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DLI adds three new names to Hall of Fame

The Drycleaning & Laundry Institute (DLI) announced the induction of three new outstanding industry professionals to its Hall of Fame, all of whom have made significant historical contributions to the betterment of the drycleaning industry.

First up is Jim Douglas, the co-founder of Prestige Cleaners in Sacramento, CA, and also co-founder of GreenEarth Cleaning where Douglas played a pivotal role in advancing environmentally friendly cleaning technologies for the industry.

In fact, he used his cleaning business as the alpha and beta

test site during the development of the GreenEarth process.

During an industry career that spans over 50 years, Douglas served as president of the California Cleaners Association (CCA) and was a winner of DLI's Meritorious Green Fields Award, as well as the association's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Also joining the Hall of



Douglas

Nesbit

Stoddard

Fame this year will be Mike Nesbit of Texas-based Edit TX, LLC, one of the largest drycleaning business in the U.S.

During his career, he has made substantial contributions

to the industry through his leadership and innovation.

As a past president of DLI and a key figure in the establishment of the Texas Dry Cleaner Remediation

Program, he has long been a strong advocate for environmental responsibility.

His innovation can also be seen in his role as a pioneer of offsite locker pickup and delivery systems, which have be-

come standard in the industry.

Finally, the third new member of the Hall of Fame was a pioneer in the industry a century ago. Joseph William "Dixie" Stoddard helped revolutionize the industry in the 1920s with the help of Lloyd E. Jackson of the Mellon Research Institute.

Together, they developed Stoddard solvent, a less volatile alternative that significantly improved the safety standards throughout the industry. That innovation also resulted in the creation of the DLI School of Drycleaning Technology in 1927 – though

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Fall schedule will feature four fabricare shows

The next two months will feature four major fabricare shows — one on each side of the country, and two more outside of it.

First up is the DL EXPO West scheduled from Oct. 4 to 6 at the Horseshoe Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, NV.

The event is free to drycleaners and will feature two days of educational sessions from industry experts.

The lineup will include: Brian Wallace of the Coin Laundry Association (CLA) who will focus on the topic of Wash-Dry-Fold; Tide

Services CEO Andy Gibson, who will explore current consumer trends in and out of laundry; Dave Coyle of Maverick Drycleaners, who will discuss how to grow profits with ten proven marketing campaigns; and Chris White of



Wallace



White



Gibson

America's Best Cleaners, who will present an important program on the future of fashion circularity.

Bruce Grossman of EZ-timers Manufacturing and Jeff Schwarz of A.L. Wilson will also be presenting programs. Schwarz will explore "The Magical Power of Bleaches" and Grossman will focus on helping attendees to learn how to fix machinery problems.

Additionally, DL EXPO West will open its exhibit hall from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday.

For more information on the show, including hotel ac-

commodations, visit the official site at www.dllexpo.org. The site also has an up-to-date map of the exhibit hall.

Profit Fest 2024

Next on the upcoming schedule, the host city shifts across the country to Marlborough, MA, where the North East Fabricare Association (NEFA) will present Profit Fest '24 from Nov. 2 to 3.

The event will take place at the Courtyard Marriott Event Center.

The Saturday morning educational sessions will kick off

following Welcoming Remarks by NEFA Executive Director Peter Blake and President Larry Fish, who will discuss the State of the Industry.

Afterward at 9 a.m., Dr. Alex Ellis will lead a discussion on "Workplace Culture Re-imagined." Dr. Ellis is an award-winning author and an international speaker and

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Blake



Fish



Dr. Ellis

Fortifying the future of fashion and fabricare



A bipartisan bill known as Americas Act seeks to create a circular fashion industry in America that emphasizes better reuse and recycling of clothing. With the EPA saying Americans throw out over 81 lbs of clothing a year, the proposed bill could be good news for the planet. It also could be very good news for the fabricare industry. To read this month's article on Americas Act and what drycleaners can do to support it, see page six.



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For those of you who remain skeptical, you can read the full text of the proposed bill online. Go to www.congress.gov and type either “S 3878” or “HR 7571” in the search engine under the “legislation” search option. Click on the link, then the tab for “text.”

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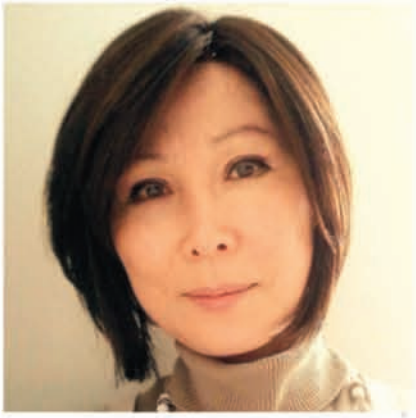


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Bipartisan bill could fortify fabricare’s future

While drycleaners are not strangers to being in the target of regulatory crosshairs, there is a new bipartisan bill that could significantly directly benefit the industry if it gets passed.

Introduced earlier this year by Senators Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Michael Bennet (D-CO), the Americas Trade and Investment Act (a.k.a. Americas Act) proposes to incorporate over \$14 billion in federal incentives to help create a domestic circular fashion infrastructure that emphasizes better use, reuse and recycling of clothing.

Currently, the fashion industry is not as fashionable as it could be in terms of its environmental footprint. In 2019, World Bank Group estimated it is responsible for 10% of annual global carbon emissions and around 20% of wastewater worldwide that comes from fabric dyeing and treatment.

It isn’t just the creation of fashion that can cause problems; a vast majority of garments are never recycled.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation noted in its report called “Fashion and the circular economy — deep dive,” the U.S. underutilizes garments by wearing them only a quarter of the time of the global average. Some garments were estimated to be thrown out after only seven to ten wears.

In terms of all the fiber used for clothing, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) notes that 85% is incinerated or disposed of in a landfill every year — tantamount to 81.5 pounds of clothing per person.

Americas Act aims to address these issues with various circular textile provisions including a 15% net income exclusion for businesses engaged in collecting, reselling, reusing, renting, repairing, sorting, pre-processing, and/or recycling apparel, footwear accessories and home linens.

The emphasis is to prolong the lifetime of garments as long as possible and then fully recycle the base fabrics at the end of that cycle.

Additionally, the bill has allocated over \$14 billion to support circular fashion.

Of that, there will be \$10 billion in loans and \$3 billion in grants to be used for:

- Programs to carry out reuse and recycling;
- Manufacturing support programs to start up new facilities, expand or retrofit existing facilities, and provide low carbon emissions transportation for covered product collection/drop off or mail-back, sortation, pre-processing,

reuse or recycling;

- Provision of components and machinery — grants and loans to the businesses to provide components, chemicals/solvents, or machinery necessary for covered product transportation, collection, mail-back, sortation, pre-processing, reuse or recycling.

Another \$1 billion of funding is including in the bill for research and development related to the reuse and recycling of textiles and \$100 million will be used for a public education program on fashion circularity.

While the end goal of the legislation is to ultimately create a sustainable fashion system, another component is to close the de minimis loophole, thus incentivizing onshoring and reshoring and reducing the threat of forced labor in supply chains.

According to Chris White, executive director of America’s Best Cleaners (ABC), that is integral to helping cut back on inferior fast fashion garments imported from companies like Temu and Shein.

“The de minimis loophole allows Shein and Temu to sell from China directly to consumers without any regulation tariffs or any questioning of the efficacy of where the garments or items came from as long as it’s under \$800,” he explained. “If you are a true consumer who cares about the U.S. economy, the environment, and the values of up-right proper labor, then you shouldn’t buy from Shein. Shein is the enemy of drycleaners. They sell stuff for \$4 or \$5. It’s polyester. It’s acetate. It’s cheap rayons.”

Fast fashion often relies on cheap materials to cut back on costs, but that can lead to other problems, especially in the environment.

