Volume 63 Number 9

Four events coming in next five months

Industry event season begins next month

While few drycleaners need a reminder that Clean Show 2025 is just a couple of months away, there will be three other notable industry events taking place between July and November, as well.

June 2025

Leadership Summit

First up on the schedule will be a two-day Leadership Summit in Johnson City, NY, hosted by the North East Fabricare Association (NEFA) and the Mid-Atlantic Association of Cleaners (MAC) from July 17 to 18.

Cleaner's Supply and Wedding Gown Preservation have sponsored the event, which will include a tour of each company's nearby facilities.

Admission is free to all cleaners, including a dinner on Thursday and breakfast and lunch on Friday. On Thursday afternoon, Cleaner's Supply will highlight the extensive training program they implement for the team members – exploring protocols, follow-up and how they oversee their entire sales force.

"We had a similar program about a year ago and the response was amazing," noted Peter Blake, executive vice president for NEFA. "While we have some excellent educational sessions lined up, one of the main draws is the opportunity to tour the facilities.

"It is really eye-opening to see the procedures they have in place and systems they have implemented. When toured Wedding Gown Preservation last year, they had over 11,000 gowns on the premises and attendees were enthralled with the packaging, cleaning process and the overall capabilities."

The program will begin at 4 p.m. on Thursday with a tour of Cleaner's Supply, fol-

lowed by dinner. On Friday morning at 8 a.m., breakfast will begin before

Upcoming Industry Events

NEFA and MAC Leadership Summit July 17-18 Johnson City, NY

Clean Show 2025 Aug. 23-26 Orlando, FL

IDC Convention Sept. 10-12 Elk Grove Village, IL

NEFA ProfitFest '25 Nov. 8-9 Marlborough, MA

presents "Defining and Developing a Leader in Today's World." She will discuss proven leadership training methods.

> After a short break, Dave Coyle from Maverick Drycleaners will host "Delight Your Clients – The

Art of Exceeding Expectations." He will reveal ways your business can differentiate itself from the competition.

For those needing accommodations, secured counted rooms are available at Traditions Hotel and Spa for \$159 per night.

For reservations, contact the hotel at (607) 797-2381 or visit them at www.traditionshotelandspa.com and men-Wedding Gown tion Preservation for the rate. To register for the event, visit www.macassociation.org.

Clean Show 2025

This year's edition of the Clean Show will be held at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL, from Aug. 23 to 26. The exhibit hall is scheduled to open from 10 a.m. to 5 Jennifer Whitmarsh p.m. on Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday and Monday, and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tues-

There will also be a multitude of educational sessions provided by some of the event's sponsoring associations. DLI has planned several sessions that will focus on strengthening your business with marketing strategies and tips - including how to incorporate AI into them – as well as improving its image by providing meaningful community impacts.



presented by Texcare

The first session will be called "Beyond the Hanger: Marketing Strategies Strengthen Your Business" at 8 a.m. on Saturday. Attendees will learn how to use strategic marketing and explore innovative ways to attract new customers, retain loval ones, and build a business that sets your brand apart.

Afterwards, DLI will also present "The Client Journey" at 9 a.m. featuring Dave Coyle of Maverick Drycleaners. He will give attendees the tools and tactics they need to surprise clients using marketing channels that aren't congested.

On Sunday morning, the association will begin at 8 a.m.



of Drycleaning Connection in Peachtree City, GA. Discover how to position your business as the top choice for customers - regardless of price. This program will focus on proven strategies for delivering exceptional customer service, buildcustomer loyalty and

Continued on page 8

DLI ads give industry image a nice boost

www.nationalclothesline.com

Initially launched in April, the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's (DLI) latest social media campaign has already showed outstanding engagement and follower growth in its first

The content (such as the screenshot of a post on right), has featured educational content and myth-busting videos seeking to reshape consumer perceptions.

"The initial response to DLI's social media campaign has far exceeded our expectations," said Ray Kroner, owner of Kroner Dry Cleaners in Cincinnati, OH. He is also DLI's treasurer and district four director, as well as the chair of the association's



Social Media Action Committee. "We cannot wait for someone else to market our service. We have to step up and self-promote so the in-

Continued on page 8

CCA and **SDA** announce plans for EXPO West '26

DRYCLEANING & LAUNDRY

The Southwest Dryclean- inaugural offering in Las Vegas ers Association (SDA) and the California Cleaners Association (CCA) have announced DL EXPO West 2026.

the return of the Drycleaning and & Laundry EXPO

Next year's Irving Convention Center in Irving, TX.

Following the success of its

(with over 1,000 attendees and more than 50 exhibitors), the

> "Attendees exhibitors loved this location in 2023 so much that we knew we

event is scheduled for March had to come back," said DL 27 to 29, and will be held at the EXPO West Chairman Allan Cripe. "It's easy to reach by plane or car, and the area is full

Continued on page 8



Sneak Peek Inside

A long history in Houston Collegiate Cleaners has been around since 1947, back

when the local roads were paved with oyster shells. Solving shirt stain mysteries

This month, Don Desrosiers plays Columbo and takes on cases of mystery stains appearing after cleaning.

The need to pick up speed Customers greatly prefer same-day service regardless of

whether or not you offer it. Crafting couture connections 20

By establishing relationships with fashion designers, cleaners can tap into a network of discerning customers.

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A national newspaper for drycleaners and launderers June, 2025 Volume 63 Number 9

Looking for truth when it doesn't reveal itself

Fans of classic detective television shows may recall Columbo (played by Peter Falk) often saying, "The truth has a way of revealing itself." That may be true, but sometimes it needs a little help. In that spirit, there is an interesting read for those in the business of textile care at www.intothefoldproject.com. The website is a product of research culled and compiled by Cents, a company that offers an all-in-one business management platform for drycleaners and launderers. In May, they released the data to offer operators "credible reporting data with usage metrics from Cents customers."

"Industry insights and trends have historically been fragmented and inaccessible for so many in our industry," explained Alex Jekowsky, CEO and cofounder of Cents. "Our mission with Into the Fold is to present unique insights and reports that enable both established and new operators to make smarter decisions across self-serve, full-service, delivery, and other service models, while highlighting the true scale and impact of this essential industry."

Now, here are some of the interesting findings from that research. Every day, 52,392 tons of laundry are done at laundromats across America. How did they derive that number? From the Coin Laundry Association (CLA), they determined there were 29,500 laundromats in the U.S., plus the average number of washing machines per laundromat is 37. They combined that with their own data: Cents calculated the average weight of all orders to be 32 pounds and that each machine averages 3 turns per day. That all added up to almost 105 million pounds of laundry per day, or 52,392 tons.

They value the U.S. laundry market at approximately \$5 billion per year. Broken down by state, they calculated the average Wash and Fold price. Coming in at the highest was Hawaii with \$2.92/lb and coming in at the lowest is Wisconsin at \$1.15/lb. Those who visit the website can click on their own state to see its averages. One of the most interesting statistics compiled by Cents is the spending discrepancy between drop-off and pickup and delivery customers.

Drop-off customers spend an average of \$44.19 per order; however, pickup and delivery customers are 80% higher, averaging \$79.81 per order, suggesting that customers are looking for as much convenience as possible when doing the inconvenient chore of laundry.

