee (see front page story) that, if passed, will require a similar circular fashion solution for citizens in the Golden State — though such

a program will still need to be created and implemented and that will require a significant amount of time.

Still, most forward-thinking drycleaners have long been in the business of prolonging the lives of garments and recycling them. In fact, every Coats for Kids, Belle of the Ball and other charitable clothing drive is a stunning example of how quality made garments can last for a significant amount of time and even be enjoyed by people of multiple generations. In the future, it seems likely that cleaners will play an even larger role in clothing sustainability, though what that will be remains to be seen.

This is an issue that the industry should care deeply about because the more that clothing matters to people, the more important of a role the drycleaner will have in their lives. This month’s profile, Jim Gilligan of Snedcor Cleaners in Michigan (see page 6), has strong feelings on the subject, “Fast fashion is not only killing the planet, but it’s had a really hard impact on the drycleaning industry because people don’t love their clothes anymore. A lot of people buy these cheap fast fashion pieces and they don’t even wear them. It’s a whim,” he said.

It will take some time before we will be able to see precisely how California and others will deal with this problem, but there will eventually be regulations to address the fast fashion problem and, while such solutions may create additional headaches for those in the industry, it is ultimately a good thing for fashion trends to focus on sustainability.

Not only does fashion sustainability make the world a cleaner place to live in, it will also help place a high premium on garments and manufacturing safety — imagine a world where there is no need for sweat shops and unsafe factories. Fashion sustainability will also put the spotlight fully on the drycleaning industry which does a better job than any other group when it comes to prolonging the life of textiles.

Hopefully, we are in the beginning stages of a shift to place a higher emphasis on fashion and its shelf life. Drycleaners can do their part, as well, simply by informing their customers of the growth of fast fashion in this century and the problems it poses. The topic would make an excellent blog topic or social media post, and it will serve to remind customers how much more technical skill and expertise the professionals put into cleaning your clothes so they can continue to be wearable for as long as possible.

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Visit us at www.nationalclothesline.com for additional coverage of the drycleaning industry and issue archives going back to January of 2018.

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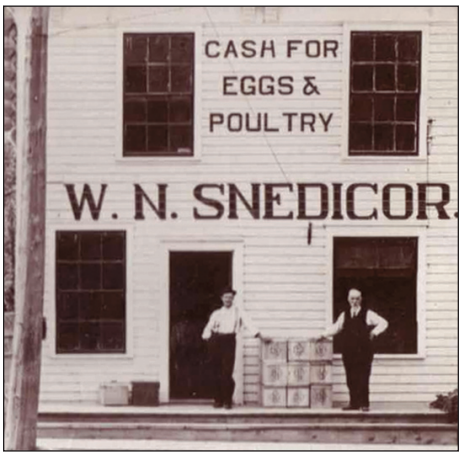
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Snedicor Delivering a better way

After considerable research, Jim Gilligan — owner of Snedicator Cleaners in Howell, MI — has traced the lineage of his business all the way back to 1914 when it had a location on Mission Ave. Then, it was known as Culver Laundry.

Years later, the Snedicator family bought the business in 1924, which had adopted the name Howell Cleaners, Tires, Rug Work and Laundry by that time. In 1927, they renamed it Snedicator Cleaners and has remained that ever since. According to Gilligan, prior to that venture, the Snedicators had been in the egg and poultry business since the late 1800s.

"They would purchase egg and poultry from the local farmers, package it, and then drive a horse-drawn wagon down Grand River Ave. between Howell and Detroit reselling the goods to local mom-and-pop grocers," he said.



The Snedicators ran the business from the early 1920s until well into the 1950s. Jim's father, Jim Gilligan, Sr., purchased the business in 1979, seeking to be self-employed after spending decades working for others.

"At that time, Snedicator's had a very good reputation, good word of mouth, high quality. Margaret, who worked at the front counter by the time my dad took over — I think she already had 30 years of experience, and they had two pressers — Stitch and Buck, a man and a woman, and they had been there for decades," Jim said. "They were both operating the old foot-pounder presses, and not only could both do super high quality, they'd knock out numbers that would put a lot of modern operations to shame."

Early on, Jim, Sr., became an Apparelmaster franchisee and added commercial rental uniform service to Snedicator's.

In the early 1980s, he opened a location on Michigan Ave. with a great counter and production space. Also, he opened his first dry store in the neighboring town of Brighton.

Meanwhile, Jim was a young man following his own path. "I always loved mechanical stuff. I was working in a boiler room at a large heating plant, working my way through school to become a boiler operator, and maybe eventually a stationary engineer," he recalled.

During that time, he often visited his father's plant and loved examining the antiquated equipment. Then, one day his father expressed anxiety at a steam pipe leak. Jim fixed it on the spot so his

father soon had him working full time at Snedicator's.

While Jim, Sr. had expanded the business during the 1980s — including adding some Martinizing package plants — he was ready to move further north in 1988, leaving Jim in charge of the business while in his late twenties.

"I was very happy being in the back

plants and brought out the production to the Michigan Ave. store."

The move drastically cut operating and production costs, but it was still a long uphill battle back to recover from the 2008 recession.

"By 2019, we had finally clawed our way back and 2020 was on track to be our best year," Jim recalled.

our last six months we have hit our 2019 revenue numbers and I believe we will probably be above 2019 by 20% or more in 2023," Jim said.

The company requires three vans now, including a 2023 Ford eTransit electric vehicle. They average between 60 to 80 stops a day.

"We're not at that super profitable



Jim Gilligan

Snedicator Cleaners

Howell, MI

working on the boiler," Jim recalled. "Managing people and customer service and all of that was way out of my comfort zone. It was something I had to develop over the years."

"I learned very early on that you can't run your business from the spotting board or the boiler room. I had to develop the HR and marketing and customer service skills and I continue to this day," he added.

Jim also learned early on that he needed help. "I think probably the smartest part of my strategy — even though it wasn't really thought out — was I surrounded myself with good people in good organizations."

In the late 1990s, Snedicator's joined Methods for Management (then run by Deborah Rechnitz), and he is now a part of her Inner Circle group with DLI. In addition to those wise moves Jim began to shift Snedicator's focus more to pickup and delivery during that decade, as well. The company had always offered the service, but only had one van that serviced a modest number of legacy customers.

"I had heard about Whitmer's Cleaners down in Cincinnati. John Olstead was legendary for growing his business through routes, so I went down to his three-day training with John and his route manager, Rex Carrigan," Jim said. "Pretty quickly, we had two very profitable vans on the road up until the crash of 2008. That was a doozy because even though we're about 60 miles from Detroit, there's a lot of manufacturing here for the auto industry."

During that period, the auto industry was hit particularly hard as new vehicle sales fell by nearly 40%. In turn, employment in the auto industry plummeted by about 45%.

"I had three plants out there, two dry stores and we were just spread too thin," Jim noted. "So, I dried up those

While traveling before COVID-19 erupted into a full-blown pandemic, Jim was troubled by the number of masks he'd seen on passengers. He began researching the virus and contemplating potential ramifications of a worst case scenario. Thus, when the lockdown orders in Michigan began, Jim already had a plan in place. "We could have kept our stores open, but I knew from experience it was going to be a ghost town," he said. "I learned a lot from the crash of 2008. The two things I did wrong at that time was — I had to cut everything on the expense side — but I completely cut marketing. The second thing I did was I waited. I just waited for things to return to normal and it never really did."

This time, though, Jim prepared by installing a processing lab for his delivery vehicles so that he could close all stores and become 100% routes. His timing could not have been better.

Still, it had been a difficult decision to make, so much so that Jim had to run the numbers through several people.

"I had a hypothesis, or, at least, an idea. My idea was — 2019 was our most profitable year ever in my tenure — and I surmised that we would be more efficient and we'd have a lot less expenses operating with only pickup and delivery," he said. "So, I posited the question: How much revenue with a pickup and delivery-only model would we need to generate to equal the dollar profit that we made in 2019? It came out to 55% of revenue would be needed to make 2019 profit."