According to Rachel Kibbe, the executive director of American Circular Textiles (ACT), America’s Act will empower the domestic fashion industry to strengthen its trade partnership with the Western Hemisphere in order to be able to compete better with China.

“With the bold textile reuse and recycling incentive provisions in the Americas Act, organizations in our industry will be able to invest in jobs in the U.S. and complete globally, while incubating innovation and R&D and fostering an environment to cultivate public private capital,” she said. “Essentially we have the opportunity for the U.S. to reposition itself as a global leader through



Spotlight on Americas Trade and Investment Act

S. 3878
H.R. 7571

localized circular textile manufacturing.”

Growing support

At this time, the future of the bill remains uncertain but its support continues growing. ACT’s members alone include The RealReal, thredUP, America’s Best Cleaners, Kreussler Textile Care, Rent the Runway, Fashionphile, Recurate, Supercircle, Thrilling, H&M, Reformation, Debrand and the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute (DLI), who joined in July.

DLI CEO Mary Scalco credited Chris White for bringing ACT and the bill to their attention. “Legislation that will bring more clothes to drycleaners is something we don’t have to think too hard about supporting,” she said.

In terms of all the fiber used for clothing, the Environmental Protection Agency notes that 85% is incinerated or disposed of in a landfill every year, tantamount to 81.5 pounds of clothing per person.

Oddly enough, ACT actually was looking for a way to influence policymakers to support a circular fashion initiative when the policy-makers ended up finding them.

“We wrote a policy paper that we published in Q1 of 2023 and took it to Congress with our hired advocacy team,” recalled Kibbe, who is also the co-founder of Helpsy, an online clothing store that upcycles and recycles garments. “Senator Cassidy’s office found us because they had written this piece of legislation we were looking for. It’s rare to find a coalition that is aligned with a piece of legislation that’s existing.”

Unfortunately, major pieces of legislation are traditionally notoriously difficult to pass during presidential election years.

Despite that obstacle, Kibbe is confident that the Americas Act will have a good chance of moving forward no matter the outcome.

“It’s a huge bill, and, obviously, there are a lot of different interests in it, so I think we’ll have to wait and see depending on the election outcome. We have various different strategies,” she noted. “There’s lots of bipartisan support.”

The plan is to keep gaining momentum and proponents. According to Kibbe, those who support the Americas Act can help it gain traction by contacting legislators.

“That is the most critical thing they can do. We need every single state in this country to have businesses contact-

If the Americas Act is passed, those numbers could be even greater. After all, there is \$100 million set aside for funding a public message campaign that emphasizes taking better care of clothing. Chris White, believes that is a key component of the bill.

“As an industry, we could never get together and even spend a million dollars, let alone \$100 million dollars, and the overall psychological messaging is: ‘Buy better. Maintain it and sell it or recycle it.’ We are critical in that *maintain* space,” he noted.

“They’re looking at trying to model it off the *Got Milk?* campaign, like *Get It Clean, Buy Better Clothes...* the whole mantra is to get people away from the consumer consumption throwaway mindset,” he added.

In terms of how to help, White has a similar idea to Kibbe’s that only drycleaners can pull off.

“So, this is a big federal bill, but you need to be involved locally,” he said. “More than likely, someone in the industry is doing their clothes, so why aren’t you dropping a note in them: *Why aren’t you for Americas Act? Understand that this independent essential business (labeled essential by the federal government) is hurting and that this legislation will help us.*”

Cleaners who would like to become more involved in supporting the legislation should also visit DLI’s site at: DLIonline.org/AmericasAct.

“We need all hands on deck in our industry,” White continued. “There’s no competitors here. This is all of us as a unified industry trying to get this golden ring for us all – and if we don’t see it that way, we deserve what we get.”

To read the full text of the proposed Americas Act, go online to www.congress.gov and type either “S 3878” or “HR 7571” in the search engine under the “legislation” search option. Click on the link, then the tab for “text.”

ing their legislators saying this is important to us,” Kibbe said.

For those who have trouble envisioning a circular fashion future, it won’t really look much different.

“I think the fashion industry would have more reuse and repair in stores. Whether new or used, you’d have more in stores. You’d have more drycleaners marketing the fact that they offer alterations and repairs,” she explained.

Already, the secondhand clothing retail market has been steadily growing globally for at a faster rate than new clothing. In the U.S., thredUP noted that total sales reached \$20 billion in 2017; that figure almost doubled in 2022 with \$39 billion.

That trend is expected to continue as the secondhand clothing retail market is projected to rise to \$70 billion in 2027.

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DLI adds three new names to Hall of Fame

Continued from page 1
the association was known at that time as the National Institute of Drycleaning.
Stoddard, who owned a business called Stoddard Dry Cleaning in Atlanta, GA, served as president of the association and remained dedi-

cated to promoting education and better industry practices.
These three new inductees will join the eight other industry professionals who have already been inducted into the Hall of Fame, including: Barney Deden, Stan Golomb, Chris Edwards, Jeff Miller, Sid

Tuchman, Don Fawcett, Walter “Buster” Bell and Milt Chortkoff.
“We are grateful to everyone who nominated an industry legend for the award, be they members of DLI or otherwise,” DLI CEO Mary Scalco said. “We know excellence on

this level can be found in all corners of the industry. Our goal is to spotlight those professionals whose contributions stand to inspire others and help make our industry stronger.”
DLI’s Board of Directors will present the awards to this

year’s group of Hall of Fame inductees at events of their choosing.
Details for the 2025 Hall of Fame nomination period will be released early next year. For more information on DLI’s Hall of Fame, visit DLIonline.org/HoF.

Fall schedule will feature four fabricare shows

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trainer who will explore how moving from groups to teams, investing in your staff, and celebrating company wins can increase productivity and your company’s bottom line.
Then, Mark Albrecht of The Route Pros will deliver a program on “Keeping Winners Engaged” from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Afterward, there will be a Brainstorming Lunch Roundtable session that is scheduled from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.
Other programs in the afternoon will include “Changing Business Models to Meet Consumer Attitudes” at 2 p.m. by Jeff Alexander of Orlando Cleaners and Cohen Wills of

Cleaner Marketing will present a program on “Weaponizing AI for Small Business Marketing” from 3:20 to 4:30 p.m.
Also throughout the day, there will be breaks so attendees can visit the Exhibitor Showcase.
The evening will conclude with NEFA’s Saturday Night Cocktail Reception and Silent Auction from 5 to 7 p.m.
On Sunday morning, Sara Moncrieff of Puritan Cleaners will explore “Relationships, Culture and Customer Service: Pillars of Success” from 9 to 10:15 a.m.
She will be followed by Carlyn Parker of Dependable Cleaners who will present an informative session on “Understanding Your Customer and Effective Communication Strategies” from 10:30 a.m. until noon.
For more information on the event or to register, visit the offi-

cial show site located online at www.nefabricare.com.
TexCare 2024
Close on the heels of Profit Fest 2024 will be TexCare International 2024 by Messe Frankfurt that is set to take place from Nov. 6 to 9 in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. The show typically takes place every four years; however, due to the pandemic, it has been eight years since its been held.
This year, Messe Frankfurt expects more than 300 exhibitors from 31 countries to show off their latest innovations to an international audience.
Some of the top exhibiting companies include: Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, China, Pakistan, the U.S., Belgium, the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Turkey.
This year’s themes of the show will include: automation, energy and resources, circularity and textile hygiene.

