



National

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Looking ahead to Clean 2025 in Orlando

In less than six months, the Clean Show 2025 will take place at the Orange County Convention Center from Aug. 23 to 26.

Messe Frankfurt, the show's organizer, recently revealed that this year's show will debut its Innovative Awards program.

"These awards will be presented to honor exceptional performance in the fields of research, new materials and technologies," the company noted in a press release.

The awards program will focus on developments in four separate categories: Best New

Application; Best New Product; Best New Technology for Sustainability; and Best New Technology for Automation.

Exhibiting companies have until a July 18th deadline to submit innovations to be considered for the program. A jury of industry experts will assess the entries.

"The awards have been designed to make cutting-edge developments visible, promote unconventional thinking, and intensify dialogue between researchers, manufacturers, and users," noted Messe Frankfurt.

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From the ribbon cutting on, the Clean Show 2022 was a huge success (pictured above). Nearly 10,000 attendees showed up to the event, which was hosted at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta. This year's show shifts to the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL, and will take place from Aug. 23 to 26.

DLI and DIA team up to offer new training program

The Drycleaning and Laundry Institute (DLI) and the Drycleaning Institute of Australia (DIA) have collaborated on a new on-demand program that will be called Inspection Perfection training.

The two industry trade associations have maintained a positive working relationship for several decades, sharing information

and resources to benefit members of both organizations. The duo's latest innovation introduces new on-demand, web-based training in the critical skill of garment inspection.

"Customers expect perfection," said Brian Johnson, DLI's director of education and analysis. "Missing buttons, lingering stains, double creases, and other very

common defects can cause them to try one of your competitors. Our new Inspection Perfection course is designed to help your team solve problems like these before the customer sees them."

Participants who complete the self-guided course will receive a Certificate of Completion, recognizing their dedication to excellence in garment care and featuring the DIA and DLI logos.

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Latest industry study offers optimism

Cleaner's Supply has completed its second annual **State of the Dry Cleaning Industry Report**, a comprehensive market research study dedicated to the drycleaning industry.

This month, we are offering you a quick preview of what it contains. Look for a full analysis next issue when Jeff Schapiro, owner of Cleaner's Supply, shares all of his thoughts on the most recent responses.

This year's study was conducted with 894 drycleaning owners across the U.S.

Interesting enough, the findings revealed that most drycleaners saw business improvement in 2024 compared to the previous year. Encouragingly, optimism remains strong for 2025.

One notable shift in the industry is that hiring has become less of a challenge, with

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Making a nickname for themselves



In Scarborough, ME, Travis (pictured left) and Toby Bartlett pivoted their Oak Hill Dry Cleaners business during the pandemic — overnight it became just the two of them doing all of the work. Turns out, they make a pretty good combination — something customers recognized and they all began calling the couple "T&T" (read: TNT) because the work they produce is *dynamite*. Read about the young couple's efforts to reinvent the business on page 6.



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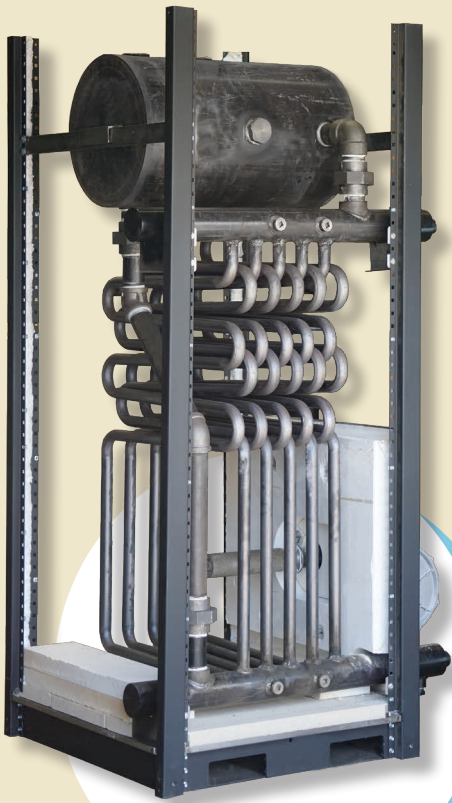
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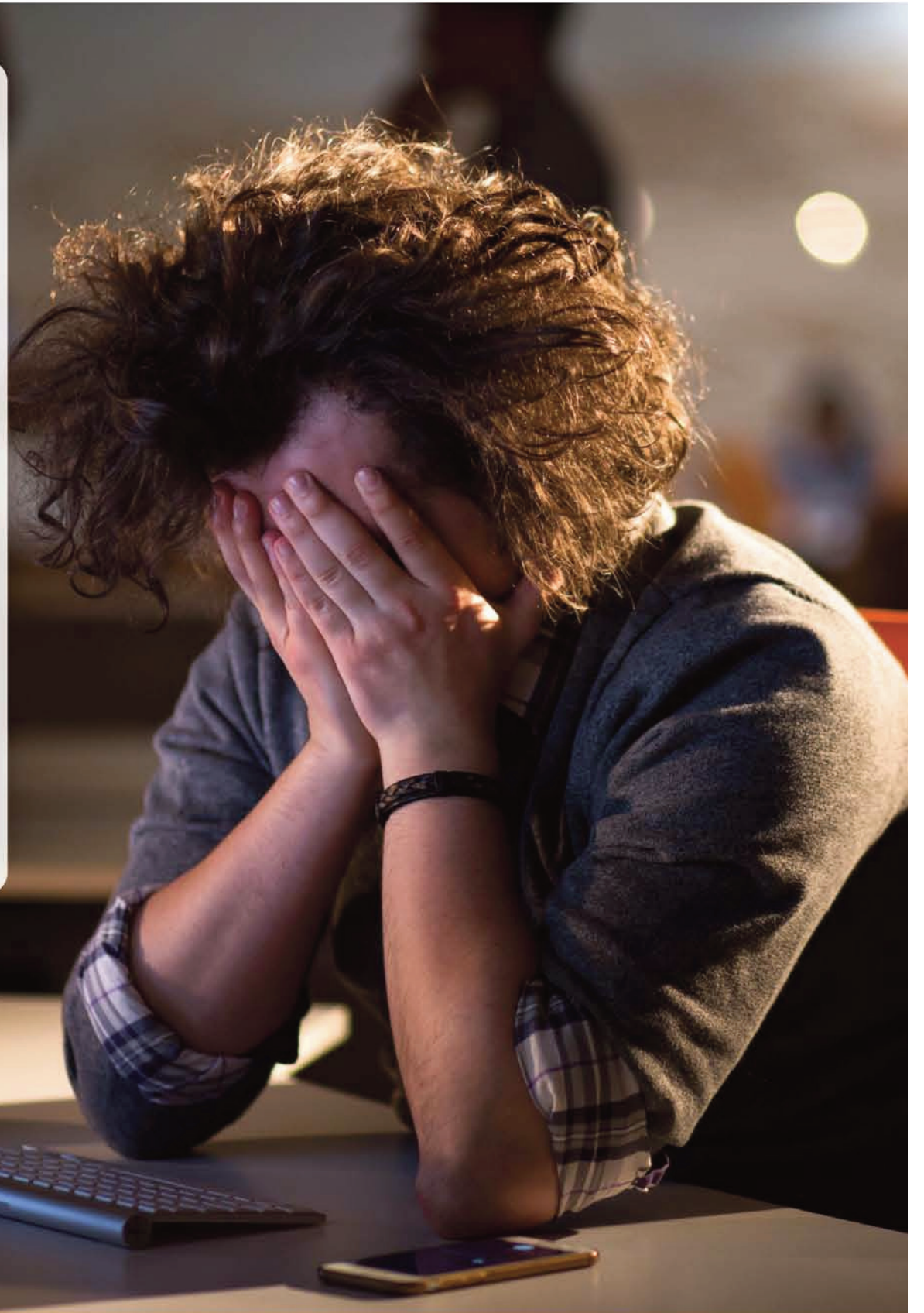
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How Many Dry Cleaners Has Your Insurance Agent Handled? One or Two? Three?

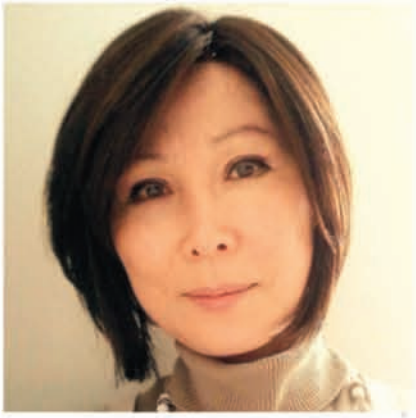


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A dynamite duo

Long before he became the owner of Oak Hill Dry Cleaners in Scarborough, Travis Bartlett was raised in a “lumberjack family” further up north in his home state of Maine.

“As a kid, I grew up four hours north of here in the lumber business — the cutting and hauling to the mill. My father started his own little company. That’s what I grew up in,” he recalled before adding, “A chainsaw’s a horrible thing.”

It was extremely hard work — and potentially hazardous on top of that — lumberjacking is habitually ranked as one of the most dangerous occupations in America.

Soon after Travis turned 18 in 1992, he moved south to Scarborough and worked for his mother who bought Oak Hill Dry Cleaners shortly before that. He really enjoyed his new job, which was similar to his previous one in one big way.

“They both require hard work,” he said.

Travis was up for the task and would work hard to hone his drycleaning skills for over 15 years before he became the owner in 2008.