Jim asked many others to calculate the percentage on their own, and they all came to the same conclusion: 55%.

"So, I decided to go for it," he said.

Snedicator's has been running 100%-only routes since the end of March in 2020.

"I definitely had some sleepless nights and some anxiety, but four of

level that the model was based on because of a few things. We had a lot of people driving quite a ways to get to us and I really don't want to tell anyone 'no.' All of our routes are more spread out than they should be," Jim said.

The move has also created some confusion. Occasionally, customers have shown up at a closed location — where they are directed where to go online. Jim has also been filming videos where he walks those new to the delivery-only process through each step.

"The way I look at it now... we're a digital company," he said.

The state of Michigan is home to the Great Lakes, so it's not too surprising that Jim loves outdoor activities like cross-country skiing and bicycling. That love of nature has prompted him to try to make Snedicator's more sustainable in a number of ways, including switching to Green-Earth many years ago and buying an electric van recently, which the company first put on the road last December.

"So, in November — total — we bought 614 gallons of gas. In December, we bought 427 gallons of gas," Jim said. "So, with the EV we saved 187 gallons of gas, and at \$3.30 a gallon, we saved \$617.10 in gasoline — and, I have not seen any movement on my electric bill. I haven't seen any sort of spike."

So far, the Ford's range of 120 miles has been enough to handle its daily routes and recharge overnight. Jim plans to buy more EVs in the future as he further tweaks the density and efficiency of his routes. It seems very likely that Snedicator's will celebrate 110 years in business next year.

"I drew a line in the sand," Jim said, referring to his decision to go routes only. "I know that we have customers who have used us maybe for years that are driving to another cleaners, but I feel very strongly that this is a very good model for the industry."

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Education event draws in drycleaners

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tries — focused on “Wet Cleaning and Your Future: The Evolution and Your Next Step.”

For local cleaners who are looking to become more environmentally friendly, Ricardo Magallon from Cook County Environmental Division spoke about a new program for Cook County (Chicago and surrounding suburbs) that offers plant assessments and grant money to purchase new equipment.

Magallon noted he probably learned more from the drycleaners than they do from him during the process, but many are anxious to receive some financial assistance for new and better equipment.

Also on hand was Dave Coyle from Maverick Market-



ing who concluded the day’s schedule with a program on “Proven Strategies to Make Money in Drycleaning and Laundry: Marketing to Today’s Clients.”

By the day’s end, attendees learned new ideas they could implement in their plants.



During IDPL’s Education Extravaganza event last month, drycleaners showed up to hear a dozen experts including Peter Blake (left photo) who outlined all of the tools available in the drycleaners’ toolbox. Another program featured Tim Hush of Pariser Industries (right photo) talked about the evolution of wetcleaning.

Pair of CA bills may concern cleaners

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will require California’s clothing manufacturers to set up free collection sites in every county where people can drop off unwanted clothing items. Used clothing will be sorted. Items in good condition will be donated to non-profit organizations to distribute, while those only requiring minimal repairs will go to repair shops. Unsuitable clothing will be recycled at designated centers where they will be broken down into raw materials for the making of new textiles.

If a textile recycling plan is submitted by the end of 2025, the fashion industry will need to submit a plan of compliance within the next 12 months. The bill also calls for a public educational campaign to let Californians know about the collection sites and how the recycling program will work.

Meanwhile, another bill — Assembly Bill 1628 introduced by Tina McKinnor (D) — could require the installation of microfiber filters on all washing machines sold in the state by 2029. “California has been a leader in reducing plastic pollution and must continue to lead on this issue,” noted Assemblymember McKinnor. “AB 1628 is a solution that is cost and energy efficient and has the potential to dramatically reduce the volume of microfibers entering the atmosphere.”

Jay Zieler, director of External Affairs and Policy for the Nature Conservancy, noted: “Our research has demonstrated that microfiber pollution is a sizable threat to Californians. With at least 4.85 million lbs. of fibers entering our lands and waters each year, mandating the use of filters can be an effective near-term solution to limit emissions.”

It is believed that microfiber filters could capture up to 90% of microfiber emissions and would have to be changed on a regular basis; however, there is no such product on the marketplace so there is no easy way to comply at this point in time.

Of course, such methods would need to be available by 2029 to meet the deadline of the legislation.

Assembly Bill 1628 will be considered by the State Assembly sometime this Spring.



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SDA adds networking arena to Cleaners Showcase

Even though the Southwest Drycleaners Association's (SDA) Cleaners Showcase 2023 takes place at the end of this month – April 28 to 30 at the Irving Convention Center in Dallas, TX – additional announcements continue coming. The latest is the addition of a new Networking Arena – where drycleaners and coin-operators can discuss pertinent industry topics to improve certain aspects of their business.

Dave Coyle of Maverick Dry Cleaners will facilitate a structured network setting to ensure that all attendees leave with a wealth of knowledge and new ideas.

"We are excited to add the Networking Arena to the only dryclean and laundry equipment show in 2023," noted Amin Bata, owner of Pepper Square Cleaners and chairman

of the SDA Showcase Committee. "Our industry is filled with innovators and veterans who have created systems and had success in different areas of their business. We can all benefit from learning from each other."

The schedule for the designated Networking Arena will allow attendees to stop by during a topic they'd like to discuss. On Saturday, themes will include "Route Creation and Development" from 1 to 1:45 p.m., "Role of the Owner in the Business" from 2 to 2:45 p.m., "Client Acquisition" from 3 to 3:45 p.m., and "Automation: Assembly and Bagging" from 4 to 4:45 p.m.

On Sunday, there will be

two sessions in the Networking Arena: "Hiring and Retaining Talent" from noon to 12:45 p.m., and "Wash-Dry-Fold/Laundromats" from 1 to 1:45 p.m. Access to the Networking Arena is included with registration – which is free to members of SDA, DLI and CLA. For non-members, the cost is \$100 on-site.

The Cleaners Showcase Networking Arena is open to all attendees and is included in the show's registration fee. Registration is free to members of the SDA/DLI and CLA and only \$50 for pre-registered non-members (\$100 on-site).

Showcase's Schedule

On Friday night, the weekend will kick off with a "Sneak Peek Exhibit Extravaganza and

Reception" from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. The educational seminars will begin at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday morning with keynote speaker Jeff Butler who will offer strategies for "Winning the Talent War." Butler is a multi-generational labor expert who has addressed more than 100 organizations internationally including Google, Amazon and Wells Fargo.

After that program, the exhibit hall will be opened at 10 a.m. and will close at 5 p.m. On Sunday, it will be open from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Additional guest speakers scheduled for Saturday include Andrew Gibson, president and CEO of Tide Services, who will present "Changing Consumer Behavior" at 10:30 a.m.

Afterward, Frank Kollman of Kollman & Saucier, PA, will

discuss "Managing Your Employees: The Top Five (Or So) Legal Mistakes and Pitfalls" at 11:30 a.m.

Sunday's programs will begin with The Route Pros James Peuster and Jennifer Whitmarsh at 9 a.m. as they discuss "Retain to Gain 2023: How Employee Retention Leads to Customer Retention."

At 10 a.m., Dave Coyle – the president/CEO of Maverick Dry Cleaners – will take to the podium for "Seven Secrets to a Seven-Figure Exit." After that program, Kermit Engh from Methods for Management will explore "The Eight Drivers of Value" at 11 a.m.

In addition to the educational programs, SDA has scheduled time on the showroom floor for live demonstrations and events (1:00 to 3:50 p.m. on Saturday and noon to 1:50 p.m. on Sunday).

