

Window Cleaning

Dec 2016

magazine

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Haircut anyone?

We talk to the big boss at Moerman

The Excelerator inside track

Tucker dual trim brush

Why is the old recipe still a winner?

Tecbuk water fed brushes

Is this Britain's best kept secret?

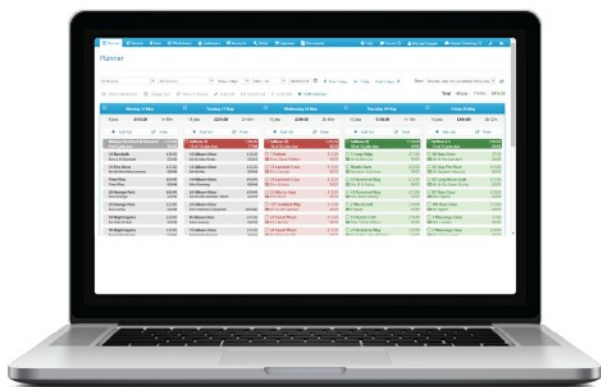
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Window Cleaning Magazine



Editorial

Hey Readers,

For the past four years I have worked mostly as a solo project on Window Cleaning Magazine, editing, graphics, research, getting the interviews, pushing contributors to finish their deadlines. A hobby that is fused with tons of passion. I would work away the midnight candle, putting the pages of the magazine together and being inspired by the contributors stories who, without their amazing help, we would not have such a well established brand and presence as we do today.

In 2017 I will make the leap from hobby to business for the Window Cleaning Magazine. Some will have already noticed the changes to our website and many more changes are planned for 2017.

WCM TV, our YouTube channel (you can find it in YouTube under my name Lee Burbidge) has some amazing content to come, with short magazine style videos in the format you guys have come to expect from us. More Booth Talk videos, documentaries and programming too.

2017 looks like the start of a new fresh approach, Window Cleaning Magazine will be a go to hub World Wide. Lets face it, WCM has already been international since 2012 with a large fan base from the UK, USA and Canada for example.

We aim to bring you the latest news and products from around the World, from window cleaning to pressure washing to soft washing. We aim to highlight and bring to your attention all the must go to events no matter where in the World you might be. We want to bring you rope access information to powered platform information and lastly we want to bring you serious content on building a successful business, running a business and staying safe too with both health and safety information as well as training.

I want to thank the readers, fans and contributors of WCM for every ounce of support given so far... And we look forward to your continued support into the next era.

You are all AWESOME!

Have a great Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Lee Burbidge

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Follow Lee on Twitter and join the Window Cleaning Magazine Facebook group.





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what do the different filters do on a system?

New to window cleaning?

Your questions answered.

Ok peeps, get your school books out...

Water (even clean water) contains dissolved particles. These particles are mostly mineral in makeup. When water evaporates it changes form into a gas, however, the dissolved minerals don't change form and so are left behind as what we see as water marks.

In order to get pure water, we need to remove these minerals without the water evaporating, and so we need filtration. The most common form of filtration is reverse osmosis. The filter works as a separator, allowing water that has not absorbed minerals yet to pass but stopping those with mineral content, it then discards this as waste. The technical terms for the pure water is permeate and the tech term for the waste water is concentrate. R/O membranes can be set to allow more concentrate to pass, this allows longer membrane life but more water usage and slower fill times, or more permeate will give you less fill times, more efficient use of water but short membrane life (never, ever, stop the concentrate flow completely). As a rule of thumb, the cheaper the membrane, the more concentrate flow.

This R/O membrane needs to be protected from some nasties in the water.

The first nasty is sediment. Sediment is small but not invisible particles in the mains supply. Sometimes, these small sediment particles of un-dissolved matter can and will block the sensitive pores in the membrane. We use sediment filters for this purpose. Sediment filters should be 5 micron, meaning they will remove anything measuring 5 microns or less from the supply.

The second nasty is chlorine. Chlorine is added to the drinking water supply to disinfect it and make it safe for human consumption, but it's very destructive to the membrane material. It would not take long for chlorine to destroy the frail membranes. To stop this happening we use a carbon filter. Carbon, the same carbon we find in gas masks, stops the chlorine from damaging your membrane, it's an essential part of your set up.

You can protect your membrane further with the use of softening resins or polyphosphate filters which reduce scaling if you live in a hard water area.

R/O membranes do the heavy work and the quality of water they produce is high, with a good quality membrane removing 97% of the dissolved minerals in your water.

You can measure this with a Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) meter. It measures in parts per million. A reading under 009 is required for window cleaning. Over this number and you will start to see the dissolved solids as your water evaporates.

If your water is above this number you will need to 'polish' your water. Deionisation resins are used for this purpose. Mixed bed resins contain positive and negative cat ions and anions which remove dissolved solids in the water much like a magnet, each attracting it's opposites. You will need to check the TDS reading regularly as the resin doesn't last indefinitely and when it goes, it goes fast. You can purify water this way exclusively instead of using an R/O membrane, but it can get very expensive, even in soft water areas.

Why the original recipe is still setting standards today

Want to learn more
About Tucker?
Click or scan here.



Brush heads like the Tucker Dual Trim have been setting standards for decades. A well tested design that has been scrutinized and copied over the years. This issue we asked Shawn Gavin, new owner of the Tucker brand, to discuss with Window Cleaning Magazine as to why he thinks this timeless brush is better than the rest.

WCM: Your strap line reads, 'Worlds Best Brush'... That's a huge statement. What makes the Tucker Brush so different?

SG: It is a HUGE statement and one that we back 100% with a month back guarantee. The first Tucker® brushes were produced in the 1950s. For decades Tucker® spent time and money working on perfecting the water-fed window cleaning brush. The bristles used by Tucker® are of the highest quality and will last the user a very long time compared to other brushes on the market today. In many ways the other brushes available are meant to be consumables that are swapped every couple months, if not WEEKS! Not true of the Tucker® brushes. Our brushes are known to last years for many users.

WCM: How many brush variations are there?

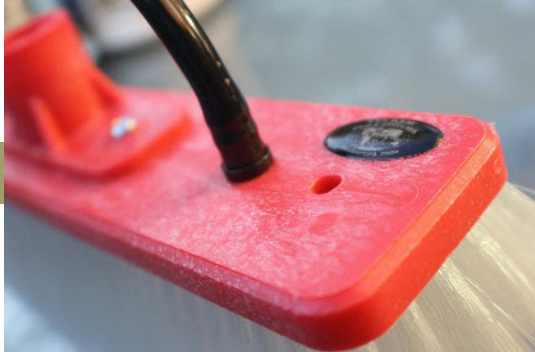
SG: At the moment we offer both a NYLON brush and a HYBRID brush. The nylon is a dual trim brush meant to give the user great splay on the edges of the brush to get into the corners of the window frame. Once enough pressure is applied to the brush, the inner trim, which is shorter, engages the glass and provides excellent scrubbing power. The hybrid brush utilizes the same nylon bristles on the outer trim as the nylon brush, but

on the inner trim we have replaced the nylon with boars bristle. Boars bristle is known to do a superior job at scrubbing stubborn stains compared to any other nylon bristle on the market today. For many years we have offered a full boar bristle brush. The full boar bristle brush is extremely affective at removing baked on debris, bird droppings, bug splatter etc. BUT the issue is that the bristle provides TOO much scrubbing power. By this I mean it grabs the surface and makes the job of scrubbing the window far more laborious for the user. When we added the nylon longer trim to the outside edge of the brush this cut down on most of the 'drag' on the surface, but still provided the end user the scrub we want from boars bristle. I believe it is the ultimate combination. Size range? We offer two sizes in each brush. 12" and 18". This size relates to the coverage the bristles give you on the glass, not the actual width of the plastic brush back.

WCM: Is it euro thread only? What about Quick Loq users?

SG: We offer the brushes in a euro thread. The hole pattern for the screws that hold the socket to the brush is the same as the Quick Loq hole pattern. This allows for Quick Loq users to easily adapt their Quick Loq sockets onto our brushes when they are upgrading.

WCM: Tell us about the bristles, how important is configuration, number of bristles and quality of bristles?



SG: *Well this is where we at RHG have really benefited from the decades of development and research at Tucker®. Over the years they have tried a few different things, but for many decades the hole pattern has remained the same. Tucker® has traditionally offered many different stiffnesses, but we quickly settled on only the best one once we acquired the company.*

WCM: **What makes Tucker such a popular brand in the US?**

SG: *For anyone who has been around the window cleaning industry more than say 15 years, the Tucker® brand in the US was the only brand they knew for water-fed. Its the oldest, and some say the most researched brand in the US. Over the 10 years prior to RHG acquiring Tucker®, the brand had really fallen behind in many ways. There was no real product development, no money spent on R & D, no pure water systems etc. Since we acquired the company we have introduced many new products, including the euro brushes, pure water systems, and a range of carbon fiber poles. In many ways I believe the prior owners were afraid of taking the plunge into many of the things we have been developing. Part of the reason was because Tucker® developed such a strong brand name in the US for the products they produced. If you bought a Tucker® product, you knew you could expect it to last you years. Many of the newer products on the market in the water-fed sector are not like that. Many are not developed to last long. Carbon fiber sections wear and have to be replaced. When an aluminum Tucker® section needed repaired the end user simply cut it down in the field and got back to work. This reputation for high quality products led to the popularity of the Tucker® brand in the US, but also ultimately, likely was part of it's falling so far behind. At RHG/Tucker® we are developing products that last years, but are also next level innovations.*



WCM: **What is your opinion on rinse bars?**

SG: *I feel they use far too much water. It's a very small segment of the industry that is interested in a rinse bar. To me it's a bit like the fan jet vs. pencil jet. Most who have been working with water-fed poles for a while know that you can accomplish the same thing with a pencil jet than you can with a fan jet. Will a rinse bar speed your process? Possibly. Is it worth the hype? No. That being said, we offer fan jets and we are interested in rinse bars as an 'add on' to our brushes, and you can expect to see that in the future for those that are interested in them.*

WCM: **How does the weight of the brush compare to your rivals?**

SG: *Our brushes are very lightweight. Comparable to most on the market. A good quality bristle isn't light but we still weigh in at 270 grams (based on the 12" double trim nylon). It's thicker than poorer quality ones and so this adds a bit of weight to the brush. Additionally, we have not made any efforts to remove weight from the brush stocks as of yet, like others have done.*

WCM: **Are the bristles a new configuration, or is it the original Tucker style bristles made famous for their perfect use?**

SG: *Same original recipe. This really comes down to the quality of the bristle and the number of points of contact 'POC' from all 2443 bristles.* **END**

We talk to the big boss about

08



the accelerator

By Lee Burbidge

We have watched Moerman grow their professional window cleaning range over the past few years and have seen their popularity explode, mainly due to innovative thinking. In just a short period of time they have positioned themselves as the third most sought after professional window cleaning tool manufacturer worldwide. When Unger Global starts popping over to your event booth and begins to check you out, you have to be doing something right.