The truth is, customers don't always find the level of convenience they're searching for and cleaners can do more about it, and not just with Wash and Fold services. Take the concept of same-day service, which really should not sound like a pipe dream. Not only does it help the plant workflow be tighter, it helps make it easier for customers to know what to expect. As columnist John Rothrock points out in his column on page 16, "Many operators worry that offering sameday service creates chaos. They see it as a disruption, something that throws off the flow. But that mindset only exists when same-day service is a rare exception. If you standardize it, those rush orders disappear."

When rush orders disappear, your focus can return to the job of making stains disappear from garments — or can you? There is no such thing as a perfect stain, but what about a case where stains appear on some garments after they are cleaned? Sometimes, drycleaners have to play detective to get to the truth. This month, columnist Don Desrosiers dons a raincoat... and gets to the bottom of a few good shirt stain mysteries. Read his column on page 10.

We also have a column on properly customizing wetcleaning loads by Dan Eisen on page 24 and Jason Loeb discusses on page 20 how to cultivate couture connections and strenghten your brand. By establishing strong relationships with fashion designers, drycleaners will open up a new door to gaining more discerning customers.

Oh, just one more thing. On page 18, Kermit Engh will explore how drycleaners can shift services into products that will resonate with customers more effectively. Columbo noted the truth is a puzzle waiting to be solved, so it's time to put on your raincoat and read this latest issue of National Clothesline.

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Visit us at www.nationalclothesline.com for additional coverage of the drycleaning industry including Online Exclusive columns and articles, visit our issue archives going back all the way to January of 2018.

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A long history in Houston

hen Collegiate Cleaners originally opened its doors in 1947, the local roads in Houston, TX, were covered in oyster shells — a byproduct of the Gulf Coast fishing industry.

The shells were crushed down and processed into products that were used in construction, fertilizers and roads.

It was a practice that was eventually banned in the city in the 1970s — the same decade the original owner of Collegiate Cleaners sold it to Marvin Troublefield, grandfather of current owner Greg Hazlewood.

"My grandpa used to work at the Warwick Hotel," Greg explained. "I think he was the cleaner back then back in the 1970s. Then, somehow they became friends — I guess he'd go over there and clean something for him — but then he offered it to my grandfather to buy it."

The Warwick Hotel (now called the Hotel ZaZa), was originally opened in 1926 as one of Houston's first luxury hotels. Today, the 315-room, 12-story property includes the city's largest and most decadent accommodations that are close to 3,000 sq. ft. in size.

In other words, being located near the hotel is an excellent place to own a successful drycleaning business. It suited Marvin well.

"I think he liked being a business owner, driving a new Cadillac," Greg said. "He didn't have that all of his life. He came from the Depression in the 1920s and he moved out with a cigar box. Everything he owned he fit in a cigar box."

fter Marvin passed away, his daughter Barbara took over the helm in the 1980s. All three of her sons soon joined the family business, including Greg who started around 1990.

"My mom and my two brothers were all running it at one time," he noted. "Then, she passed away unexpectedly."

Over time, one brother left in the early 2000s, then the other brother left in 2013. "It's just been me for the past ten years," he said.

For Greg, the business is all he has ever known. As a young kid, he's often spent time at the cleaners on Saturdays to be with his grandfather.

"I'd go help him clean up. You know, he'd give me a dirty job where's I'd get all dirty," he recalled. "Some places I cleaned had never been clean up there, I don't think. But, I always kind of appreciated that. He gave me all the hard jobs."

The more Greg came around, the more he was able to learn. Eventually, he learned it all.

"I can do everybody's job. You know, that's what I can do," he said. "I don't like to do everybody's job, but you know I think from me having to do people's job over the years, I can do

them all."

f all the jobs he has worked at the drycleaners, the most important has always remained the same for Greg and his family customer service.

"There have always been family

These days, the business is doing much better and Collegiate Cleaners' customers are dressing up and going out again much more frequently.

"We've just been keeping busy," Greg said. "I don't know if it's because of the neighborhood we're in. Most of the clients that come in are pretty he's happy to go wherever the business needs him.

"I do everything. I call myself the CEO and the janitor. I can clean the toilet or write the payroll, tax and rent checks," he said. "I got some new help coming in... I got another girl starting tomorrow so I'll be pretty full on staff again."

www.houstondrycleaner.com

Greg Hazlewood

Collegiate Cleaners Houston, TX

members in the front to greet customers most of the time," he said. "We always try to do the right thing — get the clothes clean and be friendly every time they come in."

According to Greg's estimates, about 90% of the work comes from customer foot traffic, which is how he prefers it.

"I enjoy the customers coming in. I mean, I've been there so long they feel like my friends," he said. "You know, I've been there so long that everybody knows me."

A high level of customer service means a higher level of loyalty from customers, which has kept the business successful for so many decades. However, the spread of COVID proved to be a difficult challenge.

"The pandemic was really crazy to us you know because they're like saying we're an essential business so I wasn't worried," he recalled. "I'm like, oh I'm an essential business, but then think about it. None of the customers were going to work. Nobody's going out to eat or spending money."

fter struggling to get by during the pandemic, Greg decided in October of 2023 to do something that Collegiate Cleaners had never done before: open up a second location (pictured below).

"A girlfriend was ambitious. I told

her I always wanted to start another location, and in October 2023 we opened the new one," Greg explained. "The one I'm at now is on Alabama Street. That's my first one to open. It's been like a little bit over a year and a half since it opened."

wealthy anyway. We don't worry about them paying."

"All the women in this neighborhood – they get dressed up every day," he added. "You don't see them with sweat pants and tennis shoes on. When they go out of the house, they're wearing a dress or a jacket."

ith other local cleaners closing down and many new high-rise buildings being constructed in the past few years, business is once again back up and rising in downtown Houston.

Long after the days of being surrounded by shell-covered roads, Collegiate Cleaners' original locations remains perfectly positioned at the heart of a rich downtown area which today houses the Texas Medical Center (TMC) — which is considered the world's largest medical center.

Overall, it encompasses over 2.1 square miles and includes 61 institutions and 21 hospitals.

TMC is home to over 120,000 employees (a large number of doctors are customers, of course) and over 10 million patients visit the area annually. The center begins a new surgery every three minutes.

While keeping busy is always great, lately Greg has had to fill in as a route driver, making him a lot busier. Still, fter 35 years of working in the drycleaning industry, Greg isn't all that sure that it has changed very much.

"The industry is really the same. I don't see a lot that's changed. The only thing that's changed is just the clothes and the starch," he said. "Back when we were younger, everybody got heavy starch in their shirts. Now, nobody ever gets starch in their clothes. We used to crease pants — the front of their pants, and now they're pressed totally differently. Nobody wants them creased unless they're old."

He's also noticed that his younger customers are reading online reviews more and embracing pickup and delivery, which is something he is consciously considering growing.

"I see the need for drop off more," he admitted. "I still don't drop off as much but I see that's what it's coming to — apps and younger people wanting to pay for delivery."

Whatever the future holds, Greg is confident he will be able to come up with a solution.

A while back, he made the mistake of letting his website domain monthly payment lapse for a day. Somebody swept in and took over his old site: www.collegiatecleaners.com.

Essentially, they hiked up the price and offered it to him if he wanted to keep it.

Greg didn't give in to those demands. Instead, he searched for another open domain that has since served as a solid replacement: www.houstondrycleaner.com.