At the time, he had a vision of where he wanted to take the business. The goal was to keep improving the quality of the work while also decreasing the business’s environmental footprint as much as possible.

Travis continued to upgrade and invest in new technology and equipment, including shifting to a new K4 cleaning machine in 2016. The business was certainly improving, but it still struggled to find its footing.

Meanwhile, Travis and Toby met in 2019 and were immediately drawn together. She soon began working at Oak Hill Dry Cleaners despite concerns that doing so could put a strain on their relationship.

Then, the pandemic began and the business suddenly shifted from a 12-person operation to just the two of them doing all of the work.

Before she met Travis, Toby was no stranger to hard work herself. For almost two decades, she produced as much as 10,000 words of copy a day as a professional writer working from home.

“I was a ghostwriter for an agency based in Texas. I did every kind of content imaginable,” she explained. “Before that, I was the editor for a publishing house in New York, which did encyclopedias. So, I actually wrote for encyclopedias. You don’t want to play Trivial Pursuit against me because I tend to have random factoids that I don’t even know are there until the questions are posed.”

Back during the early days of the pandemic, though, there didn’t seem to be any easy answers. Travis and Toby faced an overwhelming scenario together — and they did it with equal

parts discipline and hard work.

“I had no idea about drycleaning, so it was actually helpful to start from scratch thanks to COVID,” Toby said. “So, we started a delivery route with just a simple sign-up sheet at the front counter and we crossed our fingers.”

“We had two people our first time

costly household items. The people who will buy those investment pieces always know Travis is the one to ask for whatever needs to be done.”

The drive from Toby and Travis to keep pursuing better quality has helped Oak Hill Dry Cleaners

Customers remember those moments and share them with others. Oak Hill’s reputation keeps climbing up.

“We do draw people,” Travis said. “They’re coming from further and further all the time — an hour and a half, two hours. A handful of people come out of Bar Harbor, which is about three



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Toby and Travis Bartlett

Oak Hill Drycleaners
Scarborough, ME

out,” Travis recalled.

While growing the customer route list was important, Travis and Toby worked long hours for seven days a week in an effort just to complete all the work between the two of them.

“We changed our hours to 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. We’re here seven days a week, but that’s essentially our hours that are in the window — and at 1 o’clock, we would leave and go do the home delivery,” Travis said. “That eventually grew to a point where we had to start looking for somebody because we weren’t getting home until 8 or 9 p.m. at night.”

Fortunately, they found a person who turned out to be a good fit — even if it didn’t seem so on paper.

“He was a professional drummer early in his life. He sailed around the world on a cruise ship as a drummer,” Toby noted. “Then, he worked a whole career in banking and retired. Now, he’s back to drumming and driving for us.”

The delivery route continues to grow and Toby believes it’s responsible for about half of the business’s volume now. Even as the entrepreneurial couple juggled to handle more and more work, they always found a way to make enough time for customers — one of the biggest reasons for the company’s success.

“Because we both grew up in small towns — at the counter, we bring that sort of small town thing to the customer. We become quite friendly with everyone who is here — and you do meet the entire spectrum of people,” Toby explained. “We get our regulars, and then we get our second-home owners — there’s a large community of second-home owners who rely on us for very high end designer clothes to really

find its niche. Still, that doesn’t mean the decision was an easy one to make.

“We invested in a Miele professional wetcleaning system at a time when it was a little hair-raising to do so, but, at the same time, we had to differentiate — and because we were always leaning towards eco-friendly, wetcleaning was the next logical step,” Toby noted. “Travis sometimes can be his own enemy because his perfectionism can make things take a little longer, but I think people nowadays are so committed to caring for their things better that it’s not a problem if things take a day or two longer than they expected. Most of the time, they leave here looking brand, spanking new. People love his work.”

The extra attention to garments isn’t the only thing that keeps bringing customers in. They enjoy a little extra attention themselves.

“People are so hungry to connect and clothes are so intimate. The minute you start investing in them with your brain and with your heart, it just immediately comes back,” Toby said. “Once you know you’re working on Bob’s shirt — and you know all about Bob’s grandkids — it matters. You just automatically do the best job possible because they’re your friends.”

“I think about the hardware store in my hometown and it’s still the same — with crooked, wooden floors and this weird collection everywhere, but everyone knew everybody and you never felt disconnected or alone,” she continued. “So, we may just be a drycleaners, but like, today, people will ask us to babysit their dog, or will bring in their grandkids to meet us. Somebody’s cat passed away and he came in just to tell me that. There I am — the drycleaner — reaching across the counter to hold his hand so he could be sad for a minute.”

and a half hours away — because they trust us so much.”

While Travis and Toby put in a lot of effort to be there whenever they can for their customers, they know that it does not go unappreciated. At some point, many customers noticed “T&T” written down (for Toby and Travis’s first initials) and they began saying “TNT! Dyno-mite!” It became a thing.

“People do walk in and befriend us and start with the TNT without us even instigating it. So, that’s our nickname,” Toby laughed.

At their wedding, the couple handed out “TNT” drinking koozies to all of the guests, most of whom were also customers, sales representatives and suppliers for their business.

Not so long ago, the couple had another interesting wedding experience, though this time it was as guests. A customer invited them to his wedding, but it didn’t start off so well.

“We got the time wrong by a half hour,” Toby recalled. “We got there, went inside and even though we had made it, we missed the whole service. We felt like idiots.”

Undaunted, the customer who invited them still wanted them to show up to the reception — where, naturally, they didn’t know anybody else.

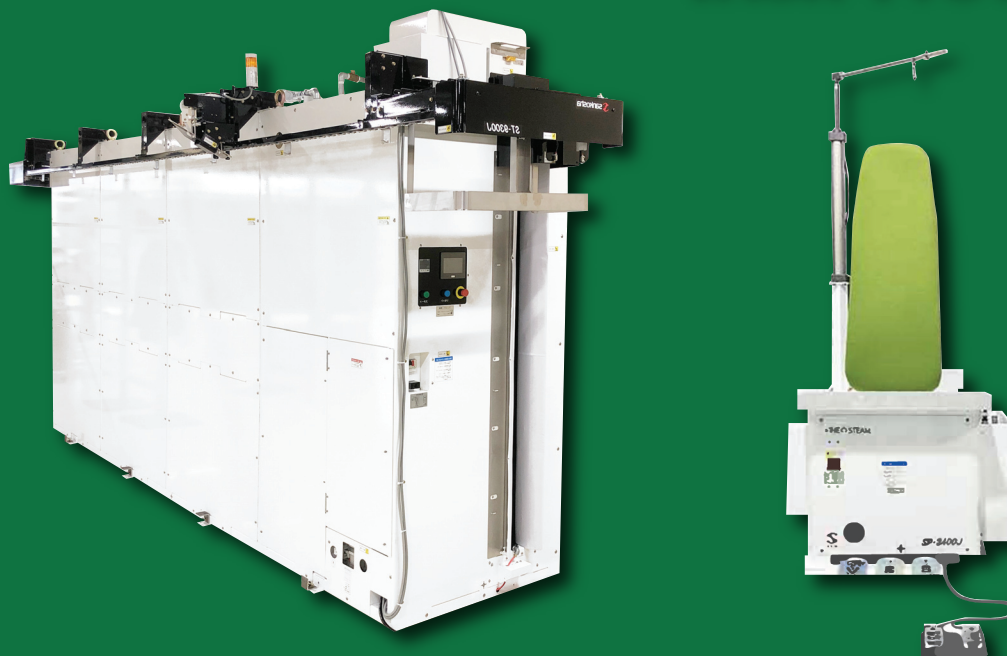
“We got there and everybody was kind of side-eyeing us,” Toby said. “Finally, these two gorgeous girls come up to us and introduce themselves as his daughters. Then, they very bluntly asked, ‘And, how are you here? Who do you know?’ We said, ‘We’re his drycleaners,’ and they kind of screamed and said, ‘Oh my God! He never stops talking about you guys!’”

“The wedding party was solely for family except for us,” Travis laughed.



**“Never iron a four-leaf
clover because you
don’t want to
press your luck!”**

~ Irish Proverb



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Looking ahead to Clean 2025 in Orlando

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The winners will be acknowledged during the Clean Show in August.

Those who wish to attend the show should be able to register soon at the official site.

Hotel accommodation options are expected to be made available this month on the site

so attendees can take advantage of special discounts at various nearby hotel options.

The cost to register to attend the Clean Show is \$125 per member of sponsoring association and \$155 for non-members for those who sign up prior to July 19.

After that date, the cost

goes up to \$175 per member and \$175 per non-member.

Sponsoring associations include the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute (DLI), the Association for Linen Management (ALM), the Coin Laundry Association (CLA), the Textile Care Allied Trades Association (TCATA) and the Association for the Linen, Uniform and Facility Services Industry (TRSA).

Over 300 exhibitors have already signed up to showcase the latest in drycleaning equipment, technology and services.

The exhibit hall will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday and Monday, and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesday.

Additionally, there will be educational sessions for visitors to attend; speakers and topics should be released soon.

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

DLI and DIA offer new training program

Continued from page 1

Designed by DIA using DLI materials, the self-paced online course expands DLI's popular Inspection Perfection training video into a full on-demand, web-based course.

This format allows employers to offer training to their employees with no downtime. The program is

100% online, allowing students to progress at their own pace and on their own schedule, making it ideal for busy professionals.