The humble squeegee has stayed pretty much the same for decades; after all why fix something that is not broke, right?

You would have thought that there could be no more improving, until forward-looking Moerman released the LIQUIDATOR channel back in the early spring of 2015.

Modified squeegee channels have been bouncing around You Tube for a good few years as window cleaners tried to bring DIY efficiency into their tools. Our very own Magazine contributor Chris Dawber certainly put a lot of this type of content out.

So why then has Moerman been so successful in such a short space of time? We profiled Moerman back in our October 2014 issue.

The company began life back in 1885 as a brush maker and bristle trader. In the 50's they began to develop and sell floor squeegees, but it wasn't until the early 2000's that Moerman broke out into window cleaning

tools, starting with their first retail line Aqua Wiping. A few years later they turned their attention to the professional market, albeit mainly in private label manufacturing.

One day, a line was drawn into the sand. Moerman noticed a gap in the high-end professional market that needed some plugging. Surely with having a professional range already, how and why did Moerman suddenly break through the innovation ranks? It was quite simple really and it started with an insight in the realm of professional window cleaning.

Moerman wanted to boost its professional window cleaning range and began to look into buying motives and how they could help window cleaners earn more money with their tools. It wasn't just about finding the USP to sell more units, although that would be in there somewhere as a beneficial side effect. It was about: how do we help the window cleaner? How could they make the window cleaner's life that much better?

In raising this fundamental question, Moerman uncovered four fundamental problems, or rather challenges, with which professional window cleaners are confronted:

- low pay/effort ratio,
- difficult,
- dangerous
- straining job.



09



Want to learn more
About Moerman?
Click or scan here.

MOERMAN
Durable cleaning tools since 1885

In our commitment to help window cleaners resolve these four problems, the Moerman EASE philosophy was created. The EASE philosophy translates neatly into EASE Value.

EASE stands for Efficient, Amazing Results, Safe and Ergonomic.

Moerman wants professional window cleaners to earn more money, and their tools to provide amazing results so that even the less experienced get it right the first time. They want their tools to be safe, and being mindful about ergonomics, that would include such things as weight reduction, elimination of needless movements, precision and control.

We have spent a lot of time at Moerman. To see first hand the focus and dedication of the Moerman team is impressive. Also, they treat other stakeholders with respect and understanding. They know what they want from a tool and they benefit from a growing pool of highly skilled window cleaners whom they sacredly refer to as the 'EASE Angels'.

Currently, there are around 15 to 20 hand picked window cleaners of differing backgrounds that feed back prototype results, experiences and snags straight back into Moerman's R&D think tank. From this the alterations are made wherever required, the 3D printer goes into overtime and the cycle repeats itself relentlessly.

We all know that when a new innovation product hits the market running that invariably sometimes this type of tweaking is continued sometime far past launch-date as the wider population of window cleaners feed back their experiences.

I caught up with Guy Vande Vyvere and his team at Moerman and decided to ask them about the most recent product release the EXCELERATOR and find out how the success of the professional window cleaning range has changed the outlook...

LB: Did the success of the original LIQUIDATOR channel surprise you? They couldn't get enough of it!

GVV: *Honestly, we expected the early adopters to go for the LIQUIDATOR channel as soon as it hit the market. And so it went. These professionals represent the leading edge of window cleaners and instantly understand the benefits of the EASE value represented by the LIQUIDATOR channel. In fact, most of these guys had been experimenting with similar methods long before we industrialized this solution.*

With about half a day's training, you can start earning back the tool once every following day, taking into account a 10-15% efficiency gain. So, if they bought one yesterday, it has already been earned back by sunset today. This impressive return on investment is something the weary professional will jump to without batting an eyelid. Rightfully so.

As you can see, we're creating so much value with our EASE inspired tools that it's not a surprise to us that professionals like it and want more of it.

What we didn't expect though was the wide interest for this product in the much slower but larger DIY market.

LB: How many 3D printed prototypes did you go through? I'm guessing some of the alterations were so minor as the tool was so precise.

GVV: *There's a saying that goes something along the lines of: "If you love the scenery, don't count your steps". The goal is to develop next level window cleaning tools. It takes as many drawings, 3D prints and prototypes as necessary to achieve that next level. We are pushing the bar on everything we design and not in the least onto ourselves.*



“...AS YOU KNOW THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS..”

We don't shy away from developing a tool, which will make one of our other tools redundant. Our mission is to relentlessly and tirelessly seek for the best product. Again, “the best product” means a fit with the EASE values.

LB: Tell me more about the EASE Angels. We just love this terminology!

GVV: *The EASE Angels know their business. They are the true specialists of their trade. Moerman has summoned them to guard the EASE values. With every new development, they judge whether the tool corresponds to the EASE values sufficiently before the launch of the product.*

At a certain point in time, the project we're working on reaches a functional prototype stage. We'll then send the tool to all of the EASE Angels and patiently await their judgement. So far, we've been able to implement most of the feedback into the final product. Of course, sometimes deferring personal preferences sets the stage for a real enigma. In this case we try to search for another way of designing the product so as to come to the best of both worlds. Sometimes we need to make a choice. As you know, the devil is in the details and at this stage we're well into the details.

LB: Explain the handle timeline and how this leads into the EXCELERATOR. We think the functionality of the EXCELERATOR is like a Swiss Army Knife of handles.

GVV: *Swiss Army knives tend to be complex and provide an all-in-one solution.*

There is a similarity in the fact that if you have an EXCELERATOR on you, you don't need anything else. On the contrary, the EXCELERATOR is not complex at all. Much rather it's stripped to the bare essentials of what the best handle in the industry should be. We've outdone ourselves to avoid “featuritis” or overly complex tools. The result is a sleek, sturdy, but complete handle. The only one you'll ever need.

LB: Why did you bring out the LIQUIDATOR channel 2.0?

GVV: *As we said before, we're relentlessly seeking for product improvement, trying to outperform ourselves if necessary. Even though you earn back the first generation LIQUIDATOR in one or two days, it's not good enough if it's not perfect.*



The imperfections were that the clips were too loose, the rubber wasn't pinched well enough, and the end clips wore out a bit too easily. This was the word from our end users. They're always right! All these issues have been addressed with LIQUIDATOR 2.0

LB: Explain the F*LIQ and how this works because it is the third part of the EXCELERATOR as a whole, right?

GVV: *Not correct. The F*LIQ is a tool accessory on it's own. You can fit it to any LIQUIDATOR 2.0 channel, regardless your handle preference. For instance, if you're fond of our Premium handle, you can use the LIQUIDATOR 2.0 channel and the F*LIQ washer and you'll have a rigid tool, which can wash and wipe with the flick of a wrist.*

LB: The F*LIQ washer is really absorbent and holds a lot of water. What makes it different and unique?



"...WE'RE FIRED UP AND WORKING ON THE NEXT CHALLENGE ALREADY!"

GVV: First of all, as proven by numerous testimonials on social media and the response of our customers the fabric is top notch.

Second, we've carefully determined the optimal size, shape and stiffness of the washer. Size entails weight which should be minimal for ergonomic reasons, but maximal for washer autonomy. The stiffness is necessary to clean into the edges and corners of the window but not the frame.

Additionally we've stitched an extra absorbing pad on the inside of the F*LIQ washer.

Finally, we invented a feature which helps the washer move away of the frame when closing-out in F*LIQ-under position. I'd like to refer to our demo movie to further explain this.

LB: How has the recent success of Moerman in professional window cleaning been received by your team?

GVV: We're fired up and working on the next challenge already! To receive a letter or an e-mail from window cleaning professionals that openly thank you for developing a tool that changes their way of working and thus their live is something that gives wings. It makes you gleam with pride. That's real value, that's the EASE value!

LB: The professional window cleaning range of Moerman gets a new logo?

GVV: Correct, we've found it's time to give our professional window cleaning range its very own logo, it's still recognizable for the users because we keep the name of Moerman but we've chosen to use the trademark black and turquoise colors. Check out the 'O' in the Moerman logo and you'll see our trademark black and turquoise split by a white streak, symbolizing the speed and accuracy of our tools.



Britian's best kept secret?

By Lee Burbidge



Tecbuk water fed brush heads feels like an insiders secret. How many of you out there have heard of them? When you find somebody else that knows about these awesome brushes, it almost seems like you are part of some sort of exclusive party. Everyone we have spoken to that have experienced the secret joy of using a Tecbuk brush have all said the same thing. Amazing! And with Tecbuk having a range of brushes that includes the only dual trim Boars hair brush in the world, you got to ask yourself, 'how did you miss this?'

So, what is Tecbuk and what is all the fuss about surrounding their brushes? Everybody knows that the business end of a water fed pole is the brush head, get this right and you can work faster for longer.

So why is it so overlooked? Yeah, pole rigidity and durability are important too, but I do get puzzled why some manufactures would bring out a new pole, but no brush!

I first knew of Richard Sorrell, the owner of Tecbuk and local window cleaner, a while back. He lives in my hometown of Leicester, UK. We would wave at each other as we passed in our window cleaning vans.