At this point, he has been in the business for 35 years and nothing seems to phase him anymore. He's still at least a few years away from retirement.

"I'll be pushing a damn cart around here when I'm 80," he said.





Industry event season begins next month

Continued from page 1

creating a value-driven brand that makes price comparisons irrelevant.

Also, DLI will present "Seven Things Your Company Should Doing with AI" at 9 a.m.



with the help of popular tech speaker Beth Z. This seminar will explore artificial intelligence applications, from streamlining operations and improving customer service to enhancing marketing strategies and optimizing inventory management.

On Monday morning, the association will offer a panel discussion of "Cleaning for a Cause: Community Impact and Business Growth" at 9 a.m. Attendees will discover how giving back can make a difference for both your community and your business.

In terms of making travel arrangements, attendees have until July 19 to pay a discounted early bird special of

\$120 for members of the sponsoring associations and \$130 for non-members. After that date, the cost goes up to \$170 per non-member and \$156 per member between July 20 and Aug. 16. On-site registration costs \$200 per person for both members and non-members.

DLI will be headquartered at the Rosen Centre Hotel, which will be offering Clean Show 2025 attendees a special discounted rate starting at \$215 per night. Links to that hotel, and other official Clean Show hotels, can be found by visiting the "Planning and Preparing" section of the website, www.thecleanshow.com.

IDC Convention

The International Drycleaners Congress (IDC) will head to Chicago this September to host its annual convention from Sept. 10 to 12 at the Sheraton Suites in Elk Grove Village, IL.

The three-day event will feature several educational sessions, including a program on "Developing the Wash and Fold Model" by Norman Way,

Puritan Cleaners of Richmond, VA. Heath Bolin, president

Sparkle Cleaners Metal-Progetti, will lead a pro-Zgram on "Au-Bolin tomation in the

Daniel

Industry" as well.

On Thursday, Fitzgerald, CD One's president of operations, will head a presentation Fitzgerald on the "CD

Cleaners Concept" before attendees take part in a plant tour at CD Cleaners, which will include visits to CD40 in Schaumburg, a satellite location in Glendale Heights and the American Music World site in Elmhurst which is scheduled to be CD One Price's first 24/7 automated kiosk.

After lunch, the convention will resume with its World

vice president of Country Reports that outline and tax and is for either a sinall of the latest global trends in textile care from around the world.

> Later in the evening, IDC will host a cocktail re-

ception at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner and the Opening Ceremony.

Friday will begin with a presentations by Tom Zengeler Zengeler Cleaners and Wes Nelson of Sankosha USA Inc.

After that, attendees will have an opportunity to tour Zengeler Cleaners as well as see some of the latest industry available equipment Sankosha's North American headquarters, located just ten Chicago's minutes from O'Hare International Airport.

Nelson

IDC has secured a nightly rate of \$134.20 nightly between Sept. 9 and 12 at the Sheraton Suites Chicago Elk Village.

The cost includes breakfast

gle King bed or twin Queen

Registration for the event costs \$500 per delegate, which covers the welcome cocktail party and buffet dinner, the Thursday evening gala dinner, all business sessions including lunch and refreshments and all transport fees to and from events.

Registration forms can be obtained through IDC Secrevia e-mail: tariat terdryclean@shaw.ca.

NEFA ProfitFest

The final show on the upcoming schedule is NEFA's two-day ProfitFest educational conference.

It is scheduled to take place from Nov. 8 to 9 at the Courtyard by Marriott in Marlborough, MA.

This year's theme for the event will be "New Ideas, Clean Profits: Elevate Your Business." Look for more details in the coming months. For information, more www.nefabricare.com.

DLI ads give industry image a nice boost

Continued from page 1 dustry's services are more familiar with the general public."

"Our goal is to enlighten

40-year-old demographic) on what our industry offers in service and garment care," he added. "The most direct way

the public (notably, the 25- to do get the attention of this demographic is through social media but, it will take the support of all in our industry to get and keep the word out."

program had returned some positive statistics.

Throughout April, the posts reached a total of more first four weeks.

During its first month, the than 23,500 people across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X (Twitter). They also amassed over 75,000 views during the

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CCA and SDA announce plans for EXPO West '26

Continued from page 1 of restaurants and entertainment -- all within walking distance."

DL EXPO 2026 will kick off on a Friday evening with a Sneak Peak Reception from 5 to 7 p.m. The educational sessions will begin the following morning and run from 8:15 to 10:15 a.m. Additional sessions on the exhibit hall floor.

The exhibit hall will officially open at 10 a.m. on Saturday until 5 p.m. that evening. On Sunday, it will be open at 10:30 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Booth sales and sponsorship opportunities will open this summer.

For additional information, www.dlexpo.org/dlexpo-west or contact the are planned to take place Sat- Southwest Drycleaners Associurday and Sunday afternoon ation at (512) 873-8195 or staff@sda-dryclean.com.

TCATA hosts '25 conference

Trades Association (TCATA) recently hosted its 2025 Management & Educational Conference at The Ritz-Carlton Tiburón in Naples, Florida.

The conference featured an outstanding group of speakers, international speaker Will Bowen, ABC Executive Director Chris White and Alex Chausovsky from the Bundy Group.

At the conference, *National* Clothesline was recognized for 50 years of membership with

The Textile Care Allied TCATA. Leslie Schaeffer accepted the award on behalf of the publication (below) from TCATA President Mack Magnus. The association's next conference will be held August 2 to 5, 2026 in Asheville, NC.





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SHIRT TALES



BY DON DESROSIERS

Closing cases with mysterious shirt stains

Surely you must remember us forget that.

the bumbling Los Angeles homicide detective in the crumpled raincoat. Why did he always wear that in *L.A.*?

My fondness for Columbo has nothing to do with his style or his manneralthough isms, those traits never

annoyed me. I considered them to be a wee bit of comic

admit it. I am the world's relief. Afterall, Columbo did biggest Columbo fan. have a grim job. He just made

Anyway, I like Columbo be-

cause of the ingenious writing — the quality of the stories. On the show, you always knew whodunit, but it was hard to imagine how the seemingly hapless detective would manage to figure

it out.

He always had us amidst a

genuine mystery.

It is sometimes fun to play detective. We get to do that in our plants on occasion, provided we care enough to get to the bottom of the *mystery du*

I'd like to share with you a few of my favorite shirt plant mystery stories.

Case #1: **Dirty Clean Shirts**

It was something like the Spring of 1992 and I had an extremely bizarre dirty shirts problem reported to me by my

inspector. This happened at a time when I ran a large wholesale shirts plant in Massachusetts. Whenever an inspector or assembler or a touch-up person finds a stained or dirty shirt, the person in charge is dealt a confusing feeling. This discovery is a good thing and a bad thing simultaneously.

There must be a great deal of satisfaction that an inspector is doing his or her job, but also there is a likelihood that a customer will not be serviced on time because this customer's order may be delayed — never

a good thing.

My inspector didn't tell me about the first few shirts that day. It may have been that she started to get concerned after she had seen eight or ten. Then she told me. We spent top dollar on chemicals. Rewashes for ring-around-thecollar were virtually non-existent, and it was quite rare to get a shirt with a stain, thanks to top quality detergent, the best oxygen bleach that money can buy and a world-class chemical rep to keep my wash department in tune. But, on this day, we suddenly were getting one or two shirts every ten or fifteen min-

It was dirt. New dirt, if you know what I mean. It seems that it happened after washing. It was almost like dust, but because the dirt was pressed into the fabric, it couldn't be brushed off — but, just a rinse removed the stain completely.