TexCare 2024 will also host a presentation of the Best Practice Awards from CINET.
For more information on the event or to register, visit them at <https://texcare.messe-frankfurt.com>.
Clean EXPO 2024
Last on the upcoming Fall lineup of major trade shows is Clean EXPO 2024, scheduled to take place from Nov. 23 to 24 in Toronto, Canada.
It will be hosted by the Canadian Fabricare Association (CFA) at the Delta Toronto Airport Hotel. Registration for the event is free for cleaners.
In addition to featuring products, services and equipment from over 35 exhibiting companies, there will also be breakout educational sessions on Saturday.
Nicole Kirby, Xplor Spot’s vice president of customer success and strategy,

will share her expertise on Spot’s Route and Delivery Suites from 1:30 to 2:15 p.m.
From 2:30 to 3:15 p.m., attendees can hear from Linley McConnell, director of client experience at Gibson’s Cleaners, and Nadine Rana, owner of Style & Grace Cleaners.
Also on the schedule is Sam Taylor from 3:30 to 4:15 p.m. He will be on hand to discuss SMRT Systems with attendees. Then, Mark Fryer, a partner at Loopstra Nixon LLP, will answer questions and discuss topics related to legal business and operational practices from 4:30 to 5:15 p.m.
For more information on Clean EXPO or to register, visit www.fabricare.org.



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DLI School gears up for Fall offerings

This month, the School of Drycleaning Technology will have Fall classes to consider – though the deadline for signing up is Sept. 20, so less time for consideration is better.

DLI will host a session of its Introduction to Drycleaning course from Oct. 6 to 10, as well as a session of its Advanced Drycleaning course from Oct. 13 to 25.

The courses cover a comprehensive approach to all the aspects of operating a successful drycleaning business with emphasis on production standards, achievable goals, and delivering quality.

To register or learn more about the full list of upcoming DLI educational offerings, visit the association online at DLIonline.org or call them directly at (800) 638-2627.



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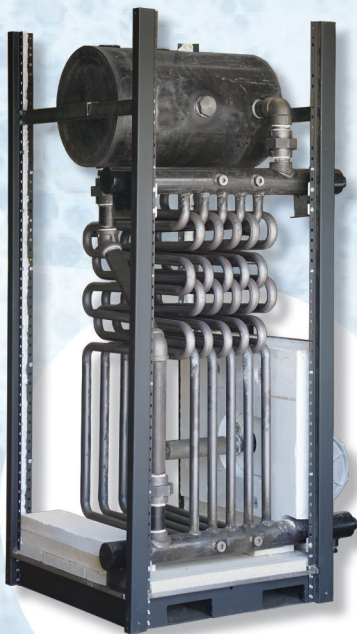
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TURNAROUND TIME



BY JOHN ROTHROCK

How to spot the ideal business location

During my studies at the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute (DLI), one particular test question stood out.

Even after almost a decade, its significance remains a testament to the real challenges many operators in our industry face.

While I didn't personally agree with the "correct" answer, it's likely because there could be more than one way to solve this problem, depending on the circumstances.

So, what was the question?

One method for improving your market share if you are in a bad location is to?

- A. Paint the building.
- B. Add a route service.
- C. Extend your hours.
- D. Sell or move the plant.

Three of the four answers are simply different tactics one could employ in an attempt to increase piece counts.

The remaining answer of getting out of the business doesn't actually solve the problem and moving may not lead to different results if another poor location is chosen.

Instead of debating the correct answer, let's evaluate how to select an excellent drycleaning location in the first place.

What exactly are the characteristics that make a great location?

The good news is that the core principles behind selecting an "A" location are universal and should work in any market. However, there are essential differences between rural towns and major urban cities.

While these differences might affect what the locations look like and how they are operated, certain criteria must be met regardless of population density.

Let's clarify a common misconception before we dig into the numbers.

Drycleaning is a convenience, not a destination. No one ever says, "I'm going to the cleaners!" Customers go to the movies, go to the grocery store, and go to a restaurant.

In contrast, drycleaning

customers *stop by* their cleaners on their way to someplace else, like when they are going to work or dropping their kids off at school.

That's why it is vital to

perfect world, every great location would have. There is also a list of site problems you should try to avoid at all costs.

Unfortunately, there is no perfect site, and you will

Remember, customers will go out of their way to pick up their clothes but aren't as likely to when dropping them off, so morning drop-off should be your priority.

location, it is imperative that there is a sufficient customer base to support your investment, and that can only be determined by the number of residents in the surrounding community that meet or exceed your demographic targets.

When evaluating an existing or potential drycleaning location to determine its long-term viability, it is important to consider not only the health of the surrounding community but also its physical attributes, both positive and negative. Locations that are customer-centric, focusing on convenience and ease of access, will always have the competitive advantage.

John Rothrock, a University of Oklahoma alumnus and Certified Garment Care Professional (CGCP), leads Yale Cleaners in Tulsa, Oklahoma. John is passionate about exceeding customer expectations and innovation in the drycleaning industry. His expertise extends beyond garment care, with a viral video educating viewers on the drycleaning process. Currently, he leverages his industry knowledge by serving as the second vice president of the Southwest Drycleaning Association (SDA).

When choosing your next location, act like you are the customer and live in the area. Get in your car and drive the streets during the morning rush hour for several days. Look for a location on a busy arterial street during the morning rush hour for several days.

begin your location search by understanding your city or town's traffic patterns and flow.

Once you have mapped your community's traffic patterns, you need to narrow your search using specific key demographics to select the ideal area(s) of town.

The best drycleaning neighborhoods are filled with single-family homes with high household incomes.

This information can usually be obtained for free from your city library (I use Demographics Now from the Tulsa County Library).

Select the top three areas in your town using the criteria below:

- **Income.** Head of household makes at least \$75,000/year.
- **Population Density.** One-, three, and five-mile radius.
- **Specific Demographics.** Education (college degree preferred), age (30 to 55); marital status (married), number of children (two).

Assuming you have correctly identified the best areas of town to locate your cleaners, it doesn't necessarily mean you will have a great location.

This is because pinpointing a convenient location within the area is just as important as the area itself.

There is an art to location selection that depends not only on key principles and data but also on understanding the community.

There is a list of site characteristics that, in a

be forced to compromise. Just remember, the best locations focus on customer convenience.

Things to look for:

- Free-standing building with arterial road frontage;
 - Strip center endcap with drive-thru and arterial road frontage;
 - 500 feet off a major intersection;
 - The side of the road where traffic flow is going to work or school;
 - Major arterial street with high daily traffic counts;
 - Major public school in the area;
 - Easy egress and ingress;
 - Connected driveways to adjacent properties.
- The things that you should avoid include:
- Major highways;
 - Rivers/large bodies of water;
 - Railroad tracks;
 - The side of the road where traffic flow is going home from work or school;
 - Strip center inner units;
 - Strip center with no arterial road frontage;
 - Apartment complexes;
 - Destination shopping centers;
 - Industrial areas.

When choosing your next location, act like you are the customer and live in the area. Get in your car and drive the streets during the morning rush hour for several days.

Look for a location on a busy arterial street that is easy to access during the morning drive.

To improve access for returning customers, avoid being on the hard corner of major intersections.

Other things to avoid are barriers like rivers and major highways that customers must cross to access your facility.

Even though it varies by community size, population density within a one-, three- and five-mile radius is very important. Because of that unknown variable, I cannot provide specific targets for this article. In general, the majority of your business (80%) will come from within the three-mile radius of your location or a ten-minute drive time.

When selecting a new



TRINITY CLEANERS of Apopka, FL, recently purchased a Union HXP-8015 hydrocarbon machine sold and installed by Gulf Coast Equipment Sales. Pictured at the startup are A.J. Jordan (left) of Gulf Coast Equipment and Nayeli Antunez of Trinity Cleaners.



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— Tom Harkin

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WRENCH WORKS



By BRUCE GROSSMAN

Preventing water pump problems

The disaster for this month will be the failure of the water pump. This pump forces a liquid “coolant” through the coils of the condensers to remove the heat from these condensers.