It wasn't until a while later that I heard that Richard made brushes for water fed poles.

It has been seriously overdue, but I caught up with Richard to find out a little more about his vision and his business for WCM readers.

LB: Hey Richard, are you still running your window cleaning business?

RS: Yes, still window cleaning since starting in 2007,

although I now spend about the same amount of my time with the brush side of the business.

LB: How do you split your time between the two businesses?

RS: *You have to cut back on the windows, and using the freed up time makes it manageable. I still have a good balance of work and family time. I could market and sell more brushes or do more window cleaning, but with two young children aged 5 years and 8, I spend a lot of time with them. Maybe when they are older I can do more, but for now I don't mind being on 'tickover' and I enjoy spending more time with the family.*

LB: Why did you find the need to create a brush in the first place?

RS: *One day I was cleaning a customer's window, I instinctively knew cleaning this pane of glass should be easy and only take a few seconds at most to clean, it wasn't that bad. At the time I noticed I had to fight the brush to get it to work, and still it took too long to get the window cleaned, requiring a lot more brush strokes than expected. That was the point that I decided to make a better brush.*

There is more money in CF poles and systems, but as a window cleaner my money comes from being able to clean as quickly as possible. I knew my hourly rate would go up if the brush was much better. No one was really trying to provide us - the window cleaners - with a more suitable brush. Suppliers bring out new poles or WFP systems, but the window cleaning brush has been treated as an afterthought. Most brushes used for window cleaning are still traditional brushes, or brushes that come with good marketing and a brand name. I think Tecbuk brushes have more substance,

"...YOU LISTEN, AND GETS LOADS OF IDEAS, SOME VERY GOOD, SOME A LOAD OF NONSENSE.."

offering 3 very different cleaning bristles in a brush that's more suitable for cleaning windows. We also provide two re-usable and interchangeable brush heads, one with a scraper and another with a pivot head, so you only need to replace the worn out brush.

LB: So in 2009, you started the development of the Aerial Brush, which is still a good seller today?

RS: *Yes, but initially I only intended to make brushes for myself. The final version was very good and I thought it would sell. The time saving it provides is fantastic. The brushes main design features haven't changed in over 4 years. Other brushes during this time have been revamped and re-branded and many new brushes that have come out have often been influenced by Tecbuk brushes.*

LB: Explain the brushes and the attempts that lead you up to 2009, or did you kick start from 2009? I mean you must have some brushes that had gone badly, knocking around in your garden shed somewhere, right?

SR: *Yes, lots of prototype brushes. For me it was a long learning curve,. But like a lot of things, if you put a lot of time, money and effort into something, you might be lucky and get to that Eureka moment.*

LB: What was it like to deal with manufactures at the beginning? What did you need in place to start the process?

SR: *I needed everything, from the jet hose to the jets, bristles, brush nuts, everything and more. I needed equipment, a place to work etc. At first I did contact brush manufactures and I discovered that none of them knew anything about window cleaning brushes! This isn't as surprising as you might think, WFP window cleaning is relatively a new industry, and although 'brushes' have been around for hundreds of years, window cleaning brushes haven't. The brush industry didn't have any idea what was required from a brush that was to be used for cleaning windows. Some brush parts are easier to source, such as the hose and brush nuts, and then you have to get the right price for them. Other things you have to make yourself, or get them made. It's a combination of sourcing parts, making parts yourself, and getting parts made. Then you have to keep stock and have a work area for assembly and equipment, storage, logos, website, sales, packaging,*

shipping, etc. The more you dig, the deeper you get into it, but it is something I have enjoyed doing.

LB: Do you have a background in brushes?

SR: *At the time no background or experience in brushes. In fact, window cleaning is a service based business, what I was attempting to do at the time was throw myself into a product based business. It's been a very different experience, but over the past 5 years I gained a lot of knowledge and experience and subsequently I think I have forced the WFP brush market to up there own game. This benefits window cleaners with a wider choice of brushes. Competitors buy Tecbuk brushes all the time, and in some cases have flown from overseas to see me and the brushes. Many won't realise the full impact that Tecbuk brushes have had on the window cleaning brush market. This is something I am proud of, after all Lee, I'm just a self employed window cleaner who happens to sell a few brushes each year, but I get the CEO and technical directors of international companies call and ask for advice on where to begin when making there own window cleaning brushes.*

LB: What were window cleaners telling you at this time about brushes?

RS: *Surprisingly not too much, they all knew like me that something more was needed from a brush, but what? You listen, and gets loads of ideas, some very good, some a load of nonsense, then you try and see what works. Back in 2009 it was new ground, the only thing that was happening at the time was a reduction*



in brush weight, and that's it. The brush stock, the bristles, the splay, spread, and brush heads everything etc, was all the same, nothing new other than a weight reduction.

LB: Is it true you were the first in the world to include a removable scraper on a brush?

SR: *Probably not on a brush, but on a window cleaning brush, yes I think so.*

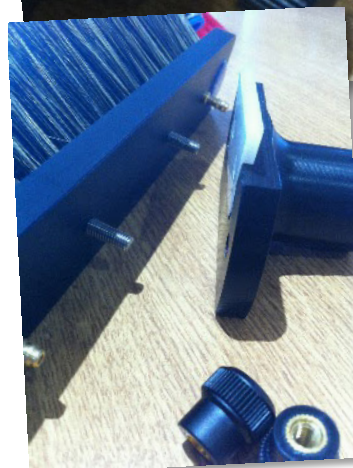
LB: Why the scraper idea? Where did that come from?

SR: *Standing in another customers back garden cleaning a window over a conservatory roof – I needed a scraper to remove a large and stubborn bird strike on the glass. So I decided to make one for those times when it's needed. It's a simple idea, but it took me weeks to figure it out. Two or three evenings per week I would make prototypes, I got there in the end. I think the Side Track pivot brush head, by comparison, which has moving parts, took me about a weekend to do.*

LB: Do you think that a brush is the most important part of a water fed pole?

SR: *As far as production goes it is one of the most important parts of your equipment, (pure water aside) and it has been overlooked by both window cleaners and suppliers. By 'important' what I mean is, most window cleaners don't need their Reverse Osmosis whilst cleaning, but the RO is an important piece of equipment. So from a production point of view, the choice of brush is important if you want to increase your working hourly rate. The difference between brushes is huge, even within the Tecbuk range. But the end result of cleaning the window will be the same, but not the cleaning time; and that leads you to the prices you charge your customers and potential earnings. The difference can be measured in a lot of money over a year. Working methods have moved forwards from how things used to be done just a few years ago. Window cleaners now use WFP brushes much more to their own benefit. I find that window cleaners these days will not think to put one brush on the pole for a year or two, and then go and clean every type of job with it.*

More window cleaners realise that time is money, and just by having better working practices, you can earn more money. The brush is a big part of that process.



LB: Would you ever design a pole?

RS: *I have, just never got to full production stage. No Eureka moment for me on this one.*

LB: How many brushes are in your range?

RS: *Good question! On the website I think there are six, but I also I have others available not yet on the website and there are two new Hybrid brushes to go on the site soon. I just haven't got around to doing some photos.*

LB: Explain what a brush 'knot' is.

RS: *A brush knot! A single 'knot of bristle' is an individual clump of bristle or filaments that makes up the brush when you get enough of them in a stock. You can just call it a bunch or clump of bristles if you want, as long as the other person knows what you are talking about.*

LB: What is the difference between splay and spread?



RS: *Splay is the overall natural shape of the bristles that make the brush. The Spread is how the bristles react when used and moved; the shape, size of the spread is relevant to the performance when the brush is on the glass. The knots create the splay which then creates the spread, this is important. You must have come across brushes used for window cleaning with gaps in the spread, or they don't spread easily, willingly or evenly on the glass. With brushes like those you do need to go over the glass more often and a tell tale sign that the brush is behaving in a less efficient way.*

LB: **So how do angle bristles and trim help in agitation?**

RS: *You want with any brush to get as many bristles working. The trim part of the brush is easy compared to getting the angles correct. One big difference with Tecbuk brushes compared to other makes, is the angles of the knots. Also, each individual knot is angled differently to the next. It makes the brushes very effective, having over 170 different angled knots of bristle in a single brush. To put that into perspective, some other window cleaning brushes have as few as 9 different angles, with the majority of the knots spread across 4 orientations. With a brush like this you need to move the brush slightly as well as do more brush strokes on the glass to engage more bristles. They still clean, but they take longer to clean.*

LB: **Why is the Aerial brush so special? Its changed shape from squared to radius corners? Why? When? Is it special, or are other brushes ordinary?**

RS: *The radius is more cosmetic, but has practical use for heavy handed users. It came about by popular demand from window cleaners who prefer a radius on the corner of the brush stock. The window cleaning brush stock is different to traditional brushes. The stock needs a much lower profile, to get the bristles to work more effectively for window cleaning. The Tecbuk brush stock is approximately 40 mm, with an equal splay, which is 100mm. Stock area size is approximately 12.5*

square inches and the cleaning area size is approximately 68.5 square inches, with 100% layered area. Gram for gram of brush weight, Tecbuk brushes pack far more punch on the glass. Stock length is 220mm, about 8.5 inches; this has been made to fit small windows no wider than a single house brick. You don't have to turn the brush so often. Stating the brush size for a WFP brush by measuring the stock length isn't accurate; you should state the size by the cleaning area. Tecbuk brushes typically are 12.5 inches (by 5.5 inches), but have a stock of approximately 8.5 inches (1.5 inch). Brushes are big because of the stock size, but this can also lead to a smaller or less effective cleaning area.

LB: **Does the window cleaner have to adjust their cleaning when using the Aerial?**

RS: *I usually encourage any users of Tecbuk brushes to speed up, that's the main point to these brushes. To be confident in there own cleaning and make some changes. That applies to any new equipment that provides real benefits. When you use a Tecbuk brush you will notice a difference from what you have used before, so you really should make some changes to your working practices.*

LB: **Why are your brushes more expensive?**

RS: *Quality does cost more; saying that I don't think they are expensive for what you get. I do think paying £30 for a cheaper made brush that performs poorly will end up costing you more. A Tecbuk brush over its brief lifetime will clean enough windows to earn a lot more money. Your time is more valuable than what the brush cost, so speed of cleaning is priority. I have customers*



"...I AM AMAZED THAT SOME WINDOW CLEANERS STILL THINK YOU HAVE TO DO A FINAL RINSE.."