It looked like wet shirts were brushing up against dusty equipment. Two bits of evidence made that hypothesis implausible: One would expect that a shirt would be dirty at approximately the same location — this was not the case. The dirt was at any number of places on the shirt. Often, it was just a small spot or two, but once on the back of the shirt, on another shirt it was the sleeve, on another it was the cuff or the collar. Hmmm.

Secondly, there was no dusty equipment. Really. I was around and about the plant trying to solve this problem in earnest while the shirts with dirt on them kept coming. I was truly annoyed and something told me that the regularity of the tainted shirts was a clue, but I wasn't making sense

I strolled into the inspection/assembly area and cringed as I observed what were now dozens of shirt orders all missing a shirt or two, sent back for a stain. Seems like in every lot that we had done, one or two orders were incomplete. Every lot? That seemed like a clue, too.

Back then, the Tailwind System was in the initial stages of development. The assembly procedures hadn't been defined yet, but the size and the definition of individual lots was nearly as clear then as it is today. That turned out to be

Continued on page 12

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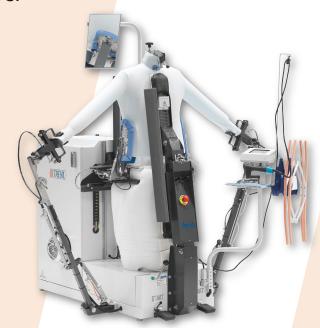


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Don Desrosiers

Closing cases with mysterious shirt stains

Continued from page 10 my biggest lead.

about 360 shirts per hour. In the Tailwind world, that is about six lots — one lot every 10 minutes. Very interesting. I recalled that my inspector was getting a couple of shirts every 10 to 15 minutes. I had an order or two from what seemed like every lot we had done today. The problem continued and wasn't going away.

The evidence:

- One to two shirts per lot with dust or dirt on them;
- The same kind of stains on every shirt;
- Dozens of different locations:
- Remarkable regularity, practically every lot would yield a couple of rejects.

I had to determine what was different today compared to any other day, and I was getting desperate. What is different? I walked over to the wash department and chatted with John, my wash man. John was kind of an elderly guy, a devoted and dedicated employee. I expressed to him my extraordinary displeasure with this problem that we were having. He just shrugged his shoulders as he took the latest batch of rejected shirts from my hands.

John was quite proud of his wash department. I was happy to see that he had tidied up a

previous Friday, I had asked This plant would produce him to get rid of some clutter in a corner. We kept individual lots organized and separated by using 35-gallon plastic barrels. They hold a Tailwindsized lot nicely. John would cover the wet shirts with plastic like so many of us do.

The clutter in the corner was mostly the covers of those barrels. I wondered why John didn't just use the covers instead of wrestling with the poly all the time. On Friday last, he agreed and said that he'd clean them off and start using them instead of poly. He had, indeed, cleaned them off and his department was sparkling.

Uh-oh! I just stumbled upon something different. Is it possible? Can it be? I had nearly reached my office while I was thinking all of this. I abruptly turned around and headed back towards the wash area. I removed the cover from a barrel that contained a full lot of shirts. The inside of the cover was covered with droplets of water caused by the dampness of the shirts. I suspected that the cover hadn't been cleaned well enough and the dust on the cover rubbed off onto the shirts and left the dirt there.

It was hard to see dirt on the cover, though. It was dark blue plastic. I fetched a clean, dry, white cloth and wiped off the

bit over the weekend. On the inside of the cover — including the crevices. Guess what?

> I think that John brushed off the dust that past weekend. He was conscientious, but he surely didn't scrub them clean with a wet cloth. As much havoc as his faux pas caused us that day, there was a great deal of satisfaction in solving the mystery.

Moral of the story I: Don't take anything for granted.

Moral of the story II: If you don't inspect it, don't expect it.

Moral of the story III: Don't waste a minute of time getting to the bottom of a problem.

Case # 2:

Beach Blindess

A few months ago, in the midst of a very involved onsite job in the Midwest, I was concerned about the large number of stained shirts arriving in the inspection depart-

This time, they were legitimate, identifiable stains — yellowing stains, food stains, ring-around-the-collar, tannin. This isn't acceptable in a shirt laundry. Stains - food and other types — do come out if you are using good chemicals. I think that some shirt launderers think that stains are something for the drycleaning department to remove, not the wash cycle. This is wrong.

Among those who think so

This was an easy problem to solve. I checked the chemicals in the wash department. I considered the built detergent to be acceptable and the requisite oxygen bleach was in plain sight.

I questioned the wash person. I learned immediately that the portioning was way off and the bleach — critical for stain removal — was only used for rewashes. I adjusted the portioning and was eager to see a drastic reduction in returned shirts the next day.

Moral of the story: You get what you pay for.

The next morning, I was plenty busy with follow-up training and I almost forgot to enjoy the assembly area — free of confusion, stress, mayhem and, most important of all free of incomplete orders caused by returned shirts.

Case #2B: Out to Lunch

A few hours later, we started to get stained shirts in the assembly department again more than a dozen. I wasn't happy about this. I checked with the wash person who assured me that she was now washing with the revised wash formula and certainly oxygen bleach in every load.

I asked her about the stained shirts that had been sent to her recently. She was a bit defensive. Apparently overwhelmed with a sudden influx of at least ten or more shirts during the last 30 or 40 minutes, she simply put them aside.

I found them hanging by her spotting area. My client and I inspected them and found deep orange stains in a variety of places on nearly all of the shirts there. The stain looked like rust to me, but a quick test with a rust remover proved me wrong in no time. We organized the shirts by stain type. It was easy. Only a couple or so didn't belong.

This plant had eight single buck units. Each unit had a "branding iron" welded to the lower portion of the rear steam chest. The result was a clear mark on the tail of each shirt that identifies the press and the presser. All of the orange stains came from the same press. We moved to the pressing area. I looked around and in less than 15 seconds I had my answer.

Behind the bucks of the collar/cuff press lay all of the evidence that I needed. I showed my client. We both shook our heads. He was eager to remove the evidence, but I wanted to get the manager and walk her through what we had just done.

Now, the three of us retraced.

were this client and his staff. We showed the manager the shirts with stains, and the tail imprints that showed the common source. Over at the shirt unit, I showed her the soiled plate of the spaghetti and meatballs lunch that the presser ate before going to

> Moral of the story I: Know what your employees are doing while they are on your

> Moral of the story II: Lunch time is the time for eating lunch.

> Moral of the story III: No eating, drinking or smoking in the plant.

> I suppose that, at some time in the past at this same plant, somebody needed to know who pressed what shirt. Without the branding in the tail that these units afford (or any other method of doing essentially the same thing), it was probably very difficult or impossible to ascertain who pressed what.