The course covers essential quality checkpoints for inspecting a variety of finished garments, including: pants; suit coats; blouses; dresses; pleated skirts; sweaters; laun-

dered shirts; and skirts.

Participants will gain valuable insights into maintaining high standards in garment care and inspection, improving customer satisfaction and enhancing their professional skills.

Ordering is simple. Once payment is received, participants will be emailed their

Industry study offers optimism

Continued from page 1

many owners now focused on increasing their overall business growth.

Additionally, the study highlights the growing adoption of wetcleaning as a key operational trend.

One of the most intriguing aspects of the **State of the Dry Cleaning Industry Report** is that it provides valuable benchmarking data, including average pricing on popular

cleaned items, both nationally and regionally.

Furthermore, it explores how cleaners are successfully expanding their services and marketing strategies to drive growth.

Be sure to check back in our April issue to learn all of the details.

In the meantime, if you would like to revisit Jeff Schapiro's analysis of the initial **State of the Dry Cleaning**

Industry Report, it was featured in the November 2023 issue of *National Clothesline*.

That issue is available by searching in the Back Issues section of our website online, located at www.national-clothesline.com.

Cleaner's Supply plans to make the full **State of the Dry Cleaning Industry Report** available for download at: www.cleanerssupply.com/research-reports.

SDA to host Spring Meeting in OKC

Later this month, the Southwest Drycleaners Association (SDA) will host its Spring Meeting at the Skirvin Hilton in Oklahoma City, OK.

The event will begin on



start providing truly remarkable customer service.

Following lunch, SDA plans to host its Board Meeting at 2 p.m.

Registration for the event is free to all SDA/DLI Allied members, but reservations are recommended because space is limited. Registration is \$100 for non-member vendors.

Hotel accommodations are available through the Skirvin Hilton at a special rate of \$199 per night.

To sign up, attendees can visit SDA's site at www.sda-dryclean.com and click on the Hotel Reservations link for the event. Attendees can call 800-HILTONS and use the code SWDC.

Tickets for the Saturday night dinner — costing \$88 each — can also be purchased through SDA's site.



The Skirvin Hilton (pictured above) will host SDA's Spring Meeting from March 28 to 29 in Oklahoma City, OK. The historic hotel first opened in 1911 and was one of the first buildings in Oklahoma to have air conditioning.

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SHIRT TALES



BY DON DESROSIERS

Diversification done the right way

I was once at a drycleaners and he had a sign in the window that said: “We specialize in: Drycleaning, Shirts, Wedding Gowns, Tailoring, Wash & Fold, Storage, Shoe Repair, Home Delivery.”

I chuckled to myself and thought, “I guess that this guy has no idea what the word *specialize* means.” It should have read: “We are pleased to offer you all of these services” or something like that. Back then, I wasn’t a fan of the *one-stop shop*. I know that is not the majority opinion but I wanted to go to a bakery for baked goods, a florist for flowers, a cobbler for shoe repair, a tailor shop for tailoring and a haberdasher for clothing. I believed if I wanted the best, I had to deal with someone who specialized in what I wanted to buy.

But, for the past decade or two, we have been struggling to keep our gross revenues up. For most of us, our customer lists haven’t shrunk so much as the number of pieces they bring to us and the amount that they spend has. If only we

can get them to spend more!

Enter the other services. It is really hard to be against the idea — and forget about what I used to think. Even if you agree with the concept of “dealing with someone who specializes in what I want to buy,” there is a really smart workaround.

I wear Johnston & Murphy shoes. They offer shoe repair. It isn’t particularly cheap, but I liked the idea of sending shoes back to them and then getting them back in like new condition. I think it cost like \$150, but the shoes come back great.

I later found out that J&M doesn’t recondition the shoes themselves; they use an outside vendor. Well, I guess that’s OK. I got what I wanted. Let’s get back to this later.

Back in my plant days, I had a huge wholesale shirt facility that processed 18 tons of shirts per week. Nothing else. Well, almost nothing else. I also refurbished feather pillows with one of those pillow machines from Harris Pillow. A few years ago, I bumped into Mike Harris at the Clean Show and I

told him a story...

Many years ago back in my plant days, the Massachusetts Dept of Worker’s Compensation contacted me for some reason and my rate per \$100 came up (maybe that was the reason that they called). The rate was high, probably \$38. The agent asked, “Do you have a laundry, cleaning articles using only water and nothing else?” I said, “Yes.” In response to my affirmative answer, he said (remarkably), “That’s not the answer that I want to hear.” I paused for a minute and said, “I clean feather pillows using ultraviolet light!” He said, “That’s what I want to hear! Your new rate is \$8.14 per \$100!”

Wow! That really happened. That was the best reason ever to diversify! Now, don’t quote me on the rates — they differ from state to state — but who could have seen that coming? And, pillows were a big moneymaker for us.

Anyway, I was always a big fan of wash and fold service. My gut told me it made sense for your home delivery driver

to include that in his realm. I never analyzed it on a P&L. I always figured that I’d leave that for James Peuster.

I am particularly fond of the **one-price concept** where a customer pays, say, \$300 per month. You will launder whatever they can fit in a bag that you supply. In theory, you make some extra cash because the bag isn’t always full. Sometimes they send 40 (or whatever size bag that you decide is right for you) pounds, but sometimes it is only 30. To use the simplest possible numbers, let’s say that a customer sends you 200 pounds in a month for which they pay you \$300; or \$1.50 per pound.

I have seen cleaners turn that into a more expensive fiasco than need be. Often, they tend to keep every customer’s laundry separate. This is wasteful and unnecessary.

Let’s say that you have five laundry orders from five customers. You have an understandable fear; if these clothes get mixed up, you will lose a customer (probably two customers for every mistake). Fair enough. The counter-point is that if you take precautions that are so costly that the venture doesn’t make any money, why bother in the first place?

Keeping WDF Profitable

Frankly, if you lose a customer due to a wash and fold error, and that leads to bad press that ultimately leads to losing customers, this has been a bad experience.

So, with that in mind:

- **Start with brand new laundry nets.** No draw-strings, no zippers. Open top, old-school sturdy laundry nets. You will be replacing them from time to time. They are not something that will last years.



Notice that the one pictured above is green. You will have five colors: green, blue, red, yellow, white. Notice that there

is a laundry pin on this net bag. You hate them and are sure that they don’t hold. You probably don’t know how to use laundry pins unless you were around when you could buy a gallon of gas for less than 40 cents.

Here is what you do. After you have attached the pin as shown, use a RT-200 rope tie (notice the green toggle on the end in picture on right) below the tie to double-secure the net. Never use a net with holes or one that has been mended.

You will be replacing nets regularly. They are not something that will last years. Perhaps you see a pattern here. Green net bag, green rope tie. Let’s extend that still more.

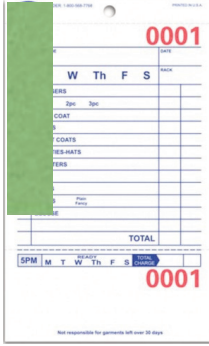
Take the invoice or work order and attach a blank instruction flag to it as shown here.

Now, all of the clothes in the green order go into green laundry nets, secured properly with laundry pins and rope-ties. Of course, you will be separating lights and darks and the laundry nets must not be more than half full, which is nowhere near as much clothing as you see in the picture. That picture was taken so that you can see the pin. Do not stuff the bags. You’ll see why later. So, you can see where I’m going here. Everything about this customer is green.

Do the exact same thing with all of the other four customers. Work on one customer at a time. Once the net bags are locked and loaded, feel free to toss them into laundry carts — one cart for lights, one cart for darks.

Where you can start making a difference in this business is by utilizing two or three large capacity washing machines and two or three large capacity dryers. I have seen these orders go to a drop store that has a coin laundry where the atten-

Continued on page 12



“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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~ Benjamin Franklin

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2024

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2024

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2022

Introduction of New Generation Laundry and Linen Presses

2021

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Introduction of New Generation Fast Back and Scissor Presses

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Don Desrosiers

Diversification done the right way

Continued from page 10
dant commandeers more than half of the machines in the laundry. I am not exaggerating even a little bit. She will take 12, 13, 15 top-loaders to wash all of these clothes and then eight to 10 dryers. If this is done in a drycleaning plant, there may not be that number of machines, so the employee turns this into an eight to 10 hour job making it into a cash-flow negative proposition. Here's how to do it:

The capacity of your washing machine will determine how much will fit into your machine, but don't let the employee determine this. Chances are high that they will underload it to pad the time clock or overload to get that last bag in. Use a scale. When loading the washers, make sure that you get all of the nets of one color into the washer before introducing the next order. Got that? If you have three red nets, three blue nets and three white nets and the washer only holds six nets, be careful not to wash two nets of each color or three nets of one color, two of another and one net of a third.

Your only choice is to wash three nets of two colors and run the other afterwards. Meanwhile, you will do the same thing with the same color nets for the dark colored

clothes, assuming you did the lights first.

For many of you, there is nothing new there — aside from the concept of colors —

tomers' delivery bag ready. Remember to only be working on one order at a time.

Go back to the dryer, open the door and open each net

door handle of the dryer. This will remind you of the pending order. Do the exact same thing to the dryer with the dark colored clothing, assuming you

The capacity of your washing machine will determine how much will fit into your machine, but don't let the employee determine this. Chances are high that they will underload it to pad the time clock or overload to get the last bag in. Use a scale.

you know how to wash, it's the drying that makes you nuts. That's what I'm here for. A 50 to 100 lb dryer is good to have. Your knee-jerk impulse is to open the nets and tumble the clothes in the dryer. Hold on.