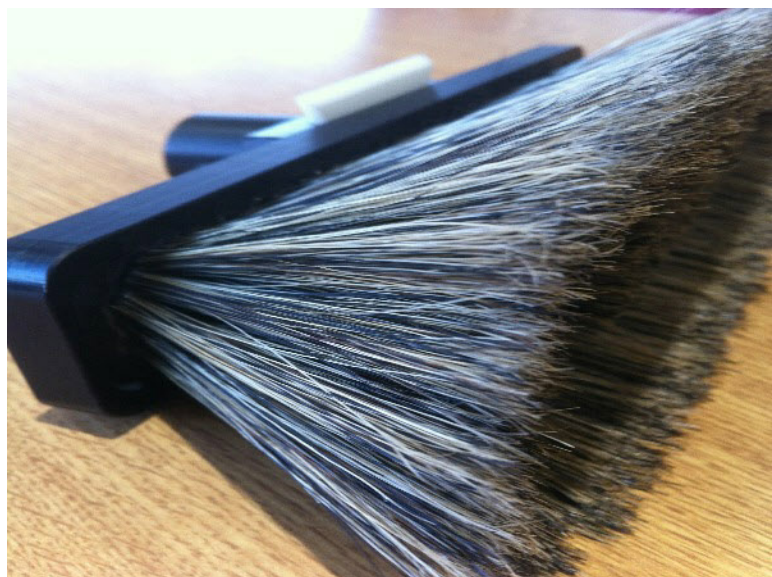
who earn in excess of £50,000 per year and use 3-4 brushes per year. Some still grumble about the price, but I remind them of what they have earned with the brushes! Typically, a Tecbuk Brush will need to be replaced after 350 hours of use, or based on earnings, after £15,000. You base these figures on how hard you work the brush and your own hourly rate, so adjust accordingly. The two types of Tecbuk brush heads can last you years, but you should always replace the brush as soon as its performance starts to slow down through wear, that applies to any brush. If you get through three replacement Tecbuk jetted brushes per year the cost works out at about £2.50 per week. If that's too expensive maybe you should be looking at other aspects of the business, rather than the cost of WFP brushes. The cost to use a Tecbuk brush per customer clean might be as low as £0.03p, so there's not much saving to be made by buying a less effective brush. Besides, if you minus the cost of the cheaper brush that cost say £30, the difference in price is probably £0.01p per customer clean.

LB: So you think your brushes will help a window cleaner work faster. Why?

RS: Yes, definitely. They will enable you to work faster. The brushes are efficient, so you can maintain your working pace and still be quicker on the glass. You can physically go faster yourself to get even more work done, but that is up to the individual user. They do have to be used with a good working method in order to get the fastest cleaning speed from them. Ultimately it will always come down to the quality of the window cleaner and not any one piece of equipment. You measure your own progress or performance with improvements in your hourly rate.

LB: How important is weight?

RS: Typically, the brushes without any other components attached, weigh in around 200 grams, give or take 5%. The weight of the brush is important, but more so is cleaning time. I would never reduce the amount of cleaning bristle just to make the brush lighter; this would obviously impact on the cleaning time. Typically, a 25ft pole, pole hose, water and brush etc, can weigh 2kg, so it would be wrong to increase cleaning time by removing bristles for the sake of saving a few grams in brush weight, when the overall weight of a working 25ft CF pole is close to 2000 grams. It just doesn't make sense to increase cleaning time for the sake of a 5% weight reduction. Tecbuk brush weight has been reduced over the years, and at the same time



the cleaning area has increased and the bristle count has gone up; no one else has done this before.

LB: I am amazed that you feel rinsing the glass isn't always necessary with the Aerial brush? Can you explain?

RS: I am amazed that some window cleaners still think you have to do a final rinse with every pane of glass they have cleaned! I expect this comes from the first type of Nylon brushes used for WFP. Brushes have changed since then, and hopefully so have working practices. With some Tecbuk brushes, yes, you can clean windows without the final rinse, in conjunction with the cleaning method. Let me explain brushes first, with all absorbent Nylon bristled brushes, you must rinse, otherwise you will get a lot of spotting. Boars Hair brushes I would recommend you rinse, although with a higher water flow rate and depending on the work, you won't have to do so much. Polyester bristled brushes are different, it's a non-absorbent bristle and so it won't retain any dirty water, so with a good working method and knowledge of your own work, you don't have to rinse every pane of glass you clean, it's at your own discretion. It's very easy to do a little test yourself, to see if you can do it, but breaking old habits is hard. Once you know you can clean glass without the final rinse needed every time, then you can refine your cleaning method to suit, and confidently move quickly onto the next window.

LB: What are your thoughts about conventional brushes?

RS: I tend to think about speed of cleaning with WFP brushes. But it's never really about the brush or any



individual piece of equipment. Failing is just an aspect of winning; you can't win all of the time or everyday, no matter how well equipped you are. You could use a 'conventional brush' and still be a winner with regards to earnings. An improvement in brushes or any other equipment, or even something more drastic as a window cleaner changing his cleaning method totally, from traditional to WFP - will just amplify the individual's abilities and current achievements. The question is, why would anyone continue to use a less efficient brush?

LB: Looking at the splay of the current dual trim, will you look at a purpose built sill brush in the future?

RS: I don't think it's necessary with a modern window cleaning brush with a low profile stock. Sill brushes came about because at the time there were no real WFP brushes with a good working angle. You can still clean the sill with the right angled bristle. If you do have a very dirty sill to clean, or a first clean job, you might change your brush as well as adjust the angle adapter to clean all the window sills on the property first.

LB: Pencil or spray jets?

RS: Pencil for speed on regular work wins every time, but I will in the future offer spray jets for customers.

LB: 1 jet or 2 jets?

RS: Depends on the size of the brush, and how the water flows through the brush. Tecbuk brushes only require the 2 x pencil jets, with a 2 mm jet diameter. Water flow rate can be adjusted from zero to over 4 litres a minute depending on the pump.

A simple test for you. You can clean a typical front door or back door window (2ft x 3ft) with just 10ml of water from a spray bottle and micro fibre cloth. Using a WFP with a water flow rate of 2lt per minute will give you over 33ml of water per second, so a good WFP brush can clean it in less time than doing it by hand, just 2-4 seconds (without the need to rinse) spot free. More jets! How fast can you move your arms Lee?

LB: What are your thoughts on overspray jets?

RS: Why not, I like to keep an open mind. I haven't done this so can't really say much, as long as you have the choice to turn it off, and if they can be used to help reduce cleaning time on the job.

LB: What would you say is your ultimate best seller?

RS: In the UK it has to be the 18% Hybrid brush and the Dual Trim Boars Hair, but I often sell out of all the different brush types.

LB: You have the World's (first) and only dual trimmed Boars Hair brush. This type of brush is big in the US, why did you bring it to the UK market?

RS: Tecbuk brushes have the World's first and only in a few things; but the DT Boars Brush is one of them. It's a great cleaning bristle, and that many window cleaners in the USA, Europe and the UK are not wrong about using Boars Hair. A lot of artificial bristles try to emulate the Boars hair cleaning ability (and fail) and there is a big demand for Boars brushes from smart window cleaners here in the UK who realise the brushes potential. If the demand is there I will continue to offer it.

LB: Tell us about the production of making the Boars Hair brush.

RS: All the brush components are the same apart from the three different types of bristles I use, and maybe some ad hoc brush stock such as the CF, Teak, and Acetal stocks. So what goes into each brush is very similar, apart from the bristles or stock material.

LB: What type of glass is best for using a Boars Hair? Has the UK received it well?

RS: Any glass, but with coated glass I would recommend Boars Hair brushes to be sure that you are doing everything to protect the surface coating. Since the Dual trim Boars brush was available for sale in the UK, they have outsold the Full Trim version.

LB: Thank you for talking with WCM, Richard it has been a pleasure.

RS: Thanks Lee.

Want to learn more about Tecbuk?
Click or scan here.



Richard Sorrell
owner of Tecbuk



18 DJ Coach Carroll

Window Cleaning Magazine's serial entrepreneur



**IN THE NEW
ECONOMY
YOUR PROSPECTS LIVE
ONLINE**



The market is not what it once was. Yellow Pages, Magazines, Direct Mail and as much as it pains me to say it - yes even cold calling; have lost some or all effectiveness. In the new economy your prospects live online. In fact day by day, more and more people spend less time in the "real life" and more time in VR (virtual reality). Now before you go messaging me about 3D world - we aren't talking View Master - in the new economy we will become one with our phones and communicate in complete digital languages ... we are talking matrix's shit ... ones and zeros.

But I don't want to get too Sci-fi channel on you so let's reel it back in and take a look at it for what it is today.

Facebook

At 1.49 billion, Facebook has more monthly active users than WhatsApp (500 million), Twitter (284 million) and Instagram (200 million)—combined. (Source: CNBC) I can still hear the echos of marketing execs back in 2005 promising that Facebook was sure to be a "fad for millennials." Well, I think we see who was on the wrong side of that bet.

Personally, I have been able to use Facebook to automate the entire outbound marketing side of my residential business. The last part of that sentence is the important part. RESIDENTIAL. Nonetheless we now have an ever flowing stream of leads that continue to come in and our office staff closes and schedules them more efficiently and effectively than ever before.

Last week I was doing one of the many weekly free consultations I offer to entrepreneurs. As we began to talk about the company's online advertising a HUGE red flag went up. The gentleman I was on the phone

with (we will call him John) began to talk about his commercial hood cleaning company and how he has recently added on concrete cleaning. Great idea - I'm a big fan of up selling. But when I asked if he had done any form of Facebook advertising, he responded that he ran a few ads for concrete cleaning but hadn't had any luck. Anytime I hear this I know it has to be one of a few problems.

