

Window Cleaning

magazine

January 2013

This issue...

How social are you?
Using social media advice

The Ettore story
Lee speaks to Diane Smahlik

How hard are you working?
By Steve Blyth

Myth Busting with Perry
Let's talk Water Fed Poles
and much, much more...

Also inside this issue...

FREE

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- **IWCA's Annual Convention & Trade Show:** Educational Sessions, Trade Show, Networking and Safety Training—our next convention is **February 13 – 16, 2013 in St. Pete Beach, Fla.**

Still unsure what the IWCA is all about? Visit us at www.iwca.org!

Window Cleaning Magazine



Editorial

I love the industry that I have chosen. The idea that you can set up in business and become a business owner and having control of your own destiny.

We have been in recession for the past few years. This has lead to more redundancies through job loses as the economy struggles to right itself bouncing along the bottom of the growth indicators.

The cleaning industry previously immune and recession proof in the past, has felt the sharp cuts of Government.

It's true that the economy is bumping along the bottom but it will return. What is important right now is your position and mind set at the point of that upward turn.

There is still money and opportunity out there, all be it less than before. 2013 should be the start of your new sales campaign. Keep making them calls and knocking them doors.

You might have to make more calls and knock more doors but I guarantee that your persistence will be rewarded.

This is your year! Go make some money!

Lee Burbidge

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Window Cleaning

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A large, dynamic splash of water in shades of blue and white, forming a circular shape around the central text.

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The Cleaning Show UK 2013 update

Just to remind everyone about the dates and location for the cleaning show this year. The Cleaning Show is expecting 12,000 visitors over the 3 day event from the **19th to the 21st March 2013**.

It will be held at the NEC in Birmingham. The UK's leading showcase for all products and services used in the cleaning and support services industry. The organisers promise this show to be the largest so far with over 200 exhibitors.

The Cleaning Show will take place in hall 6 in the NEC, Birmingham. The halls feature high quality catering and a wide variety of meeting and hospitality suites, allowing exhibitors to make the most of the event.

With 20 halls covering 190,000 square metres, Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre is the UK's largest exhibition setting and the busiest hosting 180 events and receiving up to four million attendees.

Recognised as one of the worlds premier exhibition settings, The NEC offers unbeatable facilities to both exhibitors and attendees. Access to the NEC is easy, with direct links from the UK motorway networks.

It goes without saying that the Window Cleaning Magazine will be covering this event.



FWC is looking for new Committee Members!

A Nomination and Election Notice was issued in the January issue of Window Talk, the FWC members magazine.

The nomination form has to be completed and in by the 28th February 2013. The form lists retiring Council Members, who are eligible for nomination and re-election. The only name currently on the form is Chairman Andrew Lee from Cumbria. All Executive Council positions are currently vacant.

Voting is open to FWC members only – incidentally Lee Burbidge of WCM is an FWC member, feel free to vote him in ☺



Winbot Window Cleaning Robot Arriving In 2013

The Winbot window cleaning robot (yeah, isn't the name super obvious) will be out from next year onwards, thanks to China-based Ecovacs.

Winbot functions like any other cleaning bots, where it will first maps out the scale of the surface that it needs to clean, followed by programming a path to track. The Winbot will rely on suction power instead of magnets in previous models, generating a mere 55 decibels of noise when "working", and it can hold up to 37 pounds (17 kg). You can also attach a safety pod to the window just in case the Winbot loses suction. Any takers? Ermmmm no!



IWCA 2013 in Florida USA

The International Window Cleaning Association IWCA holds regular events for members and non members. This event is a convention and a trade show.

The show is held this year at St. Pete Beach, Florida USA right on the beach line.

Where as the numbers are lower than the British turn out for the Cleaning Show that is to be held at the NEC Birmingham UK at the end of March 2013, the IWCA convention does cater specifically for the window cleaning industry. The Cleaning Show maximises turn out by including all aspects of the cleaning industry. Window cleaning being a small part.

The IWCA show is spread over 4 days from the **13th to the 16th of February 2013**

The organisers boast:

- Step by step demonstrations of window cleaning tools by the industry's top manufacturers on the trade show floor.
- Education sessions for helping business growth.
- Industry leaders show how to survive economic challenges
- Hands on safety training
- Meet other window cleaners from across the globe.

If your flying from the UK, you can get a return flight for around £400. The airport is 40 minutes from the event and so a cab would probably cost you £30/£40.

Hotel rooms vary from \$85.00 (for standard rooms) to \$300 (for suites) per night. You can book at the hotel that the event is held at too. The hotel is TradeWinds Island Resort but there are cheaper hotels around.

Access to the event does cost. You can visit the IWCA web site to check them out here <http://www.iwca.org/Conference/Cost>

Some of the exhibitors are All Access Equipment, Bee Access Products, Brodex, Detroit Sponge, Ettore, Glass Renu, IPC Pulex, J. Racenstein, Libman, SimPole, Sky Pro, WCR, Unger and many more.

Lee Burbidge of the Window Cleaning Magazine will attend the event for all of you that cannot make it. WCM will try and cover every scrap of the event and report back to you for a later issue.

Window Cleaner In Bath Causes Stir Throughout the industry



No its not a window cleaner with a giant desert spoon, this is just your average Bath window cleaner showing a reckless disregard for his personal safety in the line of duty, climbing some 50ft around narrow ledges of a stone building without a harness.

The daredevil cleaner, who remains unidentified, was captured scrambling up the Milsoms hotel in the city to clean windows on the fourth floor. As well as the hotel, a branch of the seafood chain Loch Fyne sits in the ground floor.

A spokesman for Loch Fyne Seafood Restaurants told the Daily Mail, "We take health and safety extremely seriously and fully expect the same from external contractors. Therefore we were shocked by the footage.

"When the video was brought to our attention we immediately moved to prevent this from happening again and have launched a full investigation into how this could have happened at all."

Lee Burbidge goes on to say, "I remember when this was released in one of the few Facebook Groups that I participate in and I remember the responses it raised. Simply shocking. Some of the Facebook Group users were so concerned they contacted the HSE. It then went viral almost simultaneously with daily national newspapers picking up the story and eventually making its way on to the TV with various networks including BBC News 24 running with it. I understand the FWC got a call for their take on the matter".



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Are you a social window cleaner?

By Ian Wicks

Firstly, what is Social Media?

Social Media is a term used to describe an assortment of online platforms, applications and technologies that allow people to socially interact with one another online. Examples of some social media sites available that are very widely known are Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

What are the benefits?

The benefits to social media marketing:

It's inexpensive to set up, it's virtually free of ongoing costs, unless you choose to pay for more in-depth adverts and more elaborate videos. You could also pay someone to manage it or purchase software so you don't have to.

It's effective and it's in line with how more and more potential customers seek out services. Like it or hate it, social media is here to stay for the foreseeable future. If you're dismissing it, you could near enough guarantee that your competition will not be. If you're looking to ramp up business you need to consider social media. With the facts I'm about to reveal, you really would be mad not to, at very least look into this phenomenon that's growing daily!

media presence at all, more shocking was only 11.5% were thinking about it and only 11.9% were utilizing YouTube which is a massive traffic source and amazingly good for Search Engine optimisation. Could this be because 50% of the window cleaners think social media is purely to speak to friends and post about what they had to eat that day? This is somewhat true in a lot of cases but at the same time real businesses are being recommended, the viral aspect is very much alive

The benefits include:

- Over a billion people using it daily
- Helps to grow your online exposure
- Good for search engine optimisation
- Easy measurable tracking
- Creates brand loyalty
- Link building

The list goes on and on....

A question for you:

Are you using the many social media marketing outlets for your window cleaning company, are you being a social window cleaner?

If not, you're missing out on a very effective and inexpensive option for spreading the word about your business just about everyone will have heard of social media around the globe and with over 1 billion people using Facebook worldwide, around 500 million twitter users and 4 billion YouTube video views daily it is without question that social media is not going away anytime soon.

To understand why social media outlets like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are so effective, you must consider the role that these outlets play when it comes to modern society. Virtually everyone has a Twitter account and Facebook account and millions have a YouTube account; in fact, many have more than one. It is quite usual for one person to have



Above is a poll result from 104 window cleaners carried out in December 2012, which revealed the following about social media:

60% of window cleaners that took part didn't have any social

FACEBOOK ADS CAN BE LASER TARGETED...

an account for business and one for personal use. With the popularity of mobile devices such as iPhones, smartphones and tablets these have made it even easier to stay connected to these social media outlets. For this reason alone they will continue to grow and business will adapt to new media.

Social media outlets serve a very important role when it comes to marketing: a "follow," "like," "Share" or "retweet." For example social media outlets offer social "proof" about the quality of a company's services or products; it's a subtle recommendation for your company.

Like many businesses, window cleaning companies thrive on word-of-mouth recommendations. It can be difficult to find a window washer that's reliable, trustworthy and affordably priced. So many potential clients ask others -- friends, colleagues and family -- for recommendations. In short, social media serves as a way to offer these recommendations in a very subtle manner -- a manner that resonates with clients who aren't persuaded by traditional marketing techniques. Studies have revealed that people are many times more likely to hire a company that a colleague, friend or family member has hired!