In water tower installations, the pump is either located on the roof near the water tower, or on the floor near the drycleaning machine, and the coolant is water. In a chiller, the pump is generally inside the enclosure housing the refrigeration components, and the coolant is either water or a mixture of water and anti-freeze called “brine.”

If the circuit breaker in the electrical panel that controls the pump trips frequently, it is a sure sign of looming disaster.

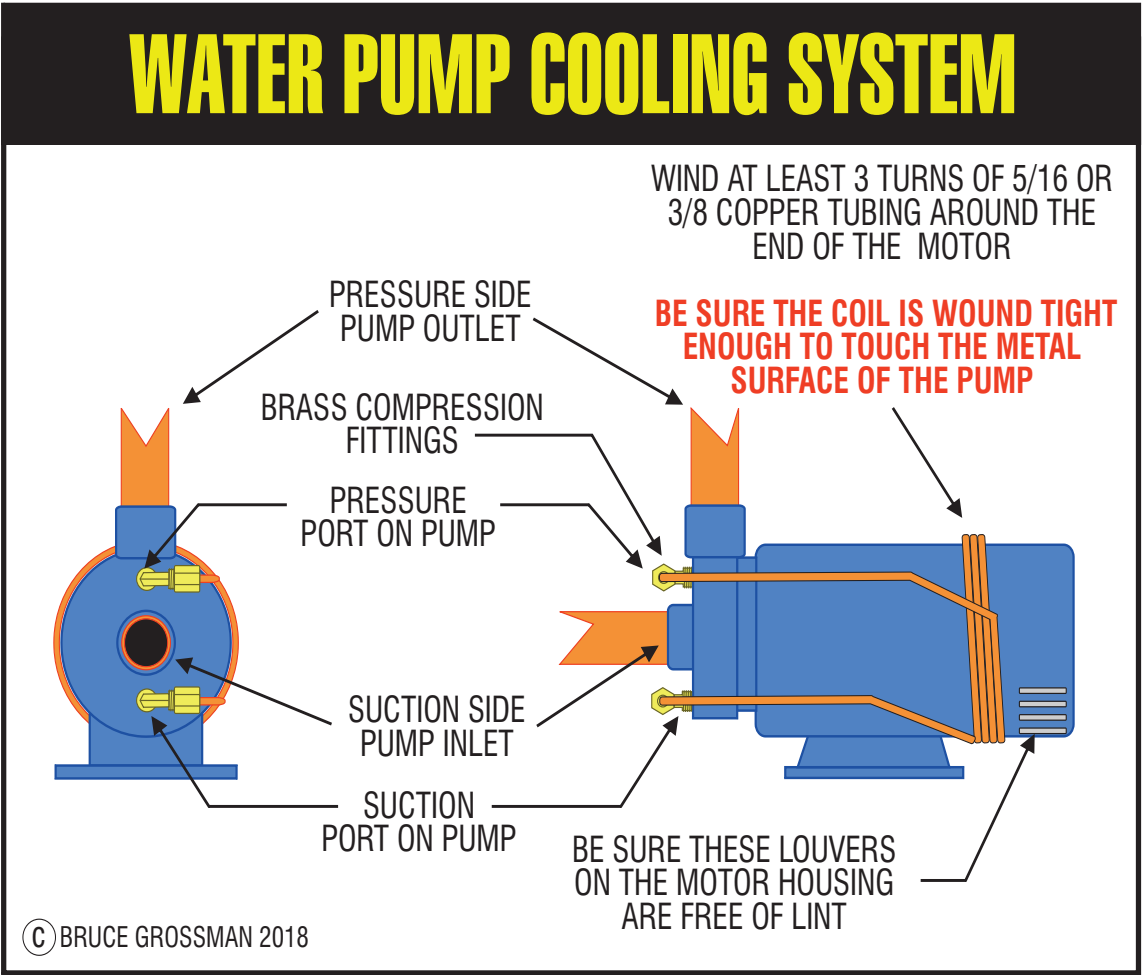
Before we get into managing this species of disaster, here are a few words about prevention. These pumps seldom fail without giving ample warning of an evolving problem. If the circuit breaker in the electrical panel that controls the pump trips frequently, it is a sure sign of looming disaster.

If you are not experienced in working with electricity, hire an electrician for the following procedures. Be sure to set the breaker for the pump in the off position, remove the protective electrical plate at the rear of the pump, then take a good look at the wire connections at the pump with the aid of a flashlight.

There is little room for the wire connections at the end of the pump, and pumps vibrate, causing the screw connections or push-on connectors to loosen and eventually fail. This is the problem area in many cases.

Observe if there is any melted insulation, bluing, or discoloration of the wires or connectors; if so, replace them. Remove the cover to the appropriate breaker panel and switch off the breaker controlling the pump. Make sure the screws holding the wires in place are securely tightened down.

Using a flashlight, observe if there is any melted insulation, bluing, or discoloration of the wires or circuit breaker connections or the area where the circuit breaker attaches to the power busses in the breaker box. Another harbinger of doom is frequent pump motor shut down due to the motor’s internal protective thermostat. If this is the case, follow the same steps outlined in the previous



paragraph, and in addition, make sure the louvers that allow air through the motor are free of lint, dust or obstructions.

You can drastically shorten the time this internal thermostat requires to reset by obtaining a bag of ice, placing it inside another strong plastic bag, and laying it on the far end of the pump motor. Remember, this is only a temporary solution.

The following goes for all equipment. *Do not use the*

circuit breaker as switches to turn equipment on and off! This practice degrades the breaker’s performance and sometimes keeps the breaker from tripping at the correct current levels. Each machine should have a disconnect close by; use this for switching instead of the breaker.

Another pump killer is excessive head pressure. Several factors could cause this and will be indicated by a high reading (45 PSI

and above) on the pump outlet pressure gauge if you have one installed. Also, the pump’s starting-up sound will differ under high head pressure.

Trying to describe sounds is nearly impossible, but the best way I can is to say that when starting the pump, the sound will take longer to even out (sorry, best I could do). Causes of this problem often lie in the bypass valve being shut or not sufficiently opened, or the clogging of strainers going into the drycleaning machinery.

Whether you’re currently having problems with your circulating pump or not, installing a cooling coil to prevent the pump motor from overheating would be a good idea. The illustration accompanying this article shows an easy and inexpensive installation.