- * Targeting
- * Budget
- * Creative
- * Copy
- * Call To Action
- * Lead Page

After digging a bit deeper I uncovered that he thought restaurant managers might see his ads on Facebook. Big no no.

There are tens of thousands of dollars literally blown on Facebook every day by people that see the "slot machine of Internet advertising" called the "boost" button - and spend \$5-\$10 on ads that are not target driven at all. Leaving a bad taste in their mouth and the possibility that they are missing out completely on what could be their biggest money generating activity.

So let's break it down. First and foremost on a local scale - Facebook ads are best used for targeting residential prospects when it comes to cleaning services companies (which is you!) You could target deeply with Facebook, but honestly at this point in the game I'm still a little skeptical on just how accurate those targeting features are. BUT and it's a big BUT - don't let that push you away. Facebook ads are still hands down the cheapest way to brand your business and get in front of the clients that can, should and will hire you.

The Long Game

Focus on a long term strategy. Your social media marketing strategy should include several aspects other than just running ads on the back side of Facebook. Blogs, project pictures, videos and contests should all be integrated for a well rounded campaign. Remember you don't need to win tomorrow - business is a game of strategy ... start building your brand today to dominate your local market.

LinkedIn

"But Coach - what if we target commercial clients?" No worries - hop over to LinkedIn and start getting linked up with the professionals that make the buying decisions for your clients or the clients you wish you had.

I have made a crazy amount of connections on LinkedIn and I feel like it still isn't truly being harnessed to the fullest ability. I'm doing extension testing and research on LinkedIn ads and how the

prospects consume content on that platform.

It's a great place to write blogs and post more "corporate" content. If that is your niche market I would highly recommend pony up the cash for their premium package. The features are amazing.

Google

I know I know it's not a social network but I'm here to help you, so I believe I would be doing you a disservice if I didn't drop a little knowledge on how the consumer changes mindsets from platform to platform. When you can understand your customer from their point of view - you unlock the cheat code on the basis of all the content you produce.

When people go to Google they are searching out a service - see what I did there? They don't care about your blog, they don't care about much of anything honestly. They are focused on the struggle they are going through and trying to find a solution to make it go away.

Your landing page from Google should be locked, loaded and ready to collect the prospects info as soon as they land on your page.

When your prospect is on Facebook they are looking for meaningful content that will influence them to do business with you. Understanding these two states of mind, and making sure you are adapted to handle both, is of the utmost importance in the new economy. Here's to your success
-Coach



Window Cleaning magazine

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seeking clarity in the UK;

window cleaning from different angles

20

by
**Carrie
Guenther**



*H*ere's a question for you all. Have you ever thought about why and how you love your job as a window cleaner, and felt a curiosity that makes you want to connect with other window cleaners? Has it ever occurred to you that every single place in the modern world contains windows, and those windows will always get dirty, and there are millions of us out here, just like you, wherever people roam, with endless glass to clean?

Take note, folks. This is a movement. This is big, big stuff. We are a huge, worldwide group of people with glass cleaning in common, and with social media as it is, the possibilities of connecting and improving our work lives through sharing and communicating are amazingly, giddily endless. I, for one, feel pretty grateful and lucky to be taking some of those opportunities to the next level.

I've been visiting friends and family in the United Kingdom since 1999. I bought my window cleaning business in 2013. When I started travelling to England, I was in my early twenties, envisioning a trajectory of

continued adventuring across countries in some capacity. I wouldn't have guessed that, fifteen-odd-years in the future, I'd have a career I love as a window cleaner, much less that I'd be taking part in filming a window cleaning documentary there, but that's what happened. For a few days during the first week in September this summer, I got to hang out with other window cleaners from my own country, in a foreign country, work alongside window cleaners native to that country, and have the whole thing filmed on big expensive TV cameras and drones. That's crazy in the best of ways.

This filming project was certainly something I never expected to be involved in when I started cleaning windows. I never even knew there were things like conventions and Facebook groups and magazines for window cleaners. I'm sure, like most folks, I figured cleaning windows was a pretty straightforward deal. Scrub, squeegee, clean up, go-home-and-have-a-beer,

"...THIS WHOLE THING WAS A BIG UNKNOWN..."

repeat. Simple. But that was before I started writing for The Magazine. Now, making window cleaning interesting and entertaining is just another part of my job.

So, after my annual visit to Plymouth, UK, (in the southwest corner of the island, which is - coincidentally - where the Mayflower set sail from) I took the train across the bottom of the country to Bromley, and met up with editor Lee Burbidge, his partner Lisa, and three people from Nevada and California; Jamie Poulin, owner of Lake Tahoe Window Cleaning, and her two best window cleaners, Josh and Corey. Together, with about ten or twelve English window cleaners, in three cities and four different job sites, we set out to film a documentary about Americans learning how things are done in England.

This whole thing was a big, unknown, fun and messy experiment. It all started, as so many things do, with an intention and a Facebook email.

Lee and I are in touch regularly because of the writing I do for the magazine. When I told him of my summer's plan to visit family in the UK, the idea for the documentary started to form. It got more interesting when we decided to invite another American female window cleaner to be involved. I was enthusiastic about meeting another rare-bird, so-to-speak, in my industry, but also slightly intimidated by her bad ass persona.

She's a snowboarder, a mom, and has a crew of men working for her. Lake Tahoe Window Cleaning is far more financially successful than my little Window Ninja business. She'd had an article written about her in the magazine, and I was friends with her on Facebook, but that was all I knew of her. Then Lee put me in charge of contacting her and discussing the details of our plan.

My initial email went something like this: "Hi, Jamie. Lee Burbidge and I have a mission to make window cleaning entertaining and beautiful. We thought you might like to join forces with us in a project to do so. Do you have a current passport?"

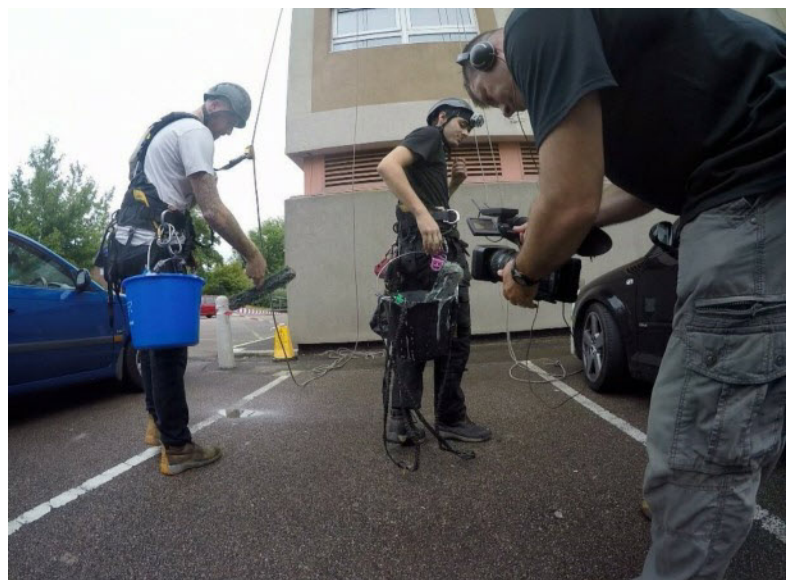
At first, her responses were minimal. She didn't seem all that interested, I worried. But it turned out that a local window cleaner in her community had taken his own life, and many of his clients had fallen into her hands. She was working ridiculous hours. Finally though, she told me that not only was she coming to England to join the mission, but she was

bringing two of her best cleaners with her. I was overjoyed. Yay ... more new friends!

What I discovered during this trip was that all my previous visits to the UK helped me to understand the life and culture there, which helped me process the differences in window cleaning between the UK and home, and why they exist. I also learned how vast the differences can be just between states in my own country. But at the same time, I also became aware of some of the things we all have in common, as window cleaners, across-the-board.

When I'm visiting the UK, I function as a part of a typical British household. To a citizen of the gigantic USA, life in England can seem miniaturized. On one hand, it is deceptive: driving between cities and villages, the open expanses of landscape, though more consistently green and damp and full-of-sheep than a lot of the American landscape, convey a sense of space and openness we take for granted anywhere outside the big cities of North America. But on the other hand, when you're in an average English village and home, everything is way more compact and small. Their houses and appliances are smaller, the space between homes and families is smaller, and cars and streets and shops and businesses are smaller.

I won't go into my feelings on English food, nor the weather there in the winter, because I am trying to keep this article positive. Let's just say there are several good reasons why I would probably never choose to live there permanently. It is, after all, family that keeps me coming back, and not the weather nor the food.



"...TO ME THE PURPOSE OF THIS EXPERIMENT WAS NEVER TO PROVE SUPERIORITY."



As far as window cleaning goes, the difference in the size of things, the way the buildings are constructed, the age of the buildings, the weather, clients' standards, health and safety regulations, these are all things that play a part in why window cleaning is just different in the UK than in the US.

Let me be clear. To me, the purpose of this experiment was never to prove superiority. There was never a goal in mind of saying, "our way is better." The intent was to learn, and to connect. And that is what I did.

The thing that fueled me about this project was looking forward to personally connecting with other window cleaners. My work life is a lonely one. I work by myself. I have one other window cleaning buddy in my hometown, but all other contacts are via that impersonal and textual world known as social media. I'm way more enthused about face-to-face interaction

with other human beings. I was just so excited to hang out with other squeegee geeks, I didn't care much about anything else that might happen.

Our American window cleaning crew got to work with four different British window cleaning companies, and our first adventure was in a little outskirts-of-London village called Bromley.

When I arrived on the train from Plymouth, I was "knackered," as they say in the UK. Run-down, sleep-deprived, and sick. I had a cold sore and my hair was, to use another British word, a tip. Lee cheerfully texted me, as the train got close to my destination, "The cameras are all set up. We will be filming you meeting Lisa at the station and walking around the corner."