Plus, once you have a new client, a new follower or a new "like," it's easy to build a relationship via social media. It can be as easy as offering information, such as tips and tricks, or a coupon code, discount or offer that's exclusively available to your social media followers.

What's more, it costs virtually nothing to maintain a social media marketing campaign, so it's a viable option for everyone, even new, small companies that don't have an advertising or marketing budget.

Here are some up to date statistics on advertising:

Sourced Dec 2012 from <http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/reports-downloads/2012/global-trust-in-advertising-and-brand-messages.html>

You will see at the very top 92% of people trust recommendations over anything else now. The fact that social media would play a part in this is indisputable, as millions of people daily chat about all kinds of things, and it is therefore reasonable to assume that window cleaning could be one of them. If they needed one, would you not think this would be asked about on Facebook and/or Twitter?

Would you agree, with most marketing you need to step into the customers shoes? What is interesting is a group of window cleaners were asked "what would you like to know about social media?"

Not one of them asked about Twitter, none asked about YouTube. Here are some of the questions that were asked with an answer to each.

1. Do you recommend a personal Facebook account or a business 'page' linked to your personal account?

For Business use, a Business page it is always going to look more professional. It can also be branded to your company, including the Facebook vanity URL (website address) facebook.com/yourbusinessname. It also keeps within their terms of service.

To explain why: Personal accounts on Facebook tend to be just that: "personal." Telling people how much beer you drank at the weekend and how sick you are feeling the next day is not really



the best image to portray for any business. This is all well and good if your target audience is your friends, but does not come across as well to others, such as potential clients.

TIP: After creating your business page, add a family member or someone close to you as an "admin" to your page. This is just in case your personal account gets hacked or suspended. 'Be aware this can happen.' If you lose your page and haven't done this, 9/10 you have lost it forever.

2. Is it worth paying for Facebook ads, or better to target local groups yourself for free?

Facebook ads can be laser targeted to the customers that you are looking for. This search can be defined in terms of age, location and more. There is a lot of data that can be looked at.

Facebook have perfected this approach to make it a great asset for advertisers, so this is always going to be the one that will show the most consistent measurable results. BUT targeting local groups is a very good way to get your company known. A mistake that many people make when trying to market their business on social media is they try and offer/sell their service straight away. This is not good! This is classed in most people's eyes as "spamming" more often than not. It is totally disregarded, meaning that not only are you wasting your time doing this, you are also damaging your company's image. Being helpful in some way is always going to be better as you need to get the viewers to know, like and trust you. Interaction is a good thing, just always make sure you are logged in on your company page and not your personal profile. The reason for this is that each comment made will link back to your business Facebook page.

Facebook paid adverts can substantially increase your brand awareness, yet in a subtle way. They can also be very costly if you get it wrong, so learning about this before you go out and spend your money is strongly advised. Running multiple ads will help you test the demographic that you are targeting, be this a certain age group, location keyword etc.

3. What is the most effective way to get real "likes" on a Facebook page from people who are genuine potential customers - not friends/family/forum members?

Targeted paid adverts, and group commenting whilst logged in as your page is always beneficial if done correctly.

Competitions can also be a good way to get your page to go viral and can be highly effective. Give away something of real value (not just 10% off), make it irresistible. One example of an irresistible offer might be: "Win a 42" wide screen TV for getting a free window cleaning quotation." This would work well as a Tweet and a YouTube video to drive traffic.

Put yourself in the potential clients' shoes: "Would you get a quote for window cleaning if you could win a TV?"

Get them to do something for this, make a comment, "like" the page and share it on their wall (or other peoples') and fill in the quote form with their details.

Having an irresistible offer for the viewer will increase the genuine "likes" and will, if done correctly, get you more contact. Having an opt-in form on your page will also allow you to interact and have an automated sales funnel if you wanted.

Just getting a "like" is only part of Facebook marketing.

An example of how Facebook could benefit your window cleaning business:

In this example we will have Lady A and Lady B (Lady B is your customer)

Lady A is in need of a window cleaner, her friend Lady B has "liked" your business page already. You have made a status update on your business page, which shows in Lady B's newsfeed. Lady A sees this and asks her friend about your company. Lady B replies and posts a link on Lady A's wall, which links to your page. Now not only have all of Lady B's friends seen this, now Lady A's friends can see it too! If Lady A then "likes" your page, each time you make a status update this is visible on not only Lady A's Newsfeed, but also Lady B's. All of the friends of Lady A & B then see it too. Can you see how powerful this can be?

So what's this Twitter thing about and what are the real benefits?

Some of the benefits include:

- Direct traffic to your website
- Brand awareness
- Engaging with potential clients
- Informing of updates to website or other social media
- Network with like-minded people
- Social interaction

Twitter is a micro blogging platform. Twitter messages, commonly known as 'Tweets' are made up of up to 140 characters. This is much like a Text message SMS. This is a feature that makes Twitter different from many.

You can send a message to a single user, or to a group of users or you can or connect directly with people you have followed (and have followed you) by sending little Tweets like "I'll be cleaning windows in Cambridge this week, tell your friends if they need us." This lets people know what you're doing and can be re-tweeted to others.

In Twitter, there is great flexibility when it comes to choosing what to make public and what not. You can send a message to a certain friend without other people seeing the message; you can also share some information with a section of friends which is great for client only messages and updates. Your general profile can be made public or private and if you don't want your twitter ID to be available to anyone, then you can set it this way.

Where Twitter stands out, is the information you publish is limited to about 25 words (140 characters). These posts are called Tweets. Twitter is a great platform for directing people to your website or Facebook business page. It also helps you be seen and keeps your brand visible.

A common issue is that people may have long company names which lead to long website addresses. No need to worry if you need to shorten a website address as you can do this so to cut down on characters. This can be achieved by going to a url shortening site such as: <http://bit.ly>. This site is free and can also be used for measuring the traffic to your site.

You Tube

YouTube is a very effective marketing option, why I hear you say; because millions of people use it! I think that's a very good reason to. It can be associated with a bit more expense than Facebook and Twitter since you'll need to create a promotional video of some degree (unless you or one of your staff has strong amateur filmmaker skills then it's free!) But these promotional videos can serve to improve your website's rankings and they tend to be very attention-grabbing, so you'll have a strong presence in the online search arena. Gone are the days of looking through the yellow pages, It's all about online searches today! If you're not on it you cannot be found, pretty straight forward. Most people have mobile phones that have a video recording function built in, so making a quick short video is no longer an issue like it used to be.

Benefits of YouTube include:

- Visual interaction with potential clients
- Ability to connect with other social media
- Videos embedding option
- Search engine optimisation
- Massive traffic source

Some Useful facts

Did you know that YouTube has over 800 million unique users visit each month, 4 billion hours of video are watched each month and 72 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute.

Something else interesting is 500 years of YouTube video are watched every day on Facebook, and over 700 YouTube videos are shared on Twitter each minute making these three Social Media outlets very powerful indeed.

One more good thing about YouTube is that 100 million people take a social action on YouTube (likes, shares, comments, etc.) every week.

Are you now starting to see the power of YouTube and why your company could benefit?



ARE YOU KIDDING ME, I'M NOT GOING IN A VIDEO....

Next, let's talk about video and the way it is shaping the way people interact, as this right now is one of the most effective marketing tools we have at our disposal.

With each video there are ways to enhance their use to you. YouTube ranking and Search engine ranking are just two of them, YouTube videos work very well on Google. One way to optimise your video is the title and description of the video, get this right and it will not only increase your views it can also increase your search engine positioning. There are many more advanced ways to optimise YouTube video too.

Are you Kidding Me, I'm not going in a video, I will look stupid

This is quite possibly why only 11.9% within the poll use YouTube at the moment. The thing is, video can come in many different forms, there are the ones where people are not camera shy and speak and record themselves, and others just shot from a mobile phone showing something of interest. There are videos that are made with slideshows or PowerPoint presentations, and others are done with a series of pictures. There are many different ways to produce a video that can suit anyone of us.

You don't have to go on film and embarrass yourself (unless you want too). Shooting a video can be done from a mobile phone, it can be as simple as cleaning someone's windows whilst explaining what you're doing and then simply uploading it straight to YouTube (depending on the mobile phone you have).

Another option is having a professionally made promotion video created. There are many places for this to be done with varying costs attached. All videos on YouTube that you create can be embedded on your own website and can be shared in a host of other places.

Free Tool: If you want to make your own video head over to <http://www.techsmith.com/jing.html>

Just remember you will be showing it to the world so be mindful of what you record.

You may notice that traffic keeps being included throughout this article, the reason for this is because traffic is the lifeblood of any online marketing. All traffic can be aimed at your website or wherever you choose to direct it. From experience, it is good practice to funnel people to your own online property, namely your website, which will then enable others to interact with people via social media. Always aim to get your visitors details because you are then able to market to them in the future...