Some of the featured programs will include: "Stain Removal Recipes for the Toughest Stains" from Jeff "The Stain Wizard" Schwarz, regional vice president of A.L. Wilson; "Machine Problem? Find It. Fix It. Forget It!" by Bruce Grossman, owner of EZ Timers; and "The OSHA Man Cometh" by Michael Tatch of Tatch Technical Services.

A full schedule of events, including education track and exhibitors can be found at www.sda-dryclean.com.

Dates set for Clean 2025 in Orlando

Continued from page 1

sector."

Details on exhibition space will likely be announced later this year. Returning exhibitors from Clean Show 2022 will have early access to secure their exhibition space.

"With the momentum of Clean 2022 still pushing our industries forward, we're very excited to have our Clean 2025 dates and location finalized and ready to share," said Brian Wallace, president/CEO of CLA and the chair of Clean's advisory council.

"The Clean Show is an essential destination for all five partner associations – ALM, CLA, DLI, TRSA and TCATA – and for our collective stakeholders," he added. "We look forward to working together to bring the best show experience to all in 2025."

For more information on Clean 2025, visit the official site at www.cleanshow.com.

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THE SPOTTING BOARD



BY DAN EISEN

Choosing the best stain removal agents

In the course of my consultations and training, 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 cleaner has to choose what works best for them. There is not just one manufacturer who has a monopoly providing all the best chemicals. The cleaner may use different products from different manufacturers. Cleaners should jump at the opportunity to obtain samples and try different products to find out which works best for them. Using products properly is a must for obtaining best results.

Neutral Lubricant

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

The quality of the neutral

lubricant that you use and the way it is used are important factors. Neutral lubricant is used after the stain is flushed with the proper mechanical action. The neutral lubricant not only protects the fabric from damage it

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.

mended, the results of combining some products can be beneficial.

Digesters

Digesters are enzyme-based products that convert protein stains into soluble sugar. Different manufac-

They can be used in a bath or for spotting board use. They must be used with temperatures no higher than 120°F, no contact with chemicals and 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 amylose acetate, which is prohibited in some states.

Oxygen Bleaches

Sodium perborate and sodium percarbonate — both bleaches are alkaline by nature, and I use them 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 are both products 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.

There is not just one manufacturer who has a monopoly providing all the best chemicals. Drycleaners may use different products from different manufacturers to find out which works best for them.

helps break up the stain — lift 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.

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 are not recom-

menters 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.

1) 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.

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

3) 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.

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One of the first purchases I made in my business was the 24-hour drop box from Iowa Techniques. Sixteen years later, that drop box is still working great and has never needed any kind of repair or service.

-Mike Astorino, Fabricare Cleaners

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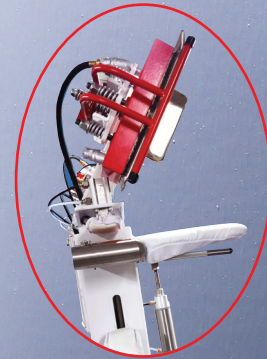


RITZ CLEANERS in Los Angeles, CA, purchased a new Realstar KM804 machine from JP Trading. Pictured at the start-up are: (left to right) Jason Smith, Realstar technical manager; Yong Pak, JP Trading; Dylan Patel, Ritz Cleaners; Andy Lien and Steve Kno of GreenEarth; and Raj Patel, Ritz Cleaners.

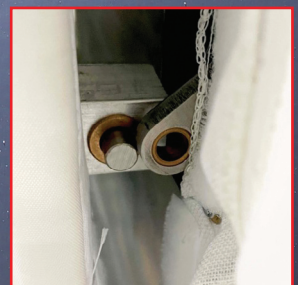
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BUILDING VALUE



BY KERMIT ENGH

How gross margin affects business value

Over the past two years, we have examined numerous ways to increase the value of your business, whether you are thinking of exiting or not. We have discussed how to value an acquisition target, which has been the subject of numerous conversations I have had with Methods for Management (MfM) members during the last 18 months. These are exciting times for those wanting to grow with opportunities in front of them.

Many of you know that your gross margin impacts your profit, but have you considered the impact it has on the value of your company? When assessing your company's value, acquirers and investors will often scrutinize your gross profit margin — the difference between a company's revenue and its cost of goods sold. In other words, it's the profit a company makes from each unit of product or service sold after accounting for the variable cost of producing or delivering that unit but does not include other fixed expenses.

For example, if a company sells a product for \$100 and it costs \$70 to produce and deliver it, the gross profit margin would be \$30, or 30%. I would add that many operators I come across do not know the actual variable costs required to produce the

cleaning services they offer. If you are interested in a tool to assist in calculating this cost, send me email. This is a great exercise to educate yourself, your staff, and to determine if your pricing is logical. There is huge power in knowledge. Share it. A high gross profit margin is a crucial factor for investors and potential acquirers as it indicates that a company has established pricing power through marketing differentiation and possesses a competitive advantage. A strong competitive moat is an indicator of a company's long-term sustainability, making it more appealing to potential investors.

When a company's gross margin shrinks, it indicates to investors that the company may be competing on price. This is typically a sign that the business lacks a unique value proposition or marketing differentiation and that competing on price is the only way to attract customers. If you find yourself in this situation, a change in strategy may be needed to survive and thrive in the future.

A shallow moat leaves the company vulnerable to competitive threats and makes it less appealing to potential acquirers.

24 vs 6 Times Earnings

To illustrate the impact of

gross margin on a company's value, let's compare two companies everyone is familiar with: Apple and Dell. Apple has a strong competitive advantage and a healthy gross margin, whereas Dell's competitive moat is weaker, and its gross margin is lower. In 2022 Apple's average gross margin was 43%, compared to just 23% for Dell.

A shallow moat leaves the company vulnerable to competitive threats and makes it less appealing to potential acquirers.

Apple has a highly differentiated brand and controls the buying experience through its Apple stores. Additionally, Apple has invested in a range of high-margin subscription offerings, such as Apple TV and Apple Music. The market is willing to pay more than 24 times Apple's 2023 earnings forecast, and the company has a market capitalization of over \$2 trillion.

By contrast, Dell offers commoditized technology products, which puts them

in a weaker competitive position, requiring them to compete on price and resulting in a lower gross margin.

The market is only paying around six times Dell's 2023 earnings estimates, giving it a total market capitalization of around \$30 billion.

Just as gross margin impacts the world's largest publicly traded companies, it also impacts smaller businesses. Ron Holt started Two Maids & a Mop, a residential cleaning company, in 2003. Holt ran a lean business and enjoyed healthy gross margins and a net profit margin of around 30%.

Holt invested his earnings in differentiating his business from mom-and-pop cleaning services. He built a network of 12 locations across the southern U.S. and had plans to expand across the country. Holt was curious about franchising as a business model and attended a Las Vegas conference where he had a chance encounter with Subway founder Fred DeLuca. Subway had more than 40,000 locations around the world at the time, so Holt asked DeLuca for his expansion advice. DeLuca cautioned Holt about actioning every idea from his employees as his company got bigger.

He told Holt, "Most of the time, employees bring you

ideas to make their life easier, not to make you more money. Every time you make your employees' lives easier, it comes at a cost."

This was a lesson I learned during the early days of covid. Many of us got thrown back into production tasks due to staff shortages. As I did, I started to see that processes developed had been changed, and not for the betterment of our customers or the company.

The changes came from laziness and shortcuts. Seeing this and getting my processes back on track was one of many benefits which came from the tough days of COVID-19.

Armed with DeLuca's advice, Holt grew Two Maids & a Mop from 12 to 91 locations and \$40 million in revenue without seriously compromising his gross margin. In 2021 Holt sold his business to JM Family Enterprises for over ten times EBITDA.

Taking Action

Apart from raising prices or reducing input costs, an often-overlooked approach to improving gross margin is to invest in carving out a point of differentiation for your business in the minds of your customers. Be the expert in specialty services where your competitors can not or will not follow. When your customers see your business as unique, you are less likely to have to compete solely on price.