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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Sherry Blackett
Plant Manager
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Oscar Escalante
Franchisor
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Owner
Snedicor's Cleaners
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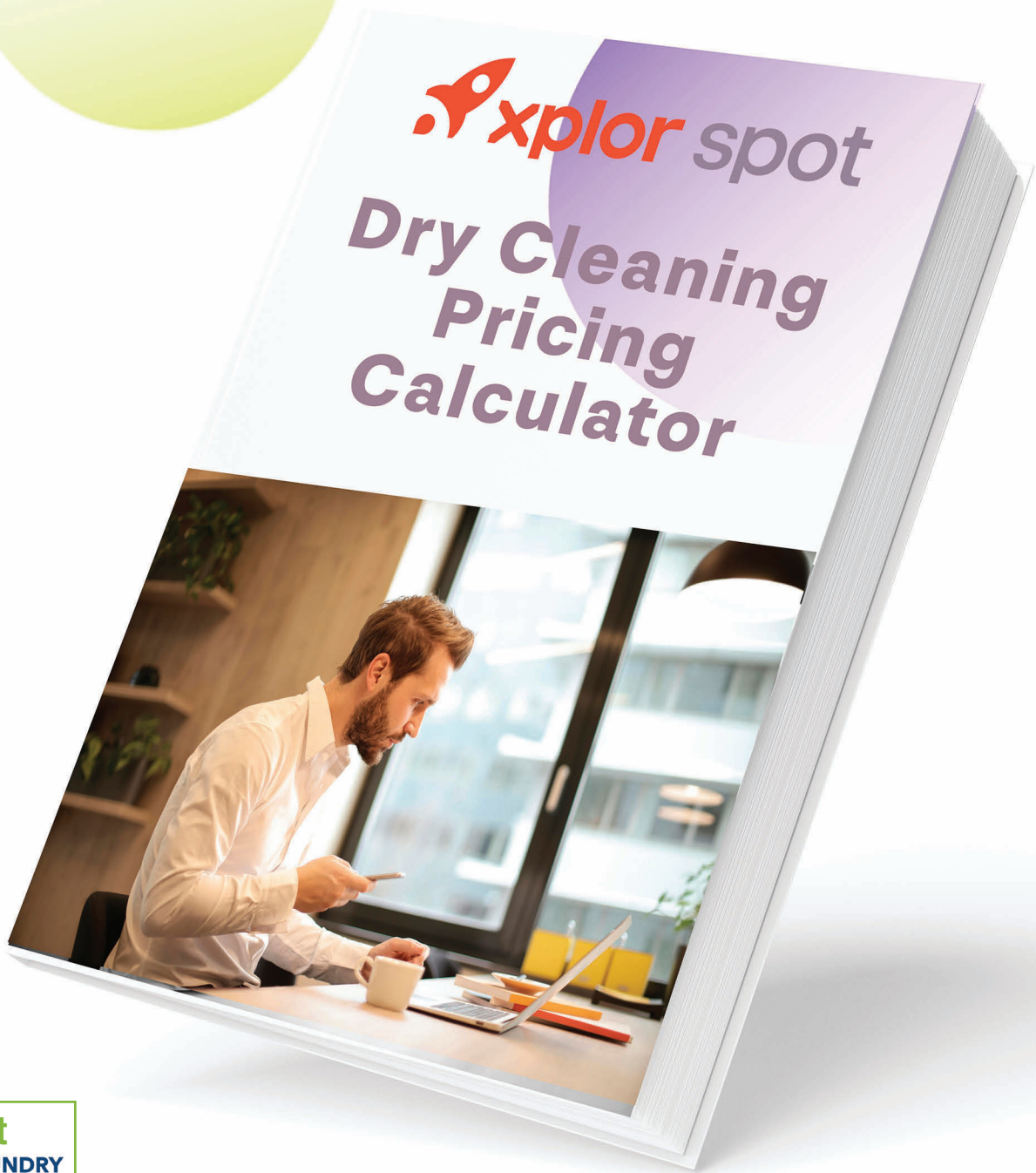


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KEEP IT LEGAL



BY FRANK KOLLMAN

Is your business vulnerable to unionization?

Outgoing President Biden did everything to foster unionization, appointing anti-employer officials to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), imposing union requirements on federal construction projects, and favoring unionized companies over non-union.

If you are pro-union, that's your prerogative. Nevertheless, even George Meany, a prominent labor union leader of the 20th century, was outraged when union employees attempted to unionize. And, at the time of this writing, employees of

the teacher's union known as the National Education Association are striking their "union" employer. Even unions have and hate union problems.

Contrary to popular belief, wages are not the primary reason employees unionize. Unionization does not automatically lead to higher wages. Instead, key drivers include poor communication from management, dignity issues stemming from abusive supervisors, job insecurity, unresolved workplace problems, and hostile rela-

tionships between employees and management.

Some companies are targeted due to their industry prominence, while others face unionization because they unknowingly hire union-affiliated employees.

Unions cannot organize a workforce without employee support. Employees must sign authorization cards or a petition to initiate a government-conducted election, and at least half of the employees voting must support unionization. Signs of unionization include: unusual employee gatherings that

disperse when supervisors approach; increased employee complaints; employees arriving early or staying late without a clear reason; employees spending more time together in the bathroom; and usage of terms like: *seniority, job security, grievance, due process, arbitration, entitle, and job description* which are often introduced by union organizers.

It's crucial to communicate your stance on unions to your employees. When asked about unionization, you might express that you are not in favor of it, and ex-

plain why: unions often treat all employees the same, regardless of performance; employees must rely on the union for negotiations, limiting individual discussions with management; wages and benefits are determined by union negotiations, not individual merit; strikes can occur in unionized workplaces, during which employees are unpaid and ineligible for unemployment benefits; seniority can take precedence over merit in unionized environments; union rules may negatively impact the business and employees; and unions generally oppose granting exceptions to individual employees, reducing flexibility for exceptional workers.

If an employee suggests that unionization will lead to better wages, clarify nothing is guaranteed. While the company must bargain, there is no obligation to agree to union demands. Unionization means the union represents employees, but the company isn't bound by a contract it hasn't negotiated.

Supervisors should be aware of the dos and don'ts of discussing unions with employees. They can share truthful information and personal opinions, but they must avoid making promises, threats, spying on union activities, or interrogating employees about their union views.

No one can be fired or refused employment due to union activities or sentiments, although normal hiring and firing practices can still apply. To prevent unionization, provide a comprehensive employee handbook and maintain open communication with your employees. Ensure that employees feel respected, fairly compensated, and well-informed.

Supervisors should address problems promptly and report any signs of union activity. Aim to be the kind of company that treats employees so well that unionization becomes unnecessary.

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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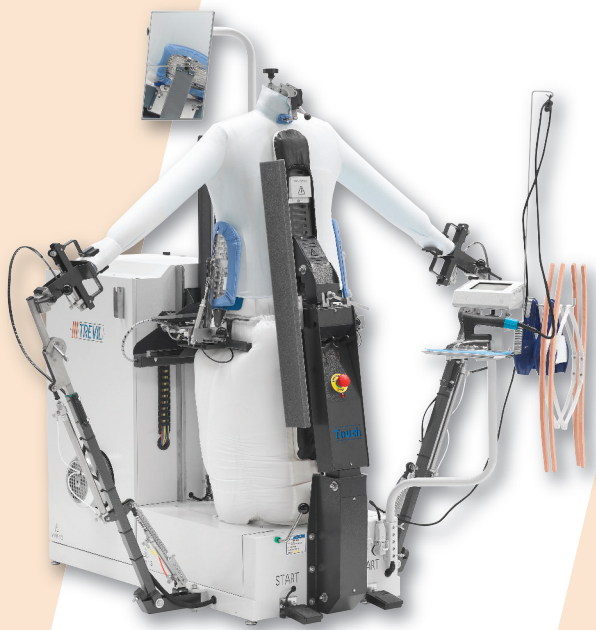


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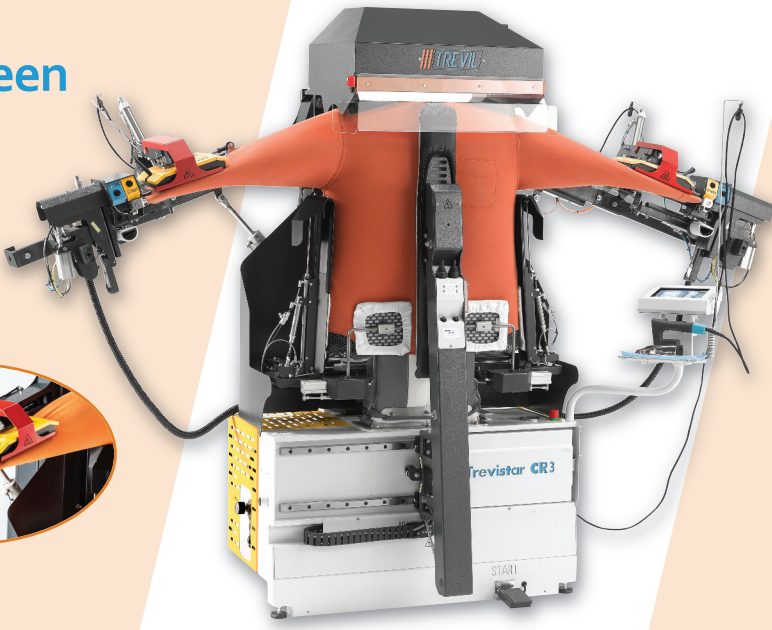
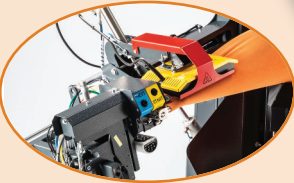
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BUILDING VALUE



