

THE **INDEPENDENT** VOICE OF THE PROFESSIONAL WINDOW CLEANER



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CLEANING

TELLING A
CUSTOMER NO

STUCK IN
THE TRUCK?

AWCMAG.com | Issue #243 | July 2023

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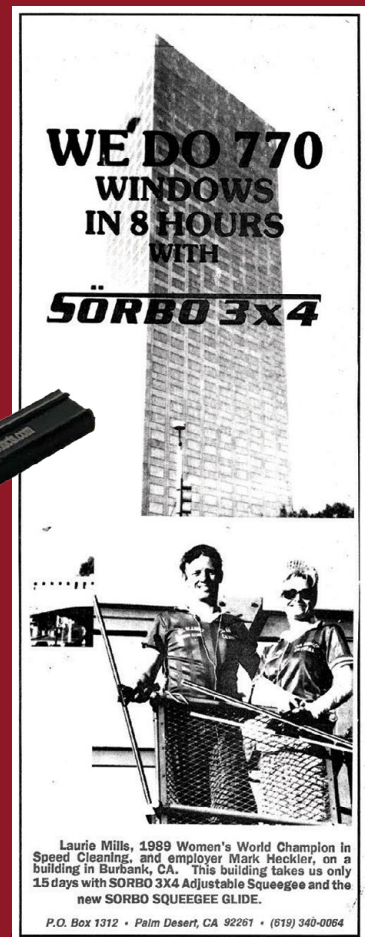


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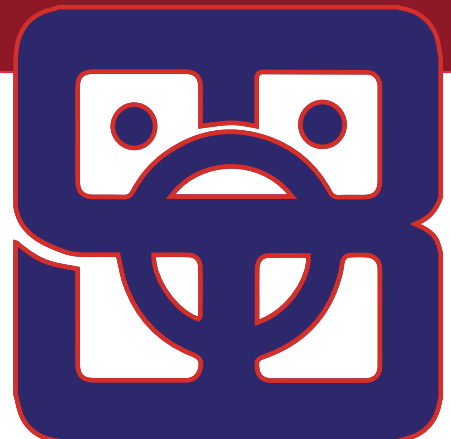


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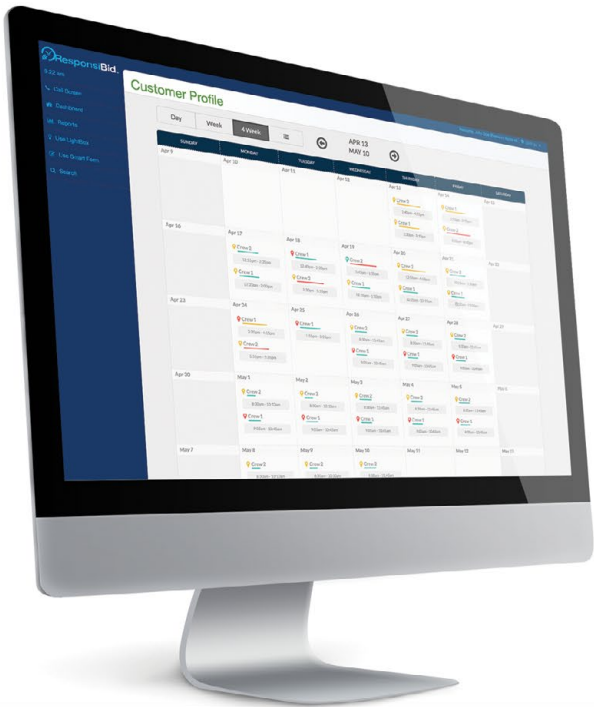


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MICHAEL BERNOFF



KYLE SCHEELE

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LOOKING BACK:

The HUGE >>>

2022

By Jen Franco



Hey guys, Jen here, editor of the American Window Cleaner magazine! Some of you may know of me, and some might think that Jersey does all the magazine stuff himself. I'm here to tell you I'm the little secret behind the AWC brand. I have been working with Jersey for a year and have learned more about window cleaning, print ads, social media, and marketing than I ever thought possible. It has been a whirlwind experience, especially the conventions I've attended!

Last year, I had only been with AWC for about four months when Jersey let me know that I'd be attending some conventions, and the first would be the HUGE in Nashville, TN! Some of you might think, no big deal; it's just a squeegee slinger get-together. For me, it was more than that. I was about to attend one of the biggest conventions for window washing and pressure washing in the spectacular Gaylord Opryland Resort and represent the AWC magazine. Four months prior, I didn't even know window clean-

ers were an actual thing, much less have a magazine and attend conventions.