Charge a premium for a differentiated product or service, and you'll beef up your gross profit margin—and the value of your company. 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 27 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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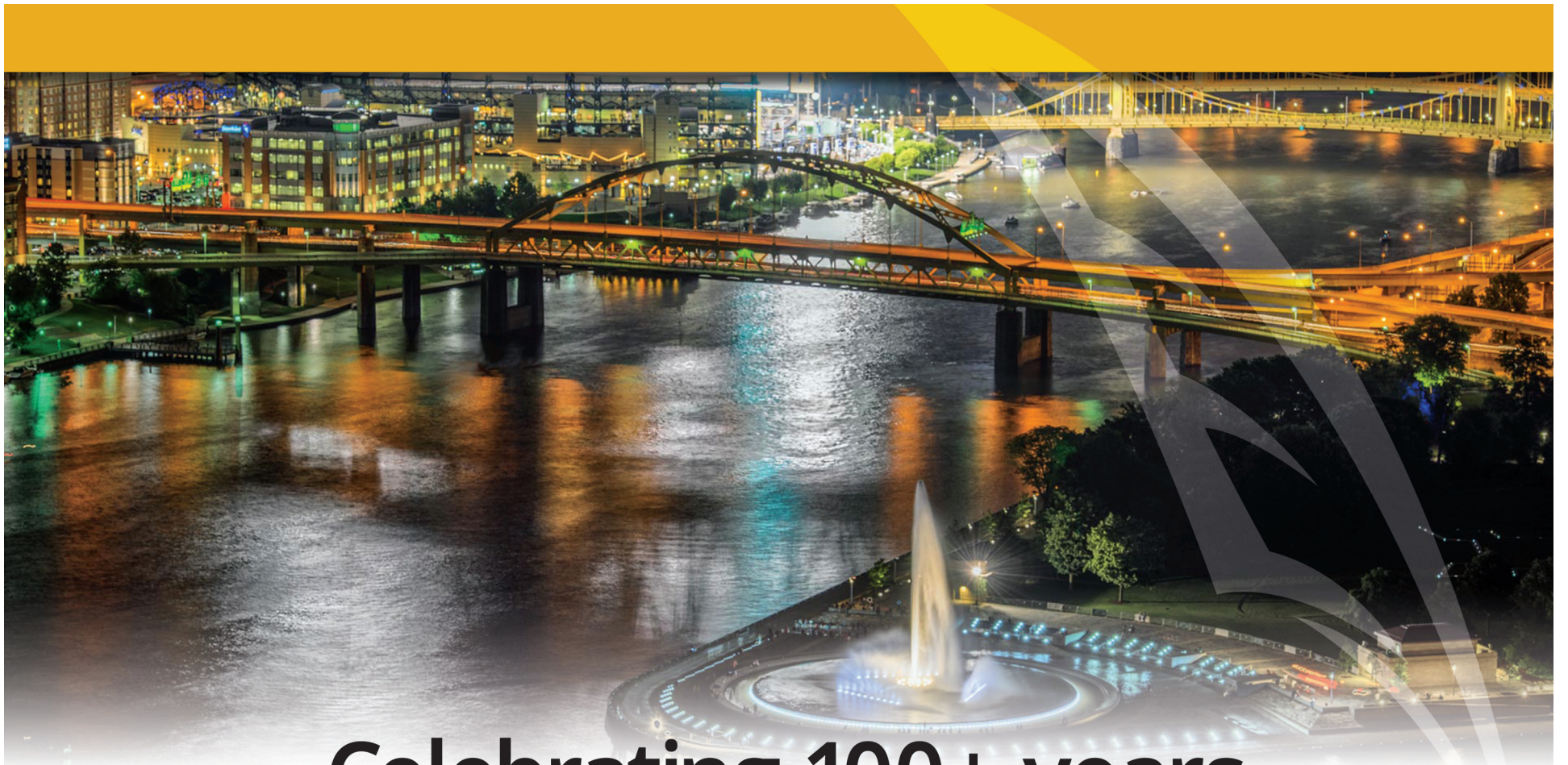
BY FRANK KOLLMAN

Here are 50 ways to be a better employer

Yesterday, I copied a list of 100 short pieces of advice for living a better life. For example, item #4 was "say no (a lot)," and item #45 was "know why you do what you do." Because I love lists, I decided to put together my own. Here are 50 short pieces of advice for employers.

- 1) Hire the best people you can.
- 2) Fire the worst people you have.
- 3) Never apologize for having to discipline an employee.
- 4) Know how the wage and hour laws work.
- 5) If you do not pay a salary, the employee is probably not exempt from overtime.
- 6) Treat employees the same or have a good business reason for the different treatment.
- 7) Talk to your employees.
- 8) Keep personnel files up to date.
- 9) Keep I-9s in a separate file.
- 10) Have good time records.
- 11) Train supervisors.
- 12) Promoting the best employees to supervisory positions can result in the loss of a good employee and the promotion of a bad supervisor.
- 13) Words matter in the workplace.
- 14) Do not impose discipline out of anger.
- 15) Document counseling sessions.
- 16) Document discipline.
- 17) Document terminations.
- 18) When documenting things, describe what happened in clear English.
- 19) Do not write like a lawyer.
- 20) Seek legal advice if you are not sure what to do.
- 21) Some government websites contain useful information, such as www.dol.gov, www.osha.gov, and various state and local websites.
- 22) Stop workplace behavior that is unprofessional, even if there are no complaints.
- 23) Join a trade association that keeps you up to date on changing laws.
- 24) Have a good accountant.
- 25) Less important, have a good lawyer.
- 26) Unions look for workplaces where the employer's relationship to employees is hostile.
- 27) Safety is important.
- 28) The following words, without details, are meaningless: unsatisfactory, inappropriate, and unacceptable.
- 29) Job descriptions are essential.
- 30) If an employee has an injury or disability, talk to them about possible accommodations, even when you're convinced no accommodations could work.
- 31) Avoid romantic entanglements with your employees.
- 32) Never touch employees except to move them out of the way of danger.
- 33) If you tell jokes, make sure they are funny.
- 34) Nicknames are a bad idea. *Are you listening, Jughead?*
- 35) Stop friction among employees before it blossoms into an argument.
- 36) Use the probationary period to screen out employees who are not going to make it.
- 37) Well done employee evaluations are great; poorly done evaluations are dangerous.
- 38) Get a signed authorization for payroll deductions other than taxes.
- 39) Do not automatically allow OSHA into your place of business. Consider forcing OSHA to get a warrant.
- 40) Keep good hiring records, especially those for applicants you rejected. They can sue for discrimination.
- 41) There are no secrets in the workplace.
- 42) It is illegal to prohibit non-supervisory employees from discussing wages, benefits, and working conditions among themselves.
- 43) Social media is dangerous.
- 44) Learn your state's rules on wage payment. They differ from state to state.
- 45) In most cases, unemployment benefits cannot be denied on the basis of poor performance. Resignation or misconduct must be found.
- 46) Never call an employee an independent contractor.
- 47) Never make under-the-table payments to your employees.
- 48) Read a few books on human behavior. You might be able to understand your employees better.
- 49) No good deed goes unpunished. Second chances in the workplace rarely work out.
- 50) In the absence of a rule, use commonsense. In the absence of commonsense, ask someone to draft a rule.