BY KERMIT ENGH

Making the transition from player to coach

In the competitive world of sports, the transition from a star player to an effective coach has often proven challenging, yet it holds invaluable lessons for business owners. Much like in sports, running a successful business requires a shift from being a frontline worker to adopting a more strategic leadership role. Consider the case of Wayne Gretzky, arguably the greatest hockey player of all time. Despite his on-ice prowess, he struggled as the coach of the Phoenix Coyotes, failing to lead the team to the playoffs in his four-year tenure. Similarly, Ted Williams, the legendary baseball hitter, faced difficulties in replicating his playing success in a managerial role. These examples highlight a critical truth: excelling at doing does not always translate to excelling at leading. This is the core message in the book *E-Myth* by Michael Gerber, which is a great read. Conversely, some of the most successful coaches, like NFL's Andy Reid and NBA's Greg Popovich, have achieved remarkable success despite not having had a stellar professional playing careers in the sports they

coached. This paradox is not just limited to sports, but is profoundly relevant in the business arena. **Transitioning from Star Player to Coach** For business owners, especially in the specialized and often personal field of drycleaning, the transition from being deeply involved in daily operations to stepping back and focusing on growth and strategy is crucial. According to analysis by The Value Builder System™, which examined over 80,000 businesses, those who can operate independently of their owner for three months are more than three times more likely to receive a premium offer when sold. This underscores the importance of developing a business that doesn't rely solely on its owner's daily input, mirroring the shift from player to coach. Jason Bagley's journey with Firing Squad, a lead generation company he founded in 2013, exemplifies this transition. Bagley, who initially handled all critical tasks, particularly prized his expertise in copywriting. However, recognizing the need to build a business that could flourish without

his constant involvement, Bagley adopted several strategies: **1) Developing Resources.** He created a comprehensive library of both effective and poor copywriting examples, making these resources available to his staff to learn from and reference. **2) Leveraging Technology for Training.** Bagley used screen-sharing videos to provide detailed feedback, helping his team understand his thought processes and standards. **3) Embracing Imperfection.** Understanding that micromanaging could hinder growth, he accepted work that was 80% of his standard, focusing on overall progress rather than perfection. If 100% is your standard, *nothing* will get done or be completed. These strategies not only facilitated a smooth knowledge transfer to his team but also enabled Bagley to eventually sell Firing Squad to Southern Web in 2020, a testament to the company's sustainability beyond his direct involvement. For owners of drycleaning businesses, where personal expertise and customer relationships often define the business,

the challenge is to develop processes and train teams in a way that maintains quality while reducing the dependency on the owner. This can involve: **Documenting Processes.** Clear, step-by-step guides for every service offered, ensuring quality remains consistent irrespective of who performs the task. **Training and Empowerment.** Regular training sessions and empowering employees to make decisions can foster a more dynamic and resilient business environment. **Strategic Planning.** Spending more time on business development, marketing strategies, and customer engagement plans to drive growth. **Feedback and Adjustment.** Implementing a feedback loop from employees and customers to refine processes and services continuously. By successfully making the shift from player to coach, drycleaning business owners can enhance the value and appeal of their businesses, making them attractive not only to potential buyers but also to a broader customer base. In conclusion, the journey from frontline expert to

strategic leader is challenging but essential for business growth. If you're ready to explore how to enhance the value of your business through effective leadership and strategic planning, our proven methodologies can guide you every step of the way. Let's discuss how you can make this pivotal transition and secure the future of your drycleaning business. This approach to leadership and strategic planning not only ensures the longevity of your business but also its potential to thrive in an increasingly competitive market.

Kermit Engh has been an owner/operator in the drycleaning industry for over 32 years and has been a Methods for Management member for over 28 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.

NEWSMAKERS

R.R. Street & Co. Inc. has announced the launch of their new **On the Spot** stain removal guide, an online resource for step-by-step videos, expert tips and fast results. Employees working at the spotting board can access **On the Spot** with their phone at 4streets.com/onthespot/ or simply scan the QR Code to be connected to the tool. Stickers featuring the QR Code are available for placement on or



near the spotting board. The user will be able to find the stain they are looking for in the "search by stain" box, or by clicking on the solvent in use and then the correct category of stain. Also included are introductory videos about the "Proper Use of the Spotting Board" as well as "Stain Identification & Classification." All videos are available in English, Spanish and Korean. On The Spot features some of the most popular Street's stain removal products, but also identifies comparable Adco and Laidlaw products that can be used as an alternative. "For nearly 150 years,

Street's has been a leader in creating products that achieve the highest level of fabric care," noted **Kristen Vos**, executive vice president at Street's. "Our stain removal products are recognized throughout the world for their effectiveness. But, unless used properly, they won't achieve the excellent results they were designed for. We hope that On the Spot not only helps make our customers' jobs easier, but also helps them achieve the best possible results with our products. **Tide Services** opened its first **Tide Laundromat** franchise in **Dallas, TX**, at White-rock Marketplace. To celebrate its grand opening, the new

store hosted a Free Wash Weekend. Prior to that, it hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony with the East Dallas Chamber of Commerce, local franchise owner/operator **Patrick Elverum**, Tide Services CEO **Andy Gibson** and the Tide corporate team. "Dallas is our home, and

opening our Tide Laundromat in White-rock Marketplace reflects our commitment to the community," said Elverum. "We're redefining laundry as an enjoyable and convenient experience. Visit us and see how we turn a routine task into something you'll actually look forward to."



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SHIRT TALES



BY DON DESROSIERS

Evaluating the quality of your shirts

After reading the title of this article, you may have already formulated an opinion on where you fit in. I have clients who have done this well before I ever meet them. They usually have a number. That is, they have rated the shirts that come out of their plants on a scale of one to ten. Many are quite conservative with their evaluations. That is a whole lot better than those who claim to produce a perfect shirt.

It isn't likely that anyone can maintain perfection in this business. If you, at times, produce a "perfect" shirt, do not use that as your poster child. Doing so is the equivalent of wearing blinders. A manager's job is to look for trouble, find it before a customer does and fix it before it becomes a customer service issue. The better your operation, the harder it will be to find problems. Look for quality issues and call them *opportunities* rather than problems. They are truly opportunities to exercise your management skills and

to improve your business.

Someone much smarter than me once said, "Many of us shy away from opportunities because they are often dressed in overalls and look too much like work."

I'll bet every one of you evaluates your quality, and you probably do it a few times a week. As a result, you probably have a number from one to ten. You may say, "My shirts are a seven." Most people say seven. My mission is to get you to lower that number (sorry), with the hopes that you will work at the issues that you find and fix them.

Ideally, you will lower your rating to a six within a couple of days and then raise it to an eight within a week or two. In order to do that, I will need to show you a few new ways to check out your quality.

The typical ways to evaluate quality are OK, but not foolproof. Many of you evaluate the quality by simply checking out your own personal shirts. If, time and again, you put on a shirt in the morning and it is ac-

ceptable, or perhaps even perfect, you settle for that as your rating. Not a fair evaluation, I'm afraid.