»»» ***Here I am, though, getting ready to man my own booth and make my boss proud.***

Attending a convention is quite the experience if you haven't ever had the pleasure before. I had been warned about how exhausting I would feel by day three. Not saying I didn't believe it, but that was exhaustion I haven't experienced since being pregnant with



twins. The whole week was non-stop between traveling, setting up, the convention days, and the tear-down. Fortunately, I found time to work beside a waterfall, enjoy some delicious restaurants, explore the incredible resort, and, most importantly, get some much-needed pool time.

THE EXHIBIT DAYS WERE AWESOME.

At first, I was overwhelmed by the sheer size of the exhibit area and the number of people, but I soon got into the groove of talking to people and getting to know the extent of the window and pressure-washing industry. I met many people from all over the world and got to put fac-

es with AWC magazine subscribers and advertisers I had only known through email.

Overall, I did a pretty good job for my first convention experience. I learned a lot about what worked and what needed improvement, and I used that information to be even more successful at the conventions that followed. If you ever have the chance to attend one of these conventions, whether it is the HUGE or not, I highly encourage you to. I had never touched a squeegee or knew much about window cleaning, and I learned so much while there. Just imagine how much you could learn from these experts in those two days!

So, if you plan on attending the HUGE this year, find my little AWC booth and say "hey"! If you want to show me some support, sign up for our awesome American Window Cleaner magazine, mention this article, and I'll throw in a couple of extra gifts!

See you next month at the HUGE!



LEADERSHIP ART OR SCIENCE?

By Matt Johnson

blueskywindowclean@sbcglobal.net



For some, leadership is an art, for some a science. For natural-born leaders, it is an art form. It just comes to them, like being a good musician or baseball player. For others, it is a science that requires study and training. They have to grow into it.

There are almost as many types of leaders as there are leaders.

Some micro managers look over everyone's shoulder and watch their every move. Some are authoritarian, especially if they are from a military background. They expect their orders to be obeyed without question. For them, leadership is a science. Others are consensus builders. They will ask for opinions from their employees. For them, it is an art form. Some leaders are totally hands-off. They enter the shop in the morning, give instructions, and head for the golf course. Some are numbers guys. They never raise their eyes from the ledger. It's all dollars and cents to them. They are least likely to invest in WFP or buy new equipment. Rarely do they have the vision to see the savings in labor or productivity new technology can bring. I would categorize them as science guys as well.

➔ THERE'S NO RIGHT OR WRONG KIND OF LEADER.

At the end of the day, a company owner has to be what he is. His leadership style must match his personality. And the makeup of the crew he employs is a factor as well. Some window cleaners respond to strong, direct leadership. Some like to be given their assignment and be left alone to complete their task.

I'd like to think I was a good leader. I trained, equipped, and led an excellent crew for difficult and dangerous jobs. I did all I could to make their lives easier. I helped them load the trucks in the morning. I often showed up at the job site and worked alongside them. I led by example. I believe if you asked my employees if I was a good boss, they would tell you I was better than a good boss. I was a good window cleaner.

Matt Johnson

Blue Sky WC, INC

St. Louis, MO

The advertisement features a blue background with numerous water droplets. At the top, the brand name "STECcone" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font inside a red oval. Below this, "Since 1938" is written in a smaller white font. The product name "Feather Weight™ Aluminum" is displayed in large, white, bold, sans-serif font. A silver aluminum squeegee is shown vertically, angled slightly to the right. Below the squeegee, the text "18" squeegee weighs only 4.6 oz" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font. Underneath that, "Aircraft-quality aluminum" and "Ergonomically designed" are written in white, bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the ad, the Steccone logo is repeated in a smaller size, followed by "Since 1938" and the text "a division of Morse-Starrett Products Co. 184 N.W. 10th Street Meridian, Idaho U.S.A. 83642 800-225-1354 website: www.steccone.com".

STECcone
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Aircraft-quality aluminum

Ergonomically designed

The Feather-weight™ channel is superior in strength and extremely lightweight.

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website: www.steccone.com



WHEN TO TELL A CUSTOMER

NO

By Toby Sprangler
*Spranglers's Window
Cleaning Services LLC.*

The ideology that the customer is always right has been a long-standing slogan in the service industry.

In the last several years, however, this has changed to a more reasonable slogan: ‘The customer isn’t always right, but is still the customer.’ The question then arises, should you ever tell the customer ‘no’ as a business owner? The answer to that question, especially as a window cleaner, is a resounding yes!

In this article, I will discuss reasons why you should tell the customer no to your services and how you should tell them. If you don’t think you can get something done when the customer needs it or have the capacity or equipment to do it safely, it is perfectly okay to be honest with the customer and politely let them know why. If there is one, it’s important to involve the customer in any type of resolution or plan B. Offer them an option that would be a win-win situation for you both.