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



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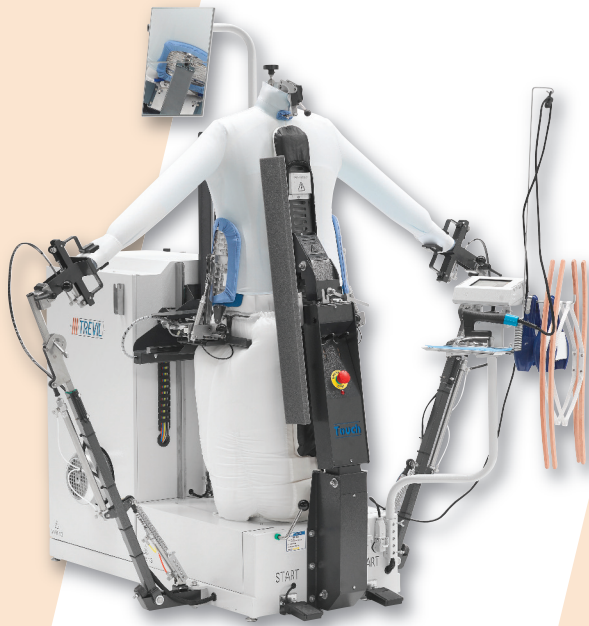


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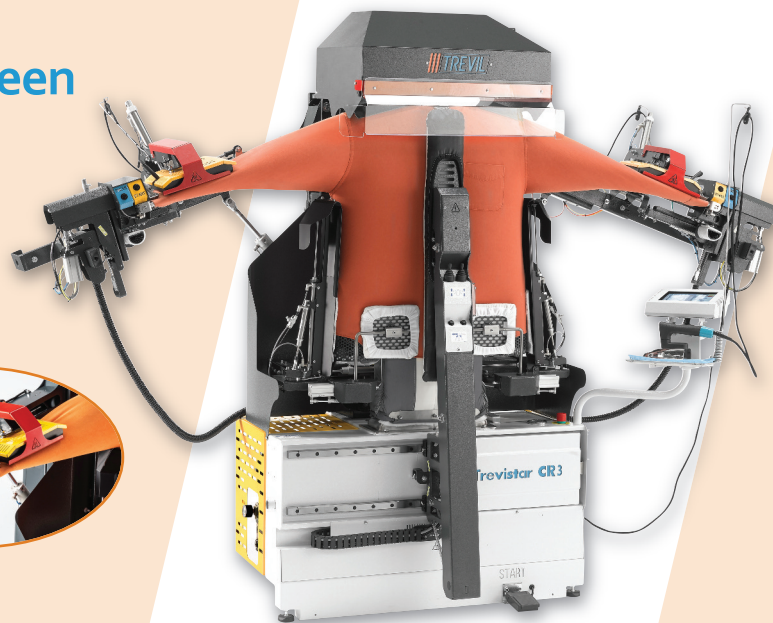
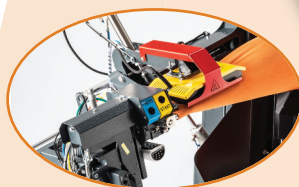
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Registration opens for TCATA's annual conference

The Textile Care Allied Trades Association (TCATA) has opened registration for its 2023 Annual Educational & Management Conference, which will be held at The Phoenician in Scottsdale, AZ, from June 4 to 7.

This year's theme is "Renew & Reconnect."

Currently, TCATA is offering a reduced early bird registration discount of \$675 for the first attendee plus \$625 for additional attendees from the same company. Spouse registration is \$300.

Those rates will increase after the early bird deadline expires on April 30.

The association has gathered an impressive lineup for this year's educational programs. The keynote speaker will be Gene Marks, president



Gene Marks of The Marks Group. His program will help attendees understand the current political, economic and technological trends that will likely impact companies in 2023 so you can make more profitable business decisions.

Also presenting at the conference will be Scott Otto, the CEO and founder of Organizational Change Advisors. He will discuss how to navigate change in an ever-changing world.



Scott Otto

A new networking style breakout session will be moderated by Bill Odorizzi, former vice president of marketing for Sankosha USA and also a past president for TCATA.



Bill Odorizzi The program will be called "Developing a Business Growth Strategy: An Executive Idea Exchange."

In addition to the business sessions, TCATA has plans for a golf outing at the resort on Sunday morning.

There will also be social outings in the form of a welcome reception and dinner later that evening from 6 to 10 p.m., as well as a closing reception and dinner that will take place

from 6 to 10 p.m. on Tuesday evening.

Additionally, there will be plenty to do at The Phoenician, which offers every amenity from a three-level pool complex to an athletic club and golf course.

For more information on the luxury resort, visit its official site located at www.thephoenician.com.

"From golfing to swimming, from sightseeing to shopping, the Phoenician Resort and Scottsdale are certain to have something for everyone to enjoy," said Rusty Smith of Forenta, conference chair. "Best of all, you'll get the priceless benefit of network and fellowship with your

industry colleagues. See you in Scottsdale!"

TCATA has secured a room rate of \$299 at the resort. The dates of availability run from June 3 to 7 of this year.

For more information on the conference or to register, visit the association online at www.tcata.org.

You may also contact TCATA by phone by calling (813) 348-0075, or send email to leslie@tcata.org.

Obituary: Bill Luse, former president of TCATA

William "Bill" Luse, a past president of the Textile Care Allied Trades Association, passed away at his home on Feb. 24.

He was 95 years old. Luse was born on Aug. 7, 1927, in Springfield, OH, and was a graduate of Harding High School, before he attended the Ohio State University.

He also served in the Navy during World War II before he married Donna Ruth Clark in 1949.

Luse was the owner and operator of the first laundromat in Marion County – Half Hour Laundry.


He and his father ran the family business, Marylyn Chemical Co., Inc., manufacturing and selling commercial laundry and drycleaning supplies throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Luse served on the TCATA Board of Directors in the late 1960s before he began his term as association president in 1971.

He was also an avid golfer and was a member of the Marion Country Club.



He is survived by his children: William C. (Linda) Luse, Barry (Janet) Luse, Bunny (Jeff) Britton, and Brian (Teresa) Luse; grandchildren: William K. Luse, Carrie M. Rogers, Kenneth "Erik" (Crystal) Luse, Nathan S. (Lisa Perkins) Britton, Dustin W. (Casey) Britton, Casey J. (Angela) Britton, Madison M. Luse and Parker T. Luse.

Donations in William Luse's honor may be made to the Sarah Jean Luse Foundation, c/o Sandusky County Communities Foundation, 1245 Napoleon St., Fremont, OH, 43420.



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BY BRUCE GROSSMAN

Monitoring your compressed air system V

Last month, I covered the correct piping for compressed air systems. This month, I'll be talking about other components in the compressed air system that remove water from the air stream.

First, a quick note about air and temperature: the hotter the air, the more water vapor it can hold. As the air cools, this water vapor condenses into liquid water.

Liquid water in compressed air systems is a contaminant stripping away helpful lubricants, degrading rubber and plastic parts, and corroding and rusting metal components.

It has been my experience that liquid water is the leading cause of failure for air-operated machinery.

Several devices are available to reduce the amount of water that gets to the compressed air components of machinery.

Compressors are often located in boiler rooms that characteristically have high heat and humidity levels.

Locate a compressor's air intake as close to an outside vent as practicable.

Usually, providing the compressor air intake area with a vent line to the outside of the boiler room is fairly simple, providing cooler, drier air at the compressor air intake.

the tank, removing it from the compressed air system.

This water and oil may be considered a hazardous waste. Opening the drain valve and draining the compressor tank should be done regularly, at least once daily.

Very effective, inexpensive and easily installed au-

Even a small leak in the compressor drain valve will significantly affect your compressor, causing cycling more often, thus incurring greater wear and higher electric bills.

1) **Drains and Auto-Drains.** Somewhere, usually at the bottom of the tank on which the compressor pump is mounted, there is a drain valve of some sort.

Water that has condensed out of the hot compressed air and fugitive oil from the compressor pump collects in the tank. When this drain valve is opened, this water-oil mixture is blown out of

automatic drain valves are widely available.

These auto-drains contain an adjustable timer that regularly opens an electric solenoid valve allowing the tank to drain.