Good God, what have I gotten myself into? I thought, and I lunged for makeup, lurching around in the train loo, wishing I could look glamorous; radiant and vibrant. You know, like people on TV are supposed to look.

But when I saw Lisa's face at the station, everything was okay. She was instantly calming and comforting. Capable and self-assured. She's an interior designer and a mother of three. She's Welsh. She has the temperament of a saint; all big blue eyes, light blond hair and dimples. Within a few moments of my arrival, she had me laughing and relaxed.

When you aren't used to having cameras in your face, it's really awkward at first. There are things that go into making video that most people never think about, like lighting and background noise and where to look. While filming my "intro" at the hotel before the Lake Tahoe crew arrived, Lee asked me questions from behind one camera, had another camera filming me from four feet away, and told me to look at a breakfast menu standing up on a desk across the room as I answered his questions. It was extremely awkward and I was really uncomfortable, but that was really the worst of it. I gradually got used to the cameras being around and I even did my own video diaries at the end of each day, using my iPhone, and got past the whole damn-I-look-weird feeling that you get when you're not used to seeing your own face on a screen, talking. I imagine it felt the same for the others, but by the end of our time together, they seemed pretty used to the cameras, too.

When Jamie, Josh and Corey arrived, they told us about their rented car and getting stuck in a round-



Carrie, Josh, Mark, Corey, Jamie in Central London

about for an hour. Roundabouts are just bizarre inventions, for most Americans. We like to reach our destinations by the fastest and most direct route possible. And though it's true that there are more roundabouts being added to our roads because of safety reasons, that doesn't mean we have to like them. Also, luggage had been lost, and a phone had been misplaced. Jamie had sent Lee and I a text saying, "I have to find a converter for my hair-straightener. You can't film me without my hair straightened, I have an afro." So everything was a bit chaotic at first, plus none of us really knew what to expect. At least we were all relieved to find that we got along well. Drinks at the pub was the first thing on the schedule that night, and Lee outlined what we'd be doing the next day.

I kept thinking we should be filming absolutely every moment of Jamie, Josh and Corey's reactions to England in general. Like their response to baked beans being served at breakfast. That sort of thing. But you can't have a camera out every minute of every day. And after all, our focus was on the window cleaning.

Next morning we all met up with Jack Sewell, director of Sewell Window Cleaning and Maintenance, Ltd, and his employee, Alex. The building, Jack told me, was an assisted living facility for seniors and single moms. When he told me they have the windows done about every three months, I remember really feeling like that was a great thing for their tenants. I know of so many assisted living buildings in my area that seem to never have their windows cleaned.

It makes a difference to peoples' mental health, I think, to have clean windows to look out of. In the states, poor folks don't often get to have the luxury of clean windows. It's definitely more for the upper class, but as I found out later, that's also because it costs much less to have clean windows in the UK than it costs in the US.

At first I think the Americans were all pretty bewildered while watching the two Englishmen securing the ropes they would hang from. Standards and methods are different between countries. Health and safety regulations are more strict in certain ways, and less strict in other ways. For me, I've always just loved watching how other people work. Everything was fascinating, right down to hearing the difference in accents and noting all the steps taken to prepare for the drops. Any reluctance or trepidation these two Men had at having a bunch of strangers hanging out

The US gang checking out UK rope access work



“..ENTERING A POSTCODE INTO A GPS MAKES ABSOLUTELY NO SENSE TO US.”

was balanced out, I think, by some of the more fun moments. Jack was tying complicated knots with such speed and skill that he seemed like Houdini. The Americans were riveted. Jamie demonstrated how to use a metal cylinder she'd brought from home, used to lower herself on the ropes. The two Brits had never seen anything like it before. We all shared our stories of what brought us to window cleaning for a living, and that's always an interesting conversation. We all came to it from different paths, but we all love it, and that's the main thing we have in common.

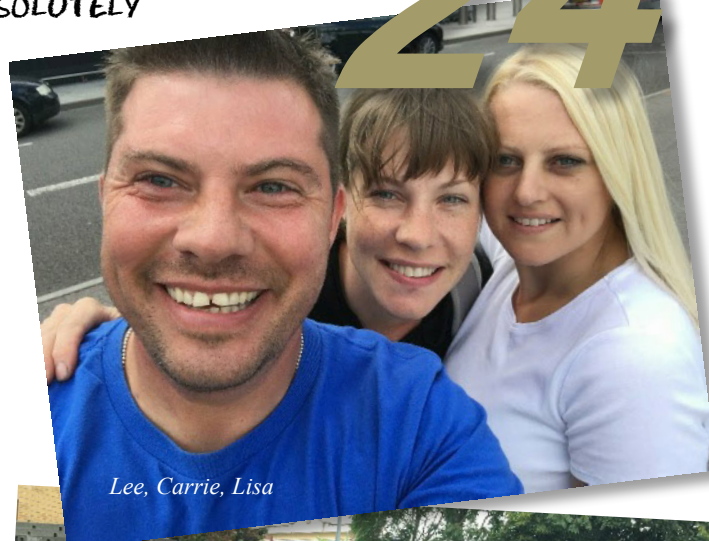
Though most of their work is residential, the Lake Tahoe crew does do drop work occasionally, and are all skilled at it. They were much more invested in what they were seeing and learning.

For me, being on the top of that building was mainly just observation. I use ladders and squeegees and only go up to three stories in my residentially-based business. I've done one rope drop in my life, thanks to a local Native American father-and-son team, who kindly taught me about ropes and harnesses on the grounds of Mystic Lake Casino in southern Minnesota. But otherwise, I've only just observed. It was fun to see Lee's directing skills in action, and Lisa and I amused ourselves by taking our own photos and video with our phones, like panoramic views and group shots of the other workers.

From Bromley we said goodbye to Jack and Alex and headed into central London to meet up with Mark Race and his employee Adriana. One funny thing that kept happening during this trip was that the Lake Tahoe cleaners in their rented car kept asking for the addresses of our destinations, to enter into their GPS system. Lee would answer by giving them a post code.

Lee, Lisa and I were in Lee's truck and though the intention was always to stay just in front of the rented car, we kept losing them. Especially in a place like London, there's no following your homie in their car. You will lose them, eventually. The problem is that Americans always enter a full address (house number, etc) to get to where we're going. The concept of entering a post code into the GPS makes absolutely no sense to us.

What none of us realized until later was that British post codes can get you to within three houses of where you want to be. We have a hard time wrapping our head around that. And our technology simply does not accept that. Jamie's American phone could make no sense of British post codes, and so - often lacking an exact street address - those guys got lost a lot.



Lee, Carrie, Lisa



Jack, Josh, Corey, Lee, Jamie, Carrie, Alex, in Bromley



Corey, Jamie, Josh, Steve, Lee in Lee's village



Josh, Jamie, Tom, Lee, Carrie, Corey in Nottingham



*Roosevelt Memorial in front of the American Embassy,
Grosvenor Sq., London.
A rare representation of Roosevelt standing.*

When we finally found ourselves at the next destination, we were right next to the American embassy in the Center of the city (London). The goal was for all of us Americans to check out the reach of a gigantic water fed pole on an eight story, very classic building typical of what Mark Race (the next company Lee had lined up) of Race Team Window Cleaning normally works on. He works in some of the most posh neighborhoods in central London. I assume that much of the construction in those areas are similar to the building where we met up: turn-of-the-century, red brick, old windows with white-painted, divided panes. This particular place was actually a block of apartments and a hotel in one building. The manager was there, smoking cigarettes in the parking garage and watching us with interest.

I have used water fed poles in the past when I went out to Arizona to work with a company and write a story about it for the magazine. I don't use them in my own work. Jamie and the guys have a WFP system but use it very rarely. Still, we were all eager to give it a go. Personally, I wouldn't be able to do much with a pole that size. I'm just not strong enough to hold it comfortably for any length of time, and I'm not able to manoeuvre it well enough to get any good results. I'm sure I'd get better with practice, but, damn: that's hard work. I admire Mark's skills. I was impressed with the reach of the pole and I also understand the necessity of doing windows that way in an ancient city like London where people live very, very close together, and health and safety regulations discourage the use of ladders whenever possible. Mark clearly loves being a window cleaner and is great at what he does, but in my own work life, working with a pole like that would definitely suck some of the enjoyment out of my day.



After we all tried out the water fed pole, we decided it was time to head to the pub. But first, Josh and Corey pulled some cases out of the rental car and started assembling their BMX bikes right there in the parking ramp. While the rest of us enjoyed our first round of drinks, the boys set off to put air in the tires. I got to talk with both Mark and Adriana at length, and they are both super sweet and lovely people. It was so nice to get a chance to know them. And - as you might expect - I am always supremely happy to meet other women in the industry. Adriana seems to enjoy her job for all the same reasons we all do; working outside, different job sites every day, and the instant gratification you get from cleaning something and seeing that humble little difference you just made in the world.

After the pub, we said goodbye to Mark and Adriana and headed to the park that lies just in front of our country's embassy. It seemed very appropriate: Josh and Corey raising eyebrows all over the place with their daring and skilled BMX biking tricks and stunts. Jamie and I each took a turn on the bikes as well. I'm happy to report I jumped a curb that was the base of a statue of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and biked down a couple of staircases without harming myself or others.

It was a good way to unwind. I don't think any of us but Lee had any clue how time consuming, complicated and exhausting it is to film anything. We were all just learning-through-doing. Same thing for the British window cleaners who volunteered to be involved. I don't think anyone knew what to expect. For example, one part of our day that made me cringe a bit, but which is surely just a normal part of making TV, is that, that morning, Lee had Jack and Alex do the same rope drops three times. That means they washed those same two columns of windows not once or twice, but thrice. All in the name of getting the best camera and video shots. If I were Jack or Alex, I would have been tempted to chuck my squeegee at Lee's head. But - like all of us - the guys were in this to make a good documentary. Because if we don't, who will? We're all pioneers in this. No one's ever done this in window cleaning before. We're making history, and it's pretty exciting. **(To be continued)**

Hair cut? anyone?

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Wagga talks pricing residential work



"JOB DONE!"

