



National

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EXPO East equipment live show set for early June

In an unprecedented move, the South Eastern Fabricare Association (SEFA), the California Cleaners Association (CCA), the Southwest Drycleaners Association (SDA) and the Pennsylvania and Delaware Cleaners Association (PDCA) will combine their four regional trade shows down to two.

The Drycleaning & Laundry EXPO East will take place from June 7 to 9 at the Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center in Kissimmee, FL. Then, from Oct. 4 to 6, the Drycleaning & Laundry EXPO West at the Horseshoe Resort and Casino

in Las Vegas, NV.

"This is a great move for the industry," said SEFA President Randy Parham, "and one we think will only strengthen

each show. These shows are important. Without them, the typical drycleaner doesn't have access and the opportunity to see all the new and innovative products and services. By reducing the number of shows from four to two, we have made it easier for exhibitors to commit to exhibiting and having a much

bigger presence."

DL EXPO East names speakers

Those who are planning on attending the Drycleaning and Laundry EXPO East can enjoy four educational presentations.

The first Saturday program will feature Terry Brock and Gina Carr who will show how attendees can implement a marketing plan enhanced by AI (artificial intel-

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Brock



Carr

So-Cal cleaners face new regulations on boilers

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) is developing various zero-emission mandates as part of its Air Quality Management Plan adopted in late 2022, and drycleaners within its juris-

diction will soon be facing new hardships regarding regulations.

The governing body specifically amended Rule 1146.2 in an effort to curb the Oxides of Nitrogen

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Cleaners gathered at Kona Cleaners for a CCA event last month and one of the topics that came up in conversation often was dealing with Rule 1146.2.

Celebrating 85 years with hundreds of people

In 1939, Alma and Lou Kroner, Sr., opened Cheviot Cleaners and Tailors in Cheviot, OH. The first day's volume consisted of a single pair of pants.

Fortunately, business grew along with the company's reputation through three generations of Kroner family ownership. It eventually became known as Kroner Dry Cleaners.

About 300 guests turned up to celebrate its 85th anniversary with family, employees, customers, and a few govern-

ment representatives, as well.

Current owner Ray Kroner, who first joined the business in 1978, back when it only had six employees, noted that it has two dozen today, typically cleaning anywhere from 600 to 1,000 pieces a day. Even after 45 years in the business, he hasn't lost his enthusiasm.

"There's no time like the present to celebrate," he said. It's a philosophy he's cultivated for the last 15 years.

When profiled by *National Clothesline* in the March issue of 2009, he recalled trying to

come up with an inexpensive but effective idea to emphasize the company's upcoming 70th anniversary. He decided on building a ten-foot PVC laundry hangar that would serve as a billboard displaying the company's years of operation (1939-2009) and the words, "Hanging around for 70 years."

It was enormously eye-catching and helped draw in about 225 guests for the company's celebration at a local tavern.

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KRONER DRY CLEANERS of Ohio recently celebrated its 85th anniversary with about 300 of its closest friends, which included customers, employees and a few elected officials.

A timeless Twin Cities' tradition



For over eight decades, Pilgrim Cleaners & Launderers has been faithfully serving the people of the Twin Cities and supporting the local community. It all began over 80 years ago (although with a different name) with Don Rosen. Today, it is guided by his grandson, Derek Engle. Read about the full family history in the drycleaning industry on page 6.



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A response to last month's wetcleaning vs drycleaning comparison looks at additional cost factors.

WATER WALL STEAM BOILER

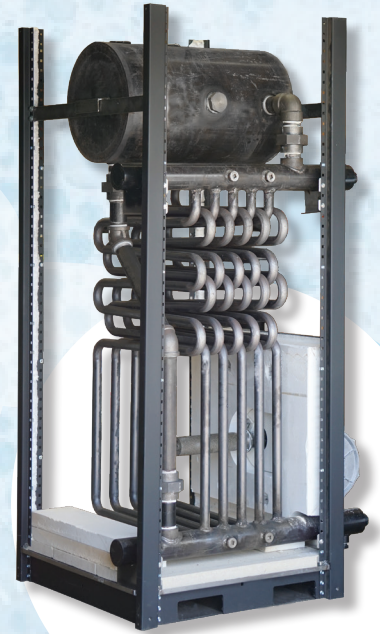
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Catching up with 203 years of drycleaning

The earth has circled the sun one more time and once again we celebrate National Drycleaning Day on March 3 — designated so because that is the day when Thomas Jennings was awarded a patent for his revolutionary “dry scouring” process for cleaning clothes and removing stains.

The year was 1821, which means from an official standpoint, that makes the drycleaning industry 203 years old... and counting. While not everything ages as well as a fine wine, the fabricare industry continue to evolve its methods and improve over time despite dealing with an increasingly harsh business atmosphere.

While one individual is credited with kickstarting the industry, it has taken a multitude of exceptional individuals throughout the years to keep it moving forward and become more sustainable and convenient in a world that seems to demand more and more.

With that in mind, this is a good time to mention that you will have an opportunity to honor such exceptional individuals very soon. Next month, we will have full coverage of the nomination process for the new Drycleaning and Laundry Institute (DLI) Hall of Fame that will begin on April 1. Then, the association will sift through all of those nominations and induct a new class of deserving candidates.

In addition to the many people who have contributed to stronger footing for this industry, it should also be noted that DLI and the many other drycleaning associations have long assisted with its success and they continue to grow in strength as an invaluable resource.

Fortunately, the associations of the industry have adapted to better suit the times, as well. This can be evidenced by the fact that the South Eastern Fabricare Association (SEFA), the California Cleaners Association (CCA), the Southwest Drycleaners Association (SDA) and the Pennsylvania and Delaware Cleaners Association (PDCA) have opted to combine all four of their regionals shows into two: the Drycleaning and Laundry Expo East will be hosted in Kissimmee, FL,

from June 7 to 9 and the Drycleaning and Laundry Expo West will take place in Las Vegas, NV, from Oct. 4 to 6.

The idea is to merge some of the smaller off-Clean Show year exhibitions into a much bigger offering and to save a considerable amount of money for attendees and exhibitors. Live, in-person events are more necessary than ever, but people also seem busier than ever — so making every show count as much as possible just makes sense.

In-between those shows, though, the industry now has more options than ever to keep up with its education, and it’s nice to see that virtual offerings are growing in number and popularity as an alternative option to traveling to off-site schools and locations. It’s a huge savings on travel and lodging costs. There is simply no excuse for a drycleaner not to take advantage of this incredible convenience.

Speaking of incredible convenience, we must make one last nod to all of print publications and online sites that also keep the industry informed and educated on drycleaning as much as possible. For example, you hold a few drycleaning crash courses in your hands right now: how to run your business by the numbers (Don Desrosiers, page 12), how to properly clean vintage garments (Dan Eisen, page 14), what are the latest rules and trends in the workplace (Frank Kollman, page 24), the inner workings of your boiler and steam delivery (Bruce Grossman, page 18), and seven strategic steps to take before selling (Kermit Engh, page 8).

When you’re finished with the day’s lessons, there is one more column from John Rothrock that poses an interesting question: Would you go to your own drycleaning business? If the answer to that question is not “yes,” then take comfort in knowing there are a lot of resources available to help you improve your business and remove any barriers that might prevent your (or your customers) from wanting to come in. After all, drycleaning has come a long way so you may have some catching up to do.

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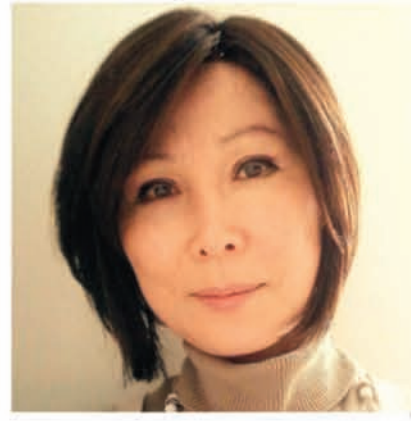


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Growing, not going

It began with Dan Rosen, a drycleaning equipment salesman for Vic's Manufacturing, who wanted to get in his own plant.