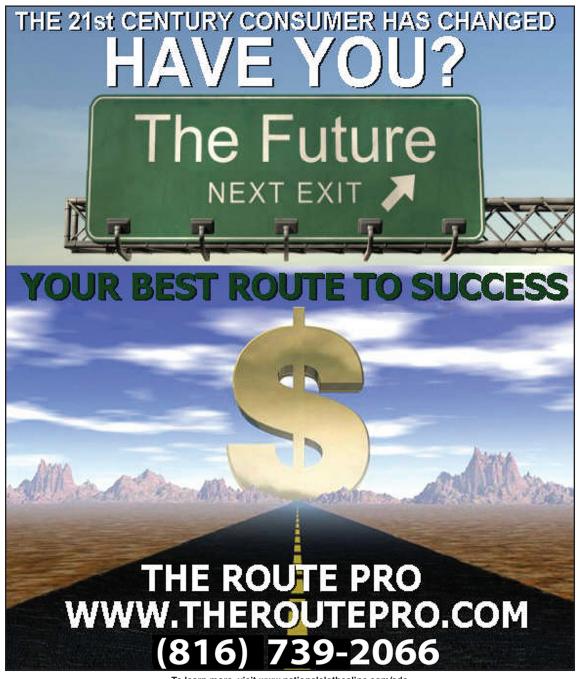
> This often needs to be known in virtually any plant. It allows for accountability. Someone in charge found that it was important enough to modify each unit slightly so that in the future the "detective" work would be automatic. Good move.

> Columbo may use clues to arrive at solutions to problems, but he cannot control whether or not someone in the future will learn from these clues. You can. As owners and managers, we need to learn from our daily experiences.

> It may be rewarding to solve a mystery, but it is far more rewarding to have the solution be self-evident because we have controls in place to either prevent a recurrence or a control that instantly points to the cause. Some time ago, someone made those presses "self-evident." Hopefully, there is no more eating while pressing. Also, I know that washing the inside of plastic barrels became routine at my plant.

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

> Don Desrosiers has been in the drycleaning and shirt laundering business since 1978. He is a work-flow engineer and a management consultant who provides services to shirt launderers and drycleaners through Tailwind Systems. He is a member of the Society of Professional Consultants and winner of **DLI's Commitment to Profes**sionalism award. He can be reached by cell phone (508) 965-3163, or email to: tailwind.don@me.com.



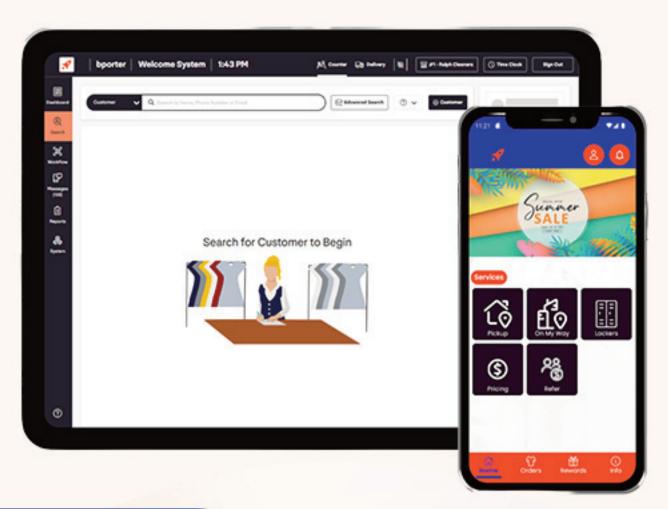
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TURNAROUND TIME



BY JOHN ROTHROCK

Same-day service should be the standard

f there's one place where mindset only exists when drycleaners may need a mindset shift, it's how we think about same-day service. Too often, we treat it like an emergency option, a hassle, or a burden only requested by difficult customers. But, what if we've been thinking about it all wrong?

What if same-day service isn't a nuisance, but the very key to growth?

At Yale Cleaners, we've offered same-day service — in by 12, out by 5, six days a week, for more than 40 years.

We operate 11 locations in Tulsa, and this model isn't a marketing gimmick or a limited offering. It's just how we work. And, once you build around it, it's not extra effort. It's simply today's work, done

Same-Day Service Is Not **Special Treatment**

Many operators worry that offering same-day service creates chaos. They see it as a dissomething ruption, throws off the flow. But that same-day service is a rare exception. If you standardize it, those "rush orders" disappear.

There are no special favors to juggle, no tickets to bump ahead, because everything is running on a same-day cycle.

What really creates chaos is inconsistency. When one order is same-day, another is two days out, and a third is "whenever we get to it," staff just doesn't know what to priori-

When everything is set to flow through on the same timeline, the entire plant runs tighter and customers know what to expect.

Yes, same-day service increases pressure, but not labor. The volume doesn't change overnight, but the opportunity

By making quick turnaround a standard, you create habits that encourage customers to bring in more, more

That shift in timing can feel like a strain if your systems aren't dialed in, and it will expose inefficiencies you should fix anyway.

That's part of what I laid out in the Focus Method. Most cleaners don't need more hours in the day. They need a system that keeps the day from running them.

The Cleaner's Supply 2023 Consumer Pulse Report clearly showed that customers want faster turnaround.

In fact, over half of respondents said they'd bring in more clothing if cleaning didn't take so long. Many said one-day service was ideal, and this shouldn't surprise anyone.

But, across the industry, same-day isn't being offered, and that absence creates a false sense that no one needs it. That's the problem. The industry has trained customers not to expect speed and then interprets the resulting silence as proof that it's unnecessary.

Let's not confuse lack of demand with lack of opportunity. It isn't that people don't want fast service. It's that they don't

know or believe it's even an option.

Right now, our biggest competitor isn't the cleaner down the street. It's the customer's washing machine.

If we want them to choose professional cleaning, we must be so convenient and so consistent in our quality that we eliminate the friction. But, friction is exactly what upcharging for same-day service and slow turnaround create.

A customer walks in and says, "I have an event tonight. Can I get this dress cleaned today?" If the answer is a sigh and a rush fee, she may not come back. Or, she may just go home and clean it herself.

What if the answer was always, "Of course. In by 12, ready by 5."

No drama. No friction. **Just service.**

We are in the service business. The more hoops we make customers jump through, the fewer chances we have to win them over — especially now, when volume is down and competition for attention is higher than ever.

Speed is not a luxury, it's a differentiator.

I hear this all the time: "Same-day might work for you, but our plant is different. Our market is different. Our staff is different."

Yes, every operation has its quirks, but we're not special in Tulsa. We face the same labor shortages, the same customer unpredictability, the same tight

The difference is we built our system around the service we wanted to offer, not the other way around.

If you want to run a sameday model, you don't start by asking how to add it in. You start by rethinking the flow of your day.

What comes in at 7:30 gets cleaned by 8. Pressed by 10. Bagged before lunch. It's possible. We do it every day and have been since 1983.

Offering same-day doesn't mean you have to clean a 12piece household order in three hours or press a wedding gown on the spot.

You can have cutoffs. You can exclude certain items. Just be consistent and communicate it clearly.

Same-day is a promise to be fast and reliable, not a promise to do anything and everything with no notice. Boundaries don't weaken the offer. They protect it.

Keep in mind, same-day service isn't harder. It's just sooner. It doesn't require more people. It requires more focus. More intentional flow. More operational clarity... and it pays off.

Cleaner's Supply is currently the only company doing meaningful consumer research in our industry.

Their insights deserve more than a glance. Customers aren't asking for unreasonable things. They're asking for drycleaning to work like the rest of their modern life; efficient, accessible, and reliable.