Besides the obvious advantage of knowing your compressor is being drained regularly without you having to squat down in a hot boiler room to open, wait,

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REFRIGERATED AFTERCOOLER

and then close a hot greasy valve, you're also spared the maintenance on this inaccessible area.

Even a small leak in the compressor drain valve will significantly affect your compressor, causing cycling more often, thus incurring greater wear and higher electric bills.

2) **After Coolers and Refrigerated Dryers.** Compressed air exiting the compressor pump is extremely hot and can hold lots of water vapor.

As this air cools, some of the water vapor condenses out as liquid water in the compressor tank requiring the draining procedure discussed in section one.

However, the air is still hot, and lots of water vapor remains in the air stream, which will later condense in the cooler air lines and equipment.

In the drycleaning plant, the most effective way to reduce the remaining water vapor before it condenses and travels into the machinery is to cool the air flow further.

The simplest method of achieving this is using a device called an after cooler. An after cooler is usually a finned coil with a fan mounted on it.

Compressed air leaving the compressor pump enters the tubing with the fins attached while the fan blows air across the coil cooling the compressed air, condensing out much of the remaining

water vapor.

A variant of this method uses a water-cooled heat exchanger instead of a finned air-cooled coil.

Refrigerated dryers are the most effective device to remove troublesome liquid water from the compressed air stream.

They apply the same principle as the aftercooler, but a refrigeration system is used instead of using air or water to cool the compressed air.

Refrigeration provides a much lower condensing temperature, hence a lower level of water vapor in the compressed air stream.

Keep in mind that you will still need some type of drain on any system used.

After coolers and refrigerated dryers must be appropriately sized to the air compressor.

Well, that's it for this month. I'll be continuing next month with more easily accomplished tasks that save big bucks.

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 2 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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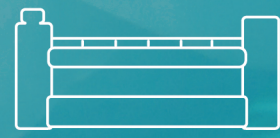
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SHIRT TALES



BY DON DESROSIERS

A step-by-step guide for pressing short sleeves

The sleeve press has not been missed by this writer, nor by most plant owners/managers. For many that have been in this business for less than ten years, they know of no other way. In fact, they may not be completely sure what a “sleeve press” is, exactly.

For the uninitiated: for around 50 years, the first step in the shirt pressing process was placing the shirt onto a sleeve press. The machine was basically two arms that stood up out of a table that was at kneecap height. When actuated, the two arms would move into a cabinet and be squeezed between the steam chests, thereby drying, and pressing the fabric. This worked equally well for short sleeves.

On paper, the sleeve press was perfect in every way. In practice, it was a disaster — and still is to this day. As simple as a sleeve press, in reality, they come in all shapes and sizes, and a sleeve press has never been able to adapt. As a direct result, it is the one machine that

causes more touch-up than any other. Think about all the errant wrinkles that are caused by the sleeve press and must be removed by an iron.

As simple as a sleeve seems, in reality they come in all shapes and sizes, and a sleeve press has never been able to adapt.

Enter the blown-sleeve shirt unit. I was not an early adopter, but, at this point in time, there really was no other way. The hard-pressed sleeve has no advantage over the blown sleeve. Couple that with the risks that you take with a hard-pressed sleeve. They are notorious button smashers and there is always the risk that those errant wrinkles get missed and end up in your customers’ closets.

But — *and it’s a big but* — I have never been happy with the short-sleeve attachments

on the blown-sleeve units. I’m guessing that you (or your pressers) are not completely happy with them either based on how many pressers I have seen ignoring the short-sleeve device (I’ll call them SSDs) entirely.

Depending on the brand of your machine, your SSD has its own issue. Some leave an imprint. Some leave an unpressed area. At least a couple of SSDs stretch the fabric in such a way that deforms the sleeve. And, they don’t work all that well.

Sometimes the sleeve breaks loose from the contraction and the sleeve just flaps in the wind. Nine times out of ten — maybe more often — the pressers ignore the short sleeve equipment, and the touch-up staff take care of those types of sleeve.

The old sleeve press did not crease the sleeve. It also did not deform the sleeve.

I will show you how to press short sleeves on any shirt press, without deforming the sleeve and without creasing the sleeve. If you have a customer base that

expects a creased sleeve, you can do that with an iron on a touch-up board in about six or eight seconds.

What I’m showing will work on any unit, any brand. Follow the step-by-step photos.

Press the collar as you normally would (Picture #1). Lay out the sleeve perfectly in half, with the bottom seam perfectly aligned with the bottom fold (Picture #2).

Lay this sleeve on the collar buck. Close the head and press for **three seconds only**. Teach your presser to count out loud:

One, Two, Three.

Do not press for longer than three seconds.

Do the same thing with the other sleeve. Press for **three seconds only**.

The sleeve does not dry in three seconds, especially Ox-fords and heavier shirts, but the part of the shirt that touches the steam chest appears to be as dry as in Picture #3. However, if you turned the shirt over or put your hand inside the sleeves, you’d feel moisture.

Next, dress the buck in the usual manner (see Picture #4),

Continued on page 28



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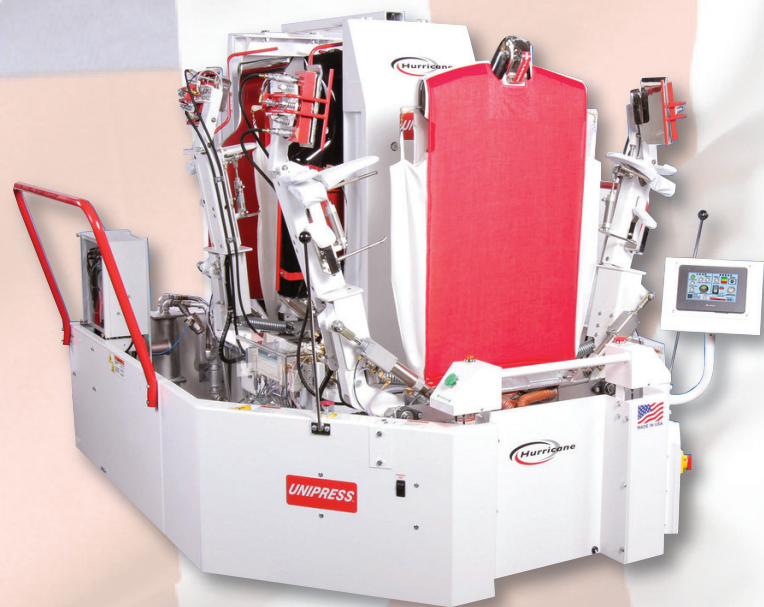


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Don Desrosiers

A step-by-step guide for pressing short sleeves

Continued from page 26

but do not select the short sleeve cycle and ignore the SSD.

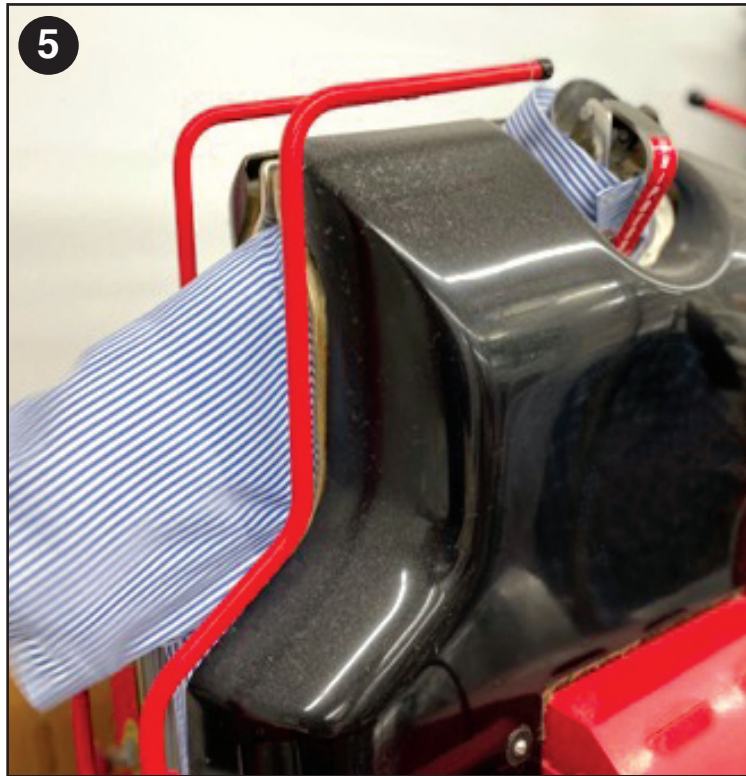
As the shirt begins its cycle, the super-heated air that is designed to dry the sleeves does exactly that (Picture #5).