Put several bags in the dryer. Remember that you didn't stuff the bags. There should be about five pounds of dry weight in the bags, so eight to nine bags in a 50 lb dryer would not be unrealistic. Tumble these eight (or so) bags for a few minutes while you prepare to complete the green order. The customer's name really doesn't mean anything at this point. Everything about this order is green. Get the cus-

that is green and let the clothes loose in the dryer along with the other nets of different colors that are par-drying. (That's a term that I borrowed from the kitchen. It means partially drying). Let's say there are three green nets. The garments from those nets are free and will dry quickly. Attach the three empty green nets to the

did the lights first.

In the folding area, the wash and fold bag awaits with the invoice and the color indicator. Soon the light-colored clothes will be done. There is a specific procedure. Open the dryer door and check a couple of thick pieces for moisture. If they are dry, toss them back into the dryer. Remove the remaining five net bags and place them into a small laundry cart for a moment, making sure that not dry pieces have clung to the net. Now, remove the loose pieces from the dryer.

Be certain you get everything. These pieces go to the folding area for final processing and packaging. Remove the green nets and rope ties from the dryer door and return them to storage. Return the five net bags that you set aside to the dryer, but select another color to remove from the nets and tumble loosely. If you have additional net colors that have been washed but have not yet been par-dried, you are encouraged to put them in the dryer now. The light-colored clothes from the green order are now folded and packaged, then the dark-colored clothes follow in the same manner. The secret is to stay organized and stay efficient.

So, I said I'd get back to the shoe repair. Johnston & Murphy is a retailer that I trust (like you) and they advertised shoe restoration for their brand only. They didn't tell me that they specialized in shoe repair, they told me that they offer this as a service to their customers. They had a path to a service that I wasn't privy to, so if you do shoes, you need a reason why your customer should go to you. J&M has a great reason. The resulting work looks like it came from the factory and the cost, although expensive by one view, is 30% less than new shoes. Most people that do shoes in this industry look for a cobbler that will give them a good discount and then the deal is done. While our service is priced slightly higher than some street corner cobblers, the

quality of work is second to none. Take a moment to look at these before and after photographs. I'm sure you will agree the company we contract with is one of the best shoe restorers in the world. We guarantee our work 100%.

Personally, I don't recommend shoe repair. Most shoes are of such poor quality that they really aren't made to be repaired. I got to know a couple of cobblers in town and they would start conversations with me because of the types of shoes I would bring them.

More than once, I've been told, "It's a real pleasure to work on shoes that are actually well constructed rather than the crap that usually comes in here." If you buy shoes at Wal-Mart for \$40, what will someone pay to repair them? Nothing. You can't replace soles on sneakers. Shoe repair is a dying business. The cobblers that I knew are long gone.

Don't try to do wedding gowns yourself. Make it a fixed cost. "We have contracted with a firm that does nothing but wedding gowns, thereby assuring quality and expertise, first time, every time"

If 2020 didn't teach you that you have to change, nothing will. You do need to diversify, but do it right. Don't pretend to be a specialist at everything, but remind your customers that you are the person that is to be trusted in this industry.

Because you are the one to trust, you are smart enough to know that you aren't the best at everything. The most important things are to improve upon the things that you do, make sure that you can be profitable at the services that you offer and for the services that you use and outside vendor, have a script that every employee memorizes and uses religiously so that ultimately the customer learns that it is the best decision to patronize you, in spite of the outside vendor.

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.



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TURNAROUND TIME



BY JOHN ROTHROCK

Three simple steps can level up your business

Waking up in Tulsa on a recent morning, I was greeted by seven inches of snowfall. For those of you in the northern climates, that's just a normal winter day. But, here in the Midwest, a snowstorm like this can bring the entire city to a standstill. With unexpected downtime, I took the opportunity to reflect on the past 12 months and think about ways to improve — both professionally and personally.

As drycleaning professionals, it's easy to get caught up in the day-to-day grind and lose sight of the big picture. What can you do differently to propel your business to the next level?

I identified three critical steps every cleaner should implement to improve efficiency, enhance customer satisfaction, and strengthen their business. These aren't sweeping, unachievable goals; they're practical, actionable changes you can start today.

Weekly Inventory

A weekly inventory process may seem like a small operational task, but its impact on your business is profound. By dedicating just 30 to 45 minutes each week to scanning and reconciling finished orders, you can uncover hidden issues, maintain accountability, and ensure your customers receive the best service. Here's how the process works:

1) Scan all finished orders. Set aside time after closing on Wednesday night to scan every finished order in your store. This quick process ensures that every ticket is accounted for in your system.

2) Review the inventory report on Thursday morning. Reconcile the scanned inventory against your records, paying close attention to exceptions. These discrepancies can reveal common yet critical mistakes:

- **Orders still in the store but marked as cashed out.** These are often cases where a customer forgot an item or staff mistakenly failed to hand it over.
- **Piggybacks.** Orders accidentally handed out to the wrong customer, creating an inventory gap.
- **Silent partners.** Instances where an order was paid in cash, handed out correctly, but remains in inventory — potentially signaling theft by a dis-

honest employee.

The Benefits

1) Catch and resolve issues before customers notice. Nothing frustrates a customer more than arriving to pick up an order that's missing or incomplete. By identifying and addressing mistakes during inventory reconciliation, you solve the problem before the customer knows it existed.

behind-the-scenes processes that dictate speed, efficiency, and, ultimately, customer satisfaction. Yet, too often, these systems are left untouched for years, riddled with inefficiencies and patched-together solutions that create unnecessary stress for employees and frustration for customers.

Let me be clear: streamlining workflows is one of the

pose and clarity.

Monthly Staff Training

When was the last time you and your team took part in training or continuing education? One of the most powerful investments you can make isn't in equipment or marketing — it's in your people. Monthly staff training is a simple yet transformative practice that enhances efficiency, re-

Training sessions also create space for team members to share feedback and ideas, fostering a collaborative environment where everyone contributes to success.

It's time to make staff training a non-negotiable part of your operation. It's not just an investment in your team — it's an investment in the future of your business. When your employees thrive, so does your company.

A few intentional changes can make a monumental difference in your business. Implementing a weekly inventory routine, streamlining workflows, and committing to monthly staff training aren't just operational tweaks — they're transformative strategies that drive accountability, efficiency, and growth.

Weekly inventory ensures that mistakes are caught early, quality is maintained, and internal risks like theft are mitigated. Streamlining workflows simplifies operations, reducing stress for employees while delivering faster and more reliable service for your customers. And, monthly training equips your team with the tools and knowledge to consistently perform at their best, creating a culture of excellence and collaboration.

The best part is these steps are achievable. They don't require massive capital investments or complex overhauls — just a commitment to continuous improvement and a focus on what truly matters: your customers, your team, and your business.

By adopting these practices, you'll not only meet the challenges ahead but you will position your operation as a leader in the industry.

I identified three critical steps every cleaner should implement to improve efficiency, enhance customer satisfaction, and strengthen their business. These aren't sweeping, unachievable goals; they're practical, actionable changes you can start today.

2) Reinforce accountability.

Regular inventory checks send a clear message to your team: every detail matters. From ensuring tickets are scanned correctly to confirming items are handed out to the right customer, this process fosters a culture of responsibility and precision.

3) Identify dishonest employees. The reconciliation process helps uncover theft or fraud, such as *silent partners* pocketing cash payments while leaving orders marked as unpaid. Regular audits ensure your business is protected from internal losses.

4) Monitor quality control.

Weekly inventory isn't just about counting tickets; it's an opportunity to assess the quality of work leaving your plant. Spotting and addressing stains, poor pressing, or damaged garments ensures customers consistently receive exceptional service.

Implementing a weekly inventory routine is one of the simplest yet most effective changes you can make. By dedicating a small amount of time each week to scanning and reconciling your orders, you gain peace of mind, prevent costly mistakes, and protect your business from internal and external risks.

Accountability, quality, and customer satisfaction are the cornerstones of a thriving drycleaning operation. Let weekly inventory become your secret weapon for success.

Streamline Workflows

For many cleaners, workflows are the invisible backbone of operations — the

most impactful changes you can make. It doesn't require a massive capital investment or expensive new equipment. It starts with something simple yet powerful: mapping out your current workflow.

Walk through your plant with fresh eyes. Trace the journey of a garment from drop-off to pickup. Pay attention to where bottlenecks occur. Are garments zigzagging unnecessarily across your facility? Do unfinished items pile up at workstations? Are employees wasting time asking, "When is this due?" These are red flags that signal inefficiencies and room for improvement.

The goal is to create a logical, circular workflow where garments flow smoothly from one station to the next. Imagine a system that begins at the counter, moves through cleaning and finishing, transitions seamlessly to inspection, and loops back to storage near the front counter. Ideally, separate workflows for drycleaning and laundering should operate independently, avoiding intersections that slow things down. By rethinking the movement of garments through your plant, you reduce wasted time and effort.

Employees spend less time managing exceptions and more time focused on value-adding tasks. Customers notice faster turnaround times and fewer mistakes. And, you'll see the benefits where it matters most — on your bottom line. Streamlining workflows isn't just about efficiency; it's about creating a plant that operates with pur-

duces errors, and, most importantly, builds a stronger, more motivated team.