This isn't about being everything to everyone. It's about being exceptional to the people you want to serve.

You don't need to chase discounts or reinvent your pricing model. You just need to stop adding friction and start building systems that meet modern expectations.

Same-day service is not about urgency, it's about clar-

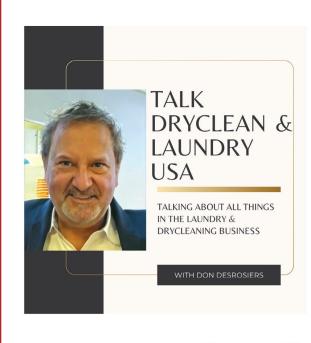
At Yale, we chose this model decades ago. It's part of our DNA. We didn't get here overnight and we're not special. We're just consistent.

If you want to move more pieces, earn more trust, and make drycleaning relevant again, stop asking whether customers want same-day service.

Start asking what would happen if you offered it without hesitation.

You already know the an-

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).



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BUILDING VALUE



BY KERMIT ENGH

The steps for turning a service into a product

business differentiate itself through a higher level of service? If so, you may be feeling the disproportionate impact of economic disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Consumers are cutting back on services both to avoid human contact and to conserve cash — yet we are still purchasing products that solve specific problems.

Businesses are buying platforms like Zoom and Slack for teleconferencing, and consumers are replacing services with products. For example, when Italy first went into lockdown, the shift in consumer behavior was swift.

In the week following the national quarantine, sales of sports gear rose by 236% as people set up home gyms in lieu of personal training. Instead of dining out, we're buying more alcohol. According to Nielsen, overall spirit sales like tequila and vodka — were up 75% from the same period the year prior.

In response, many servicebased businesses are repositioning their offerings to resemble tangible products:

- Guerrilla Tacos in Los Angeles transformed their dining experience into a product called the Emergency Taco Kit — a takeout survival package for taco lovers.
 - Spiffy, a mobile car wash

oes your drycleaning service, now offers its Disinfect & Protect product.

> • In the UK, Encore pivoted from talent booking to their Personalized Music Message, allowing customers to commission video greetings from

- Firmographics (company lem your product solves. size, industry)
- Life Stage (just married, makes home cooking fun.
- Company Life Stage (startup, mature)
- Psychographics (attitudes, aspirations)

- The Emergency Taco Kit
- Disinfect & Protect sanitizes cars for essential workers.
- A wash-dry-fold subscription removes a chore for busy

Start by narrowing your focus to a single customer type. It may feel counterintuitive, especially when you

want more customers, but services can be customized for many, while products must be specific. Picking a niche helps design a more effective product and reach your audience more efficiently.

To adapt to this shift, here eight steps service providers can take to transform their offering into a product.

Step 1: Niche Down

Start by narrowing your focus to a single customer type. It may feel counterintuitive, especially when you want more customers, but services can be customized for many, while products must be specific. Picking a niche helps design a more effective product and reach your audience more efficiently (e.g., through targeted Facebook groups).

Niche down further than you're comfortable, then niche down some more. Consider:

 Demographics (age, gender, income)

Step 2: Rank Your Services

Identify your services and score each one based on how:

- Teachable it is to your employees
- Valuable it is to your target customers
- **Recurring** the need is for

Use a one to 10 scale. Pick the highest-scoring service and move forward. You can always return later to explore other op-

Step 3: Get Clear on Your Quarter-Inch Hole

Harvard Professor Theodore Levitt famously said, "People don't want to buy a quarterinch drill. They want a quarterinch hole."

Understand the real prob-

What's your quarter-inch

Step 4: Brand It

Services are usually associated with people, products with things. Give your product a distinct name like "Emergency Taco Kit" or "Personalized Music Message." Naming your product adds credibility and builds a brand identity.

Step 5: List Your Ingredients

Product companies list what's in the box. Service providers should do the same. Instead of vague proposals, outline what a customer gets.

Create a list or even a visual infographic to show exactly what your product includes from processes to deliverables

Step 6: Pre-Empt Objections

Unlike in-person service sales, product sales don't allow you to address objections in real time. Instead, anticipate concerns and tackle them in your marketing.

Spiffy, for instance, reassures prospects with:

- A money-back guarantee
- Insurance coverage
- Trained technicians
- Eco-friendly cleaning supplies

What objections might your customers have — and how can you ease their minds up front?

Step 7: Price It

Services are often quoted per hour or per project. Products come with a clear, published price. Make it easy for customers to understand what they're paying and why.

Step 8: Manufacture Scarcity

In service businesses, your time is naturally limited. With products, you need to create urgency:

- Offer limited-time dis-
- Introduce seasonal or limited-edition packages
- Restrict access to create exclusivity

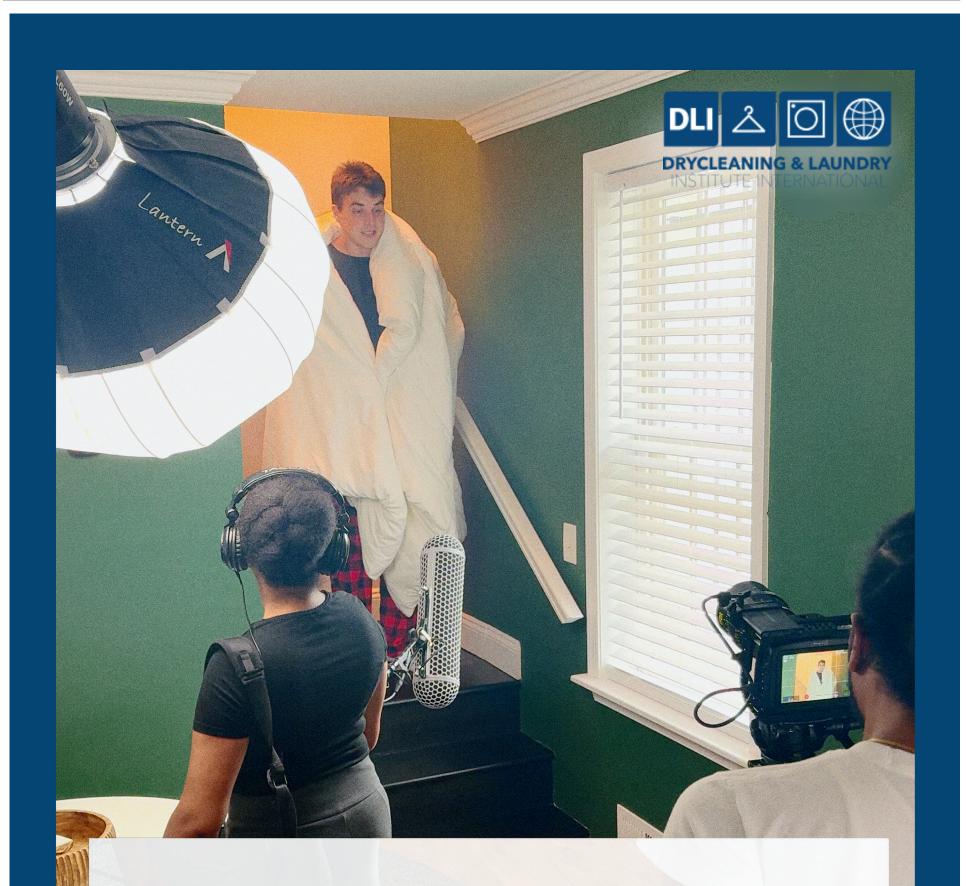
Even in challenging times, customers act when they feel they might miss out.