These are some reasons that most window cleaners would have to tell a customer no, but certainly not all of them:

- 1. Job Safety
- 2. Lack of Profit
- 3. Lack of Job Knowledge
- 4. Being Treated Poorly

➔ 1. JOB SAFETY

Your first consideration at the top of the priority list is always job safety when telling a customer no to your services. As an example, if you have cleaning gutters as an add-on service to your window cleaning business and the customer is re-

questing a quote for gutter cleaning on a two-story house, but you don’t feel comfortable doing that at 20 to 25 high, you should tell them that you don’t have the right equipment, such as a lift to do that safely, and won’t be able to give them a quote at this time. The same goes for external window cleaning on a two-story or three-story house. If you don’t have the equipment to do it safely, such as a water fed pole, or feel confident about doing it safely with a ladder, tell the customer you won’t be able to give them a quote at this time.

➔ 2. LACK OF PROFIT

As a business owner, you must make a profit from the services that

you provide to keep running your business. There will be times when a customer is looking for the best value and the lowest price possible, and the quote you gave them is just too high for them, even though it is very reasonable. If you don’t have any negotiating room for your price, then you should stick with your gut and your price and explain to the customer that you offer the highest quality possible and you aren’t willing to lower your price or quality, which you provide. If they asked for an estimate for the interior and exterior but didn’t want to pay that price, offer them a lower external-only price that they might be happier with, which could be half of the original estimate.

→ 3. LACK OF JOB KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, OR EQUIPMENT

As a business owner, you will be asked to give quotes on locations or jobs that might be beyond your experience, skills, or equipment. As a window cleaner, this will most likely happen to everyone at some point in time. If a large, four-story hospital with nothing but windows contacts you for an estimate and you honestly feel like you don't have the manpower or equipment to do the job in the time-frame they need, you will need to tell them no and not give them an estimate. But also, be honest with your contact person and explain why you won't be able to provide them with the estimate at this time.

→ 4. YOUR COMPANY DOESN'T OFFER THAT SERVICE

It is common for window cleaning companies to offer add-on services such as gutter cleaning, chandelier cleaning, or pressure washing. If a customer asks you to give them an estimate and you haven't expanded to that area yet, bought the necessary equipment, and learned how to use it, it is best to politely explain to them that you don't offer that service yet or have the equipment but to check back later in the year. This is a good example of telling a customer no, but in a polite way so as not to offend them.

→ 5. BEING TREATED POORLY

Everyone wants to be treated with respect, but if a customer is out-of-line, is hostile with you or one of your employees, or yells explicit, it is best to remove that client from your list and any future business with your company. When dealing with the general public in the service industry, there will always be customers who will always be unhappy and constantly complain about something. These customers will do more harm than good for your company and only bring morale down with your employees. Again, it is always best to part ways with them in a polite way.

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PURE WATER CLEANING FOR HIGH RISE WINDOWS

6 REASONS TO ADOPT A PURE WATER CLEAN

By Unger Enterprise



While many window cleaning professionals understand the benefits of a pure water clean, many have not taken the next step to adopt this high window cleaning technology. For a group of professionals constantly looking for ways to clean better, faster and safer, what does it take to switch to pure water window cleaning?

If you're not yet utilizing pure water in your high-rise window cleaning jobs, here are six reasons to make the switch.

»»» REASON #1:

Enhanced Safety

Did you know there are more than 300 ladder-related deaths and over 130,000 emergency room visits related to ladders each year? Eliminating ladders as often as possible enhances safety measures. A pure water window cleaning system that utilizes an extendable water fed pole keeps professionals on the ground rather than on ladders to reach high-access windows outdoors. This results in fewer on-site accidents and potential lost work time. Reducing the use of ladders and scaffolds also saves on expenses and set-up time.

»»» REASON #2:

Longer-lasting Results

One of the main benefits of using pure water is that it contains no minerals or impurities that can leave streaks or spots on the glass. In fact, water fed window cleaning poles reduce streaking by a whopping 99 percent. This means that when the water evaporates, no residue is left behind, which can help exterior windows stay cleaner

for longer periods. For the window cleaning professional, this means better results and increased customer satisfaction.

»»» REASON #3:

More Environmentally Friendly

Pure water cleaning doesn't require soaps and chemical detergents, so this outdoor window cleaning method results in less environmental impact. With pure water cleaning, contaminated water doesn't leak down to shrubs and other natural features. Compounding this benefit, studies show that sustainability and respect for our planet are especially important to employees and business stakeholders today.

Additionally, using tool accessories such as a window cleaning brush and a pure water cleaning system can reduce the cleaning time required to complete the job and subsequently conserve water.

»»» REASON #4:

Reduced Chemical Exposure

According to OSHA, exposure to commercial detergents is potentially toxic and can result in a range of health hazards, including irritation, sensitization, and carcinogenicity over time. In addition, when using cleaning products regularly, they impact air quality. That not only impacts the cleaning professional but also the people who work or visit a facility. Pure water cleaning uses a natural deionization process (re-

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verse osmosis) to remove impurities in the water to forego the use of chemicals during the cleaning process.