If you are a typical size, like 15 or 16 and wear polycotton blend oxfords, you are not fairly evaluating your shirts. No offense, but anybody can do a great job on those. Also, it is remarkably difficult to inspect a shirt while you nonchalantly take it off the hanger and put it on. I write a column about shirts and even I have found myself wearing a shirt with a gross horizontal crease across the back.

It is true that if you find a missing button on one of your own shirts, you can assume that others have been missed. But, you won't assume that *every* other shirt has a missing button.

If you are about to wear a shirt that has a horizontal crease across the back, you will not assume that *every* other shirt has one. So, if your shirt is perfect, do not make the mistake of assuming that *every* other shirt is perfect. Agree?

Just for fun, though,

when you send your own personal clothes through the plant, use an alias on the invoice. This will help prevent someone doing an extra-special job because it's the boss' clothes.

The least effective way to analyze quality is to watch a presser press. If they are bound to do something inappropriate, it is least likely to happen when you're watching. Find a spot in where you can see a particular machine — say, the sleeve press. Ideally, from there you can see your presser who can't see you.

If you suspect this presser is, for example, hitting the stop button on the machine and not allowing shirts to fully dry, he or she probably won't do it while you're watching. You may catch it if they don't know that you are. That is about all that you can accomplish as an eye witness. So, then, what is a better way?

The grossest thing that can happen to a pressed shirt is that it wasn't allowed to fully dry. In order to produce a top quality shirt, it must be completely dry. That doesn't mean 99% or 97% dry or pretty close to dry. It means fully dry.

If you attempt to evaluate this at the plant, you will not succeed. When a shirt comes off the press, it will not feel damp because it is hot. Furthermore, if there are damp areas, they may not be evident until later. Here's why. Let's say that for whatever reason, you're body press isn't fully drying the shirts. It could be that you're pads are spent or that you're equipment is defective or your presser is shortening the cycle.

The part of the shirt most likely to be damp is the button-hole band. At first glance, it will appear perfectly dry, *always*, because the front surface of this thick band was, seconds ago, squeezed up against a very hot piece of steel. The surface dried by conduction. It's going to be dry, at least for now, but if there is significant moisture on the back side of the button-hole band, the front side will act like a wick. It will soften and even wrinkle with time as the remaining moisture is absorbed into the shirt.

This shirt can easily get

by your inspector because it will still look fine then. The best way to catch this is to look at a friend's shirt. Invite him to dinner. Look at his shirt during that time. You will see your product in a completely different perspective. You will see the cuffs, the collar, the sleeves, the front and the back of the shirt. How do you stack up now?

Another way to do this and to get a bigger sampling is to go to your plant on a day you're closed. Look at shirts that are already bagged and ready to be picked up. Promise not to be disappointed. Remember, this is an opportunity to improve your business.

The biggest cause of occasional inferior work is **doing too good of a job most of the time**. I did a job recently where the pressers did a remarkable job of pressing shirts. The shirts came off the presses quickly and as close to perfect as I've seen. There where very few touch-ups required.

After a few days there, the owner asked me to rate his shirts on a scale of one to ten. I said a seven. Seven? The shirts were generally perfect. The reason I scored him that low (and I don't think that seven is bad at all) is because the inspectors were so used to seeing shirts that didn't need touch-up that their job had become too mechanical. Shirt after shirt was excellent. When a really bad one came along, it was missed.

The inspectors had begun to *assume* perfection. Assume. Don't you just hate that word? The remedy is supervise, supervise, supervise. Don't expect what you don't inspect.

If you do want 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.



“Our recent MfM collaborative gathering served as a platform for sharing knowledge, discussing emerging trends, and brainstorming innovative solutions to common challenges faced by our industry. As CEO of Best Care Dry Cleaners, I am proud to have participated in this exchange of ideas. By staying informed of the latest advancements in garment care technology, we can ensure that our services are efficient, convenient, and tailored to meet the evolving needs of our clients.”

~Lisa Loscerbo, Best Care Dry Cleaners, Winnipeg

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THE SPOTTING BOARD



BY DAN EISEN

Cleaning rayon and acetate blended fabrics

Blended fabrics are widely used because usually the blend enhances the serviceability of the fabric. A proper blend of cotton and polyester has the look of cotton but the wrinkle resistance of polyester. Nylon blended with wool also gives the wool wrinkle resistance.

Rayon and acetate blends are entirely different. The blended fabric possesses the limitations of both acetate and rayon. Although rayon can be manufactured as durable and washable, the rayon produced for blends is usually viscose rayon which becomes weakened when wet and shrinks easily.

Rayon and acetate blends are used in many high styled woman's wear as well as in all weaves including satin, plain, crepe, taffeta and velvet.

Weaknesses

Manufacturers can produce the durable rayon which is referred to as *high wet modulus*, which can be wetcleaned and wears well. A less durable rayon produced is called viscose rayon which becomes weak when wet and shrinks easily. This means that this rayon will weaken in wear easily.

The type of rayon fiber

used in blends is usually the viscose rayon, which is the least durable of the two.

Acetate. Unlike rayon, acetate is thermo-plastic in nature. It is subject to fume fading and discolored easily from contact with alcohol. This can occur during normal wear or using alcohol found in some spotting

chafe and discolor from minimum rubbing and abrasion.

4) Pleating. Although acetate is thermoplastic in nature, it can be heat set. Rayon can not be heat set. Wetcleaning will cause loss of pleating.

5) Draperies. The life of rayon and acetate draperies

fading can occur during wear or while garments are hanging in the closet.

Identification

To identify the presence of acetate, a small piece of fabric should be cut out and acetone should be applied. Acetate fiber will be dissolved. If a match is held to a sample piece of fabric, the

ance of the fabric. In using oily type paint removers, the garment must be drycleaned immediately. Failure to do so may result in color loss from moisture in the air. Avoid using general formulas which can cause color loss. Tannin and protein formulas are usually safe, but avoid using acetic acid. Even mild acetic acid when heated becomes strong and can affect acetate.

Wetcleaning

Most rayon and acetates cannot be wetcleaned. Velvet, crepe and gabardine must never be wetcleaned.

Wetcleaning is permissible only on those fabrics with a label stating that the garment is washable.

Independent Garment Analysis Service

Dan Eisen's Independent Garment Analysis Service has been experiencing a high volume of fabric problems from drycleaners nationally.

If you would like to have a phone consultation with Dan Eisen before sending a garment, call (772) 579-5044.

Dan Eisen, former chief garment analyst for the National Cleaners Association, can be reached at (772) 579-5044, or by e-mail at dannyeisen39@gmail.com or through his website at www.garmentanalysis.com.

If a match is held to a sample piece of fabric, the acetate portion will melt, leaving a bead or hard edge, but when the flame is extinguished, there will be a glowing ember that leaves the remains of fluffy ash.

chemicals.

General formula contains alcohol and oily type paint remover when in contact with water will release alcohol.

Fabric Problems

1) Velvet. The acetate pile will permanently flatten in contact with moisture. This can occur from rain, spillage of food and beverage and routine spotting using water.

2) Crepe. Rayon and acetate crepe will shrink in any wetcleaning process.

3) Satin. Satin is constructed with floating yarns. The floating yarns will

is limited. The fabric will easily discolor and weaken from exposure to sunlight and gases in the atmosphere.

6) Linings. Rayon and acetate linings do not wear well and will likely fray and weaken during wear.

7) Gabardine. Rayon and acetate gabardine shines easily. Routine finishing will cause shined areas.

8) Red, blue and purple colors. Fume fading or color loss due to gases in the atmosphere can occur on any color but are more susceptible to these colors. Fume

acetate portion will melt leaving a bead or hard edge, but when the flame is extinguished, there will be a glowing ember that leaves the remains of fluffy ash.

Drycleaning

Dryclean according to weave and appearance. Silk type fabrics should be cleaned three to five minutes in a dry load and dried at 140°F.