The beauty of these social media outlets, is that they can all be linked together. This not only cuts down on your time spent working, it also allows you to reach more people with your online marketing with less effort, after all time is Money...

Hopefully you now have a better understanding of social media and are interested in learning more.



If you would like to discover how to set up your own social media correctly and learn more about it, click below for a full featured guide, which will show you how to set yourself up on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. There are also some tips on how to enhance your efforts even if you're already set up and some more free tools and resources to use.

This is Free of charge to Window Cleaning Magazine readers.

Get your free copy today by heading over to socialwindowcleaner.com/wcm

Look forward to seeing you on social media soon.



Article written by Ian Wicks

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Sliderax Commercial Vehicle Roofracks

Swift, Safe and Secure

The Sliderax modular commercial vehicle roof-rack system looks to set new standards of safety and security in its sector, thanks to an innovative, patented design that exceeds all 'Working at Height' Health and Safety regulations.

The system's design is as clever as it is simple. Precision-fabricated from tough anodised and powder-coated steel, the system bolts robustly to the recipient vehicle's roof mounts quickly and easily. The flexible nature of the system allows vans and commercials of all sizes to be equipped. The trump card of the Sliderax system however, lies in its ingenious sliding track design, which allows a lone individual to tightly secure loads of any shape or size, without the need to use steps or ladders.

The securing straps that come with the system use a wheeled bracket. This is simply inserted into the track on one side and then pulled tight across the load. This can all be done easily and safely at ground level, eliminating the need to use some kind of step, as is often the case when tethering loads at this height. Once the strap is pulled tight, the load is secured via a traditional ratchet strap which slots easily into the bracket on the opposing side – making for a totally safe and unmovable solution.

As well as being significantly safer than all traditional tethering solutions, the Sliderax system is also considerably faster – essential for busy tradespeople looking to maximise their time and efficiency.

Most core commercial vehicle fitments are covered, including the Mercedes Vito, Ford Transit and Connect, Vauxhall Vivaro, Nissan Primastar, Renault Traffic – and of course, VW's Perennial T4 and T5 Transporter.

All tools needed to fit the bars come with the kit and prices start at just £160 + VAT for a 2-bar system (Mercedes Vito).

Whether you're looking to make loading your commercial vehicle safer, swifter or more secure – or indeed, all three, Sliderax is the perfect solution. Perfect for everyone from sole traders looking to do the job properly through to fleet managers with an eye on a perfect HSE record... Sliderax gets the job done!

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Lee Burbidge interviews Diane Smahlik of Ettore

Diane Smahlik is Chairman of one of the most iconic companies in the window cleaning industry. Her Father was a man that would change the squeegee we know today into its global recognisable design.

His innovations revolutionised the squeegee, making it lighter, with a single rubber and with clips rather than screws.

So what squeegee am I talking about, I hear you ask? It can be none other than the brass Ettore squeegee!

Window cleaners from all over the world would of used this brass squeegee by Ettore Steccone. His design was recognised as the market leader of the time and many set out to copy it. Others used it as a benchmark. To this day, the brass Ettore squeegee is just as popular as it once was.

I remember starting out, learning how to window clean. I purchased a bunch of Ettore brass squeegees as recommended by the hardware store I found. They were buried between the garden tools and birdseed. Man, that shop sold just about everything.

Fortunately, for me, the store owner was also a window cleaner and that is how I came across Ettore. To this day, I still have my first Ettore. It sits on my desk reminding me of how I accidentally fell into window cleaning.

Lee: Hey Diane, thanks for speaking with me. Where do we start? What was your Father like? Where was he from?

Diane: *What was Ettore Like? That is a good question. He was a very affable, quick witted, out spoken, stubborn, good-hearted and hardworking man. He did not have an easy childhood. He was one of 10 children living in a poor mountain village called Mongiardino, which is about two hours up in the mountains above Genova, Italy.*

From what I remember, he always had the desire to leave his country and make his way to America, where he knew he could make a better life for himself. After serving in the Italian Army during WWI, and being decorated, he did just that; immigrated to the US in 1922.

Lee: Like all innovators in our industry Ettore was a window cleaner, right?

Diane: *When he first came to the States, he worked at various jobs. He had relatives in the produce business and worked there for a while. He was also involved in the wholesale flower trade. I do not remember exactly when he started cleaning windows, but I do know that his impetus was that he wanted to be his own boss.*

Lee: What was driving him at the beginning?

Diane: *He began working in earnest when he returned from a trip back to Italy in 1932, having married my mother and settling in San Francisco. Obviously, with a new wife, he*



had to settle into a career that would provide a comfortable life for them and their future family as well as fulfil his desire to be his own boss.

Lee: Describe the problem with the tools of the day? Why did Ettore feel the need to change things?

Diane: *He started out doing janitorial work, cleaning interiors as well as windows. My mother also helped in that area. Also, at that time, there were housing developments being built and they did construction clean up. With regards to the squeegee in use, it was termed a Chicago Squeegee, I believe because that was where it was manufactured. It was made of heavy gauge steel, with two pieces of red rubber placed slightly below one another and held in place with screws, anywhere from six to eight of them. Needless to say, it was a heavy tool, and after a day of working with it and having aching shoulders and arms, Ettore knew there had to be a better way.*

Lee: Window cleaning was a very dangerous job in those days. No Health & Safety officer in sight at all (laughs).

Diane: *Window cleaning was a dangerous job in those days. I do have a couple of anecdotes I can tell you.*

"DON'T THINK THAT WOULD BE OSHA APPROVED TODAY!...."

As you know, we do have a rendering of Ettore on an Indian motorcycle carrying a ladder. This is actually true. He used to go from job to job on his motorcycle with his ladder over his head sitting on his shoulders and the bucket hanging from the back. Tells you something about the traffic congestion in those days!

When he was doing ladder work on the side of a building, he would position his bucket a bit before where he was working, so that if someone hit the bucket, he would know in advance that his ladder might be next. Also, when he was doing work outside a building a couple of stories up, rather than waste time climbing in and out of each window to clean the exterior, he would walk along the outside edge grabbing on to the sills to pull himself along the side of the building, cleaning as he went along. Don't think that would be OSHA approved today!

Lee: Back in 1936, Ettore patented his innovation and called it the New Deal. What did he mean by that?

Diane: While he was working during the day, in the evening he was tinkering with his idea of a new type of squeegee. In his opinion, and because he worked with the old tool for hours a day, he knew it had to be much lighter than the current model.

He and my mother moved to a home in Oakland that had quite a large garage in the backyard. That is where he set up shop and began to work on his idea. I'm going to jump around a bit here, as I was an infant during most of this so all my recollections on the early years are what my parents have told me.

When he finally got his squeegee to the point that he felt it worked perfectly, he filed for a patent. That was, as you say, back in 1936. He thought at the time that it needed a name that would catch people's attention. As you know, Roosevelt was president and his New Deal was a big deal for the country. Hence the name New Deal. His squeegee was something entirely new and innovative and he felt that eventually it would revolutionise the window cleaning business.

Lee: At the time J. Racenstein Company, New York was the largest and most well known supplier of window cleaning tools. Why do you think they were so dismissive with the 'New Deal' brass squeegee at the start?

Diane: To get his tool in the hands of the window cleaner, he knew that he had to have the support of the largest, at that time, window cleaning tool supplier, the J. Racenstein Co. He paid them a visit to try and convince Mr. Racenstein to carry his product. Apparently he took one look at it, deemed it a toy because it was too light and he did not believe it could do the job.



Lee: Ettore had a strange way of getting J. Racenstein to buy his new squeegee. Can you tell us what the legendary story was?

Diane: That is when the infamous bet came about. Ettore bet Mr. Racenstein the best hat money could buy, that within a month's time, he would be calling to place an order for his new squeegee. To insure that J. Racenstein would carry his product, Ettore went out and gave away his tool. He told window cleaners just to try it out for a few days, and if they liked the product, to call J. Racenstein in New York and he could supply them with more. He won his bet and we still have the Borsalino hat in our little museum at our new facility to this day.

Lee: Ettore worked out of his garage up until the early 1950's. How did he manufacture the tools in his garage?

Diane: I was young, but I do remember it being quite a large "garage". There was room enough for him to set up three presses and an area to assemble the product. I believe he had one employee at the time that helped run the presses. He was still working as a window cleaner as he did have to earn a living and provide for his family along with funding his new manufacturing venture. My mother told me that after working all day cleaning, he would come home, work on producing his tools and then early in the morning go down to the produce market and gather up all the discarded packaging material and haul it home so that he would have packaging material to ship out his product. Early recycling! He did remain there until about 1954, when we moved to a new home, which he had built for us and he moved Steccone Products into a real factory. I might add just as a matter of interest, that he did all this, beginning and during the Depression, without borrowing one cent from anyone.

Lee: He lost his patent and his name was infringed on around about this time. What was happening?

“... IN 2001, 9/11 SHOCKED THE WORLD.”