REASON #5:

Simple to Store and Transport

You can't replace the ease and convenience of traditional window cleaning tools, especially when cleaning ground-level windows and glass. However, cleaning high-access windows is another story. When using traditional window cleaning tools, the cleaner often uses as many as six to seven different components (e.g., squeegee, towel, bucket, etc.). However, introduce a ladder into the mix, and that's a lot of components to man-

age without having your feet on the ground! A pure water system, once assembled, significantly reduces the number of individual components you must manage and transport when working with multi-story buildings.

"IS IT TIME TO ADD PURE WATER CLEANING TO YOUR WINDOW WASHING ROUTINE?"

If it takes a live demo for you to see how easy it is to use a pure water system and the benefits it delivers, that's something we can do! Whether we come to you or utilize a virtual demonstration, take the next step to see pure water cleaning in action.

Reach out to Unger Enterprises to learn more about our Pure Water Systems and how we can help you clean better, safer, and faster!

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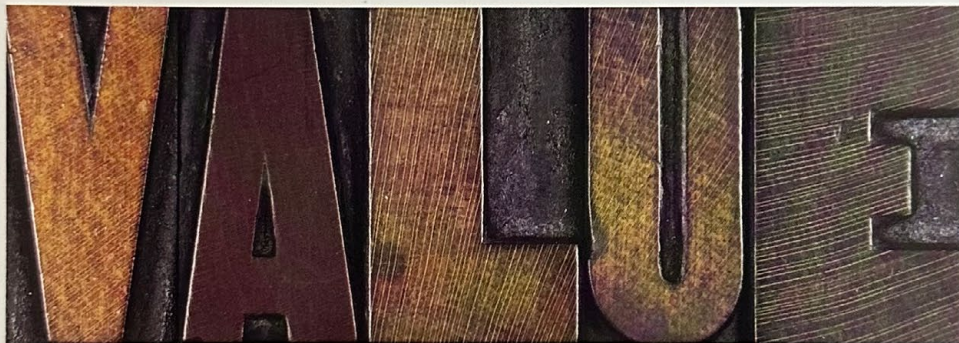
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WINDOW CLEANER

THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF THE PROFESSIONAL WINDOW CLEANER

MAGAZINE



CHALLENGES

in keeping true to your professional ethic

From buddy to **BOSS**. *How to successfully promote from within.*
this is IMPORTANT! Understand the EMV CHIP





Zack Wiedenbeck

Rigs



Brand
Everything

& Digs

San Marcos Window and Pressure Washing

My wife Nicole and I started cleaning windows in 2012 out of her Hyundai Elantra hatchback. We had a fold-up Werner ladder and some basic tools. I quickly learned that Home Depot tools wouldn't cut it and kept searching for the best products.

I was intrigued by water-fed poles (WFP) and knew that would be key to growing our business. WCR helped a lot with that! I also started doing more pressure washing and added that service to our name.

We got a Ford Transit Connect in 2014, which did a good job holding all our gear. It was also a nice billboard. It did get a little crowded, so we dedicated it to window cleaning and got a Tundra to hold the pressure washing equipment.

It was a little inconvenient having two different trucks for each service. My goal was to eventually combine everything and use one water tank for a pressure washer and WFP.

Having a good crew, in addition to trucks, has been our key to success. We make sure to take very good care of our crew. A few guys started as college students and stayed on after graduating. Most of our crew had been friends for a while, so good chemistry was already built in.

Our employee, Peter Ingalls, became a partner and had a lot of previous experience with multiple cleaning companies. He did a great job bringing on fellow cleaners and training others. He also helped set up our newest service trucks with a pressure washer and WFP combo.



The water pump from WCR is housed in a side compartment and allows us to supply our Xero pure system from the 100-gallon water tank. We can turn a valve to plug into a water spigot instead of using the tank. In addition to supplying our pressure washer and WFP, the water tank also supplies the soft wash system using a pump and proportioner in another compartment.

Your best investment is yourself, your crew, and good equipment that makes it easy on you.