No touch up is needed, no crease remaining and, best of all, your pressers will find this method easier than what they are doing now.

Because there is still some moisture in the sleeves, the slight crease that you put into the sleeve when you pressed it on the collar press disappears.

This is one of the three reasons why you do not press the sleeves for longer than three seconds.

The second reason is that productivity will be adversely affected when the collar/cuff pressers gets bogged down playing with short sleeves.



Lastly, if you press those sleeves for a long time, the two halves will stick together, especially if the shirt is starched.

As you can see in the remaining three photographs (Pictures #6, 7 and 8), no touch up is needed, no crease remaining, and — best of all — your pressers will find that this method is easier than what they are doing now.

“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 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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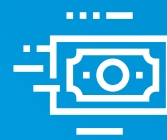
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DLI will focus on wide variety of topics for April programs

This month, the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute (DLI) will be offering two one-hour webinars on how drycleaners can outsource their payrolls and maximize the Spring high season — plus a class of its virtual stain removal program will begin soon.

First up, DLI will host a virtual education session on “Benefits to Outsourcing Your Payroll” at 1 p.m. EST on April 12.

One week later, the association will host a webinar featuring Dave Coyle of Maverick Drycleaners who will discuss how to “Maximize the Spring 2023 High Season,”

It will be held at 1 p.m. EST on April 19. Both are free for members.

Later this month, DLI will offer its virtual Stain Removal course beginning on April 25.

The course will be presented with Zoom video conferencing technology and will be spread out over seven two-hour sessions that will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays through May 16.

Topics for the course will include removing coffee, ink, grease and other stains from clothing; identifying cotton, silk, polyester and other fabrics; using bleaches without

damaging the fabric color; using specialty products such as digesters, amyl acetate and acetone in stain removal; and identifying fibers and fabric construction.

Tuition is \$495 for DLI Budget or International members, \$394 for Standard members, \$297 for Gold members and Premier members may attend any three courses for free. Non-members must pay \$695 to attend.

In addition to its webinar presentations, DLI plans to continue offering its peer-to-peer Zoom video conferencing meetings every Tuesday morning at 11:30 a.m. EST.

For more information on any of DLI’s upcoming events, visit them online at dlionline.com.



DRYCLEANING & LAUNDRY INSTITUTE INTERNATIONAL

Zips expands in Austin, TX

Zips Cleaners recently opened a new location in Austin, TX, operated by multi-unit franchisee Jason Frick. This is his fourth store in the city. The most recent “drop store” is at the former site on William Cannon Dr., a 1,732 sq. ft. facility with an on-site tailor and counter staff who receive and return items from their

customers. The items are actually processed at a nearby fully equipped Zips location.

Frick partnered with new franchisees Jake Malishkevich and Alex Shuster to open the location and will soon open a second drop store with them in Round Rock, just north of Austin. Construction on that unit, located in the Randall’s

Shopping Center at A.W. Grimes Blvd. and Gattis School Rd., has already commenced.

“This new location is very well known and heavily travelled, so we’re very convenient both to residents of and commuters to the area, Frick noted.

For more information on Zips, visit them at www.321zips.com.

ABC receives GBB green business award

Recently, America’s Best Cleaners (ABC) was selected as one of the best of the Green Business Bureau (GBB) in 2022. The GBB are annual awards that recognize members of the Green Business Bureau who have created greener businesses and demonstrated a commitment to sustainability with tangible results.

GBB CEO Tom Permatteo noted, “America’s Best Cleaners has been a leader in sustainability for well over two decades. They have worked with the Green Business Bureau not only to improve their own organization, but to bring real and practical solutions to their affiliate membership and partners. ABC has spread the message that sustainable business practices are critical to the long-term success of any company competing in the garment care industry, and they continue to make a huge positive impact on the planet and in their community.”

ABC Executive Director Chris White expressed gratitude for receiving the honor. “I’m so happy and pleased that our entire affiliation and

network of partners is being recognized for our over 20-year commitment to the environmental movement in the garment care industry,” he said.

“We take pride in our leadership position from our early adoption of liquified CO2 cleaning, professional wet cleaning and implementing the world’s only bio-based textile cleaning agent, SystemK4,” he continued. “We continue to work with our technology partners to implement paperless tagging, invoicing and manifesting to reduce our consumption of paper and further our pursuit of products, equipment and techniques to lower single-use plastic consumption and energy. Our continued educational partnerships with fashion design houses, textile manufacturers, fashion institutes and retailers have positioned us as critical partners in the circular fashion movement as we learn and share with each other how to lower our carbon footprint.”

For more information on America’s Best Cleaners, visit their website online at americasbestcleaners.com.

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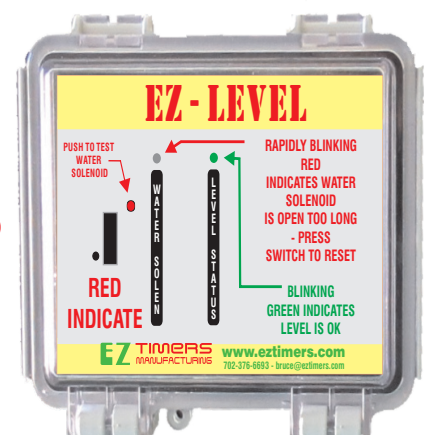
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Griffin's Cleaners host latest RCS meeting in FL

Renewal Claims Solutions (RCS) – formerly known as the North American Restoration Drycleaners – recently met at one of its partner plants located in Sebring, FL.

Partners from all across the country attended.

One of the highlights of the three-day event was a plant tour of Griffin's Cleaners, a local third generation family-owned retail and textile restoration facility.

Located in central Florida, the business works with insurance companies and mitigation contractors to help restore soft contents after fires and other natural disasters.

The most recent hurricane has left Griffin's with an enormous backlog of work.

Ray Griffin and his two sons showcased their recently installed Metalprogetti assembly

conveyor, which, with proper tagging and software, is estimated to take the place of up to two workers in a standard production plant.

Also during the meeting was a presentation in a classroom setting by Kermit Engh from Methods for Management.

He discussed how his business management services are available to those in the drycleaning industry, as well as success planning for those intending on transitioning their business to the next generation.

There was another presentation given by Liza Morantz of Morantz Ultrasonics, who, along with her husband, offered a firsthand demonstration of some of the latest ultrasonic cleaning methods and equipment available to the

restoration industry.

Morantz Ultrasonic equipment can be used for certain textiles, delicate fabrics and hard surface blinds, electronic equipment and a variety of difficult items to clean that are encountered in the operation of a professional restoration business.

Renewal Claims Solutions is a partnership of elite, independently-owned drycleaning and laundry businesses across the country that work together to leverage their national footprint.

The partners collaborate in establishing industry standards and refining best practices that are then employed in servicing the insurance industry and their customers.

For more information, visit the group's official website at renewalclaimsolutions.com.