Diane: *The name and patent loss is quite a long story. To summarise, one of the buildings Ettore cleaned housed a manufacturing company. They noticed that he was using something new to clean the windows and inquired what it was all about. He explained it to them and they offered some assistance. They were the ones who told him that he should put his own name on the product, call it Steccone and copyright the name. Although a smart man, he only had the equivalent of a 5th grade education and wasn't really schooled in the legal ramifications of copyright. This company offered to do it for him. Unbeknown to him, they copyrighted the Steccone name, under their company's pervue. They also offered to help him produce the product and offered him royalties on the sale of the squeegee. Before all this could come about, however, the patent was challenged and for reasons I never really knew, he lost his patent. When this happened, the company that offered assistance pulled out telling him that without the patent they didn't need him and proceeded to manufacture his squeegee using his name.*

Lee: **Why did the 'New Deal' squeegee have a name change to Ettore Master? When was this?**

Diane: *Ettore managed to over come this setback, made some changes in the design of the squeegee, adding end clips to secure the rubber in place and began manufacturing his product once again. This caused another problem to arise, because he was using his name on the product. He didn't realise that the other company owned the name and thus he ended up in court trying to reclaim his name. In the end, he was allowed to produce his squeegee, keep his name on his company but not on the product. Hence the name Master Squeegee on the tool. If you find old Ettore Brass Squeegees manufactured around this time they will carry a disclaimer on the side of the handle, Not A Morse-Starrett Product.*

Lee: **Why was it important to have his product provide streak free windows? Did other tools not offer the same at the time? Did the old tools have quality issues?**

Diane: *You ask about the rubber and streak free performance. The rubber is the most important part of a squeegee. It is what removes the dirt from the window and leaves it sparkling. Its performance is important primarily to the window cleaner as a time saving device. If you have to go over a window after you have squeegeed it, this costs the end user time and time in the window cleaning business is very costly. The type of rubber used in the old type squeegees was hard and inflexible and left streaks on the window. This increased the work for the window cleaner as it was never a one-pass job, he always had to go back over and take care of the streaks.*

Ettore perfected the window squeegee rubber. We are known world over for our unmatched rubber blades. Ettore knew instinctively what was needed to produce a perfect rubber blade.

It wasn't always an easy task to get a rubber company to understand just what he was trying to accomplish. Particularly when the instructions to the chemical engineer came from a small, uneducated Italian immigrant who spoke with an accent. Not only is the formulation important, how the rubber is slit to make a perfect working edge is critical. That particular machine was also invented by Ettore. To keep our rubber blades to the highest standard possible, we control and oversee the rubber production ourselves. When it arrives at our factory, each individual piece is hand inspected and hand cut to size before it goes out the door to make sure the blade contains no imperfections that could hinder its streak free performance. These days, anyone can make a squeegee, but only Ettore can make streak free rubber blades.

Lee: **In 2001, 911 shocked the world. A terrible time and many lost their lives, window cleaners too. Incredible stories of bravery, courage and care came out over time.**

One story that sticks in my mind is of the window cleaner called Jan Demczur that used his Ettore squeegee handle to carve through drywall and saved people in the North Tower. That tool made its way into the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. What do you think when you here that story?

Diane: *The 911 story was a very interesting one. If a window cleaner had not been in that elevator with his tool, six men would have lost their lives when the tower collapsed.*

When the Smithsonian notified us that our squeegee handle was going to be a part of the 911 Memorial Exhibit, we were of course honoured. They invited us to attend the ceremony telling us that it wasn't going to be too much of a big deal but of course it was Washington DC and there is always something going on there.

I will tell you it was somewhat of a surreal experience, seeing a small, battered Brass squeegee handle sitting on top of a sea of blue velvet with a spot light shining on it, surrounded by photographers. It does give one pause to know that a small tool used by an ordinary man to earn a living, was responsible for saving the lives of six men. I know my father was looking down smiling at the thought that for whatever reason, a piece of him, a little Italian immigrant, is in the Smithsonian.

Lee: **Sadly, the great Ettore Steccone passed away in 1984 aged 87. How is the family structured across the company today?**

Diane: *When my father passed away, the company had already been under the direction of my husband Michael, as due to a couple of strokes, Ettore had somewhat stepped aside from the every day running of the business. Michael was the one who realised that in order to keep the*

company viable we had to diversify and go into the retail market, as that is where the future lay. It was at that time we officially changed the company name and logo to Ettore inside the wing. I have been asked where the wing came from. My father chose that because he felt that with his new squeegee you could fly through your work with ease.

Lee: On your web site you have two choices. Consumers or professionals. Which is the strongest market for you?

Diane: Trying to get into the retail market was not and still isn't an easy task. We are proud to say though, that Ettore was the first professional tool to be offered to the retail market.

At the time, we received a lot of flack from our competitors and professional customers for taking our products to retail. They felt we were being traitorous to our roots and loyal users. Ultimately, it was a good move for everyone. At this point in this industry, the consumer market is a place you have to be. The professional market is somewhat stagnate. There are very few mom & pop stores anymore and a good majority of the janitorial outlets are owned by large companies. They are very few new markets available and most of the time, it comes down to trading customers between competitors. Consequently, if you are not established in the Retail consumers market, your days may be numbered.

Lee: Today the range of tools that Ettore have is vast, right?

Diane: If you look through our catalogue, we probably have over 300 different tools and combinations there of, that we sell. Along with squeegees of varying sizes and types, we also provide, extension poles, buckets scrubbers, dusters, soap, scrapers etc. whatever anyone needs to clean windows in any situation.

Lee: Lets talk about pure water window cleaning. It is a market everyone is getting into. Talk us through the idea behind gaining the knowledge and experience in building these systems?

Diane: Ettore Products first came across pure water cleaning with a visit to the UK over 15 years ago.



There was a window cleaning company using this technology which they adapted to window cleaning. They equipped a building in London with a sprinkler system that ran ionised water every night for about 20 minutes, which in the end alleviated the necessity of continual window cleaning. We eventually partnered with this company to bring the technology to the US.

Lee: Tell us about the 'sell' to the US

Diane: It was not an easy sell. "Clean windows without the squeegee, how dare you, it can't be done." That was what we were hearing. What people did not understand at the time, that what causes spots on the window is the minerals in the water. Remove those minerals, remove the spots. This type of window cleaning has started to catch on over the past five years or so. People are starting to realise how much time they can save by using this system. Most importantly, it cuts down on labour costs and lessens liability issues, which can occur with ladder use. We are partnered with an up and coming company that produces the units for us. We are now selling very compact and easy to use units that vary in sizes and water output and poles that are considerably more light weight and easier to manage.

Lee: Tell us about the range of water fed poles you have? Gardiner Pole Systems in the UK manufacture these for you, right?

Diane: Yes, Gardiner is producing a pole for us under the Ettore logo. The whole idea of pure water systems use in window cleaning is really beginning to catch on and as always Ettore is proud to be a front runner in this venture. I can't speak to the use of hot water systems and actually, this has just recently come to my attention. As far as making our mark, Ettore is the first company that brought the idea of pure water and its use in window cleaning to the forefront. Maybe we do not blow our own horn enough, but we certainly have played and are a major player in this new technology.

L: You attended the ISSA/InterClean show in Chicago IL USA. How was the show?

Diane: Yes, I did attend the ISSA show in Chicago and sad to say I feel that this particular venue is becoming a dinosaur. I have been going to these shows since I was a teenager. Actually, I attended my first one in Chicago at the age of eight in the basement of the old Conrad Hilton Hotel.

I am not involved in the seminars and other informational sessions the ISSA offers so I cannot address whether or not those still have value, but I can speak to the actual convention itself. It's definitely not like it used to be. You really don't have a chance to see your distributors, primarily because a good majority of the smaller privately owned business don't attend anymore. I don't believe they see the

"IT WOULD BE A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION IF ISSA HAD A SHOW EVERY YEAR...."

value of attendance compared to the expense. Those larger companies send only their buyers and they usually just meet with department heads. There was some improvement when the ISSA finally decided to allow the end users entrance. It made it interesting for them and us to have dialogue about our products and for them to get hands on with the product. It is also advantageous when you have new products to show. For us as manufacturers it is a huge expense, which often doesn't balance out with the return we would hope to get. In the end, you just chalk it up to PR. It would be a step in the right direction if the ISSA would finally decide to have a show every other year, as their partner in Amsterdam does. This might make a difference in the attendance and quality of the show.

They will fit securely with no fear of the tool disengaging from the pole. We have also introduced four new sizes of inter-locking extension poles, the longest being 32'm which allows for a smaller collapsed footprint making them easier to carry. We are also working on a couple of things which I am not allowed to speak about as of yet.

Lee: Many thanks.



Lee: What is new for Ettore?

Diane: As far as new goes, there is only so much you can do to a squeegee. Kidding aside, we have now made it so that all of our tools, dusters and the like click lock on to our extension poles.

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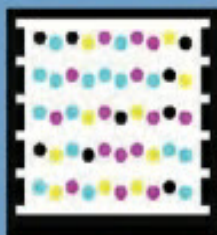
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WCM are on the hunt for the best looking or even damn right interesting or unusual window cleaning trucks.