David Rodriguez- San Marcos Window and Pressure Washing





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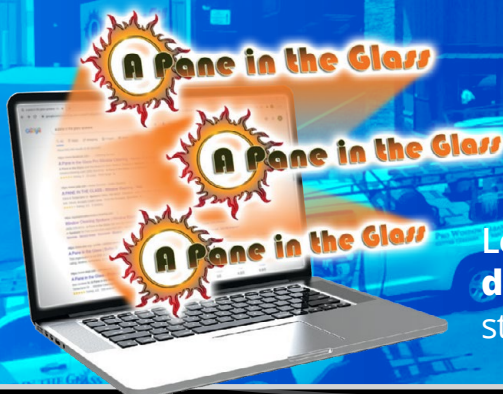
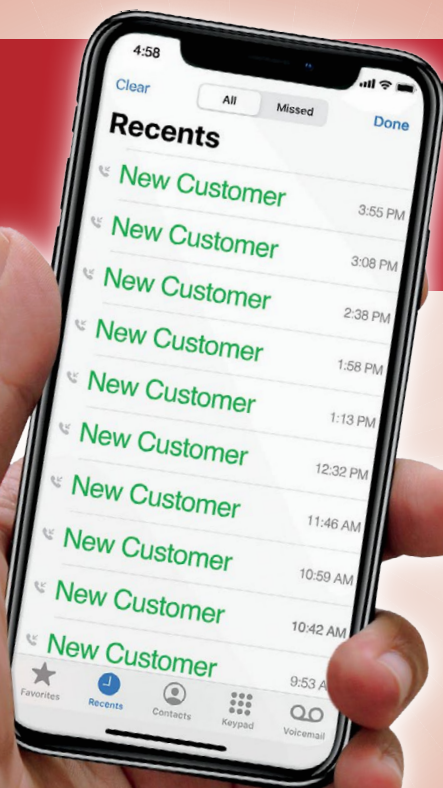
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How to Get

More Homeowners Following Your Window Cleaning Business on Social Media

By Jim DuBois

**NEED LEADS
THIS ARTICLE IS FOR YOU!**

Hey! Jim DuBois here with another article to help you move the needle a little more in your business. Do you know what your clients and other homeowners in your community are doing right now? Checking their phones.

Even if they're not checking them right this moment, most of them will be checking their social media feeds in the next little while, certainly before this evening is done. Just like you, right?

People will first glance at their phones, then browse through their Instagram feed, Twitter feed, Facebook page, and then revisit their phone once more.

While they're checking their phones and social media, are they going to find your window cleaning business there? Social media allows for an incredible marketing opportunity, but most window-cleaning businesses have barely established any type of presence. Here are five tips to help get you noticed, get more followers, and get more leads for more calls on the calendar.

»»» 1. BE INFORMATIVE

More homeowners today know less about their homes than ever before. What regular maintenance should they be doing? How long will

their gutters, windows, and home exterior stay clean? When could damage occur with lack of maintenance? At my company, we like to post educational tips and reminders throughout the year.

Show yourself to be the expert that you are in your service offerings. Warn people about the dangers of mold, ladder falls, and how dirty windows and solar panels affect their utility bills.

»»» 2. KEEP IT FRESH

Homeowner tips are great, but mix it up. Start discussions. Promote new blog posts on your website. Share snippets, before and after photos, visual content from videos you upload on YouTube, etc., from videos you post on YouTube. Tell them about your business.

Celebrate holidays, even lesser-known ones, like:

**Happy Valentine's Day!
We LOVE serving our
customers!**



Over 228 million people in the US — that's over 67% of the population — are using Facebook. Most of them check it at least once a day and 98% are checking it on some kind of mobile device.

Or for our industry:

- May 15: National Window Cleaning Day
- August 23: National Pressure Washing Day
- November 5: National Gutter Cleaning Day

3. KEEP IT CONSISTENT

You don't have to be on every social media platform, but you do have to post regularly on every platform that you're on. People will draw conclusions about your business that you won't like when they see that you haven't posted in six months.

YOUR EXERCISE:

We recommend that you set up a schedule and stick to it. For example, at first, it might be posting on Facebook a couple of times a week, once a week on Instagram, and one new video per month on YouTube.

4. KEEP IT INTERESTING!

Whatever you do, don't be boring! Most of the time, you should not be selling (promoting sales, new products, offering discounts, etc.) because that will get boring very fast. Post content that will grab attention. Here's one that surprises people and can generate a lot of discussion:

- Windows are responsible for 25 to 30 percent of the total heat gains and losses of the HVAC system. Having dirty windows means less light passes into your home, and this leads directly to less space being heated by the sun and more work for your HVAC system. By keeping your windows properly cleaned, you can enjoy the benefits of reduced energy bills.
- 87% of all mold starts in the gutters. Cracks in the home exterior (fascia, soffit, siding, stucco, etc.) allow water inside, which is another way your home can sustain water damage and fuel the spread of allergens.

5. KEEP IT REWARDING

From time to time, you can offer discounts or promote new products. We like the idea of holding prize-winning contests for followers who will share a post.

CONCLUSION

Most of your clients, in fact, most homeowners, will be on Facebook today. You have the opportunity to connect with them on Facebook and other social media platforms. Follow these five tips, and you'll more grab attention, get more followers and, over time, convert more of them into new customers.