During the recent Renewal Claims Solutions meeting in FL, Kermit Engh (top photo) discussed some business management solutions. Members also enjoyed a tour of Griffin's Cleaners of Sebring, FL, (bottom photo).

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THE ART OF Stain Removal & Customer Communication

The Art of Stain Removal & Customer Communication is a special, all-day program created for you and your staff, presented by the Pennsylvania and Delaware Cleaners Association and the North East Fabricare Association, held at Wedding Gown Preservation Co. in Endicott, New York.



Jane Zellers



Bob Edwards

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After lunch, Bob will continue his presentation and Jane will explain the most efficient ways to create lines of communication between your front counter and production department.

- How best to converse with your customers about potential issues?
- How to keep everyone on the same page?

Afterwards, there will be a Q & A session followed by an exclusive tour of nearby Cleaner's Supply.

Please feel free to bring as many of your staff as you wish.

PDCA, NEFA, and DLI members are receiving this terrific program as a **Membership Benefit**.

Non-members will pay a \$99 fee per plant, which can be put towards DLI membership.

Thank You to Wedding Gown Preservation Co. & Cleaner's Supply for sponsoring the light breakfast and lunch.

We appreciate your support!



Questions? Contact Mark Pollock at mark@pdclean.org • Leslie Schaeffer at leslie@pdclean.org or 215-830-8495

Sparkle Cleaners hosts TAG

In February, the Tuchman Advisory Group (TAG) were hosted by Heath Bolin and Ross Adams of Sparkle Cleaners in Tucson, AZ.

The group visited Sparkle Cleaners' main plant, as well as a few drop stores. A highlight of one of those stores was a separate back entrance for access to 24/7 lockers.

Heath Bolin, president of Sparkle, noted, "It was great to have some of the top cleaners in the country visit our operation and share ideas and give us a 'look in' from the outside."

In addition to offering a critique of Sparkle Cleaners, TAG members also had an opportunity to share thoughts on their own operation, covering everything from financials and alterations to routes and social media and more.

"Having a fresh set of eyes to offer feedback on your operation is always an important exercise," said Ross Adams, Bolin's son-in-law who joined the company and is general manager. "When those observations are coming from industry experts like we have in the Tuchman Advisory Group, the information gained is invaluable."

The group was also treated to a program from Frank Dubasik, director of U.S. operations for Metalprogetti. At the conclusions of the meeting and a final meal together, the group was surprised by tickets from Michael Jones of Highland Cleaners who purchased tickets for everybody to watch the finals of a ballroom dancing competition being held at the hotel.



Each of the students pictured here received a \$200 scholarship from Kreussler, Inc. as a new member of DLI.

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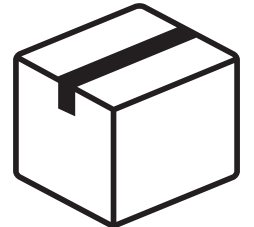
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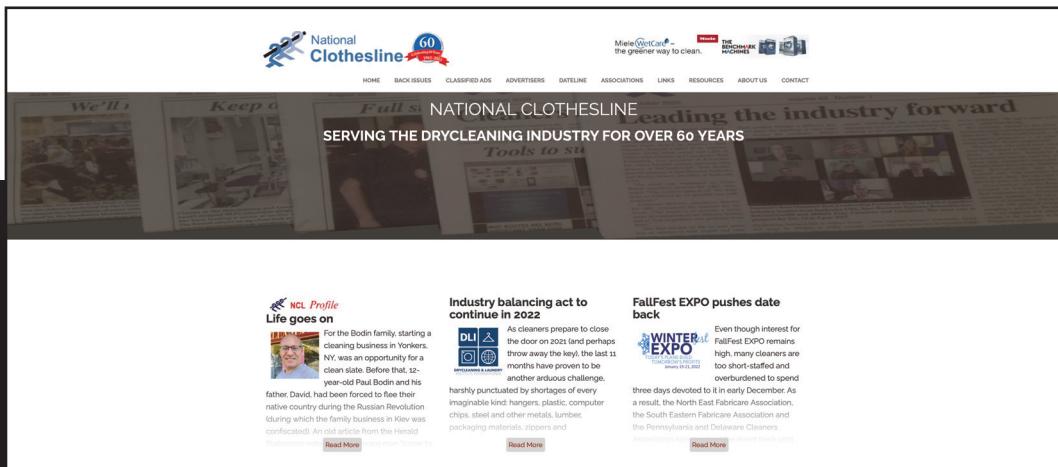
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 Life goes on
 For the Bodin family, starting a cleaning business in Yorkers, NY was an opportunity for a clean state. Before that, 12-year-old Paul Bodin and his father, David, had been forced to flee their native country during the Russian Revolution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

Industry balancing act to continue in 2023
 As cleaners prepare to close the door on 2022 (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, gloves and more.

FallFest EXPO pushes date back
 Even though interest for FallFest EXPO remains high, many cleaners are too short-staffed and overbooked 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.



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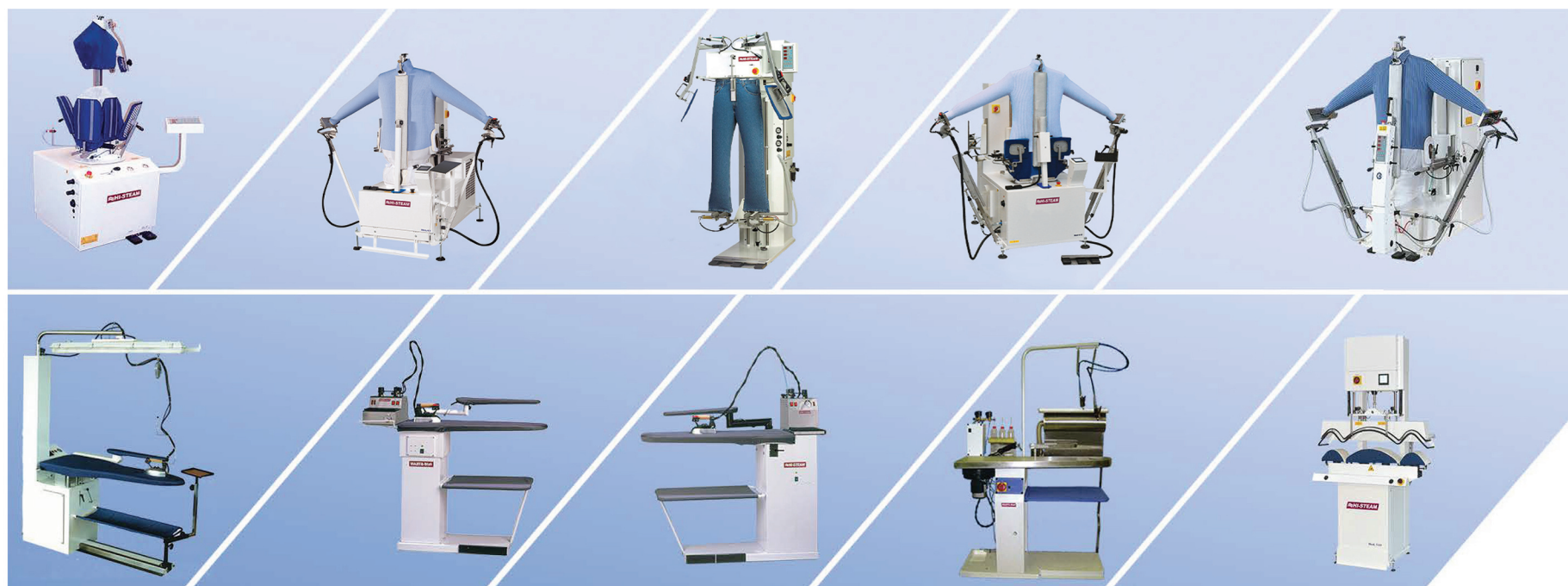
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