In many drycleaning operations, employee training is treated as a "one-and-done" activity. New hires are shown the basics during their first few weeks, and after that, they're left to learn as they go. While this approach *seems* practical, it often leads to inconsistent results, miscommunication, and preventable mistakes.

By implementing monthly training sessions, you establish a culture of continuous improvement. These sessions don't have to be lengthy or overly formal, but they should be purposeful and focused. Start by identifying areas where your team struggles — whether it's spotting stains, handling delicate fabrics, or managing customer interactions. Then, design short, actionable training modules to address these challenges.

Training also provides an opportunity to revisit your systems and workflows. As you refine your plant's processes, ensure your team understands and embraces the changes.

Walk them through new procedures step by step, answer questions, and address any concerns. This not only boosts efficiency but also creates buy-in, helping employees feel more engaged and valued.

The benefits of regular training extend beyond operations. Employees who feel supported and empowered are more likely to take pride in their work, deliver exceptional customer service, and stay with your company long-term.

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).



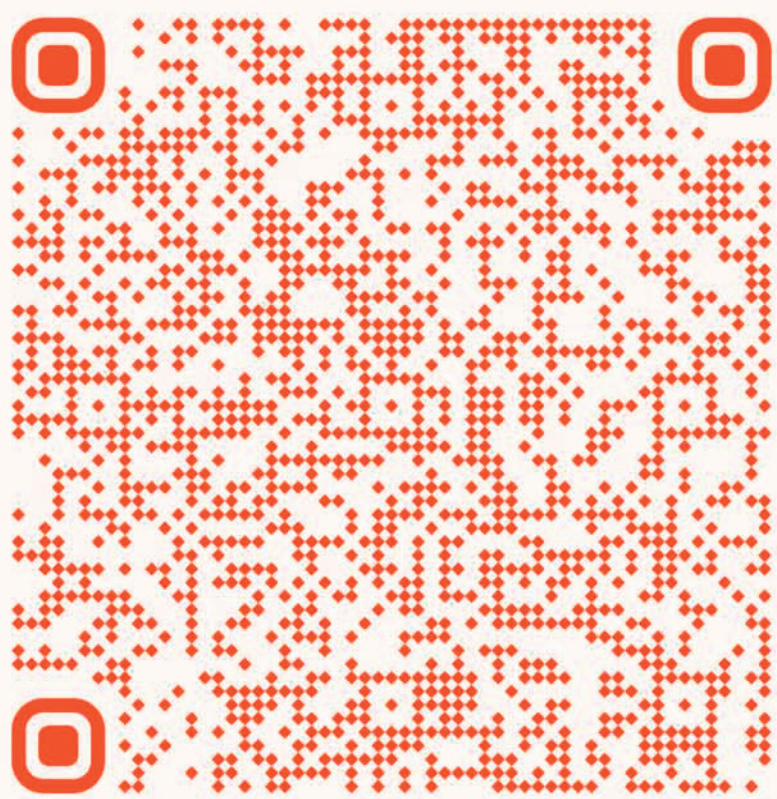
Where flowers
BLOOM,
so does **HOPE**
~ Lady Bird Johnson



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BUILDING VALUE



BY KERMIT ENGH

A crucial checklist for buying and selling

This month, we'll revisit information written years ago due to the amount of buy/sell/transform activity I've been a part of in the past 24 months. When involved in such a transaction, the following list is crucial — especially if you're the buyer. If you're the seller, you should be prepared to provide it if asked.

Mistakes made during the due diligence process can be extremely expensive down the road and/or may hide unexpected circumstances that make the transition hard and stressful. These include issues with leases, equipment that does not work, and vendors who refuse to work with you due to the practices of the prior owner. I can assure you something will surprise and frustrate you. Let us examine the following list:

1) Profit and Loss Statements. For the past three years, these are the most common documents requested. Only P&Ls produced by a licensed CPA are acceptable. Even so, review them carefully with your CPA. Now that COVID is behind us, sales numbers are being normalized.

2) Federal Income Tax Returns. We need the first page (showing income), plus either Schedule C with addenda or Corporate Tax Return. We need all statements and schedules containing expense information. We just need to see, but not keep, the tax returns.

3) Copy of Lease and Any Related Documents. This includes any assignments of lease or correspondence with the landlord(s). Does the landlord know of your interest in marketing your business? What is your relationship with your landlord? What are the remaining terms of each lease, the assignability of the lease, or is re-negotiation required for each? Remember to factor any adjustments into the price offered for the business.

4) Equipment List. Please use our form, listing the item, condition (excellent, good, poor, not working, or surplus), and age. Note if any items would be removed if the business were sold (i.e. personal property you want to retain, or something belonging to an employee or subcontractor, etc.).

Are there any surplus items and/or items not in working order? This is huge. A recent purchase I was privy to involved numerous major pieces that were not functioning and others requiring major service. And, do not forget to evaluate any environmental issues that you do not want to take on.

5) Employee Summary. Please complete this as best as possible. Report by individual stores. Do you have any family member(s) on payroll? Are any employees paid outside of payroll? Are all employees compensated according to industry standards? Are immigration documents up to date? Is any-

one being paid cash? Are there long-term benefits obligations?

6) Current Loans and Leases. This includes loans and equipment leases. Don't forget the credit card machine, alarm systems, vehicles, or other items under a lease agreement. What is the balance of the lease in dollar amount and term? Can the lease(s) be assigned?

7) Balance Sheet. For your most current period. Please advise of any unusual activities.

8) Outside Professionals. Please provide the name, phone number, and email address of your attorney, accountant and any other professional advisor that we will need to communicate with during the valuation process. This will normally be professional-to-professional communication.

9) Current Inventory. Provide both a good idea of your inventory of completed customer goods and the usual value of production supplies normally kept in-house. Have anything you do not want on the property removed prior to closing. You want to break any legacy environmental issues.

10) Year-to-Date Sales. Break down as best as possible, by income account, by category (retail, wholesale, commercial, route, fire restoration, miscellaneous services, etc.).

How does this current year's sales compare with last year? What is the reason for any increase or decrease in sales? Remember to look for

any customers who represent anywhere from 10-15% of revenue. This is a big red flag.

11) Seller's (Owner's) Business Disclosure Statement. Do not worry about listing fixtures and equipment in section A if you have already listed them on the above form. Complete all questions on both sides, then sign and date.

12) Owner's Discretionary Expense. We need to know of any items that were either paid to the owner or their family, non-cash items, or not absolutely necessary in the running of the business. Examples include: owner/family salary, payroll taxes and benefits, amortization, depreciation, one-time income, write-offs or expenses, non-essential travel, entertainment, or other expenses. This process may be referred to as "recasting" the P&L. If on the seller's side of the transaction, this would increase the value of the business in the eyes of the buyer.

13) Your Availability. When will you be available to meet with us, either in your office or in another privileged setting, to visit your business and local competitors, and to discuss the above items? When visiting or hosting visitors, I have found it helpful to introduce myself as a new "insurance agent" to slow any rumors that may go around between employees.

14) Agreement for Business Exit Consulting. In many cases, sellers and buyers may

contract with consultants who specialize in business transactions. Each will have their own programs and terms.

15) Basic Information Profile. Either complete or be prepared to discuss all the listed items at your next meeting.

16) Current Contracts and Agreements. Provide copies of any written agreements and an outline of any unwritten agreements: Employee or subcontractor agreements; commercial or wholesale account agreements; advertising or vendor (credit card contractors, etc.) agreements.

17) Copy of Price List. Note which are your best-selling items. How do your prices compare with the competition? How often do you raise prices? When was the last increase?

18) City/County Map. For each county where you have a location: Please mark and note the name of your units, your major clients, and your competitors. Where is the residential and commercial growth? What are the good and bad neighborhoods?

19) Business and Neighborhood Facts. Provide a history of your business and prime market area, including: business start and growth dates, account and competition changes, local neighborhood, zoning, and road changes (past and projected).

20) Trade Associations & Publications. What associations and publications are available to your industry? Which are you a member of? Provide samples and contact information.

If there is an opportunity in front of you, I would be honored to provide any assistance or lead you to contacts that I have worked with for others.

Kermit Engh has been an owner/operator in the drycleaning industry for over 32 years, a CINET winner in 2016 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.



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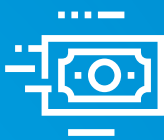
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Video capturing the fabric of your success

Standing out requires more than just offering a quality service. It demands connection, transparency, and a compelling narrative.

For drycleaning businesses — often perceived as a traditional industry — capturing the everyday activities can be a powerful tool for growth and engagement. It can also educate potential customers about how the industry is changing to better meet their garment-care needs.

At Sudsies, we’ve embraced this approach, utilizing a remote camera and microphone system. This innovative setup allows us to seamlessly document a variety of business activities, from roundtable discussions and business luncheons to charity events and interviews with fashion designers.

The result? A rich tapestry of content that strengthens our brand, builds relationships, and drives business.

The Power of Visual Storytelling

At one of our recent events, four business owners got together for a roundtable discussion on what is working in their drycleaning businesses and what they’d like to change.

Everyone shared tips, supported each other, and shared best practices to keep their employees and customers happy — and this translates into bet-

ter service overall.

We used our audio and video system to capture what was said and translate it into real value for our guests.