These are some of the strategies my company and my coaching clients continue to implement into our businesses. I hope you do the same.

Stuck on something? Need a question answered?

Hop on a quick call here: Calendly.com/JimDuBois/20-minute



GET MY BRAND NEW
FREE UPDATED 25
PAGE ACTION GUIDE:
**MILLION DOLLAR
WINDOW CLEANER**

Jim DuBois is founder of Squeegee Pros, Inc. out of Mooresville, NC and is the creator of WindowWashingWealth.com, a niche specific business coaching company only for window cleaners and pressure washers. For more information go to WindowCleaningBusinessCoach.com.



Gabe's Spotless Window Cleaning

Business Growth:

IS YOUR BUSINESS AN INSTRUMENT OR AN ASSET?

One of the biggest quandaries that business owners have is about growth: We all want it, but how much is right for us?

THERE IS NO "ONE SIZE FITS ALL" ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION.

We all have different goals and things that are most important to us. The type of growth that one owner would kill for might be like a prison to another. Knowing where you need to be on that growth spectrum requires self-awareness and honest meditation on your future and what you will need your business to be for you when you are older. Is window cleaning just a temporary gig? Is it simply serving a purpose until you achieve another, more im-

portant, milestone or goal? Are your business needs simple and thus prefer uncomplication rather than increased income? Then, growth beyond what comes organically is probably not very attractive.

However, if your family depends on the income that comes from this business and window cleaning is what you plan to do for the rest of your life, then you need to give your growth a deeper thought. Most window cleaners do not have retirement savings. Most do not have a plan in place to keep the business going in the event of a serious injury or illness. For many single owner/operators, you hit a ceiling profit-wise that you will never be able to get past without hiring. It's not an easy discussion. However, if you rely on your business in the ways I

just mentioned, you owe it to yourself and your family to ask yourself the hard questions.

The key to finding value in business growth is to ask yourself if your business is an instrument or an asset? An instrument only works when you operate it. An asset works for you even when you are not there. An instrument is only valuable when played and may only be able to be operated by you. An asset can grow in value for you and in the eyes of potential investors/buyers. This discussion can be a bit hard to visualize, so let's use an orchestra as an illustration to highlight some things you can do to move your business toward becoming an asset and see if that is the right direction for your business.

1. HIRING

If you Google “One man band,” you will find a bunch of videos of guys wearing these elaborate contraptions that allow them to play ten or more instruments in a song. Don’t get me wrong, it looks amazing and is very impressive. There are limits, however. There is a finite number of instruments that one person can have on them. They are also unable to play all the instruments at once, settling for three or four at a time. That method of being a musician will never compare to the depth of sounds that a full orchestra can provide. The conductor can stand in front of all the musicians and direct them to play in a way that complements each other and achieves the goal that the composer intended.

In the same way, a successful business run by a single owner/operator is very impressive. Especially if the business has been around for a decade or more, the skill needed to accomplish that is amazing. Yet, if you have a growing family to feed, loved ones who have climbing medical expenses, or are becoming limited by your own physical condition, you will find that your business has a ceiling. On the other hand, if you are the conductor of the orchestra that is your business, you have the flexibility to use and grow it in ways that would be restricted as a single owner/operator. The music comes not from you directly but from the team you have built. In this way, your business becomes an asset that can make money apart from you, even if you are still the one that guides its growth.

2. SYSTEMS

When the conductor leads an orchestra, that is not the only guid-

ance they receive. Each musician has sheet music in front of them that tells them what and when to play. This keeps the different musicians playing in unison with their various types of instruments, strengths, and roles.

“ *Systems are a lot like SHEET MUSIC.* ”

They help your employees know what is expected of them even when you might not be there. Often the issue plaguing owners isn’t that their employees are hard to manage; it’s that they have not received sufficient instruction on what they need to do. They are like a group of musicians, each playing the music they prefer over each other. Establishing systems provides a protocol for your employees to follow,

giving them needed boundaries that allow them to utilize their best qualities to keep the whole crew unified. Establishing systems can be complicated, and it may require the assistance of a mentor or business coach. However you decide to institute them, they will allow your business to function apart from you, eliminating the need to micro-manage every aspect of what your employees are doing—just one more important step in making your business an asset.

3. STRUCTURE

One of the worst feelings in the world is when your favorite band breaks up. Sometimes it’s mutual; other times, it’s acrimonious. Either way, it’s just really sad to know that you will never hear new music from them ever again. Even if



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only one person leaves and the rest of the band stays intact, the loss of a prominent musician can severely affect the group's success. On the other hand, orchestras are identified by their organization rather than individuals. Sure, some classical musicians may rise to stardom. Yet, if they leave to pursue a solo career, another musician fills the position, and the orchestra continues. That's because the audience recognizes and values the group effort of the orchestra to play the classical songs they came to hear. They know that one person does not have that prominent of a role that they will affect the entirety of the experience.