By Wagga

How you price up a window cleaning job is going to be one of the most important aspects to the success of your business. So why do we tend to get it so wrong at times? Well to be honest, there is no perfect format that you can employ to get the optimum results every time. There are a lot of factors at play and you have to work round these as best you can.

I am going to stick with domestic window cleaning in this article rather than with commercial work, which I might just tackle in the future. One of the things I have noticed as a window cleaner in the North East for nearly thirty years, is that there are differences with pricing here than further down the South of the country. Of course, I am talking about the UK here, but if you are from other parts of the World, then this article may still be of some interest. I have often heard it said that in the South of the UK, it's more expensive to live and that goes for property prices too. So it is inevitable that a higher charge might be warranted to clean a house in the South because of the higher cost of living. Conversely, the closer you get to Scotland,

the less you can generally charge, or people will be willing to pay. Of course it works both ways here. You can get away with earning a bit less as housing and living costs are less up North. Also, there are a greater proportion of people with money and willing and able to pay for a premium service in the South.

One big mistake I have made is to compare my earnings with the minimum wage. Compared to that, my earnings are vastly superior, but it has led me to become complacent with my house pricing. Don't let this hold you back as though you don't deserve to earn a good amount and somehow feel grateful to be earning more. The minimum wage reminds me of the race to the bottom where it tends to be going. I see so many window cleaners who just seem to miss the potential out there and do themselves out of a much better standard of living. I could do with listening to my own advice here too!

Before we go any further, make sure you become as professional and efficient as possible for your circumstances, making sure your equipment and technique is up to scratch first. If you are working traditionally with ladders and squeegee, consider converting to water fed pole. This way you will have the advantage of reaching hard to get to windows faster, safer, and can offer a better service such as

gleaming frames and doors (even garage doors done in less than a minute). To do this without water fed pole equipment is possible but is not so easy or anywhere near as efficient. There are a couple of strategies that I am going to suggest, one of which is the "haircut strategy". This is what you would pay for a haircut for a man in your particular area. Just an ordinary barbers and times it by six. This is what you should potentially aim for per hour. So, if you pay £6 for a haircut and times it by six you get £36. If you live in more affluent areas then it may be £8 so the hourly rate becomes £48. For every storey above the first floor add another haircut. You also need to take into account the cost of extra equipment, such as larger carbon fibre poles and the higher workload with it's associated risks on windy days.

Another strategy would be a minimum pricing scheme whereby you do not accept work any less than say £10 for anything including just the front. Some you will win and some you will lose, but you end up with more profitable work. I personally don't recommend the use of contracts for domestic work as it will put off potential customers who will then choose someone else. It has to be a trust thing with a verbal agreement. It won't always work but this is the nature of the job - good will. You will soon sort out the good customers from the bad.

Some have suggested the more technical strategy. This is where you estimate how many windows a property has and say charge a £1 for each window and door. Sometimes this can work out quite well but it can get too difficult, but it will give you a better overall idea of how much you should be charging during your assessment. Don't just assume what's at the back of a house. Although you will make some mistakes, always try to look at what is actually at the back of a property. Once you get round there you might be surprised. I once had the shock of my life when I realised that the house had two of the largest conservatories I had ever seen - yes two! It then becomes a little awkward to renegotiate.... The most recommended way to assess a property is to think about how much time it will take you. This takes experience but it won't take long to get this right, especially if you make some mistakes. You learn by your mistakes as they say, and when you have underestimated some work, you soon find out if it takes you nearly an hour to do and you have only charged £10. That is a bit of an extreme granted, but yes I have done it.

There might actually be reasons to charge less than you would like though. With competition increasing every year, the old "race for the bottom" syndrome raises it's head again. Unlike Scotland where there is a licence scheme for window cleaners, in England this is not necessary and encourages all sorts of unprofessional people to have a go. I have seen people actually drinking beer at the top of the ladders! Some

will have a go and will be claiming social security. So to them, it may seem easy money. If they are making £80 per week and only charging a small amount they see this as good money. Of course, most don't seem to grasp the potential of the professional who can command this sort of money before dinner, if not in the hour, and I am talking of one man on his own. But this is an extreme situation, and unless you can convince the householder that they are paying for a premium service, when you offer the whole works including the garage door, then it might not be worth trying to compete on price in this sort of area.

If you have to travel to areas a little further than you would like, then you must take into consideration the time it takes to travel and the cost of fuel. You should add this in and if the householder does not agree with your price then you have to explain the costs involved and sell your premium service. Sometimes it's best to just walk away rather than compromise too much. "But my last window cleaner only charged £5" Well why aren't they still doing them? Often it was because they did a rubbish job and this is often evident when you look at the house with your experienced eye. Or perhaps they just got fed up of not making any money. You won't win them all and sometimes - just walk away.

When canvassing, yes do leaflets at the same time, but always knock on the door and speak to anyone that might be in. This way you can sell yourself and your business. Even if they say they have a window cleaner, try to have a glance at what sort of job they have done. It's surprising at how much better you can do it if you are prepared to clean all the frames and doors. Believe me, if you do it right then they will truly sparkle. Once you get a foothold in an area then you have greater ammunition. For instance, I do the houses on either side of one that is in a real state. The difference is quite marked and I was able to point this out when I canvassed the house. They have something tangible to refer to. Many window cleaners cannot do the frames, or try to get away without doing them. I got into this situation a few years ago and I began to lose customers so I had to up my game.

If you get a new customer and it's quite dirty think about charging for a first clean. If it's a £15 house then charge say £20 or more, depending on how bad it is, but beware, there are pitfalls here, and what may seem an easy job may turn out to be a nightmare, so try hard to make an accurate assessment of the work in hand. Finally, if you find that you have too much work on and you do not want to expand with staff, then you can begin to put up your prices a bit more, or even add a haircut or two! "Job Done!"

a cause of scratched Glass

A Quest For Answers

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For decades now, window cleaners have reported encountering glass with a “rough surface” that has a “drag sensation” and exhibits a “tinkling sound” when a razor blade is passed over the surface. This type of surface has historically been described as fabricating debris in varying amounts. Historically, “fabricating debris” has been described as particles that were not adequately washed off prior to entering the tempering oven, thus getting fused or “baked” onto the surface. However, research by the IWCA in recent years has shed light on some inconsistencies in that theory.

First, lab tests that attempted to attempt a fusion of glass and sand particles failed. After heating and cooling, glass contaminated with particles failed to produce the fusion.

Second, powerful microscopes attempted to detect fused particles on actual samples of offensively scratched glass from the field. No such particles could be identified.

Third, after more than five years of searching, no actual physical specimens of glass tainted with fused fabricating debris have been delivered to the IWCA. However, we were able to gather scratched glass samples from actual construction sites in all parts of the country. Sure enough, these scratched glass samples exhibited a “rough surface” whereas many times similar glass windows on the same job site exhibited a smooth surface and did not scratch, even though the same cleaning methods were used.

Fourth, at last years IWCA Convention we introduced the idea that the rough surface of glass that appears more likely to scratch could be due to a change at the micro or nanolevel, and the term nanoscale roughness was introduced. There is an entire field of science that discusses how surfaces with a nanoscale roughness may be more prone to physical damage. The question remained however - how do the “rough surfaces” that are encountered in the field originate? Do they develop during the tempering process? Or are there other considerations? Could the development of such nanoscale roughness go back to the actual float glass process where glass is made on a bed of molten tin - producing what is known as an “air side” and a “tin side”?

It is interesting to note in the IWCA collection of scratched glass with “rough” surfaces the tin side usually corresponded with the rough side, which corresponded with the scratched side. Should this surprise us? Is it possible that the tin side of float glass can develop a random roughness?

To begin to understand this, I direct your attention to the paper “Statistical Analysis of the Metrological Properties of Float Glass” by Brian W. Yates and Alan M. Duffy. This paper speaks of a “surface roughness” that develops on the tin side of float glass and reports “It can be seen that the overall tin side surface roughness average is indeed rougher on average than the air side”. The conclusion reads: “Statistically significant differences were found between the tin and air side surface roughness values for both untreated and acid treated, with the tin side being significantly rougher than the air side.”

Is there a definite link between the rough tin side of some glass surfaces and surface scratching? Does post production heat treatment of glass exacerbate the roughness of some glass surfaces? These questions will be closely examined as you are about to see.

Armed with this knowledge, questions, and the collection of scratched glass samples, the IWCA has embarked on the first of it's kind scientific research during the summer of 2016. Dr. Paul Duffer has led the way for the IWCA to participate in a special research program at the World class Department of Materials Science and Engineering at Pennsylvania State University. Professor Seong Kim, PhD is dedicated to materials science and has much experience with glass surface studies. He will oversee the IWCA research of scratched glass at Penn State.

The IWCA is dedicated to helping window cleaners better understand the glass surfaces that window cleaners work on daily. Armed with knowledge as an industry we can develop cleaning methods and practices that will assist us in maintaining the integrity and beauty of glass, reduce possible damage, and adequately protect ourselves if aggressive cleaning techniques and restoration should become necessary on a job site. Please, stay tuned.

Contribution supplied by Paul West



The Wagtail Wave



By guest journalist Mark Strange,
Beautiful View -
The Window Cleaning Store

The Wagtail Wave....It's two, two, yes two tools in one!

Well it's time to take another look at a new Wagtail product that has recently hit the market. The Wave is Wagtail's newest entry into the water fed arena. But unlike it's past contenders like the ZapStream or the earlier version, Jetstream, the Wave takes it's function into a couple of new realms by adding twice the pivot action and by incorporating a squeegee element.

Okay first, let's back up a bit, shall we. You may recall a few years ago Wagtail came out with the Jetstream, their first water fed tool. It was a curved scrubber pad attached to Wagtail's famous pivoting handle. Wrapped around the outer perimeter of the tool was a standard 8 mm water fed hose with holes drilled in across the top to act as multiple jets. Get it? JET-STREAM. It wasn't a perfect tool but many found it useful as a way of dealing with large plates of glass, especially hydrophobic glass.