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Hello my name is Joseph Scinta owner of Clear Vision Window Cleaning in Buffalo, New York. I started out cleaning windows with a family friend at the age of 10 years old and spent the summer learning how to do residential and store front window cleaning.

I started my own company in 1985. I grew the business to 7 full time employees very quickly. I was good at cleaning windows and things went well for the first few years but what I lacked was business skills and marketing knowledge. I slowly lost control of my company.

The last few years I've been a one-man show. When I started out there was no place for people in the industry to trade ideas and teach others. Over the last few years we now have window cleaning magazines, window cleaning online forums, YouTube videos, and much more. There are plenty of ways to learn and grow.

When I looked at getting into water fed pole work there were at least 5 companies willing to talk with me on the phone and help me get set up and grow.

In early 2011 I realised I now had the tools and the help to start growing once again. I went out and hired a company to build me a website with the promise they would get me ranked high on Google. I spent a little over \$1000.00 on the site over 9 months ago. Sadly, to this day it has still not ranked on Google so I did what any window cleaner of our time would do, I went on the web and asked around. I asked what others were doing with their websites.

It is at this time I came across the name of Mark Palmer from www.windowcleaning.com. I called and talked with him for an hour or so, he asked several questions about my company, my insurance, what industry organisations I belonged to. He asked for customer testimonials and several other questions as well. Here is what their web site has to say about their program...

'WindowCleaning.com is a national network of the best window cleaners in each city. In most cities, only one window cleaner is chosen out of hundreds of window cleaners! Each window cleaner is interviewed personally by one of our team. We verify their level of experience, if they are properly insured, their reputation in the industry,

and how their customers feel about the service they provide. Then we choose the best. You can be sure, that by choosing a WindowCleaning.com awarded member, you are choosing the best. And to back it up, all WindowCleaning.com members offer our no hassle \$1000 Streak Free Guarantee!

I found Mark very easy to work with and he listened to what my needs were. After just a few days, I received a call saying that my site was up and running. I was amazed at the way it looked and how easy it was to move around the site.

After the home page was created, I was able to add additional pages myself, including pictures and testimonials. It was easy! One night I uploaded a few photos and testimonials and went to bed. I woke up in the morning and things were moved around and tweaked to look even better. I was kind of shocked so I called Mark and asked him what happened. He explained their team gets an email whenever there are updates, that allows them to help fix things making sure my site always looks it's best. How's that for customer service?

I was hoping to get ranked quickly on Google but I didn't expect things to work this fast. After only two weeks I hit the first page of Google, after the first month I was ranked #5 and now a little over 6 weeks I rank #3 in a very competitive market. I'm sure I will be #1 before the spring arrives here in New York. I can't wait! I have talked to many others that have already sold thousands of dollars in window cleaning from their site alone.



Did You Know ?

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has the most extensive

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What Cause Spots When Using a Water Fed Pole

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22

MYTH BUSTING

With Perry

Let's talk Water Fed Poles

The MYTHBUSTER Frame

These articles are aimed at challenging the easily absorbed marketing angles that are throughout our industry. Maybe we are all so busy cleaning windows that we haven't got time to challenge everything we hear, or maybe we are the best guys in the world and we want to trust and believe everyone. You can dismantle each myth one-by-one yourself with a little extra knowledge and some time .. thereby empowering yourself to make decisions for yourself as to which product truly suits you best - for your own reasons.

Why are we exploring Water Fed Pole Construction ?

This article is about stiffness/rigidity and pole weight and how to decide what is the best pole for you. It starts by helping you understand what is the composition of any poles that you might already have, and are they what you thought you bought.

What you are looking for in a water fed pole is stiffness and less flex when cleaning windows. 'Less flex' means more of the pressure you apply at the handle, is translated to the water fed brush bristles that is cleaning the glass.

More pressure on the glass, with less effort, means "faster, more effective cleaning".

What is out there in the Water Fed Pole Market Place ?

Most manufacturers are happy to make and sell a vast range between low-grade water fed poles and high-grade water fed poles that all pretty much 'look' the same as the high-grade water fed poles.

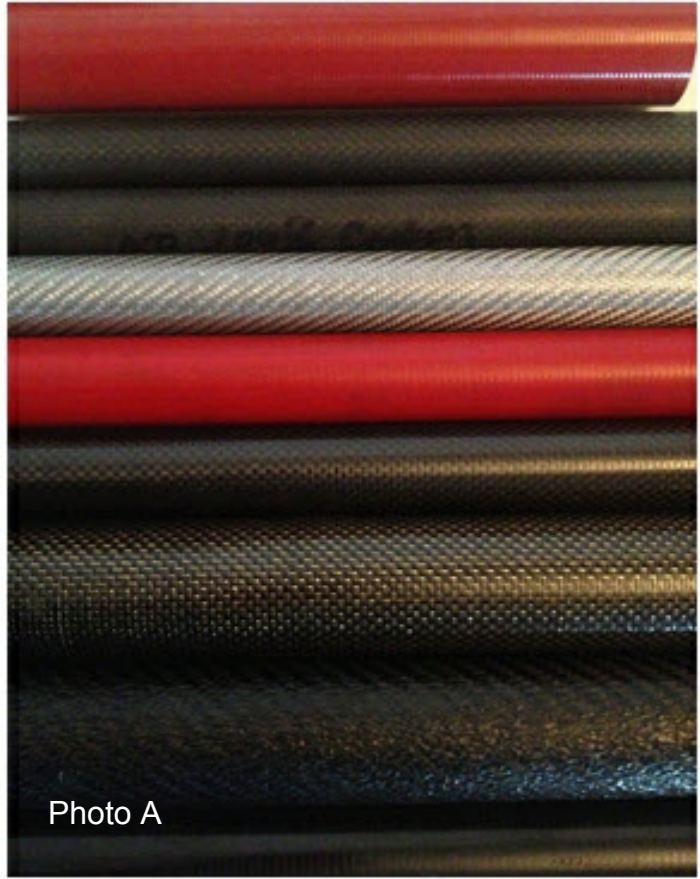


Photo A

They can do this because the lower-grade poles cost less to manufacture, but the manufacturer can make the same margin on them as when they sell a high-grade pole. They do this even though the lower-grade poles deliver a lower efficiency in window cleaning to the Buyer.

So the new Water Fed Pole Buyer, if not well-armed with knowledge, will read, look and touch the water fed poles in a retail shop or online thinking they are all 'much the same' except the price. On this basis, one cannot blame them for buying on price.

Unfortunately, this inevitably results in him experiencing a less-than-ideal experience when cleaning with his new equipment, achieving lower window cleaning results for his customers, and sometimes even developing a reluctance to embrace the full benefits that water fed poles can offer to his business, and even drive him back to his ladder-based traditional methods.

This is why choosing a water fed pole can be a problem for any buyer. When comparing the full range of poles side-by-side, it is practically impossible to tell the difference between one pole and the other without seeing it in action and knowing how to 'read' the pole.

Hybrid and Fibreglass poles weigh more, and aren't as stiff, so you need to work harder to clean. If you are going to invest in a water fed pole and pure water system, you would like to put a little less effort into cleaning windows as a result, right ?

Carbonfibre and High Modulus Carbonfibre poles are lighter and more rigid, delivering a better experience for the Window Cleaner in practically every situation.

But it is not as simple as that ... and that is why you must read this article.

How are Water Fed Poles made ?

Carbon fibre poles are made by hand - the fibres are bought in sheets and cut by machine to suit the pole design as per the designer's specifications. Each sheet layer is typically around 0.16mm (0.006 inches) thick and is pre-impregnated with resin to prepare it for the bonding process (we call these sheets 'pre-preg')**.

Each strand of carbonfibre is comparable in diameter to a human hair, with thousands of these strands combined to create a carbon fiber 'tow' (like a band) that is used to create the woven or stitched fabric that is impregnated to create each pre-preg sheet. The fibres aligned with the impregnated resin as a pre-preg sheet is usually around 0.17mm thick.



Photo B

Whilst there are only 6 companies in the world that make carbonfibre, there are scores of companies that take the carbonfibre and make it into hundreds of different configurations of 'composite' pre-preg sheets by aligning the fibers and mixing them with resin, each with different quality and characteristics.

“THERE ARE TWO BASIC STRENGTHS THAT A DESIGNER IS LOOKING FOR....”