Imagine being able to offer potential clients a glimpse into the meticulous process of garment cleaning, the expertise of your staff, or the cutting-edge technology you employ.

Visual storytelling allows you to do just that. Instead of simply stating that you offer

ter trust.

It shows that you’re not just a business; you’re a part of the community, actively engaged and invested in its well-being.

Our system allows us to capture these moments authentically and share them with our audience. Whether it’s a clip from a charity event we sponsored or a short interview with a local fashion designer, this content helps us connect with our community on a deeper

pertise and builds credibility.

We regularly showcase these innovations, updates, and tips on our Instagram account.

Our handheld camera system enables us to capture these moments with ease. We can document training sessions, explain new cleaning processes, or even interview industry experts — all while maintaining a natural and engaging format.

This content not only engages our existing clients but also attracts new ones who are looking for a drycleaner that is modern, innovative, and community-focused.

The Takeaway: Invest in Documentation

Capturing the everyday activities of your drycleaning business is more than just a trend; it’s a strategic investment in your brand’s future.

It’s about building relationships, showcasing expertise, and connecting with your community on a deeper level.

By embracing visual storytelling and utilizing innovative tools like our handheld camera system, you can elevate your drycleaning business and create a lasting impression. It’s time to capture the fabric of your success.

Jason Loeb strives to deliver exceptional results and leave a lasting impression on the customer, business partners, and the communities served by his brands. Through strategic partnerships and real estate acquisitions, he ventured into the textile care industry to realize his dream of building a remarkable “people business.” Sudsies represents his commitment to preserving the integrity of couture and cherished clothing by ensuring that each garment receives the care it deserves. To contact Jason, send email to jason@sudsies.com.

A short video showcasing your team carefully inspecting a delicate garment, explaining the stain removal process, or demonstrating the use of eco-friendly cleaning solutions speaks volumes.

high-quality service, you can show it.

A short video showcasing your team carefully inspecting a delicate garment, explaining the stain removal process, or demonstrating the use of eco-friendly cleaning solutions speaks volumes.

Building Relationships and Fostering Trust

In the drycleaning business, trust is paramount. Clients entrust you with their valuable garments, so building strong relationships is essential.

Documenting your involvement in community events, your attendance at industry conferences, or even a simple “day in the life” feature can humanize your brand and fos-

level and build lasting relationships.

Showcasing Expertise and Innovation

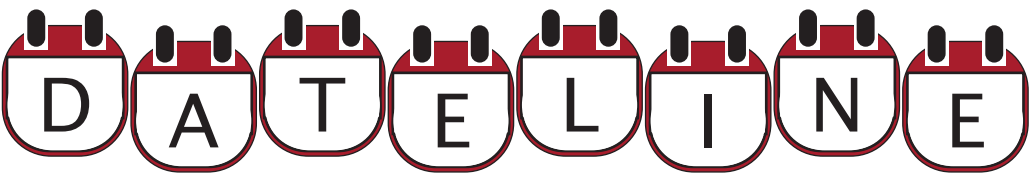
The drycleaning industry is constantly evolving, with new technologies and techniques emerging regularly. Documenting these advancements and sharing them with your audience positions you as an industry leader and demonstrates your commitment to providing the best possible service.

Whether it’s showcasing a new stain removal technique, highlighting your investment in eco-friendly equipment, or sharing insights from a professional development workshop, this content reinforces your ex-

Reaching a Wider Audience

In today’s digital age, video content is king. Sharing your documented activities on social media, your website, and other online platforms can significantly expand your reach and attract new clients. Short, engaging videos are more likely to be viewed and shared than text-based content, making them a powerful marketing tool.

At Sudsies, we leverage our documented content to create a dynamic online presence. We share snippets of interviews with fashion designers, behind-the-scenes glimpses of our operations, and highlights from community events.



2025

March 8 The South Eastern Fabricare Association (SEFA) host “Training Day” at Unipress Corp. at 3501 Queen Palm Dr. in Tampa, FL. Visit www.sefa.org.

March 24-28 The Drycleaning & Laundry Institute (DLI) Introduction to Drycleaning course, DLI School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. Visit www.DLIonline.org.

March 28-29 The Southwest Drycleaners Association (SDA) will host its Membership & Board meeting in Oklahoma City, OK. Visit

www.sda-dryclean.com.

March 31 - April 11 The Drycleaning & Laundry Institute (DLI) Advanced Drycleaning course, DLI School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. Visit www.DLIonline.org.

April 27-30 The Textile Care Allied Trades Association (TCATA) Conference, Naples, FL. Visit www.tcata.org.

May 6, 8, 13, 15 The Drycleaning & Laundry Institute (DLI) Virtual Stain Removal Techniques course, DLI School of Drycleaning Technology 14700 Sweitzer Lane, Laurel, MD. Visit www.DLIonline.org.

May 16-17 America’s Best Cleaners and Route Pros present “Spark & Start: Retail and Routes” workshop at Puritan Cleaners in Richmond, VA. For more information, send email to Routeprosmark@gmail.com.

May 23-26 North Carolina Association of Launderers & Cleaners annual convention, Double-Tree by Hilton, Atlantic Beach Oceanfront Hotel. Visit www.ncalc.org.

June 1, 13, 17, 19 The Drycleaning & Laundry Institute (DLI) Virtual Stain Removal Techniques — advanced course, DLI School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. Visit

www.DLIonline.org.

July 8, 10, 15, 17 The Drycleaning & Laundry Institute (DLI) Virtual Stain Removal Techniques — basic course, DLI School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. Visit www.DLIonline.org.

July 29 & 31 The Drycleaning & Laundry Institute (DLI) Virtual “Service Superstars” with Jen Whitmarsh. For more information, visit www.DLIonline.org.

August 23-26 Clean Show 2025, Orlando, FL. Call (770) 984-8023 or visit www.cleanshow.com.

Sept. 9 & 11 The Drycleaning & Laundry Institute (DLI) Virtual “Inspire and Influence: Leadership” with Jen Whitmarsh, Visit www.DLIonline.org.

Oct. 6-10 The Drycleaning & Laundry Institute Introduction to Drycleaning course, DLI School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. Visit www.DLIonline.org.

Oct.13-24 The Drycleaning & Laundry Institute Advanced Drycleaning course, DLI School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. Visit www.DLIonline.org.

Be sure to send us your upcoming events to be added to our calendar of events.
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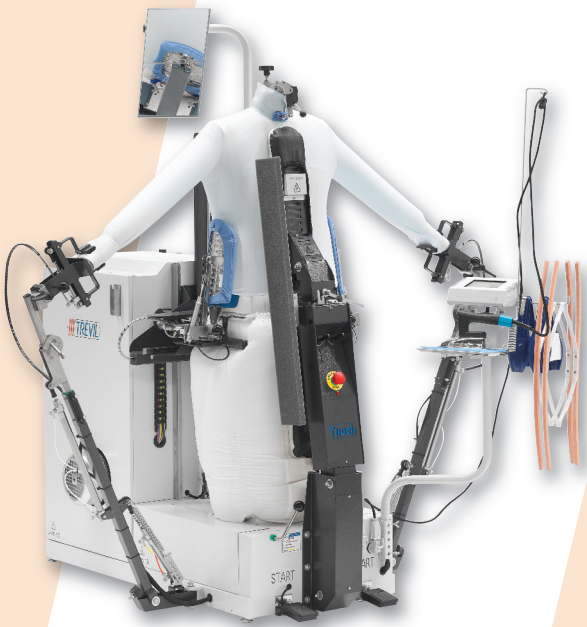


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Drycleaners today face new challenges with labor availability, retention, and training chief among them. At the same time customers demand high quality and quick turnaround time.

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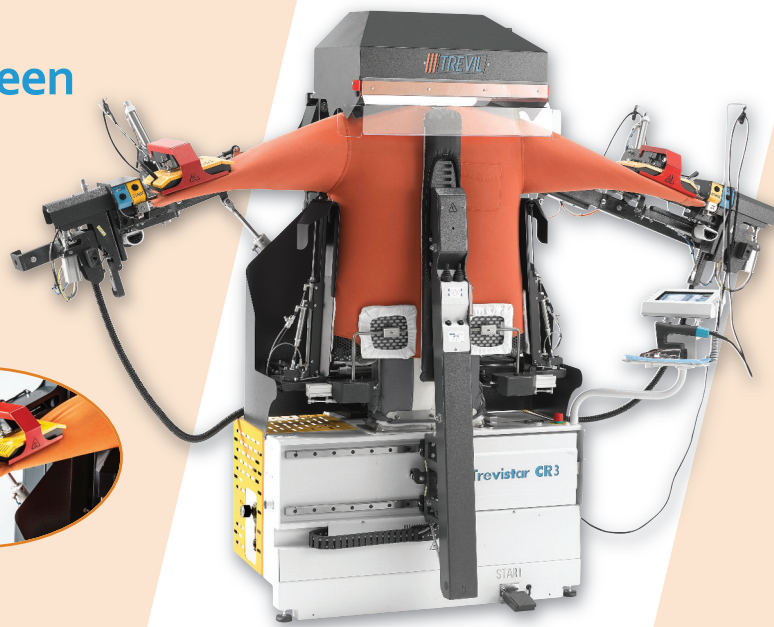
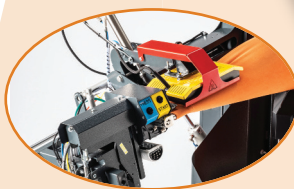
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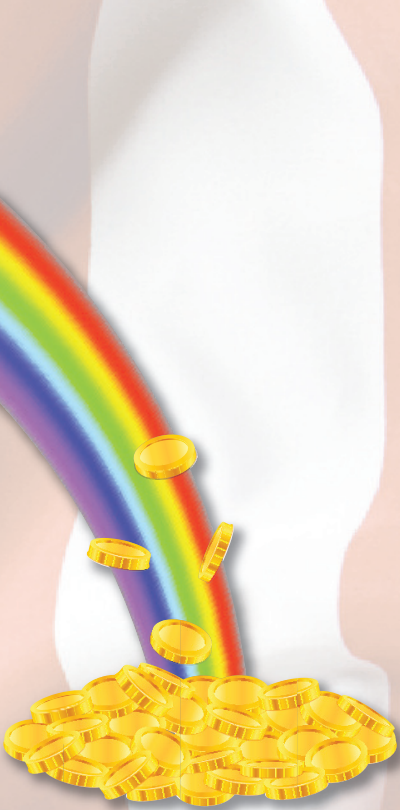
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WRENCH WORKS



By BRUCE GROSSMAN

Drycleaning machine systems — part 1

In the following several issues, I'll explain the processes incorporated in the modern drycleaning machine, including distillation, washing and extraction, drying, and the control system.