"When he got back from World War II — shortly thereafter — instead of working for Vic's, the two partners hired him on as a third. He eventually bought them out," recalled Derek Engler, Rosen's grandson who currently owns the family business, Pilgrim Cleaners & Launderers.

Instead of selling equipment to various Pilgrim and Johnny on the Spot franchises, Rosen now owned one and was determined to be an active owner.

"Being hands-on in the quality and customer service, I think that really has been the part that has pushed us ahead of our competition," Engler added.

Another factor that played a big role in the business's success was strategically picking the best places to grow. The emphasis was always on growing.

"I think my grandfather and his partners were really good at choosing the best locations in town, even if it meant paying higher rent, because they wanted to be where they had easiest access to the neighborhood," Derek noted.

In 1984, Rosen became the sole owner of the business, which had expanded to include a multitude of locations. At that point, they would all be known as Pilgrim. Then, twenty years later, he sold the business to his daughter, Bonnie Engler, in 2004.

"When she bought the company, she was rebranding," Derek recalled. "We had an Old English logo — a little hard to read — and she made everything more modern and clean looking and renovated our front door lobbies to look very clean and new and modern."

Five years after Bonnie took over the business, Derek joined in 2009, eager to help Pilgrim offer pickup and delivery service to customers. In fact, one of his projects while studying to be an entrepreneur in college was to make a plan for starting a route service.

"I'm not one who likes to sit around in the office all day," Derek said. "So, we bought a truck and I was knocking on doors and calling on apartment and condo buildings. I just grew it that way, with one truck and me knocking on doors."

After many long days, Derek began getting to know more people and the route business slowly grew... at first. However, persistence paid off.

"By year five, we were doing about a million-and-a-half in business," he added.

In time, Derek stopped knocking on doors; he was too busy managing a fleet of drivers that brings in \$3 million in business today. By 2017, his role in the company changed to vice president.

"I was doing a lot more with lease negotiations and looking at new locations to open and kind of determining the best use for our current location. We started looking for places where we could own our own cleaning facilities," he explained.

This year, Derek assumes control as the business encompasses 200 employees, 27 locations and three cleaning facilities. They had five production sites when the pandemic began and were paying rent on three of them.

"Today, we operate out of three buildings that we own so we don't have to worry about the landlord rais-

testers gathered in the streets to protest the killing of George Floyd.

"I get a call from the National Guard saying, 'We have 10 hotels we rented out the entire hotel for... we're going to have armored tanks around them all day. We don't know how long we'll be here, but we need daily laundry service for all of our servicemen's fatigues... for

a crazy job!"

Derek is not a believer in saying "no" when opportunity knocks; perhaps it's because he originally heard *no* often when knocking on doors in an effort to build up Pilgrim's route service.

"There's the phrase, 'You grow or



Derek Engler

Pilgrim Cleaners & Launderers
Twin Cities, MN

ing our rent, or making the updates that we need to — it's nice being your own landlord," he said. "It gives you a lot more flexibility."

During the lockdowns, with drycleaning volume down 80%, Pilgrim had to find a way to fill that gap.

"We hadn't really specialized in business-to-business laundry before," Derek said. "We had to shift. We picked up a lot of clinics. We did scrubs, lab coats, towels — that type of stuff — in addition to making masks and that helped keep us afloat. It also helped that a lot of our competitors decided to lay off their employees and close a lot of locations. So, in a lot of suburbs, we were the only ones left for a period of months before they reopened their doors."

Another opportunity for business came along during the pandemic, though this one was temporary. In May of 2020, thousands of National Guard soldiers were deployed in Minnesota when thousands of pro-

10,000 troops. Can you do it?" Derek recalled.

He immediately responded yes, but then added that he needed an hour to figure out the logistics of how to accomplish such a demanding challenge.

"I showed up the first day to these hotels and — I'm not joking — we had dropped off two of our largest rolling bins in each conference room at these hotels," he said. "They filled those floor to ceiling twice a day with laundry bags. We were running a military-based laundry facility for the better part of two weeks."

The production plants never shut down during the exhausting, all-hands-on-deck scenario.

"We were making about four or five trips a day to the ten hotels. I took one of our big box trucks and parked it at my house because I was working 22-hour shifts," Derek said. "I went home to eat and get a one-hour nap and then I'd go back and do constant circles between our facilities and the hotels all day every day for about a week. What

you go. I'm not interested in running a company that has flatline sales so, in our industry, some years that means you've got to go out and find somebody to buy," he added. "We're not afraid to invest in our company by going out into our market and having that conversation with competitors."

In addition to adding new customers whenever possible, Pilgrim has long worked extra hard in keeping the ones they already have by giving back to the community and showing their appreciation. Through the Rose Foundation (named after Don Rosen), the company has collected and cleaned over 600,000 coats for the local community and has been a strong supporter of Masonic Children's Hospital at the University of Minnesota. They also clean Boy and Girl Scouts uniforms for free and host a "Costumes for Kids" drive annually in October for Halloween.

"If there's a need in the community and it involves kids, we try to be on the forefront of that and help," Derek noted, adding that his grandfather started the tradition while he and his mother followed. "He joined all of the chambers of commerce in all of the communities we were in. He spent a lot of time outside of work for these causes and you saw his face everywhere in the community. You know, there's two types of giving. There's charitable giving with your money, and there's charitable giving with your time. We really want to focus on both."

Today, the company remains strong after 85 years and the plan for the future is to keep growing.

"I think my grandfather and mother laid the path to where we are today, and I just want to continue in terms of our image and our culture," Derek said. "I think focussing on our community, focussing on quality, service and convenience are still in the forefront — and just continuing what they have instilled in me over the last 20 years."



In May of 2020, Pilgrim Cleaners performed laundry service for thousands of National Guard soldiers who filled up ten entire hotels. They were deployed to Minnesota following the George Floyd incident.



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BUILDING VALUE



BY KERMIT ENGH

Seven strategic steps sellers should see

Have you thought about your *end game* for your business? You may be years away from selling your business, but it's never too early to understand what the process involves.

If you have ever promised your child a gift in return for good behavior, you know all about negotiating leverage. When selling an attractive business, you also have leverage — but only up to the point where you sign a letter of intent (LOI), which almost always includes a “no shop” clause requiring you to terminate discussions with other potential buyers while your newfound *fiancé* does due diligence.

After you sign the LOI, however, the balance of power in the negotiation swings heavily in favor of the buyer, who can then take their time investigating your company. At the same time, with each passing day, you will likely become more psychologically committed to selling your business. Savvy

buyers know this and can drag out diligence for months, coming up with things that justify lowering their offer price or demanding better terms.

With your leverage diminished and other suitors sidelined, you are then left with the unattractive options of either accepting the inferior terms or walking away.

long-term, standardized contracts, including a clause stating that the obligations of the contract survive any change in company ownership. This clause may not be for regular retail customers, but could work with the commercial account you may service.

2) Nurture and prepare a group of 10 to 15 “reference-able” customers.

3) Ensure your management team is all on the same page.

During due diligence, acquirers will want to interview the company managers without you present. They want to determine if everyone in your company is pulling in the same direction. I know that many of you reading this will flinch at the thought of letting

used, will assist in this.

7) Make it clear that there are others at the table.

Explain that while you think the acquirer's offer is the strongest and intend to honor the “no shop” agreement, other interested parties are at the table.

If you take all seven of these steps, you will protect the value of your business as the balance of power in the negotiations to sell your company swings from you to the buyer.

Now, what if you are the buyer of one of your competitors? Then flip each of these to your benefit.