There are hundreds of different carbonfibre compositions available to suit the multitude of applications - each tailored for the application to provide the best ratio of strength and stiffness in the required load directions. There are also hundreds of different Fiberglass configurations, uni, biax, triax, quad, needle punch, quads with mats, biax with mats, high weight uni, stitched, woven, glued (and that's before we start talking about different tow weights, and orientations to provide specific directional strength). *Don't worry .. this is the only super-technical sentence in this article.*

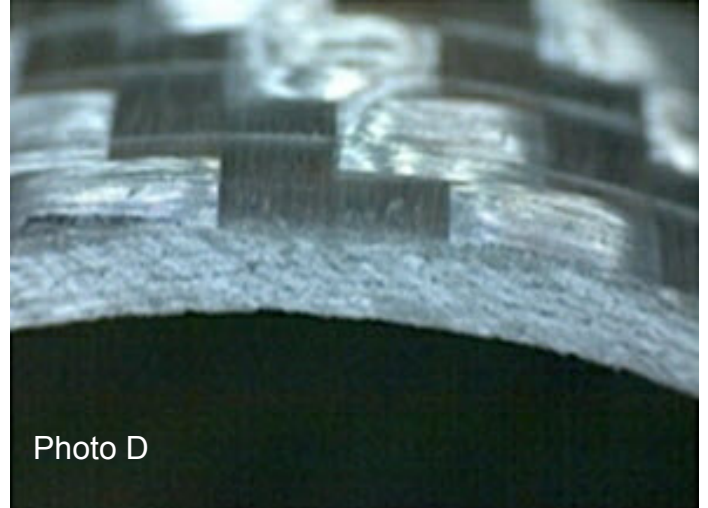
There are two basic strengths that a designer is looking for - unidirectional (to maintain shape with pressure applied in one direction) , and multi-directional*. If the fibres are all in the same direction, we have 'uni-directional' carbonfibre sheets (see Photo B) and if the fibres criss-cross with a weave, we have 'multi-directional' or biax carbonfibre sheets (see Photo C).



Water Fed Poles - What Materials are Used ?

As uni-directional carbonfibre is used to effect strength in one direction, it is the most commonly used to make the high quality rigid Water Fed Poles. This is because all the working stress in cleaning windows is usually in the one direction down the length of the pole.

To increase the overall strength and robustness of the pole, the designer will often include a small amount of multi-directional composite material - especially for the outer surface layer to minimise delaminating of the fibres. The cheaper multi-directional solution is to employ a layer of fibreglass (see Photo D) ..



while the stronger solution is the '3K biax carbonfibre' (see Photo E).



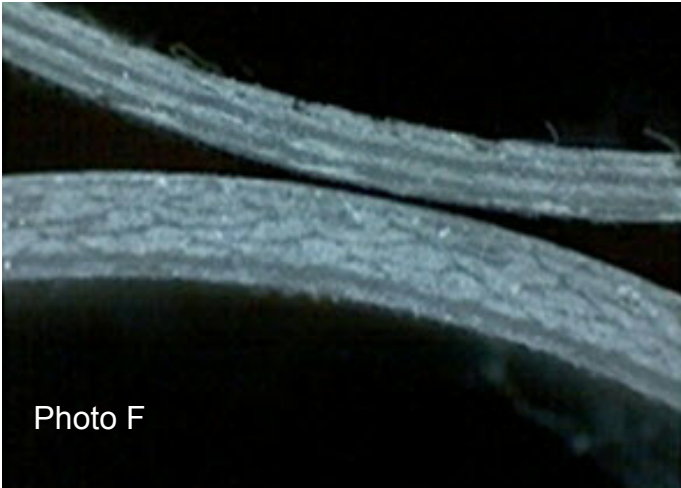
Making the Pole Sections

So .. having chosen the composite sheets, they are machine cut to get the 'grain' or fibres in the desired direction and then the layers are laid over each other by hand, around a steel mandrel (mold).

The design dictates how many layers of composite sheets to use, knowing the more layers, the stronger and stiffer the pole section.

To make a pole significantly lighter, the designer reduces the number of layers of carbonfibre. This makes the pole section cheaper to manufacture (less material) but, understandably, the pole section is inevitably weaker as a result of this decision.

An ultra-light pole is usually about 5 layers of carbonfibre and an ultra-strong pole is usually about 8 layers of carbonfibre which significantly increases the strength and stiffness of the resulting pole. (see *Photo F*)



Once all the layers are applied, they are bound REALLY tight by winding a narrow band of super-strong plastic over the full length of the pole. This process ultimately leads to the ridges that you will find on unsanded water fed poles (see *photo G*).



The purpose of the binding is to create pressure that will force the resin and the carbonfibres to all bond as one when they go into the oven to be 'cooked' at really high temperatures. The resultant behaviour of the pole is affected by the pressure of the winding, the pressure in the oven, the temperature of the oven, and the time in the oven.

So ... a designer and manufacturer use a technician like a restaurant owner uses a chef. The designer makes the decisions to use certain types of carbonfibre and/or fibreglass sheets to create an unlimited range of water fed pole properties from their 'recipe'. The technicians "chefs" produce the product following the specific recipe.

With all of the different materials, and design decisions to be made, you can see now why there are no two poles the same in the market, regardless of their marketing claims, or the over simplification of titles. Most manufacturers want to dumb this down to 'Fibreglass, Hybrid, Carbon, and High Modulus' but you can see from above these are 'categories' but cannot be relied on.

The proof of the product is not in the aesthetics of the handle - it is its' performance in the workplace.

Some quick guides on the materials :

Fibreglass is the heaviest and High Modulus Carbonfibre is the lightest.

Carbonfibre and High Modulus Carbonfibre basically weigh the same, but High Modulus can achieve the same strength/stiffness with less carbonfibre, thereby creating the 'lighter' tag.

What is a Fibreglass Pole ?

Fibreglass poles are heavier and much cheaper than Carbon poles. This is because the glass fibres are not as strong and stiff as the carbon fiber (lower modulus than carbon and high modulus carbon). Because of this characteristic the designer needs to use a thicker wall thickness to compensate for the lower modulus 'flexible' nature of fibreglass. Fibreglass poles used to be extruded through a mold - a process requiring very thick walls (leading to very heavy poles), but modern hand-wrapped fibreglass poles can be made to meet the demands of the user with less wall thickness, and therefore, less fibreglass weight.

“THERE IS NO WAY TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE VISUALLY BETWEEN CARBONFIBRE AND HIGH MODULUS CARBONFIBRE”

The key properties of fibreglass in a water fed pole are ‘flex’, and ‘heavy’.

What is a Carbonfibre Pole?

A Carbonfibre Pole should be 100% carbonfibre, but the behaviour of some of the carbonfibre water fed poles on the market do not behave like a 100% carbonfibre pole.

The type of carbonfibre sheet, and the designers’ design, and the technicians’ ‘recipe’ to prepare the pole section can change the behavior of the carbonfibre pole. Some pre-preg sheets (the high-tech types) are ‘Made in USA’ or ‘Made in Japan’, or other developed countries. Other pre-preg sheets are ‘Made in China’ and in other developing countries. These pre-preg sheets are not produced with the same quality standards and result in lower properties compared to the products produced by high quality developed suppliers.

All said, you can still get a range of 100% carbonfibre poles with a large range of rigidity, not only because of the composite material, but because of variables in the preparation process.

What is High Modulus Carbonfibre ?

Unfortunately, there is no scientific line at which Carbonfibre is deemed ‘High Modulus’. The term is broad, and refers to the premium carbonfibre materials (imagine the density of carbonfibre strands) and the ‘cooking process’ including pressure, temperature, fibre alignment, and time.

The result of High Modulus is increased rigidity, but possibly at the expense of becoming brittle if the wall thickness is too thin. Then the poles would break even when being used in their omni-directional function (cleaning windows, for example).

There is no way to tell the difference visually between Carbonfibre and High Modulus Carbonfibre as they are both black carbon.

What is a Hybrid Pole ?

Hand-wrapping poles opened the opportunity for the composites to be mixed and to use the properties to be shared.

The idea of a Hybrid pole is (originally) to get sufficient rigidity from using unidirectional carbonfibre sheets, and strengthen the walls of the pole sections with omni-directional fibreglass.

A cheap pole can be called ‘Hybrid’ so it looks like Carbonfibre ... but it could be 50% to 80% or even more layers of Fibreglass, covered with a layer of biax carbonfibre.

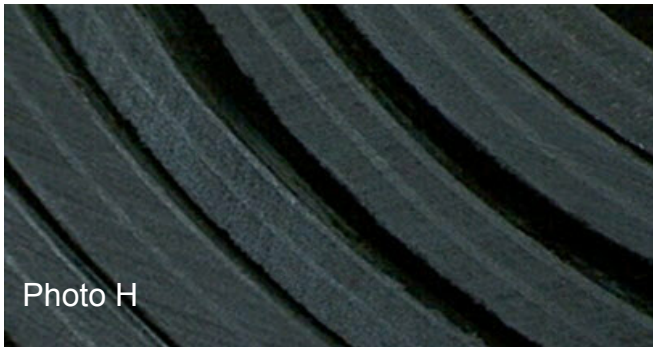
The problem with Hybrid poles is that the stiffness of the pole is created using the lower modulus fibreglass as opposed to the high modulus carbon. Doing this, sacrifices the weight, strength, and performance of the water fed pole, but it looks almost identical to a carbon water fed pole....

Hybrid Poles are cheaper and flexible because they are, in effect, partly fibreglass poles.

For example, if your (7 layer) ‘Carbonfibre Water Fed Pole’ has six layers of Carbonfibre and one coloured surface layer (it must be fibreglass to be coloured), this would mean this pole is actually 14% fibreglass.