Spotting

Use a padded brush or wrap a towel around the bristle brush to avoid fabric damage. Avoid spatulas which can alter the appear-

ZIPS launches Train the Trainer program

After more than a year in the making, ZIPS Cleaners recently rolled out its Certified Trainer program, designed to certify team members as trainers, and imbue them with effective skills in communication, implementation of training tools, and organization.

The **Train the Trainer** program was developed for ZIPS by the company's Training and Development People Manager Jennifer Davis, and Field Training Manager Jennifer Hall.

Its intent is to create a training culture and mindset and ultimately achieve better outcomes from training sessions from location to location, including consistency in operational procedures, better retention of lessons and instructions and better performance

by and retention of employees.

The program emphasizes separate four-step processes for training the trainers (Prepare, Present, Attempt and Achieve) and having the trainers train other team members (Tell, Show, Do and Review).

An inaugural class of 20 corporate and franchise managers and employees successfully navigated the program, held at the 70-unit garment care chain's Savage, MD, headquarters (pictured on right). All Trainers received a certificate of completing the class.

"This program is off to a great start," said Davis. "It was designed to build a culture around positive and effective training and improve employee retention and knowledge inside the four walls of ZIPS locations. Based on our turnout and the

comments we received when the session concluded, I think we hit a home run."

Next up for the program is to encourage additional ZIPS' corporate and franchise stores to enroll more participants. Hall will visit each trainer to present each graduate personally with a Certified Trainer logoed uniform shirt, check on their location's training area

and observe them in action, implementing what they learned.

"I'm truly excited to see this Certified Trainer program come to life," said Hall, "and I'll be equally excited to watch it evolve. This is something I dreamed of doing back when I started with ZIPS in 2008. We now have the resources, tools and executive support -- exactly

what we need -- to take ZIPS training to the next level!"

Bob Barry, president/CEO of ZIPS, added his thoughts: "With our new Certified Trainer program, we now have a formal, thorough way to replicate our brand standards in every employee who joins our team, ensuring their success while promoting optimal operations."





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Saturday, October 5:

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8:15 am - 9:15 am

Top Trends in WDF and Laundry Delivery

Presented by **Brian Wallace**
CEO, Coin Laundry Association



9:15 am - 10:15 am

*Consumer and Market Trends in
Out of Home Laundry*

Presented by **Andy Gibson**
CEO, Tide Services

Sunday, October 6:

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The Route Pros are (left to right)
James Puester, Brian Fish, Jen Whitmarsh,
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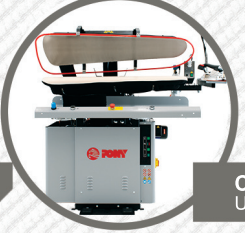
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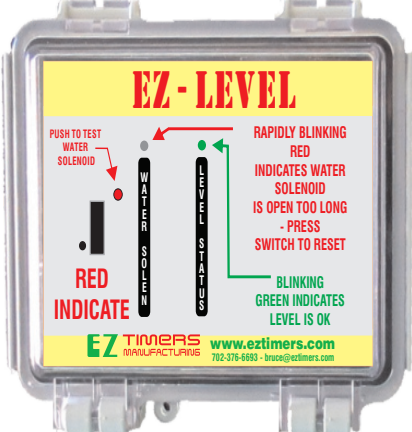
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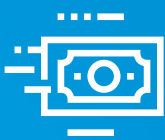
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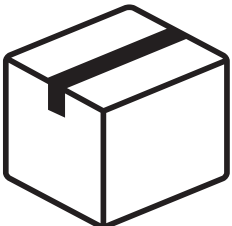
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NCL Profile
Life goes on

For the Bodin family, starting a cleaning business in Norwalk, 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 old article from the Herald.

Industry balancing act
to continue in 2022

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

FallFest EXPO pushes date back

Even though interest for FallFest EXPO remains high, many cleaners are too short-staffed and 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

Light always follows darkness
by Peter Blake

It has been a long, interesting and challenging 18 months, to say the least. I know I have never worked harder or more hours than I have during the past year and a half. I also know I am not alone, and

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

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

A Tribute to James Peuster
by Mark Albrecht and Jennifer Whitmarsh

As we round out 2021, let's recognize an achievement of a familiar personality in our industry. James Peuster, JP (as many know him) begins his 20th year consulting teams

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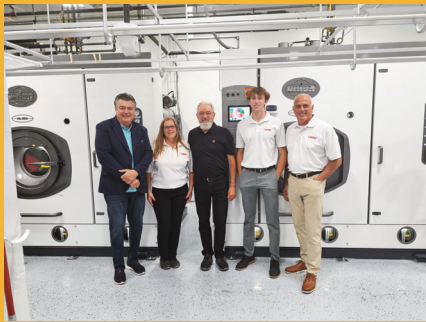


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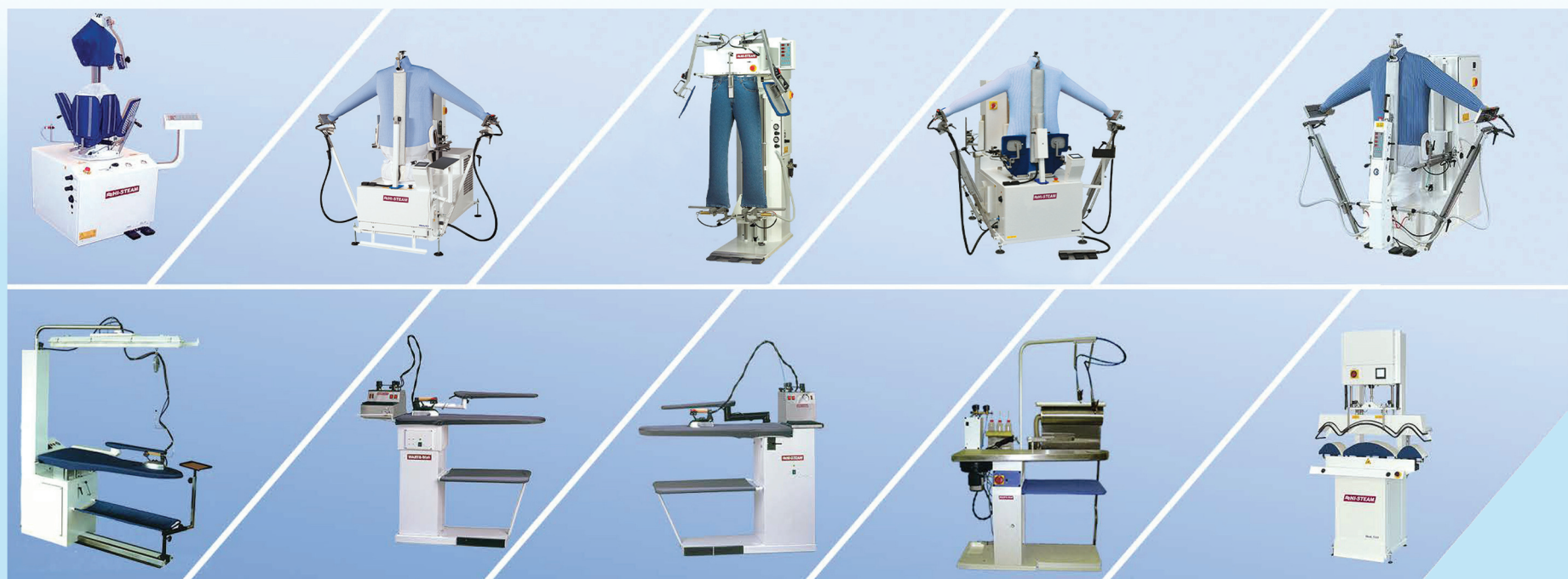
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