In conclusion, preparing your business for sale well before signing a Letter of Intent is crucial in retaining control and maximizing value. By ensuring your customer contracts include “successor” clauses, nurturing a robust group of referenceable customers, aligning your management team, obtaining audited financials, disclosing risks upfront, negotiating a shorter due diligence period, and subtly hinting at other interested parties, you lay a strong foundation for a favorable negotiation.

These proactive steps safeguard the business value and streamline the sale process, keeping you in a position of strength throughout the transition.

Whether you are a seller fortifying your exit strategy or a buyer looking to capitalize on opportunities, the principles of thorough preparation and strategic foresight remain your most powerful tools in any business transaction.

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.

If you take all seven of these steps, you will protect the value of your business as the balance of power in the negotiations to sell your company swings from you to the buyer.

Here are seven things you can do — before you even put your business up for sale, and before signing an LOI —to minimize the chances of your deal dragging on for months and becoming watered down:

1) Make sure your customer contracts have “successor” clauses.

Have customers sign

Acquirers will want to ask your customers why they do business with you and not your competitors.

Before you sign the LOI, cultivate a group of customers to act as references. They need to be friends or customers you know well. A well-thought-out story as to what you are thinking of doing is vital.

your team know you are thinking of retirement, but they already know it is coming if you are of a certain age.

4) Consider getting audited financials.

An acquirer will have more confidence in your numbers and perceive less risk if a recognized accounting firm audits your books. It is critical to have clean numbers for a prospect to review. A recent Methods for Management member, who concluded his end game, received 15% more in the sale than the first offer due to clean numbers and historical trend analysis reports.

5) Disclose the risks upfront.

Every company has some risk factors. Disclose any legal or accounting hiccups before you sign the LOI. For some, this may include environmental factors, government loans from during the pandemic, or maybe even projected retirements of staff members.

6) Negotiate down the due diligence period.

Most acquirers will ask for 60 or 90 days to complete their due diligence. You may be able to negotiate this down to 45 days — perhaps even 30 with some financial buyers. If nothing else, you'll alert the acquirer that you're unwilling to see the diligence drag past the agreed-to-close date.

If you have prepared your business for this event, you will have collected all necessary documents for the buyer. A good broker, if

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So-Cal cleaners face new boiler regulations

Continued from page 1
 (NoX) from large water heaters, process heaters and small boilers by phasing them out in stages in order to meet federal air pollution standards by 2037.

While the final regulatory details are still being reviewed by SCAQMD — the deadline for public comments lapsed last month — the regulation stands to affect a large number of California cleaners who, as of Jan. 1, 2025, will no longer be able to install natural gas-powered boilers or water heaters in a new building.

SCAQMD regulates sources of pollution in a wide geographic area that covers 95% of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino County populations — totaling

163 cities and unincorporated counties and nearly 17 million people.

“Essentially, they’re phasing out any natural gas-fired boiler or water heater in southern California,” noted Mike Leeming, national sales manager for Parker Boiler. “They pick on boilers, which is less than 3% of the emissions of the whole basin.”

He is certain that the proposed amendments by SCAQMD will create a pair of particularly tricky new challenges for cleaners.

As an example, he mentioned the logistical problems that will potentially plague Milt & Edie’s, a prominent drycleaning business in Burbank, CA.

“They have two 25-HP

steam boilers. They run those things 24-7, almost all day and all night. so their gas bill is about \$14,000 a month,” he explained.

“Well, the first challenge they have is they have to bring in about 900 amps to power the average electric boiler. They don’t have it. They have 400 amps now, and both the city and the Burbank Department of Water and Power say there’s no more to give them,” he emphasized.

Even if insufficient power somehow proves to be a surmountable issue for drycleaners, there is also the prospect of paying much higher monthly energy costs in order to operate the electric equipment.

“I did a calculation — utility costs for electricity are 5.3

times that of natural gas — so, take that \$14,000 figure times 5.3 and that will be his monthly electric bill!” Leeming continued. “What are shirts going to cost now?”

So far, the public comments from the drycleaning industry noting the potential financial hardship have not generated any empathy from regulators.

“Unfortunately, the feedback from the AQMD is that economic impact is not their concerns,” Leeming said.

Those seeking ongoing updates on Rule 1146.2 may visit SCAQMD’s site located at www.scaqmd.gov and type “Rule 1146.2” in the site’s search engine. Then, click on the link for “Proposed Amended Rule 1146.2.”

EXPO East show set for early June

Continued from page 1
 (intelligence). Later that day, Glen Gould of Drycleaning Connection in Peachtree, GA, will explore the dynamics of team building and using enthusiasm-based leadership to increase performance.



Gould

On Sunday, Chris Kuehl of Armada Corporate Intelligence will examine current economic trends and forecast what lies ahead. Afterward, Dan



Kuehl



Miller

Miller, CEO of Mulberry’s Garment Care, will present “From Laundry to Literature” which explores how he leveraged his accomplishments in the drycleaning industry into a way to fulfill his ambitions of writing.

For those planning on making the trip, the Gaylord Palms Resort will be offering a special convention rate of \$229/night.

For more information about either upcoming show or to register, visit the joint website located at www.DL-Expo.org.

Celebrating 85 years with hundreds

Continued from page 1
 Since then, Kroner doesn’t pass up any chances to celebrate successes, honor employees and give back to the community.

This year’s 85th celebration gathered an even bigger crowd and attracted a lot of media attention, as well, including coverage from two TV news crews and a radio station.

“We’re part of most celebrations of life. We are part of celebrations of death,” Kroner explained. “We are the clothes on somebody’s back. We hear those stories from customers. This is a very personal and unique business.”

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“I tried most of the other brands and none can match the simplicity and reliability of the Realstar Dry Cleaning Machines. After running our first Realstar for 15 years with very little trouble we purchased another one to add to the capacity. There was never a question on which one we would purchase. The reliability, the simplicity, and mostly the support when there was an issue were all the reasons we needed to stick with Realstar. It’s incredible when you call support and provide your model number and problem, you feel like the tech on the phone is standing in front of the machine with you, immediately you know you are in good hands. I’ve been doing this for 40 years now and have encountered a lot of vendors but none that I would write a testimonial on, until now. Keep up the great work you guys.”

— Ben Combs, owner of Judi’s Cleaners



Jared Abram, owner of Abram Laundry Services, Antonia Mazatzi, Production Leader and 17 year employee of Judi’s Cleaners, and Ben Combs, owner of Judi’s Cleaners.



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SHIRT TALES



BY DON DESROSIERS

Running a drycleaning plant by the numbers

I have spoken, lectured and written many times about running a drycleaning business *by the numbers* — that is — to set, strive for and attain a certain level of productivity in each department.

I like to break it down like this (keep in mind, the goals will not be the same for every plant):

Drycleaning Room:

60 pieces per labor hour (PPLH)

Laundry Washroom:

200 PPLH

Drycleaning Inspection, Assembly & Bagging (IAB):
60 PPLH

Total Drycleaning department:

17.5 PPLH

Shirts IAB:

60 PPLH

Total Shirt Department:

28 PPLH

Hot Head:

21 PPLH

It doesn't matter whether or not you agree with these goals or believe in their attainability because my point today has to do with training new employees.

Often, plant operators fail to attain their goals and the official catch-all excuse is there are trainees in the mix of employees. Fair enough.

First of all, you must make sure that the trainees have been trained. That is certainly job one. The problem with excusing poor numbers and blaming them on the "new kid" is that it is wasteful, costly and complete <insert common barnyard animal colloquialism>! Here's why.

Let's say that your laundry manager needs a new shirt presser. The interviewing process takes place and a new hire is given a job as a shirt presser.

Let's assume the equipment is a single buck unit where the previous presser regularly pressed 55 shirts per hour and the total department PPLH was at 25.

With the introduction of the newbie, shirts per hour productivity drops to, say, 40 shirts per hour, and the total shirt plant PPLH to 19.