The same is true of your business. If you are the only person your clients ever see, you will have a difficult time selling your business if you ever need to someday. Your clients like you! They don't want some stranger coming in and replacing their favorite window cleaner! If they are going to have to start over with a new window cleaner, they might as well pick one themselves.

Also, if you are a Sole-Proprietor, you will have difficulty figuring out a value for your company. Without the clear division, an LLC or other type of Corporation gives you, your income and identity will always be intermingled. Structuring & branding the business apart from you as an individual is one way to eliminate the problem of customers associating you with your company. Certainly, let them know about your involvement and care. However, show them that what you offer is a service that gives the same quality of experience regardless of who may show up that day. This makes your business an asset regardless of whether you plan on being involved for the long term or not.

The point is that you have something special in your hands with your business, and whether it keeps its value for the long haul largely depends on

HOW YOU TREAT IT.

If your needs are simple and the ceiling of a single owner-operator is comfortable enough to live under, by all means, do so. However, if you want your business to grow with your life and adjust to your changing needs, then you must do some planning. The inconvenience of managing employees and dealing with the complexities of small business ownership is worth it to have options. It's pretty cool to go on vacation and know your business is still making money for you while you are relaxing. It is comforting to know that you can be there for your family without losing out on needed income if there is a medical emergency. And it's reassuring to know that even if you are having difficulty carrying ladders or lasting through a day like you used to, the job will still be completed. As I said in the beginning, there is no one-size-fits-all answer. And that's ok.

***Just close your eyes,
take a deep breath,
and follow the music
you need to hear.***

Gabriel Gutierrez

Owner and President

Gabe's Spotless Cleaning Services, Inc.

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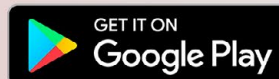
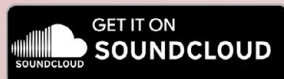
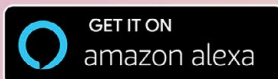


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IWCA
GLASS COMMITTEE
ARTICLE



The IWCA Glass Committee was invited to offer American Window Cleaner magazine an article to provide insight into what the committee has been working on recently, along with some historical perspective.

If you attended the IWCA Convention in February of this year, you had an opportunity to spend some valuable time sharing in some of the latest work of the Glass Committee during one of the educational seminars. The focus was on the unveiling of the Architectural Glass Guide. It's an information-rich resource that offers a wide range of technical information, easy-to-understand descriptions, definitions, and other helpful information for not only window cleaning professionals but those who work on and around architectural glass.

The Glass Committee (commonly referred to as the GC) created the Guide in a user-friendly downloadable format that can be viewed while in the office or from the field as a quick reference. The Guide is accessible on the IWCA website (iwca.org) under the Glass Education tab; the Guide is complimentary for IWCA members.

There are likely to be many readers who aren't familiar with the Glass Committee's work over the years since its formation in the mid-2000s or the wide range of projects they have either undertaken or participated in since then.



The GC started off seeing that professional window cleaners faced challenges in understanding the “canvas” we work on.

For historical interest, Paul West, the original Chair of the GC, coined the reference “canvas” as a way

of analogizing the work surface of professional window cleaners and the related “art” of our work. The “canvas” we work on came in many forms and conditions, and prior to the formation of the GC, there had been no presence or dedicated entity whose single goal was to provide helpful information and education to window cleaners.

Recognizing this need, the committee set forth as one of its long-term goals, the formation of not only being a representative body for professional window cleaners, but a continuing-educational resource.

The GC recognized that in order to achieve any short or long-term goals, a strong and productive relationship needed to be formed and maintained with the manufacturing community of the architectural products window cleaners work on. This large group comprises the current National Glass Association (NGA), formerly known as the Glass Association of North America (GANA). The GC worked closely with GANA, over a period of years, in formulating and editing several key General Information Bulletin (GIB) documents. These bulletins formulate the best practices component for the production and life of every glass product on the market. Through the formulation and editing of several significant bulletins, the GC was able to manifest the first collaborative effort between the professional window cleaning trade and the Glass Association of North America ... this was groundbreaking for not only for professional window cleaners but our interactions with customers and other trades.

Examples of these bulletins can be found on the IWCA website and include:

- 1. Construction Site Protection and Maintenance of Architectural Glass**
- 2. Proper Procedures for Cleaning Architectural Glass Products**

The standards were raised... the continuing education of window cleaners raised the performance bar, and as a result, the rise of standards through published best practices helped to pave the way for architectural glass and those who ply their trade on it to receive the deserved level of attention.