A year or two later Willie Erken, the mad inventor of Wagtail fame, refined the Jetstream by creating a much flatter scrubber surface and a few other tweaks. The newly named Zapstream was also a minor hit in some markets but I did notice a slight drop off in mentions throughout the web forums and social media after a while. At least in my circle of online friends and colleagues.

In the end, the Jetsream and Zapstream held a reputation of being a useful tool, although not perfect. The biggest complaint among users would probably be the drilled jet holes in the 8mm tubing not being in alignment with each other. This resulted in an uneven spray pattern. Some users even experienced jet holes blocked by debris, left over from the drilling out process.





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So here we are a couple of years later and the evolution has brought us to Wagtail's latest design. The Wave! This entry has given us the largest scrub pad area to date. The scrub area is completely flat and is the exact dimensions of the same blue scrub pads found on all of Wagtail's flipper combination tools. Again, like the jet stream and Zapstream, we have an 8 mm tubing going across the top, over the scrub pad area and holes have been drilled into it to act as jets. This time described as a 'wave' of water instead of 'stream'. In other words, not different really. And from my first observations, we still have a minor issue with misaligned holes and partially blocked jets. The blockage being an easy fix, misaligned holes, not so much.

Fortunately there are enough exciting upgrades to the Wave to make it a tool to consider. Just like the Swipe that I wrote about in my last article for WCM, the Wave incorporates the double direction pivot action. Yes, you get side to side pivot as well as up and down pivoting with the Wave. But wait, that's not all. The Wave can be flipped up just like the Swipe to reveal a squeegee rubber blade. Unlike the Jestream and the Zapstream, this is two, two, yes two tools in one!

One's first observation is that the Wave is both a water fed scrubber and a squeegee, but in combination it is more. For maintenance cleans this can be a great water fed squeegee, eliminating the need for soap, but for true high water fed work this could be a great way of dealing with extremely hydrophobic glass. Imagine a plate of glass that doesn't want to sheet no matter how much water hits it. Well, after your scrubbing and traditional rinse method you could come back for a quick squeegee-ing off of the hanging water, eliminating

the chance of the glass drying spotty. Too much work you might say? Maybe yes, maybe no, but better than having a call back, right?

One thing I must mention that some end users will have issue with is that the tool arrives with just an 8 mm tube but no union push fit connector to hook up to your existing pole hose. And for those new to Wagtail tools, and most importantly the Wagtail pivot handles, they'll be wondering how to fit this on the end of their water fed pole. There's no euro thread or standard acme thread inside the Wave's handle. You'll need to slip it on the end of your pole tip. For some this won't be an issue, for others with pole tips wider than about 22mm (or 7/8") you'll need to get a bit creative. This shouldn't be an issue for existing Wagtail users as this lot are usually pretty good at tinkering and modding out their tools.

The last thing to discuss about the Wagtail Wave is the size range and corresponding price range. The Wave comes in 12", 15" 18" and 30" models. Not sure why there's a 15" model, seems a bit odd but I'm sure there's a reason for it. Maybe more cost effective to produce? The cost on these are around what you'd expect for a mid range water fed brush. However, depending on your market and the costs of importing these to your region, pricing may be up or down. Best to check with your favourite local supplier. Worst case scenario, you can always order direct from Australia.

For those that love the Wagtail product line, this will be a sure hit. For those new to popular tools from Down Under, the Wave may be a good introduction to the brand. And for those most critical of Wagtail products, yes the Wave does have a couple of areas where it could be improved, mostly how the jet holes are made. I'm sure with a little refinement the Wave could be a long standing, popular tool for the water fed window cleaning industry.

The PWNA 2016 Annual Convention & Trade Show: Recap

November 17-19, 2016 – Charleston, South Carolina saw the 2016 PWNA Annual Convention and Trade Show.

Robert Hinderliter, an ex power washing contractor that owned a distributorship, and a guy called Joe Walters who owned an insurance company named after him, founded the Power Washer of North America in 1992. Joe Walters insured a lot of power washing contractors. The #1 reason why Robert and Joe started the PWNA back in '92 was to give the power washing contractor a voice for which they succeeded in doing over the years.

Back in the day, organizations catered for distributors or manufactures only, such as CETA, and contractors were never allowed to attend. It was uncharted territory setting up the PWNA and it would appear that the original founders attracted some backlash for branching out in this way. Eventually, once the dust settled, contractors began to join.

Today they have over 320 members and they continue to grow. The PWNA has a very rich history because of their longevity and class in this organization.

Being the first of its type in the power washing industry does help.

We spoke to John Tornabene a PWNA Spokesperson, "The benefits of attending the PWNA convention are plentiful. From networking with very successful contractors, learning from some of the best teachers in the industry, meeting some of best vendors who care about their needs and the experiences they get from these events, can be lifelong just like some of the friends they make"

John goes on to say, "The classes were all getting excellent ratings by each attendee who filled out a small questionnaire to rate the classes they attended. The excitement on the trade room floor was something you could just feel in the atmosphere, and yes I personally will be purchasing a water fed pole from Reach-iT, one of the Vendors at the trade show. The networking during the cocktail hour and the friendship being formed at this event is priceless! All of this makes you feel like you are in one big happy

family with something very unique, which is this.... We all have a common interest which is to be successful in the world of power washing."

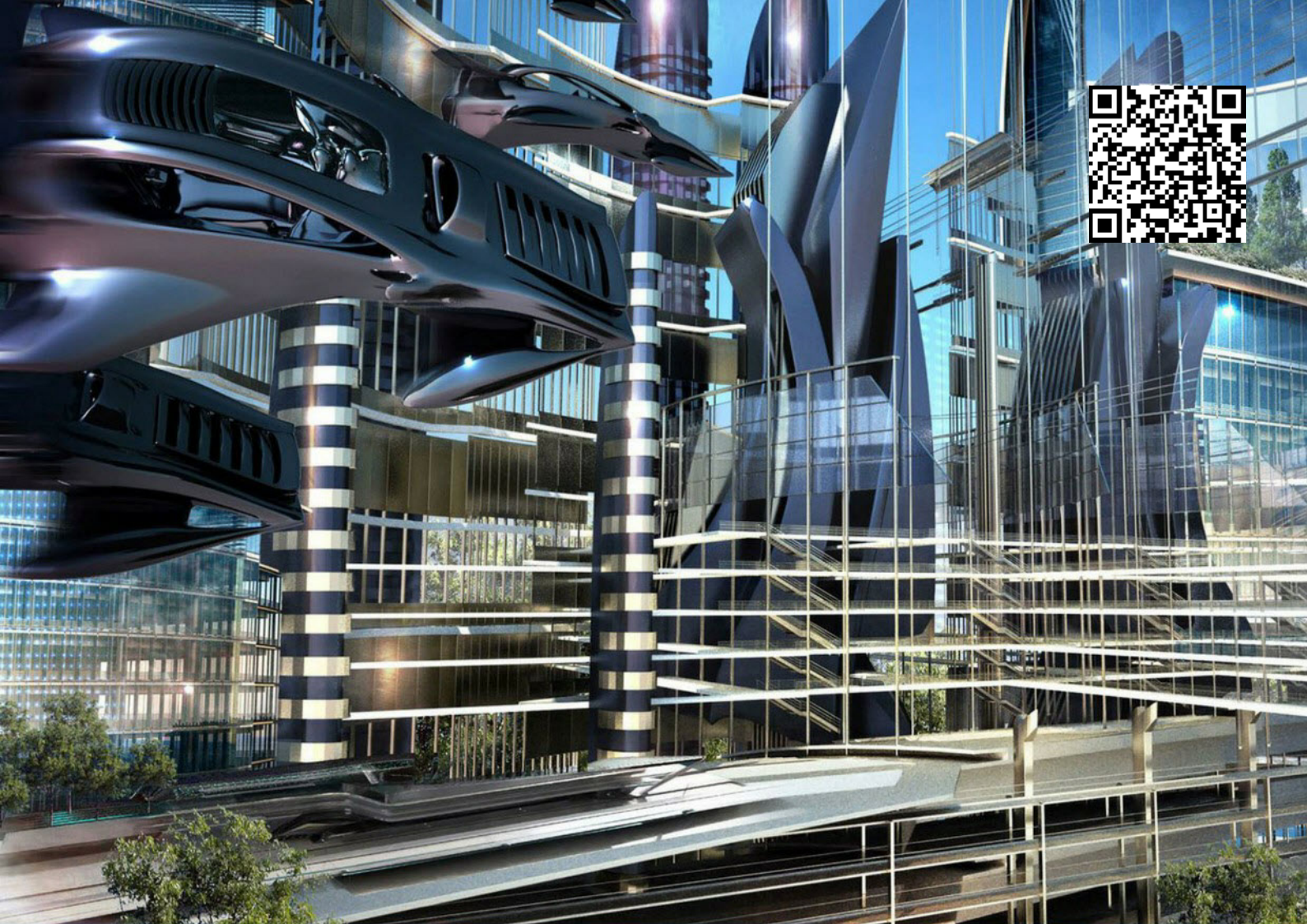
The PWNA Convention this year was everything it was advertised to be, and then some. The convention kicked off with the announcement of who the vendor sponsors are, followed by the PWNA Board of Directors introduction. The President John Nearon, whose term ended, received a huge applause. John Nearon received a plaque from Babe Ruth's granddaughter Linda Ruth Tosetti for a job well done. Incoming president Andy Reinsel, seemingly has large footsteps to follow, but most expect him to do very well.

Apart from the classes and trade show, attendees could eat lunch at round tables with specific subjects picked by the PWNA Board of Directors. This idea was the one that was requested the most by members. I have to say, Window Cleaning Magazine is a fan of round table networking, and this unique spin on the concept is a great idea.

The ladies were not left out too at the PWNA, as they got their very own 'Wine & Wash' that proved to be A big hit and it will be back next year. And I have to say, judging by the pictures Window Cleaning Magazine has seen, they had a fab time.

For more information on the PWNA please follow this link: <http://www.pwna.org/>





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