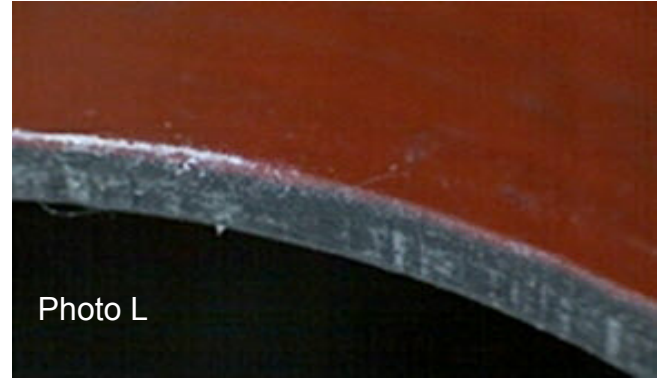
A second example is more chilling : If you have a (7 layer) Hybrid water fed pole and the outer layer is convincingly biax 3K carbonfibre, you have six layers of fibreglass and one surface layer of carbonfibre. With this configuration, your pole is just 14% carbon (or 86% fibreglass) and thus much less expensive to produce - but it can still be classified as a hybrid pole.

So .. it is time now to establish how much fibreglass is in your pole.



These photos are close-ups at 200:1

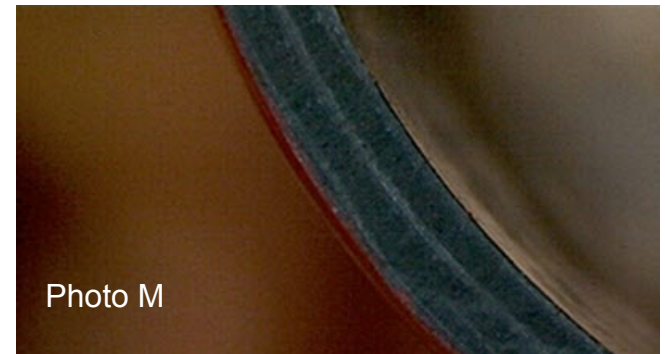
You can see the different layers clearly.



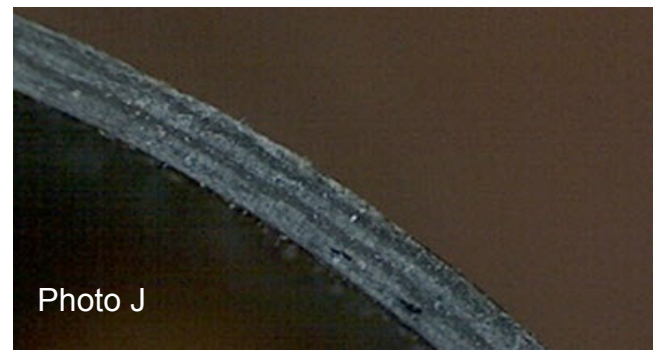
(L) Carbonfibre Pole coloured red on the outer layer with a fibreglass surface layer. See Photo below for a clearer perspective of the ratio of fibreglass.



(I) A Hybrid Pole - this design uses inner layers of fibreglass and outer layers of carbonfibre



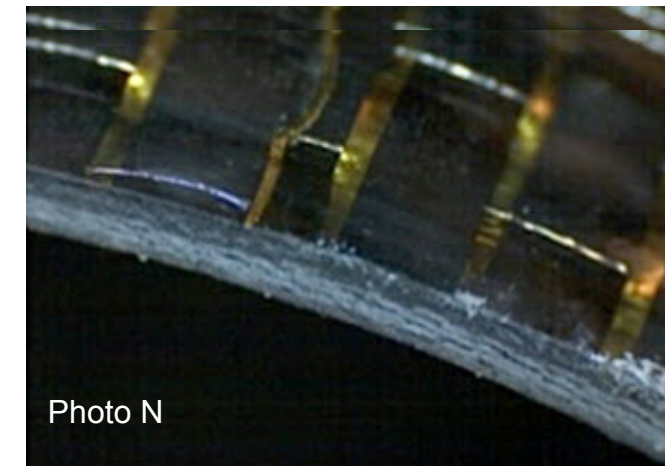
(M) Red outer layer... and you can see the telling sign of two layers of fibreglass in the carbonfibre pole.



(J) A Hybrid Pole - this design uses alternate layers of fibreglass and carbonfibre.



(K) A High Modulus Carbonfibre. Each layer is clearly marked by the ultra fine membrane that backs the high-tech prepreg and assists the spread of the resin throughout the fibres.



(N) A Hybrid Pole with the highly attractive biax carbonfibre outer layer with a gold weave

What is your pole REALLY made from ? Time to MYTHBUST this one yourself !



You can find out this with a high powered magnifying glass (see photos on page 25) or, use your iPhone.

1. Expose the end of the pole section (like in the example photos)
2. Take a photo with the focal point on the end of your pole section (think about putting something beside this to make it easier for your phone to identify the focal length).
3. Use your digital zoom to zoom in to see the layers.
4. HERE IS THE RULE: Carbon can ONLY be black ! Anything not black in your pole is NOT carbon.

Note: If your Carbon Pole has a coloured outside, it is possibly a paint... but most likely a layer of fibreglass.

**Note: omnidirectional is a misnomer as no fiber reinforced composite is truly Omnidirectional or provides consistent strength in all directions - they tend to provide strength in different directions. Uni- 1 direction, Biax 2 direction usually 0 and 90 deg. Triax, +45, -45 and 0, Quad 0, 90, +45, -45 etc. to maintain shape with pressure applied from multiple directions.*

*** Carbon can actually be as thin as 0.05 mm for a veil and as thick as 0.6 - 0.8mm for the heavy toe 56K products used in more industrial applications.*

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SAVES WATER

Flow control is instant meaning you can even switch off water between windows. Our users say they are saving between 60 and 150 litres a day! Answers environmental concerns about water wastage!

SAVES MONEY

One user is in the process of reducing his 1000 litre tanks to 650 litres. Smaller vans equal cheaper tax, servicing, running costs and more importantly than ever, a reduction in fuel costs. Not to forget water processing and metering costs!

MAKES PROFIT

Extra water in your tanks gives you an opportunity to do extra jobs in the day. Many Aqua-dapter users claim to be able to complete an extra 4-5 jobs per day.

FIND OUT MORE AT WWW.AQUA-DAPTER.CO.UK

Backpacks

by The Window Cleaning Warehouse

Open the back of a water fed pole operatives van and amongst the weapons of window cleaning, chances are there is a backpack ready for attack! More and more window cleaners are using backpack for everyday work and some are even making the first steps into the water fed world using the backpack as a starting point.

This is a pretty modern phenomenon, only a couple of years ago people would laugh at the thought of using a BP for window cleaning. The shout of 'who you gonna call? Ghostbusters!' could be heard but not so much nowadays.

As with any industry, window cleaners are always looking to make the job easier, faster and more efficient. With pure water being used more and more on various jobs, backpack are really coming into their own.

Courtyards, the back of houses (especially terraced), through offices, etc. there are countless opportunities for the backpack to be used over the standard van mounted systems and even trolleys. Most window cleaners don't actually use them on their back, some use the handle which most now come with to transport them and others put them on to a sack truck which acts like a makeshift trolley system, at a hugely discounted price!



Currently there are three main models out there - Shureflo 'type' (once the most popular BP on the market), the WCW backpack (with the handle on the top of the unit) and the new Big Boy style backpack (which has the handle on the lid).

So which one to go for? Well there are a couple of factors price, ease of use and reliability are pretty high up on the scale. The WCW Backpack and the Big Boy are just over £100, which compared to the price of a trolley system, is fantastic value.

The Shureflo is more towards the higher £200 mark. This is mainly to do with the circuitry on the Shureflo that comes with a PCB board, this controls the speed of the pump giving you 5 settings. This adjustable feature is now on all the backpacks mentioned but they work in slightly different ways. The Shureflo you push the button on the back, which automatically changes the speed of

"THERE ARE COUNTLESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE BACKPACK..."

the pump from low to high whereas on the other two models, they have an adjustable dial for a more fine tuned water flow. The WCW V3 model is more sensitive giving you a greater control whereas the Big Boy comes in a close second.

The other issues are the handles; you will notice on the Shureflo that there isn't one! As we mentioned previously, most window cleaners don't use the backpack on their back, instead they use it as a portable unit. They take it from job to job using the handle, so to do the same with the Shurflo you would have to strap it to a trolley/sack truck. The better handle of the other two are on the WCW V3 model as it is built into the body of the unit, whereas the Big Boy has the handle on the lid - which isn't ideal but is more than capable to carry the load.

Each unit has a different water capacity. The Shureflo is 16ltr, the WCW V3 is 18ltr and the Big Boy is a whopping 22ltr (max) obviously the more water you can carry the more jobs you can do before a refill. With the standard trolley holding around 25 litres the Big Boy competes with these systems very well.

Add-ons

As we've spoken about, the usual add-on for the backpacks are a sack truck trolley. Some users strap up the units and make something comparable to a trolley system. Other useful accessories are some extra hose, which can be pretty handy; you can leave the unit and walk around a building a fair way without having to move the unit all the time.