Let's further suppose that the company policy here has been that the laundry plant manager reports his productivity numbers to the owner daily.

He will "spend" some of that money in such a way that his numbers look fine.

As time goes by, the training budget depletes, of course. If the shirt laundry

presser replaced a presser that was producing, so the proof exists that quality and quantity can co-exist.

We can always complicate this issue with the feel-

bagger or three weeks for a shirt presser.

This method puts reasonable pressure on the manager to do his job while making it clear that the company does not afford him an endless supply of money for labor.

The manager is granted artistic license for standard numbers for a limited time but knows that it will cost him personal money if he doesn't get on the ball and train the new shirt presser.

Now, before anybody screams "Foul!", consider how fair this really is: if you are the owner reading this, you are paying a manager to do a certain job (run a profitable shirt department) with built-in bonuses for reaching certain levels of quality, service and profitability.

The manager's pay structure, by the way, should always be set up as a minimal base pay, plus bonuses. The manager has to really want the bonuses to make his job one with a good pay.

If he fails to meet his goal, he punches you in the nose (so to speak) and you don't have to pay the bonuses, so you effectively get to punch him right back. In biblical terms it is known as an *eye for an eye*.

So, this keeps the pressure on the manager to do his or her job, certainly a big part of which is to develop his/her subordinates.

"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 launderers and drycleaners through Tailwind Systems. He is a member of the Society of Professional Consultants and winner of DLI's Commitment to Professionalism award. He can be reached by cell phone (508) 965-3163, or email to: tailwind.don@me.com. The Tailwind web site is at www.tailwindsystems.com.

The question is, when does a "new guy" graduate to non-new-guy status. When he is pressing 55 shirts per hour? After 60 days? If it's a certain amount of time, does the newbie ever somehow morph from new guy to under-producing employee on a short leash? Probably not.

Now, with the 25 PPLH out the window, the laundry plant manager reports a subpar number coupled with the stock explanation; "We've got a new guy pressing shirts."

The question is, when does a "new guy" graduate to non-new-guy status? When he is pressing 55 shirts per hour? After 60 days?

If it's after a certain amount of time, does that newbie ever somehow morph from new guy to *under-producing employee on a short leash*? Probably not.

In real life, he probably drops the *new guy* moniker when he has begun to mingle with the staff and talks to his co-workers in the break room — when he demonstrates that he is part of the staff

But, the subject is numbers and the manager's responsibility for those numbers to his superiors. Naturally, I am presuming that someone is accountable to someone else for productivity numbers. (I wish that wasn't such a huge presumption at so many plants).

Still, I admit that there must be some concessions made when a new employee is introduced. A training budget is the first thing that comes to mind.

Let's say that you have calculated into your operating expenses such a budget, and that dollar amount is \$20,000 per year. You can call it \$1,650 per month if you like.

In this scenario, your laundry manager gets to ef-

fectively "spend" some of that money in such a way that his numbers look fine. As time goes by, the training budget depletes, of course. If the shirt laundry

presser replaced a presser that was producing, so the proof exists that quality and quantity can co-exist. We can always complicate this issue with the feel-

ing that the newbie does a better job than the person that he replaced, but that would be a digression from the point.

How do we compensate for a trainee's relatively inferior production rate without penalizing the manager who is doing the best that he can?

The answer does lie with a training budget, but it isn't so much measured in dollars, but rather in hours or time.

Typically, a newbie is hired and allowed to get better with practice. You probably have become aware of my feelings regarding that. The newbie will simply get better at being slow. Nothing more. If they do get faster, it is more attributable to chance than proper training.

What you need to do when a new hire is introduced is grant the manager a grace period that allows for proper training.

To illustrate using the aforementioned example, PPLH has plummeted to 19 from 25 and this is directly caused by the new shirt presser.

The department manager is allowed to retain his bonus structure for a limited period of time — let's call it two weeks.

After that time period has lapsed, the manager loses his bonus because he has failed to adequately train a new employee within a reasonable time frame.

You are charged with setting those time frames. It might be two days for a

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May the wind be always at your back,
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THE SPOTTING BOARD



BY DAN EISEN

Helpful hints for cleaning vintage clothes

There is an increasing interest by consumers to not only collect, but wear the fashions of years past. Amazingly enough, people who kept garments for many years knew something about preservation. I have dealt with many people who brought vintage clothing to me wrapped in tissue paper or a white sheet that had been preserved in pretty good condition for many years.

The cleaner who undertakes the cleaning and restoration of vintage clothing should know something about dyes, the fabrics of the era and also have a thorough knowledge of chemicals and expertise in drycleaning and wetcleaning.

I have been involved for many years cleaning vintage clothing for museums, including the Metropolitan Museum in New York. I have dealt with many private collectors who buy and sell vintage clothing.

In the past, I noted that I was a consultant brought in to clean Colonel Saunders'

(Kentucky Fried Chicken) suits that he wore while cooking his famous fried chicken. After restoration, one of the suits was auctioned off and sold for \$80,000.

In dealing with vintage clothing understand what fashion, fabrics, trimming and dyes were used.

Trimmings: Hooks and eyes were common before 1915. Snaps were common after 1912. Elastic was used after 1915 and zippers after 1935.

After 1856, garments were machine stitched. Epaulettes appeared on the shoulders after 1859.

Fibers: After 1910, commercial production of rayon started in the U.S. Acetate started in 1953 and acrylic began in 1950. Polyester started in 1953.

Fabrics: All fabrics were used in antique clothing employing characteristics of the three major weaves (plain, twill and satin). This includes taffeta, brocade, batiste, velvet, muslim, crepe and ribbed fabrics.

Dyes: Vegetable dyes obtained from fruits and vegetables were commonly used up until the middle 1800s. Anilin dyes and synthetic dyes were first introduced in 1860. History reports that sailors introduced blue indigo dyes in their uniforms because they did not fade.

After 1930, white became the traditional color for wedding gowns. Prior to that, brides had choices of color including wine, black, blue, brown and pastels.

Accepting Vintage Clothes for Cleaning

Vintage clothing in wool fabrics should be carefully examined for moth infestation. Skirts and bodices used bone and metal inserts and should be inspected for damages on the fabric caused by the inserts.

Beads and trimmings were usually applied in a chain stitch, which means that when the sewing thread snaps, all of the trimming unravels.

Dye fading can be observed by examining the re-

verse side of the fabric for color difference. Buttons were often made of glass, which should be removed before cleaning.

Check for re-dyeing of the fabric, which was often the fashionable thing for the bride to do after a wedding. The white gown was often cut down, dyed and used as a regular dress.

Drycleaning

Dryclean vintage garments in a moisture-free load using mild agitation to prevent fabric damage. Use proper soap addition to obtain soil removal and prevent redeposition of soil.

When drying the fabric the drum should be controlled so that the garment receives less mechanical action. This means that the drum is turned a few times and the garments are allowed to only lie in the drum before the drum is turned again.

Crinolines with bone inserts are best handled in wetcleaning. These should be soaked with a mild detergent, rinsed and dried on a wind whip or steam air finisher.

Fringe trimming should be tied with string and put into a net bag to prevent tangling and knotting.

Fortuny is a vintage pleated dress made of silk. The pleats were put in by a method in the early 1900s and the method was kept a secret. These dresses should be twisted and tied and then put into a net bag before cleaning. Some colors may bleed and transfer during drycleaning but this can usually be corrected by recleaning a few times and making sure no moisture is used in drycleaning.

Spotting

The spotting of antique clothing differs in dye sensitivity from today's modern fabrics. Due to the vegetable dyes often used, acids can cause dye bleeding or permanent color changes on some fabrics.

Cleaners who are used to using rust remover will find many dyes that are permanently damaged when used. Test all spotting chemicals before using.

Digesters are normally safe to most fabrics but on old wool may be hazardous. When using the steam gun

always spot into a towel to confine loose dye. Stop spotting if bleeding is noticeable on the towel.