The work produced through the relationship with GANA was greatly influenced and enhanced through the knowledge, commitment, and passion of a 31-year career Ph.D. scientist, **DR. PAUL DUFFER.**

Dr. Duffer spent his career with Pittsburgh Paint Glass (PPG) as a research chemist. His work on researching problems with glass surface corrosion and maintaining surface quality, combined with a unique passion for professional window cleaners, served as a much-needed, if not essential, part of the team to work through a myriad of technical and deeply scientific issues. As passionate and committed as the GC was with its composition of



professional window cleaners, the truth was that the committee needed technical expertise and Dr. Duffer supplied what was so needed. There was an additional element that was brought to fruition with Dr. Duffer's presence and that was his circle of credentialed researchers and scientists. Through the efforts of the GC guided by Dr. Duffer, the IWCA provided funding for a study program at Penn State University. Professor Seong Kim directed the study with the use of a Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM).

The study itself involved much scientific and technical data and analysis, but it revealed advances in understanding the variances in glass surfaces and the relationships between the surfaces and the potential causes. Specifically and very simply put, the study found that tempered glass, the most often-used product in architectural glass, had differences in the surfaces that resulted from reactions experienced during the manufacturing process during the heating and cooling phases.

These differences may not sound like a big deal to us as we go about our typical jobs as professional window cleaners, but they can and do take on a very significant meaning as these differences might become problematic for us on the job in

the form of potential scratching or achieving uniform results without damage.

Architectural glass, while relatively basic in its composition, remains a nuanced product with many forms, designs, and intended uses and functions. It also has nearly countless exposures to products, processes, and forces that require continuous research and study. Architectural glass can go through a very long and sometimes mysterious journey during its life. We, as professional window cleaners, have little to no way of knowing or detecting the history of what particular panels of glass have been exposed to or what specific condition the glass is in when we are called to ply our trade on it. Knowing this to be true, the IWCA Glass Committee dedicates itself to proactively asking questions and finding answers to the many and varied situations and challenges professional window cleaners face. Whether the challenge is associated with profoundly technical scientific research, daily-used best practices, providing training videos or conducting educational seminars, the IWCA Glass Committee will continue working to live out its mission of providing educational material and programs for professional window cleaners and those who work on or around glass.



Aaron Stewart



Chicago - 1970's

"Work truck for General Window Cleaning Co."



Around the Globe

United Kingdom

My Dad started window cleaning in the 1970s and then became a general manager of a national cleaning company, so cleaning is in our DNA.

I left school at 16 in 1985 and needed some work. Dad suggested window cleaning, so I started window cleaning the old way, up and down ladders for the next-door neighbors, which progressed to cleaning the whole street. I upgraded our transport from walking around to customers to transporting the ladders on a bike as the round expanded.

Thirty-eight years later, we have two window cleaning vans with heated reach and wash systems and a dedicated pickup truck for soft-washing.

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1. Seeing the results: When you clean a property and remove all the dirt and grime, the end result is immediately visible, and it can be very satisfying to see the transformation.

2. Physical activity: Window cleaning can be a physical activity that some people may find



enjoyable. It can be satisfying to have a workout while cleaning your windows.

3. Sense of accomplishment: Cleaning properties and seeing the delight of the customers gives you a sense of accomplishment.

4. Fresh air: Window cleaning is mainly an outdoor job. In spring and summer, it's a joy to be outside.

Every day is different; meeting new clients and transforming properties gives us a great sense of accomplishment.

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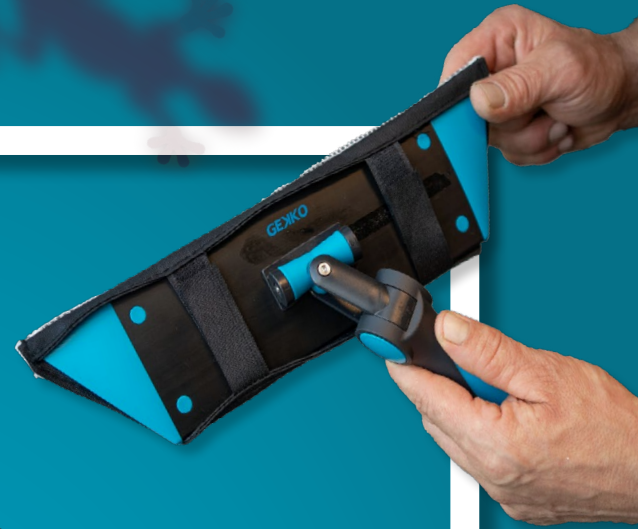
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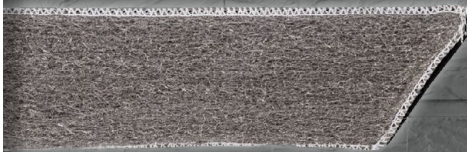
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