The components used in these processes will be included, and how these components are combined and coordinated to clean garments.

Distillation

Distillation is a process of purifying a liquid, such as a solvent. Solvent dissolves impurities it removes from garments like grease, oil, wax, and detergent (these impurities are called non-volatiles); in addition, solvent suspends solid impurities like lint, dust, and soil. These impurities are called particulates. Proper distillation will, in most cases, return the distilled solvent to its original condition, leaving these impurities behind in the still bottom.

The two steps that comprise the distillation process:

1) Evaporating the solvent. Liquid solvent is heated in the still until it boils and vaporizes, changing from a liq-

uid state into a vapor much like steam exiting a teapot.

2) Condensing the solvent vapor. Solvent vapor is cooled on some surface (generally a water-cooled coil), much like steam condensing on a bathroom mirror, changing from solvent vapor into a liquid solvent.

Evaporating the solvent

Solvent in the still is vaporized using heat (usually supplied by steam); in most machines using flammable solvents, heat is combined with a vacuum.

The addition of a vacuum is used to lower the temperature at which the solvent boils, maintaining the solvent at a temperature below the solvent's flashpoint (the lowest temperature at which a substance can ignite).

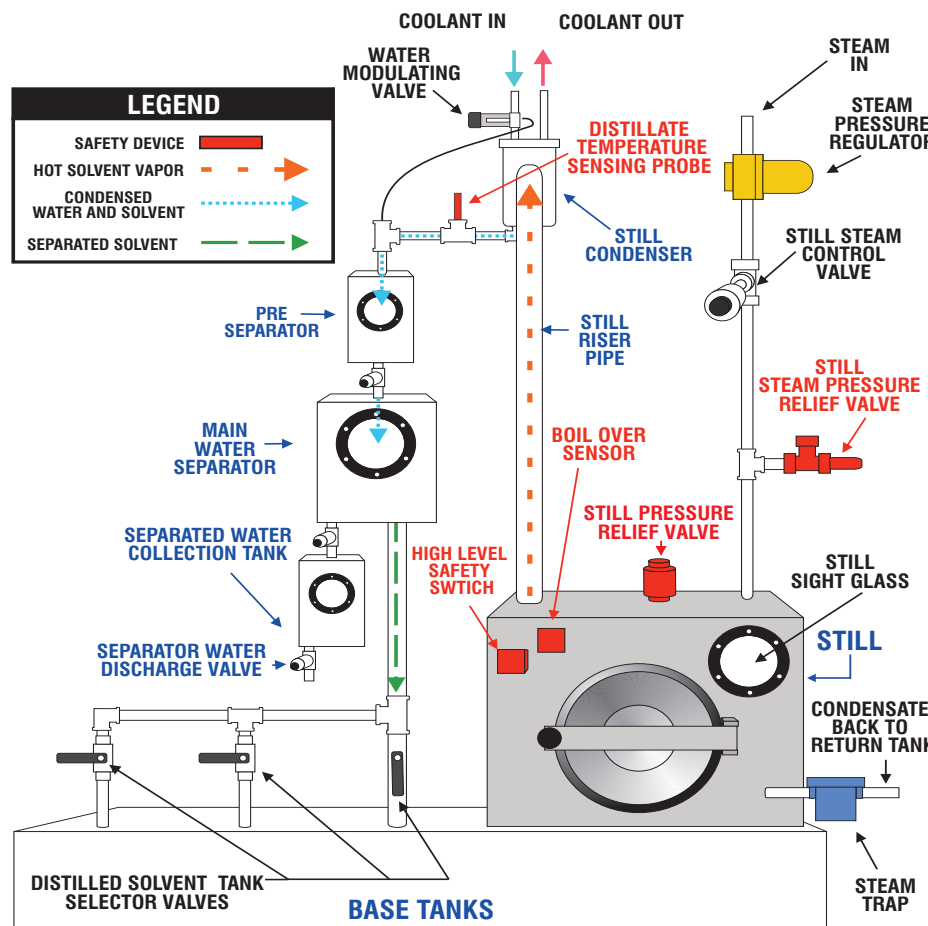
For this article, we will use steam as the heating media. Anytime you use steam for heating, a steam trap is required to remove the condensate from the heated vessel. In this case, the still steam jacket (a steam jacket is a separate chamber surrounding the bottom of the still which contains

the steam, isolating it from the interior of the still, and it heats the still similar to a flame under a kettle). In addition, there is a steam valve that turns the steam supply on and off.

Steam heating also has another very positive attribute: temperature control. Since steam temperature is a function of steam pressure, it's easy to control the heating temperature of the still by setting the steam pressure using a steam pressure regulator.

TYPICAL DRY CLEANING MACHINE DISTILLATION SYSTEM FOR LIGHTER THAN WATER SOLVENTS

*This illustration is a composite of several machine brands and may not represent your exact still configuration



Condensing the solvent vapor

As the solvent is heated and vaporized, the vapor expands and flows up through a large pipe called a still riser and then enters the still condenser. Inside the condenser is a coil of tubing that has cold water flowing through it.

When the hot solvent vapor contacts the cold coil, it condenses (changes from a vapor to a liquid). Since water is also present in the solvent when the solvent is added to the still, the water condenses along with the solvent and must be removed before the solvent can be reused.

Water removal is accomplished by the water separators, devices that use the difference in the specific gravity of the solvent and water to separate them. The separated solvent flows into a separate tank called the distilled solvent or rinse tank, and the water is collected in a separate area to be drained off and disposed of as hazardous waste.

Still bottoms

After the solvent in the still has been boiled away, what remains is a residue, a combination of hazardous waste byproducts that must eventually be removed from the still and placed in a hazardous waste drum. These waste byproducts are called still bot-

oms. In machines using perc, to minimize the amount of costly solvent left in these waste byproducts — in some stills there is a valve called the steam sweep valve — this valve is used at the very end of the distillation process to conduct steam into the still, purging the remaining solvent vapor from the still bottom.

In machines using perc, water content contained in the steam forms what's known as an azeotrope, which boils at a much lower temperature than the pure solvent, driving out the last remnants of solvent from the still bottoms.

Next month, I'll continue by explaining the functions of the control and safety devices associated with stills and common problems encountered during distillation.

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 SA-HARA 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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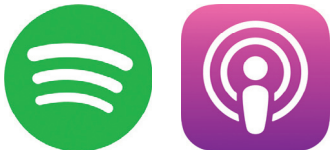
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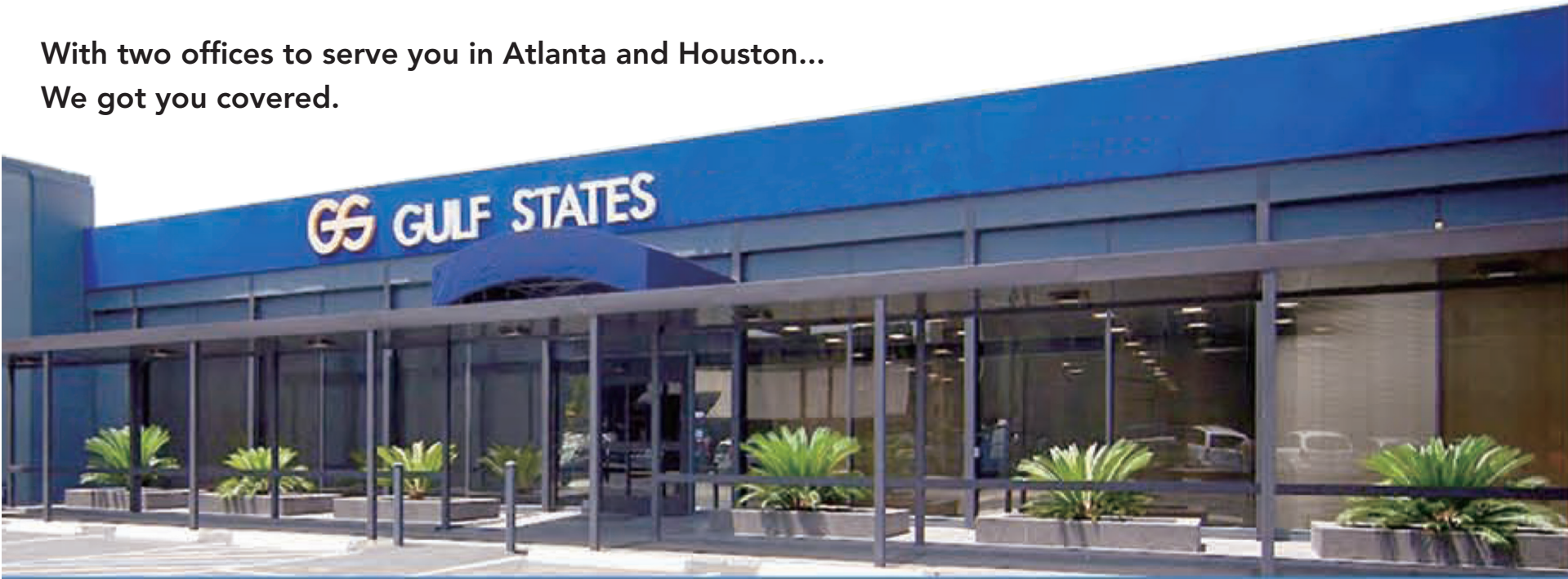
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THE SPOTTING BOARD