When spotting ribbed fabrics such as grosgrain or bengaline, remember to rub or brush against the ribs, not with the ribs.

Spot satin and brocade on the reverse side of the fabric to prevent yarn chafing. Although acetate velvets were not popular as a pile fabric, flattening of the pile on silk and rayon velvet can be just as troublesome. Watch out for any inscriptions or writing on waistband areas and avoid spotting or pre-spotting these areas.

Wetcleaning

White fabrics respond to a soaking in sodium perborate or sodium percarbonate bleach. Remember to rinse and sour thoroughly.

Wedding gown buttons will tend to rust after bleaching or wetcleaning. A way to prevent this would be to sour the gown using oxalic acid. Removal of the buttons prior to wetcleaning may be troublesome but less bothersome in the long run.

Do not wetclean crepe fabrics as shrinkage will be a major problem. Test colors for dye fastness before wetcleaning.

Finishing

Popular sleeve styling used were the bell shaped sleeve (pagoda sleeve) and it should be steamed only and not creased.

Finishing a wedding gown is time-consuming as the gowns consisted of yards of fabric. After finishing, a gown should be hung on a hanger and the steam iron used to remove any wrinkling remaining. Sometimes using a chain to hang and raise the gown over a steam air finisher will be helpful.

Velvet should be handled using a velvet brush while steaming the fabric. Remember, spraying with water cannot be used on acetate, rayon or silk velvet.

Dan Eisen, former chief garment analyst for the National Cleaners Association, can be reached at (772) 579-5044, or by e-mail at danneisen39@gmail.com or through his website at www.garmentanalysis.com.

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WRENCH WORKS



By BRUCE GROSSMAN

Controlling your boiler water level IV

I'm using the type of return system used in almost every drycleaning/laundry operation called an **open loop return system**. There are other types of return systems, but they are seldom, if ever, used for our applications. [Editor's Note: For the first three parts of this series, visit us online at nationalclothesline.com — December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024 issues in our Archives section.]

Like the steam delivery system, the condensate return system also has drops between the individual machines and a large main pipe running back to the boiler return tank called the **return header**.

Connected to the outlet of the steam trap is a **check valve** of some sort, usually of the *swing check* family. The check valve is used to prevent the flow of condensate back to the outlet side of the steam trap. There should also be a **ball-type shut-off valve** after the check valve, used to isolate the return system from the check valve and trap.

Unfortunately, these shut-off valves are not present in all installations. If these valves are not currently installed, why not install one when you change out a steam trap? They are cheap, open quickly, and are easy to install, providing a safe and dry environment when changing traps.

The condensate is pushed

back into the **condensate return tank** through the return header. The condensate return tank is a major part of the steam system and performs many functions.

Condensate Return Tank

The **condensate return tank** is a large vessel vented to the outside (some are cylindrical, others rectangular in shape, and some are built around the boiler shell) — all with the **boiler return pump** located beneath. The condensate return tank is a multi-purpose device which:

1) Acts as a reservoir or catch basin for the condensate returned from all of the steam-heated machinery, providing a source to flood the intake side of the return pump, which pushes water into the boiler.

2) It contains a device that supplies new water to make up for the condensate lost due to venting, evaporation and the use of live steam in the finishing and spotting of garments. In most cases, this is a ball-float valve operated like the float valve in most toilet tanks.

3) A convenient mixing and distribution system for the addition of chemicals to the boiler, such as boiler compound and/or other additives, which prevent harmful scale from building up. That scale can clog the boiler tubes as well as scavenge (trap and bind oxygen which is naturally dissolved in make-up water),

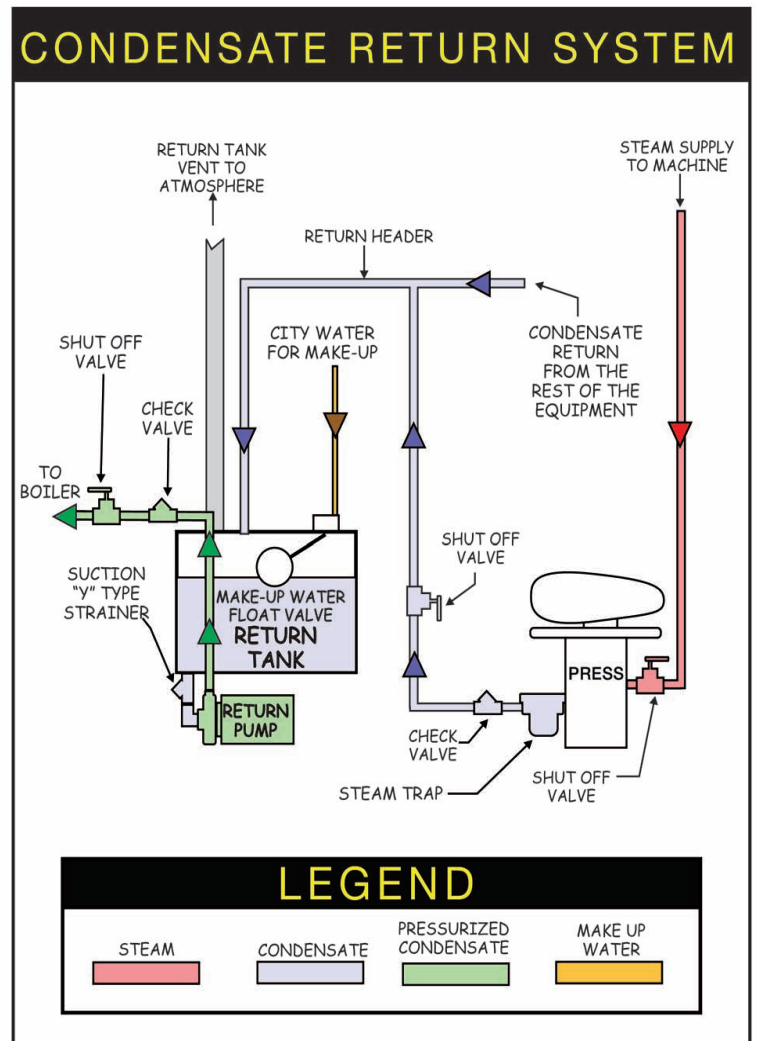
preventing the formation of carbonic acid (H_2CO_3) — the same stuff that tickles your nose when you drink soda water (seltzer) too fast. In carbonated drinks, it may only tickle your nose; in steam and return systems, it dissolves steel and iron (as in pipes or tanks) over a relatively short period of time.

For now, I'll just discuss item **number one** on the previous list — the reservoir aspect of the condensate return tank. A pre-set level is maintained in the return tank by adding make-up water, often called city water (water supplied by an outside source), to the condensate returned by the machinery into the return tank.

Water is pumped from the return tank to the boiler by sensing the level in the boiler and turning the return pump on and off.

At the outlet of the return tank, there will likely be a "Y" type strainer. The strainer traps particles of scale, rust, corrosion, or the occasional nut or bolt breaking loose and arriving at the return tank.

After the "Y" strainer, there is usually a turbine-type return pump, sometimes called the **condensate feed pump**. Turbine pumps are designed to push a low volume of water against a high head pressure. This pump is required to refill the boiler with water as the water is turned into steam, dis-



tributed throughout the plant.

After the feed pump outlet, there are generally a series of check valves (valves that allow flow in only one direction). On many boilers, the first check valve is a stainless steel **spring-loaded metal disk-type check valve** designed to pass large pieces of debris without being jammed into an open position.

The next check valve is

usually a **swing check** or another spring-loaded check made from bronze with a Teflon disk.

The purpose of all of these check valves is to prevent water from being pushed out of the boiler, through the pump, into the return tank when the pump is off. Return pumps and check valves are the most problematic components in your steam system.