Service providers have been walloped by recent global events — but by reshaping your service to look and feel more like a product, you can tap into consumer behavior shifts and come out stronger on the other side.

See you next month.

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Kermit Engh has been an owner/operator in 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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FEATURING

Cultivating couture connections is crucial

drycleaners hinges on more than just superior cleaning techniques. It necessitates building robust, mutually beneficial relationships inside luxury fashion with designers and their sales teams. These connections can elevate your business, enhance your reputation, and drive a steady stream of discerning clientele.

Meiloute Marquez discovered Sudsies more than 20 years ago. As a seasoned sales professional with a decadeslong journey with iconic brands like Hermès and Akris, Meiloute knew how much the after-care of luxury garments mattered, and she was interested in forging a relationship with a cleaner who understood the quality of the brands she represents.

Meiloute doesn't just sell garments; she empowers clients, helping them discover the confidence that luxury apparel can give them. Her abilto forge genuine connections extends beyond clients to industry peers, as evidenced by her longstanding relationship with Sudsies.

"It all started with my silk

uccess for high-end scarf," Meiloute recalls. "The edge was hand-stitched and rolled. If a drycleaner doesn't use the proper methods, a scarf like that will feel flat and will

that everyone uses daily): "We are in the people business."

"Many people shop online now, but they are missing something special — the kind

By establishing strong relationships with these key players,

drycleaners can tap into a network of discerning customers.

When designers and their teams confidently recommend your

trusted partner, you can become an indispensable re-

commitment to preserving the They are often the primary integrity of their creations. By positioning your business as a

point of contact for clients and valuable referral can be sources.

- Position yourself as a reliable resource for garment care, not just a service provider.
- Send personalized thankyou notes or emails to designers and their teams after the event.
- Connect with them on professional networking platforms like LinkedIn.
- Offer to send them a brochure that highlights your specialty services.

2) Educational outreach

• Position yourself as an expert, develop workshops or seminars that address specific garment care challenges faced by designers and their clients.

Topics could include:

- The care of delicate fabrics (silk, cashmere, lace).
- Stain removal techniques for luxury garments.
- Proper storage and preservation of designer clothing.
- New textile technologies and how to care for them.

Customize the content of your workshops to the specific needs of your audience.

- Consider offering separate sessions for designers, sales teams, and high-end clients.
- Building brand awareness by promoting your workshops through industry publications, social media, and your web-
- Partner with local boutiques or design studios to host your events.
- Provide physical takeaways, such as a small fabric, or a specialized cleaning product that you use.

3) Tailoring services to designers and clients

- Offer priority cleaning for designers who need garments for shows, photo shoots, or client appointments.
- Invest in equipment and training to provide specialized treatments such as: hand-finishing; restoration of vintage or antique garments; specialized stain removal for unique
- Implement rigorous quality control procedures to ensure that every garment is cleaned and finished to the highest standards.
- Pay close attention to details such as button replacement, seam repair, and garment presentation.
- Offer pick up and delivery services, and even in-home

Continued on page 22

services, it lends credibility and reinforces your reputation as a specialist in luxury garment care. source for designers and their

have the residue of chemicals. The hand-feel will be ruined. I came home so happy that day I picked up my scarf that now I recommend them to everyone. Jason knows the value of every garment clients bring in, and he knows his drycleaning methods have to match that value."

Meiloute's philosophy — relationships first, commerce second — is a guiding principle for any business seeking to excel in the luxury sector. She understands that true luxury is about creating a personalized, memorable experience. Her beliefs go hand-in-hand with the Sudsies team's motto (one

METHODS FOR MANAGEMENT

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

Learn how becoming a MfM bureau member can

help you maximize your business.

of in-person relationship you can get when shopping in person or receiving the customer service Sudsies provides is becoming exclusive. People who shop online miss the quality in garments and the quality of care for these garments. I feel so lucky to do what I do for Akris. My philosophy is that I work in a museum. That's how great the quality is, and I get to share incredible products that bring value and beauty," she

For drycleaners, this translates to actively engaging with designers and their teams, understanding their specific needs, and demonstrating a clients.

Leveraging designer influence

Meiloute's unique position within the shared guest ecosystem highlights the interconnected nature of the highend market. Designers and their sales teams wield significant influence, shaping the preferences and choices of their clientele.

By establishing strong relationships with these key players, drycleaners can tap into a network of discerning customers. When designers and their teams confidently recommend your services, it lends credibility and reinforces your reputation as a specialist in luxury garment care.

"Luxury clothing and the service Sudsies provides go hand-in-hand together. Sudsies is up-to-date with luxury fabrics, the looks, and the cuts. They know how to handle the best," Meiloute affirms.

This type of endorsement is invaluable, driving a steady stream of high-value clients to your business.

Strategic steps to cultivate designer relationships

- 1. Proactive engagement. Attending industry events, fashion shows, and trunk
- Don't just collect business cards; engage in meaningful conversations.

Ask designers about their latest collections, their fabric choices, and their challenges in garment care.

- Demonstrate genuine interest in their work and their brand.
- Research events that align with your target market. Focus on events where your ideal clients are likely to be present.
- Fashion weeks, local designer showcases, and exclusive trunk shows are prime opportunities.
- Introduce yourself to sales teams and boutique managers.

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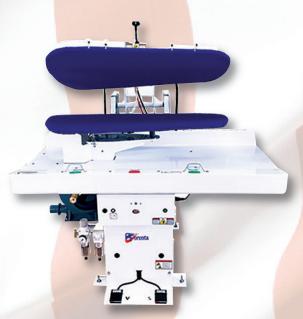
~ Anne Geddes

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Jason Loeb

Cultivating couture connections is crucial

Continued from page 20 wardrobe consultations.

- 4. Establishing open communication
- Schedule regular meetings or phone calls with designers and their teams to discuss their needs and gather feedback.
- Develop surveys or questionnaires to gather feedback on your services and identify areas for improvement.
- Pay close attention to the feedback you receive and demonstrate a willingness to address any concerns.
- Communicate openly with designers about your cleaning processes and any potential
- Respond promptly to any questions or concerns they may have.

tionships with designers, create a small advisory board that

• If you have enough rela- pertise and commitment to store that shows off the differ- as trusted partners in the world quality.

• Stay informed about new

ent types of fabrics that you are of luxury fashion. able to clean.

Designers and their sales teams are influential trendsetters. Their recommendations carry significant weight with high-end clientele. A single positive referral from a respected designer can lead to a cascade of new customers, each representing a substantial lifetime value.

meets a few times a year.

5. Staying up-to-date

Invest in ongoing training for your staff to stay up-to-date on the latest fabrics, cleaning technologies, and garment care techniques.

• Pursue industry certifications to demonstrate your ex-

developments in textile technology and cleaning solutions.

- Experiment with new techniques and technologies to improve your services.
- Share your expertise through blog posts, articles, and social media content.
 - Create a display in your

• Invest in the newest cleaning technologies that are applicable to the luxury garment industry.