BY DAN EISEN

The use of safer bleaches for color fabrics

Most drycleaners that I encounter in my training and consultations understand bleaching, but only for light or white fabrics.

Bleaches remove stains by either adding or removing oxygen from the fabric. The bleaching process is used to whiten clothes and remove last traces of stains such as protein, tannin and dye.

Understanding the concepts of all bleaching will make the cleaner aware of what is safe to colored fabrics, and what is not safe.

The application of the bleach is also important for the safety of the fabric.

It must be understood that **heat accelerates bleach**. Every ten degrees increase in temperature doubles the chemical action. That means if you heat a bleach up from 90°F to 100°F, you double the chemical action, making it twice as strong.

The chemical nature of the bleach also makes the bleach dangerous.

1) Sodium percarbonate and sodium perborate

These are mild bleaches, but the alkaline nature of the

bleach makes it dangerous to dyes on fabrics.

For example, if I used these bleaches on a colored silk, the dyes will discolor due to the alkalinity of the bleach. If I apply heat to this bleach it becomes even more aggressive.

2) Sodium hypochlorite

This bleach is highly alkaline in nature and will remove dye from a fabric even in a diluted state. The alkalinity of

4) Sodium hydrosulphite

This is a strong reducing bleach that is used to remove dye from fabrics. It is highly aggressive and will remove color from fabrics.

5) Titanium sulphate

This is an acid-based reducing bleach that is used to remove dye from fabrics.

The chemical nature of the bleach makes it unsafe to most dyes on fabrics.

gressive, and the addition of the alkali will cause colored fabrics to discolor.

In order to use hydrogen peroxide safely, it must be used in a 3% concentration. It also should be used in a spray bottle.

If you go to the drug department inside stores, you will be able to purchase hydrogen peroxide in a spray bottle designed for cuts and bruises.

nature and it must be rinsed thoroughly after use.

Any bleach remaining in the fabric can produce color loss. Although it is a very mild bleach, it should be tested on color fabrics if color fastness is a factor.

It can be used on a stain with the straight powder and moistened with the steam gun. It can also be dissolved in water and it is then applied to a fabric.

Sodium bisulphite is very effective for removing dye and also some stains such as wine. After use it should be flushed thoroughly but it does not have to be neutralized.

Safe bath bleaching

1) Hydrogen peroxide.

Bath bleaching using any bleach can be hazardous to color on fabrics because the soaking action tends to bleed dye. The safest bleach in a bath to use is hydrogen peroxide.

Use four ounces of 6% hydrogen peroxide per gallon of water. Soak for 10 to 15 minutes. Then rinse.

2) Sodium bisulphite.

Bath bleaching using sodium bisulphite is the safest reducing bleach to remove dye or stains such as wine.

Use two ounces of sodium bisulphite per gallon of water. Soak for 10 to 15 minutes and then rinse thoroughly.

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.

Bleaches remove stains by either adding or removing oxygen from the fabric. The bleaching process is used to white clothes and remove last traces of stains such as protein, tannin and dye.

the bleach also makes it unsafe on wool and silk.

3) Potassium permanganate

This is a strong oxidizing agent that is rarely safe on colors. It is acid by nature and must be neutralized to remove discolorations that the bleach forms.

The agents used to neutralize the bleach also make the bleach more aggressive.

Oxidizing agents

Hydrogen peroxide (3%).

Hydrogen peroxide is made up of two parts hydrogen and two parts oxygen. The extra oxygen is what does the safe bleaching.

Most cleaners using this bleach will accelerate the bleach with ammonia or protein formula. This combination will make the bleach more ag-

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CHICKASAW LAUNDRY SERVICE in Ardmore, OK, recently purchased two Union HL-860 drycleaning machines with solvent heating. Plant manager Brad Houchin (left) is pictured with Matt Lipman of Union Drycleaning Products during the installation and start-up.



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Tide Services surpasses 200 national locations

Tide Services hopes to build on its successful expansion in 2024 when it surpassed 200 nationwide laundromats and drycleaning locations.

Last year’s standout achievement was a landmark 51-unit Tide Laundromat franchise agreement led by multi-unit franchise veteran Barry Dubin.

On the Tide Cleaners side, the brand accelerated growth through acquisitions, with 11 of its 16 new locations coming from competitive takeovers.

Additional Tide Cleaners milestones included a 12-unit expansion in South Florida, openings in Midland, TX, and new development agreements in St. Paul, MN.

A 20-unit signing for new locations in Tampa and Orlando was also achieved by franchise group Clean and Press Solutions.

“Tide Services is redefining the out-of-home laundry industry by staying ahead of consumer needs through innovation in convenience, technology and sustainability,” said Tide Services CEO Andy Gibson. “As we continue to build on this momentum, we’re looking to partner with franchisees who are passionate about setting new standards and taking the Tide brand to the

next level.”

In 2024, Tide Services expanded into key markets with laundromat debuts in Dallas and a drycleaner opening in Boynton Beach, Florida. By year-end, new locations in Nashville brought Tide Services’ total locations to over 200 nationwide.

In 2024, Tide Cleaners ranked #11 on the Top 50 Brands by Number of Multi-Unit Franchisees and #297 on Franchise Times’ Top 400.

The company also deepened its commitment to giving back through its Loads of Hope program last year, providing essential laundry services to families affected by crises such as Hurricanes Helene and Milton.

Overall, Tide Loads of Love has done over 68,000 loads of clean laundry for those in need since it first launched in 2005 as a response to Hurricane Katrina.

In 2025, Tide Services hopes to build on the success of last year with plans to accelerate growth on the Tide Cleaners side through continued acquisitions while expanding Tide Laundromats through new and existing franchisees.

For more information about Tide Services franchise opportunities, visit www.tidefranchise.com.



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In Memorial



It is with profound sadness and heavy hearts that we share the tragic news of the passing of Mrs. Jin Han and Ms. Jinna Han, beloved wife and daughter of our dear colleague and friend, Mr. Joon Han, following the devastating aircraft accident of AA flight 5342 at Washington Reagan National Airport on the evening of Wednesday January 29th, 2025.

Words cannot express the depth of sorrow we feel for Joon and his family during this unimaginable time. Jin and Jinna were cherished members of their community, whose warmth, kindness, and vibrant spirits touched the lives of many. Their loss is felt not only within their family but also across the countless lives they impacted through their involvement in the Boston community, the global skating world, and their church.

Our priority now is to support Mr. Han in every way possible—today, tomorrow, and in the difficult times ahead. We stand united in offering our strength, compassion, and unwavering support as he navigates this profound grief.

In honor of Jin and Jinna’s memory, and out of respect for Joon and his family’s privacy, we kindly request sensitivity in any outside discussions of this tragic event. For those who wish to extend their condolences, we encourage heartfelt, messages of support to let Joon know he is in our thoughts.

As we reflect on the remarkable impact that Jin and Jinna had on so many, we commit to remembering their legacy with dignity and respect. We will share further information on commemorative initiatives in the coming days.

Our hearts are with Joon and all those affected by this heartbreaking loss.



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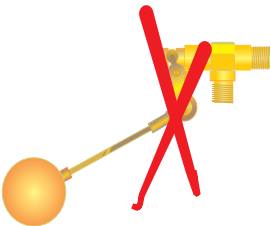
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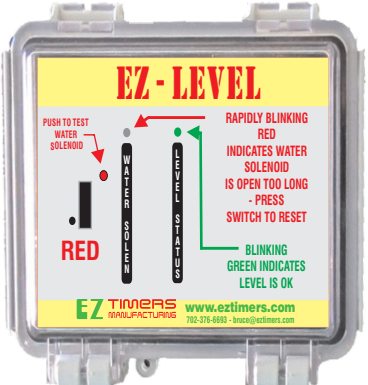


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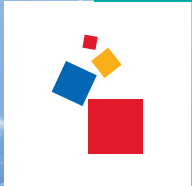


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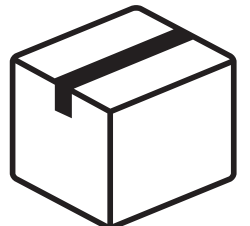
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