Well, that's it for this month. Next month, we will deal with troubleshooting common boiler problems. Look for a downloadable PDF file of this article on my Fix-It Academy website at www.fixit-academy.net where even an amateur can learn to make your own equipment repairs.

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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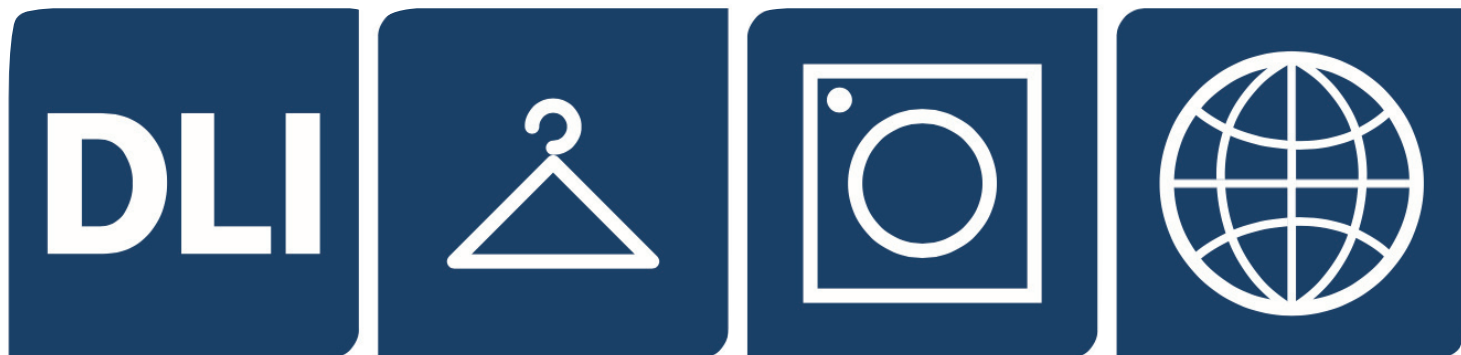
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BY JOHN ROTHROCK

TURNAROUND TIME

Would you choose your own cleaners?

Over the past several months, I have searched for unique and engaging ways to convey my deeply held beliefs about drycleaning and how to serve customers best. Like many in our industry, I am passionate about what we do and how we do it.

As a social media enthusiast, I have discovered that the comment section on various drycleaning forums is an invaluable resource for many in our community. However, like all things in life, it's a double-edged sword. One of my favorite aspects of the comment section is that people tend to be their true selves — exposing the good, the bad, and even the ugly parts of the drycleaning industry. It is the Wild West of ideas and information, and it's up to the reader to filter out the wheat from the chaff.

Still, these raw, unfiltered forms have become an excellent resource when deciding what to write about. This month proves to be no exception, as the comment section has me asking the question, "Would you choose your cleaners if you were a drycleaning customer?" This seemingly simple, yet profound, question lies at the heart of business success in our industry.

In the harsh world of drycleaning, where decisions are made daily to ensure smooth operations and profitability, are your choices helping you deliver real value to your customers? As someone deeply invested in the industry's success, I've had the privilege of witnessing countless opportunities for improvement among owners.

While every business faces its unique challenges, I believe there's massive potential for positive change that can enhance individual businesses and elevate the industry as a whole.

Accessing the customer's perspective

To truly understand the impact of our decisions as drycleaning owners, we must step into our customers' shoes. Would they choose your company over other drycleaners in the

marketplace, and if so, why?

What are their expectations, preferences, and pain points when comparing you to your competitors? Are you meeting their needs effectively and offering something that sets you apart?

Sure, I could easily talk about your quality of service, pricing and service offerings, but I want to dig deeper. What **friction points** must a customer overcome

chases with just one click.

The solution is not as straightforward for our industry and will vary according to your business model.

Some of the most recent solutions developed to reduce friction points include: On My Way, automated kiosks, 24-hour drop boxes, crowd-sourced delivery, lockers, card on file, and automatic A.I. customer service responses.

my first draft and presented it to Yale's management team for review and critique. Let's just say the criticism was harsh.

While I had documented our policies accurately, the document's tone did not align with our company values and brand voice.

You see, Yale had formal policies on how to handle most situations, but they were more guidelines than

that protect our customers and company.

Believe it or not, that document has served us well over the years.

When a difficult customer service situation arises, reacting emotionally and not following company policy is easy. However, following the policy becomes inevitable if you have taken the time and effort to create your TOS and make it available to team members and customers.

The best part is that it will help you develop a loyal customer base and a strong company culture.

In my experience, the daily grind of running a customer service business can sometimes make you lose sight of being a customer-first company.

Getting caught in this trap can lead to making decisions that add pain points to the customer journey.

It is vital to regularly self-reflect on the decisions you make each day, evaluating your performance to ensure that you and your company stay aligned with your core values and mission.

Moving forward, let's remain committed to transparency, proactively addressing friction points and embracing a customer-centric approach.

By continuously striving for improvement and delivering exceptional service, we can ensure that every interaction leaves a positive and lasting impression.

Together, let's shape a future where customer satisfaction and trust are paramount, driving our industry forward with integrity and excellence.

What friction points must a customer overcome to have clothes cleaned by your cleaners? What are your Terms of Service, and are they so one-sided that they only serve to protect your company's best interests?

to have clothes cleaned by your cleaners? What are your **Terms of Service**, and are they so one-sided that they only serve to protect your company's best interests? Understanding these aspects from the customers perspective allows us to identify areas for improvement and innovation.

By addressing these pain points and aligning our services with customer expectations, we can enhance their overall experience and foster long-term loyalty.

It's not just about meeting their needs; it's about exceeding them and creating value that resonates with customers on a deeper level.

Now, you might be asking yourself, what is a *friction point*? In a service like ours, it's **any obstacles or sources of dissatisfaction customers encounter on the customer journey**.

These issues can crop up at different stages, such as when they first learn about the service, when they decide whether to use it or when they're using it. Recognizing and ironing out these wrinkles is crucial to keep customers satisfied and more inclined to stick with the service over time.

Pick-up and drop-off

Consider Amazon's one-click purchase feature as an example. This genius move removes all those annoying extra steps from the buying process, letting customers breeze through their pur-

Because Yale Cleaners does not offer traditional route delivery, we addressed one of our customer's friction points by implementing On My Way with a card on file.

Since its debut in October of 2021, it has been used by our customers more than 37,000 times as of the time of writing. And, based on customer feedback, they love the service.

By tackling friction points like Amazon does, we can make sure our customers enjoy a seamless experience and keep coming back for more.

I encourage you to evaluate your company's friction points and look for ways to reduce and eliminate as many points as possible.

Terms of Service

Years ago, I set out to draft a **Terms of Service** (TOS) for Yale Cleaners to publish on our website.

My goal was to document our standard operating procedures and company policies for customers, explaining the entire customer journey, including when things go wrong (*friction points*).

I began scouring the internet for examples as a starting point and was disappointed at what I found. Even the biggest operators at the time did not have a published TOS, and the few available lacked substance.

Eventually, I completed

black-and-white rules.

Now, if you have been a drycleaner for any length of time, you have had countless opportunities to disappoint customers by either failing to live up to their expectations or when something goes wrong with their order. Both friction points can be mitigated with a well-crafted TOS.

However, please don't misunderstand me; simply posting a TOS on your website will not solve anything. Creating a well-thought-out document containing comprehensive policies on how to handle the most common situations and then using it as a training tool for your team is where the magic happens. Your Terms of Service should include topics such as: types of cleaning, pricing, quality issues, service issues, lost/damaged garments, payments, biohazards, bed bugs, and old stock, to name a few.

These policies should not overly favor the company or the customer but instead strive for a fair, balanced approach. But, if in doubt, err on the side of your customer!