By implementing these strategies, drycleaners can build strong, lasting relationships with designers and their teams, establishing themselves

Investing in designer relationships yields significant returns. Some of the benefits include word-of-mouth referrals, enhanced brand reputation, and a steady influx of high-end clients.

As Meiloute attests, "I believe Jason should train others on how to train their teams. He should train even outside the drycleaning business; that's how good he is. Sudsies delivers above 100 percent perfection; I've never felt less and I've been going there for 20 years."

Designers and their sales teams are influential trendsetters. Their recommendations carry significant weight with high-end clientele. A single positive referral from a respected designer can lead to a cascade of new customers, each representing a substantial lifetime value.

This organic growth is far more cost-effective than traditional advertising, as it's built on trust and credibility. These referrals are typically high quality, and high value clients.

Associating your brand with prestigious designers elevates your status within the industry. This enhanced reputation attracts not only individual clients but also potential partnerships with other luxury businesses, such as high-end boutiques, stylists, and event planners. Having a reputation of being the best at cleaning high end garments, gives your business a competitive advantage. By emulating this apprioritizing proach and relationships, designer drycleaners can unlock a wealth of tangible and intangible benefits.

This strategic investment not only drives business growth but also elevates brand perception, establishes industry credibility, and secures a prominent position in the competitive luxury garment care market. The KOI of these relationships is a long term investment into the health and growth of a drycleaning business.

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 jason@sudsies.com.





2025 IDC Convention

Chicago, IL • USA

Meeting the Challenges of the **New Market Environment**

September 10 - 12, 2025



Norman Way Vice President **Puritan Cleaners**

Day 1 • Wednesday, September 10

Light Buffet Lunch • 12 PM

Mr. Chris Tebbs, IDC Executive Director, Opens Convention • 1 PM

Norman Way: Developing the Wash and Fold Model

Heath Bolin: Automation in the Industry

Buffet Reception • 6 - 8 PM



Visit to CD Cleaners

Daniel Fitzgerald: The CD Cleaners Concept

Lunch at the Hotel • 1 PM

World Country Reports

Retail Laundering Options for a More Profitable Business

Conference Closes • 5 PM

IDC Gala Dinner

Cocktail Reception • 5:30 PM & Opening Ceremony & Dinner • 6 PM



Joanna Vasquez

CD One Price

Operations Team

Daniel Fitzgerald



Heath Bolin

President

Sparkle Cleaners Inc.

and Metalprogetti

Thomas Zengeler President Zengeler Cleaners

Day 3 • Friday, September 12 (Optional)

Presentations at the Hotel from:

Tom Zengeler, Zengeler Cleaners & Wes Nelson, Sankosha USA, Inc. Visits to Zengeler Cleaners and Sankosha USA, Inc.

Japanese Sushi Lunch provided by Sankosha USA, Inc.

Return to the Hotel • 4 PM



Wes Nelson President, Sankosha USA, Inc.



Convention Hotel:

Sheraton Suites Chicago Elk Village Nightly Rate for September 9 - 12 includes Breakfast & Tax King or Twin Queen Bedrooms: \$134.20

(Additional days may be available)

Registrations:

Japan Tour Services (JTS): Email: info2@jts-travel.jp Website: www.jts-travel.jp/idc-registration-form

IDC Secretariat:

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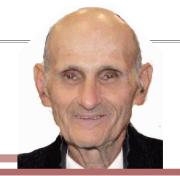








THE SPOTTING BOARD



BY DAN EISEN

Customizing your wetcleaning loads

n order to properly wetclean it is necessary to customize loads you are running. This means adding the proper detergent with the proper additives in a specific formulation for that particular load. There is not one detergent that can specifically handle all loads equally. There are some fabrics that require special additives to obtain maximum results and better cleaning. There are some loads that require color stabilization and lubricating agents necessary to prevent shrinkage.

Although the manufacturers have provided the proper chemistry, often cleaners do not understand how the chemistry works and are often sidetracked with the easy way out.

Wetcleaning is an art and the more knowledge people have, the better cleaning results you can obtain. There are many manufacturers who offer different formulations but cleaners are not maximizing the chemistry that is available.

Wetcleaning detergents

1) Anionic. These detergents have a negative charge surfactant that cleans fabrics.

maximum cleaning results on most fabrics but are not designed for wetcleaning wools, silks and fabrics with poor color fastness.

2) Cationic. These detergents have surfactants with a positive charge. These detergents tend to stay with the fabric and provide a softness to the fabric. Therefore, they are very useful for cleaning wool, silk, rayon and other delicate fabrics. It is important to note the negative charge properties of this detergent.

If cleaners pre-spot fabrics with an anionic detergent and then wetclean it with a cationic detergent, there will be a breakdown causing insoluble rings and swales. Anionic and cationic detergents are not compatible. The rule is that you must always avoid mixing anionic and cationics.

3) Nonionic. These are detergents that are neutral without a positive or negative charge. They can clean garments as an additive with any detergent. They do not cause a breakdown in any detergent. Nonionic detergents also provide a degree of softness to the

Anionic detergents obtain fabric. Nonionic detergents have an ability to remove grease and oil and are effective in wetcleaning pre-spotting formulations. Nonionic detergents do not have capabilities of removing ground-in soil.

Additives

Manufacturers provide detergents with additives or cleaners can add them separately. Additives provide better cleaning and also add additional safety to fabrics and color.

1) Alkalis. These are chemicals that release hydroxyl ions in the presence of water. Alkalis increase cleaning power of any detergent or pre-spotting detergent. For example, if I wetclean a load of khakis with just using anionic detergent, there will be only a certain degree of soil removal.

If I add alkali to that detergent, I can possibly double the soil removal capabilities of it. Some manufacturers formulate detergents with an alkali to provide better cleaning for khakis, denim and raincoats. If I add alkali to a pre-spotting agent, the agent becomes much more aggressive. If I add it to a nonionic detergent, the

oil and grease stain removal potential is increased.

If you are wetcleaning a heavily soiled load, you can add one to two ounces of ammonia (28) per gallon of water. If the detergent is already alkaline based, you may not have to add as much alkali to increase soil removal.

2) Acids. These are agents that release hydrogen ions in the presence of water. Acids can provide color stabilization and softness to wool and silk. Most cationic formulations are acid in nature but additional acid in the load for stabilizing poor color fastness can be done. The most versatile acid to add to loads is acetic. Add one to two ounces of acetic acid per gallon of water. It can be used in the rinse water to neutralize highly alkaline detergents. Acetic acid can also neutralize bleaches. Acids can be used to add to loads stained with excessive amounts of tannin stains.

3) Enzymes. Detergents with enzymes provide additional stain removal. The enzymes used in detergents can withstand high water temperatures up to 140°F. They are

also stable in the presence of mild acid, alkali and bleach.

4) Sodium percarbonate. This is a mild oxidizing bleach used in detergent mixtures rather than sodium perborate. Sodium percarbonate releases more oxygen than sodium perborate and dissolves more easily in cool water. When used in detergent formulations, it is safe to most wetcleanable items providing the water temperature is cool. They should not be used on wool and silk.

5) Softening agent. These are cationic additives used to soften the fabric and texture. They are essential when wetcleaning wool and silk. They are usually used in the rinse water when cationic detergents are used. Garments that are treated properly with softening agents usually do not have to be drycleaned to soften the fabric after wetcleaning.

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





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