Some policies need to be black and white with no ambiguity (pricing), while others should allow flexibility (claims). In the end, after many conversations with more experienced team members, I found the proper balance on how to best present Yale's Terms of Service

John Rothrock is the president and CEO of Yale Cleaners, a family drycleaning business in Broken Arrow, OK, that is focused on providing high quality, same day drycleaning with exceptional customer service. He earned a degree in Business Administration in 2005 from the University of Oklahoma. He is a graduate of the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute, and is a Certified Garment Care Professional (CGCP).

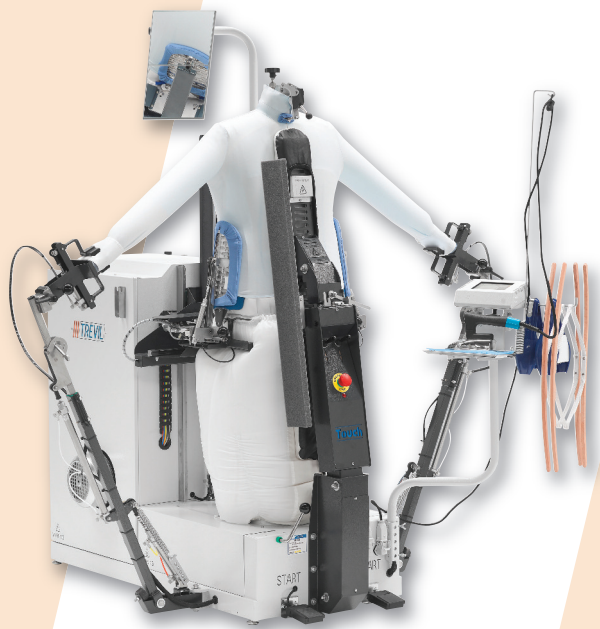


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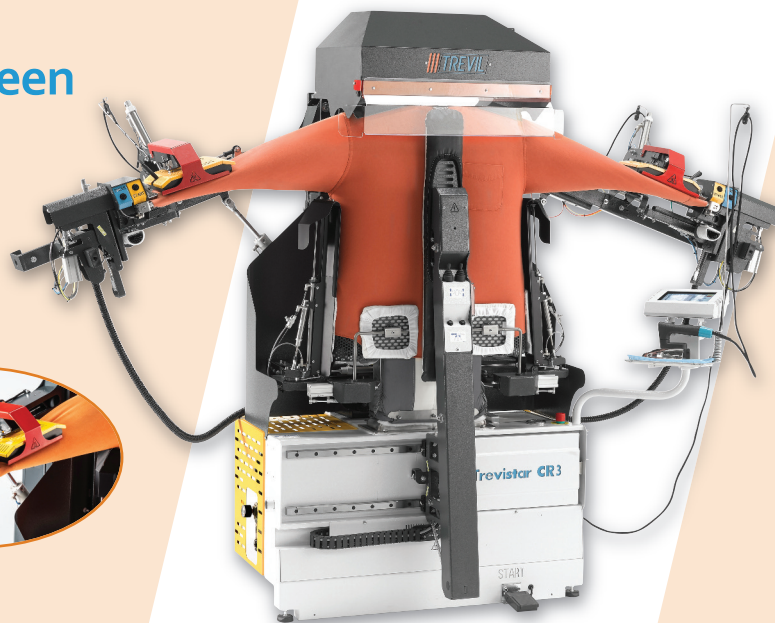
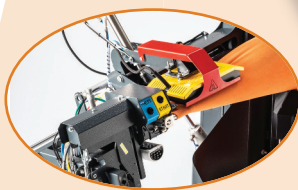
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KEEP IT LEGAL



BY FRANK KOLLMAN

How well do you know workplace rules?

I have a PowerPoint slide I frequently use in presentations on labor and employment law. The title of the slide is *Rules*. The body of the slide says: “In the absence of a rule, please apply common sense. In the absence of common sense, please ask someone to draft a rule.”

I also frequently refer to Philip Howard, the author of *The Death of Commonsense*, who points out that the government adopts rules to prevent officials from using judgment. If a rule says “employers must use six-inch widgets” and the employer uses a different-sized device that is better than a widget, the rule is enforced anyway. The book is littered with numerous examples where the enforcement of a rule had bad consequences.

Unfortunately, the federal, state, and local governments continue to adopt rules designed to eliminate common sense and good judgment from the workplace.

I thought this might be a good time to point out some of those rules and trends in labor and employment law. Several key trends are emerging, reshaping how businesses, legal practitioners and employees navigate the complex landscape of labor laws and employment practices.

Key areas of regulation include labor standards for home offices, data privacy and security, and equitable treatment for remote versus on-site employees. A recent article pointed out that remote workers do not get promoted as quickly as employees who work out of the office.

to significant legal battles over worker classification, with implications for benefits, wages and protections.

In 2024, we are seeing more jurisdictions implementing laws that either tighten the criteria for classifying workers as independent contractors or offer a new category of worker with a blend of employee and contractor benefits. These changes aim to provide gig workers with greater security while maintaining the flexibility that defines gig work.

As I have said in this column before, there can be dire consequences from misclassifying an employee as an independent contractor.

Focus on Mental Health in the Workplace

Mental health has become a central focus in employment law, in large part because of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Work can be stressful, and if the stress causes conditions such as depression or anxiety, it can become nearly impossible to accommodate those potential disabilities under the ADA.

If an employee becomes surly with a customer, then blames it on a mental health issue, discipline becomes more difficult to administer.

Employers need to recognize that mental disabilities are protected.

While you may be able to fire an employee whose mental health makes him or her unable to work — but, that decision needs to be made in the context of and with the guidance of the ADA.

Enhanced Protections for Diversity and Inclusion

Despite some pushback in recent months, diversity and inclusion continue to be at the forefront of labor and employment law trends in 2024.

Employers are being encouraged, and, in some cases, required to take proactive steps in ensuring diverse hiring and promotion practices.

This sets up the possibility of discrimination charges being filed by individuals who were passed over in favor of a lesser qualified

applicant based on diversity and inclusion goals.

It can easily turn into a no-win situation for the employer committed to diversity.

If you hire a lesser qualified person for diversity and inclusion reasons, seek some legal guidance.

Data Privacy and Cybersecurity

With the increasing use of digital tools in the workplace, data privacy and cybersecurity have become critical issues in labor and employment law.

Employers must navigate the fine line between monitoring for performance and security purposes and respecting employee privacy.

In 2024, we are seeing stricter regulations on what data can be collected, how it must be protected, and the rights employees have over their information. This includes guidelines on the use of monitoring software, data breach notification requirements, and restrictions on the use of personal data for employment decisions.

The use of social media continues to draw the attention of government regulators such as the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). If you have employees posting on social media about your business, you are somewhat hampered in how you respond to it.

There have been numerous instances where the NLRB has said that disciplining an employee for criticizing an employer can be a violation of the National Labor Relations Act.

In sum, the promulgation of rules and regulations continues. Use common sense when you can, but it is becoming more difficult to use that as a defense against charges, lawsuits and government citations.

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.

Several key trends are emerging, reshaping how our businesses, legal practitioners and employees navigate the complex landscape of labor laws and employment practices.

Increased Emphasis on Remote Work Regulations

The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally changed the work environment in many industries, making remote work a norm for people who work from a computer. There is an increased focus on developing and refining laws to address the challenges and nuances of remote work.

Governments are also exploring wage and hour issues related to remote work, where it is harder to know if the work hours reported by the employee are accurate.

Gig Economy and Worker Classification

The gig economy continues to grow, blurring the lines between traditional employment and independent contracting. This has led

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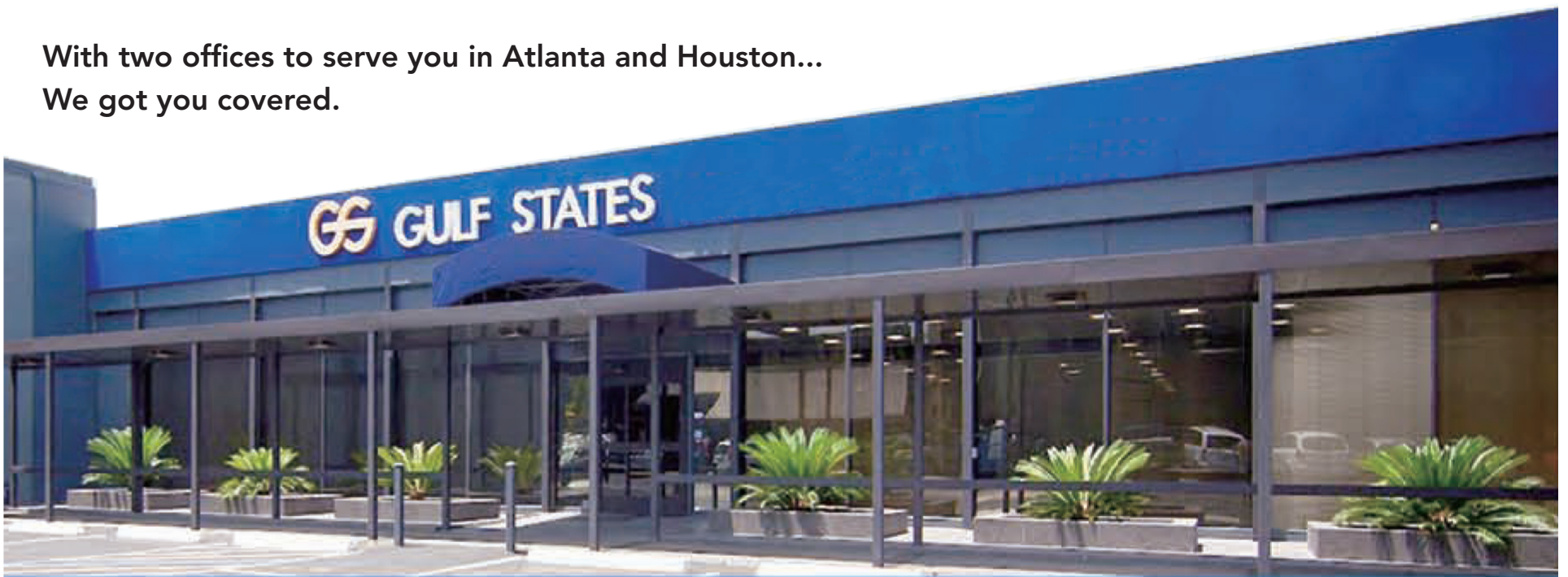
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A response to Wetcleaning vs Drycleaning

Other factors to consider when comparing costs

by Vic Williams

I read with interest the recent debate regarding wetcleaning versus drycleaning and the author's conclusion that wetcleaning is a "no brainer" replacement for drycleaning, either wholly or in part. [Editor's Note: See "Wetcleaning vs drycleaning: a cost comparison" in our January 2024 issue located in our archives at www.nationalclothesline.com]

Much of the article focuses on initial start-up costs and the ability to now offer W-D-F (wash-dry-fold) to customers. While I agree with a few of the points made, I believe some drycleaning options are not mentioned, and some of the costs and disadvantages to wetcleaning are not adequately addressed.

A few things should be clari-

fied. If wash-dry-fold is the expected need for a new piece of equipment, then a standard laundry washer and dryer or a wetcleaning system is the way to go. However, other things should be considered when comparing wetcleaning vs drycleaning.

Allow me to present some additional information the equipment buyer will want to consider before purchasing a new system.

1) Numerous manufacturers offer drycleaning machines that feature NO water usage at all. These machines do not require a water-cooling tower or water chiller to accomplish this. These machines have a refrigeration unit that is air cooled, eliminating the need for water at all.

2) Within the last 18 months,

we have worked with many large drycleaning groups who continuously review the cost of business.

Without divulging sources, I can say that we are seeing a final cost of cleaning medium (either water or solvent) plus detergents, plus some allocation of pre-spotting costs, to result in a piece cost of about **21 cents per wetcleaning item and 8 cents per drycleaning item.**

The cost of the chemicals used in wetcleaning is something to really watch out for since they are mandatory and are set by the supplier of the chemical.

3) As we collaborate with drycleaners around the world and attend events and trade shows worldwide, we find there is near universal agreement that the

amount of training required for wetcleaning staff to be much higher than for drycleaning staff.

We also find that wetcleaning is most successful in couture cleaners and high-priced cleaners where a responsible plant manager or owner/operator is the one doing most of the load sorting and program choice. Most of these plants still process most of their garments utilizing one or numerous drycleaning machines.

4) It is universally reported that the number of customer claims and damaged items goes up the more wetcleaning is used in the cleaning facility, which of course is typically due to training issues, but also can be caused by human error, going against care labels, and chemicals failing to dispense reliably.

5) Speaking of care labels, remember that if you wetclean something that says "Dry Clean Only" and it is damaged, there is not much the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) or the law can do to back you up.

6) Regarding a 60 lb. wetcleaning machine installation versus a 60 lb. drycleaning machine installation, remember that there is an incredible amount of load sorting required with wetcleaning, so much so that it is not likely most cleaners will be able to load a wetcleaning machine to 50 to 55 lbs. per cycle the same way they can with a drycleaning machine that does not require anywhere near as much load sorting.

While a wetcleaning cycle may be faster, you will lose ground by cleaning a much greater number of small loads per day.

7) Regarding the high cost of drycleaning waste disposal, permits, and other regulatory compliance — since most of the customers would be changing from a perc solvent to an alternative solvent, these disposal costs and fees are greatly reduced. And, we have many GreenEarth affiliates who have special permission to dispose of their used filter media in the municipal trash and are exempt from all air permits and special operating fees.

8) Some cities are looking very closely at requiring lint removal from laundry systems before entering the sewer system.

We are aware of a recent situation where a drycleaner was quoted \$30,000 to install a compliant lint removal system that would allow him to operate three washing machines in the state of Georgia.

Drycleaning has been considered a dirty industry for quite some time but now it appears laundry is next on the radar.

In my 32 years of experience, all the best drycleaners in the world are utilizing wetcleaning to some degree.

I agree that more pieces can be safely cleaned in wet cleaning than in years past; however, this is an industry with a major training and service problem that is only getting worse each year, and the one-on-one service and support we may have enjoyed in decades past is going away.

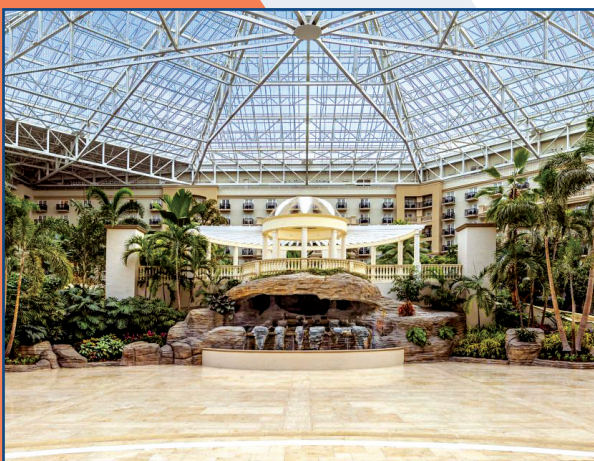
The training needed to successfully wetclean the majority of the drycleaning pieces is perhaps more than most drycleaners can handle.

Please remember that all the best cleaners have great drycleaning, shirt laundry, hand washing, and wetcleaning — all the tools needed to handle the modern wardrobe.

Vic Williams is the eastern sales manager for Union Drycleaning Products USA. He has 32 years in the technical field of drycleaning machines and has been a drycleaning facility owner for 21 years.

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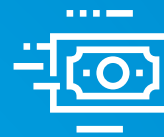
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