Another nice add on is a remote control unit which can be added on retrospectively to any backpack. This is kind of a luxury and is not necessarily needed, but nice nonetheless.

A cut off system is also very valuable to save water, either a tap adjustment or Aqua-dapter can really stretch the water use to the max due to the water restriction a backpack inherently has.

Which one for me?

They all do the job in slightly different ways. Some swear by the Shureflo style which has served them faithfully over the years, though they have been known to have circuit board issues, where just as many prefer another model.

If price is your point then the WCW V3 and the Big Boy are going to prove very attractive. Probably the best path to go down is ask someone who has got or even had a few backpacks to give you their advice and maybe have a go yourself to see what you like the best!





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Ask the Expert

A window cleaner business owner asks Peninsula...

I'm expanding my window cleaning company and we've just acquired a rival company, do I have to keep the new employees on the same contracts?

Or can I introduce my existing contracts of employment?

Peter Done, managing director of Peninsula responds:

This sounds like there has been a business transfer covered by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations or TUPE for short. The application of TUPE should have been clarified before any purchase and your options are now limited given that the transfer has already taken place.

You are obliged under TUPE to preserve the incoming employees' terms and conditions. As this is a legal obligation you have a defence in relation to any complaint of unfair treatment from your current staff should they raise the point that their terms and conditions are not as favourable as those of the incoming employees. While this situation could result in people doing the same job on different terms this, the fact that a transfer has taken place could constitute a genuine material factor which validates the difference. Where the employees are on protected terms they only apply to the job in which they were employed pre-transfer. If they seek to move into a different role in your organisation post-transfer then you have the option to offer any new role on your standard terms.

Harmonisation of terms is something many employers want to do following a transfer in order to ensure that everyone is on equal terms and to make it easier for administration purposes, but changing terms and conditions merely for this reason will more than likely land you in trouble. Any changes implemented must not be connected with the transfer. This prohibition is not affected

by the fact that the employees may be no worse off after the changes have been effected.

This doesn't mean that changes cannot be introduced in any circumstance; but it does mean that bringing them in is more complicated. If it can be established that any changes were, for example, to effect productivity and would have been made anyway, then it may be arguable that the changes were not made merely for harmonisation purposes as a result of the transfer.

Ultimately your ability to change the terms and conditions will come down to the distinct reason you wish to implement them.

How does this affect the window cleaning company that loses a single contract? Does TUPE still apply?

The application of TUPE to a situation where a contract is lost is a very fluid area and, recently, case law appears to be indicating that many fewer sets of circumstances will be covered by the regulations.

In order for employees to be subject to a TUPE transfer when a contract is lost, there needs to be an organised grouping of employees who carry out the particular work in question before the transfer, and each employee must be assigned to the particular task. Whether there is an organised grouping is a matter of fact for the tribunal to decide, however, it is clear that the way the work is structured will be pivotal to this. If there is one group of employees who were brought together wholly to service a particular contract and no other contract, then it is likely TUPE will apply and they will transfer. However, if there is no defined group of employees who service the particular contract and the work is merely structured by shift pattern, for example, which means any particular employee could perform the work on that contract, this may not fall within the scope of the regulations.

For further information then please call Chris Webb on 0161 827 9915, quoting Window123 for free advice

Or visit the www.windowcleaningmagazine.co.uk website and click on the Peninsula tab at the top of the page.

How hard are you working?

by Steve Blyth

That water fed pole you are using, is it working you harder than necessary?

Window Cleaners have been cleaning more glass than ever before using water fed poles with pure water. While pure water cleaning has been around since the 60's, the health and safety laws in the UK during the first part of this century have really ramped up the adoption and understanding of how pure water cleaning is more than just staying off the ladder. The demand for better and more productive WFPs has lead to fast growth by several suppliers offering improved products.

This demand has been answered by the suppliers and it seems that every year there are new poles, improved poles and poles that are no longer available.

Some manufactures are out of the business, others are reborn and a pole that was top of the line three years ago, is hard to find parts for today.

Most WFP users are making more money cleaning the same structure with the poles and they are safer doing the work. This change in the method of cleaning has the WFP quickly becoming the primary tool used everyday.

With retail prices of poles falling and more poles than ever to choose from, how are the poles that are available really better and easier to use?

For the window cleaner the choice comes down to how hard are you working?

In my research, the three most important factors are **stiffness**, **brush quality**, and **weight**.

The easiest to determine is **weight**. It is simple to get weights for all the poles and compare them, but a light weight pole alone does not make the work easier. Overall pole weight needs to be looked at in relationship to the poles height, brush weight and pole stiffness.

Pole stiffness is important in several ways, a pole that is stiff requires less work to manipulate, rather than having to put the cleaner's energy into bending the pole, the effort is sent directly to the brush. Think of the exercise equipment that uses no weights but huge rubber bands for resistance, the more you bend a pole you expend more energy in the bend and the bend resistance in the pole also makes it more difficult for the cleaner to set the brush on the intended spot.

Brush weight impacts the pole as well. A heavier brush will cause more bend and more difficult placement, yet too light a brush above 30 feet and the brush may not clean off the dirt effectively.

In looking at how poles are used there are three target height ranges being cleaned: **First Floor**, **2nd** and **3rd story**, and lastly **40 to 65 feet high**.

This is further broken down into residential cleaning, route cleaning and commercial property cleaning.

First Floor

The tubing used in poles used for first floor cleaning will not vary much weight wise. The poles are typically 7 to 12 ft long and the choice of hose doesn't have enough weight difference to cause much extra effort. Here the brush weight is a big influence allowing for quicker movement of a small WFP on the glass. Choosing a light weight brush for first floor work offers great benefits in reducing effort by the cleaner. Stiffness is not an important measure in first floor work either.

Residential vs. Commercial does not impact pole choice for small poles significantly either. Rinsing is often performed by holding the brush head off the glass at this height a lighter brush and pole makes that easier work.

2nd and 3rd story

These are poles in the 27 to 32 ft range. Working at this height starts to bring all three pole characteristics together. A pole that is not very stiff will be harder to use

with a heavier brush, especially a boars hair that absorbs water.

Residential work has more obstacles to clean around, more chances that the cleaner will be working the pole on an angle to get to a window. A stiffer pole offers easier placement of the brush on that hard to get to glass. When residential cleaning at 30ft having available both light and medium weight brushes is helpful, lighter bushes for getting sideways into hard to reach windows with less effort and a heavier brush for quicker and easier cleaning of glass that is straight up above you.

When you roll up to the structure. take stock of the work at the site. Is it complicated to access or all straight up? Choose the brush for that job when setting up.

Often in residential work, the brush needs to be adjusted to lay flat on the glass. This requires bringing the pole down and adjusting the angle, then getting the pole back up to the glass. A stiffer pole is much easier to bring down when fully extended. Flexible poles often require enough extra effort that the cleaner will reduce the pole height instead.



“A FLEXIBLE POLE MAKES USING A MEDIUM WEIGHT BRUSH MORE DIFFICULT....”

Residential brushes with bi-level brush heads often referred to as sill brushes, allow for easier cleaning as they require less adjustment of the gooseneck to stay on the glass and are often used to clean sills with the downward facing, angled bristles and are available in light and medium weights.

Commercial Work is often less affected by pole stiffness. Light poles with medium to heavy brushes are regularly used here.

The pole is generally used straight up with only small side to side movements required. The bend is less of an impact. The heavy brush is faster at cleaning as the higher up you go, the harder it is to press on the glass from the ground with the pole.

Rinsing can be performed by holding the pole off the glass and is preferred when using a boars hair brush. A stiffer pole will make that task easier to perform. When the pole is flexible, rinsing is often performed with the brush on the glass and a medium nylon brush is a good compromise for that.

Cleaning above 40 ft

That's a long way up and it is harder to manage the movement of the brush head above 40ft. Other than some multi family homes and mansions, this is mostly commercial work though it can often have obstacles that need to be cleared.

Great stiffness is more important here, for a couple of reasons, light brush heads have a hard time cleaning at this height as the cleaner just can not get enough leverage on the brush head. Standing out from the wall is an often used method of putting more weight on the brush and doing that with a flexible pole really adds to the work load.

A flexible pole makes using a medium weight brush more difficult and the cleaner's energy is spent moving the brush into position more.

At these heights, moving a pole from one work area to another can be a challenge. Too flexible a pole and the operator may need to bring the pole down some before making the move.

A stiffer pole will allow easier movement from one area on a structure to another while extended, allowing for quicker and easier work.

With all of this going on it is important to look at these three components together: stiffness, brush type /weight and pole weight.

A light pole can look good on paper but require more effort to manipulate the pole.

A stiff pole at short lengths may have you spending money unnecessarily when a different brush would serve your needs.

Pole stiffness is likely the first consideration in a purchase of a pole 27ft or longer.

Brush type and weight in poles shorter than that.

Then of course there is your choice of water jets...



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Gardiner SL-X *reviewed by Timber van Duijvenbode*

37

The history of the SL-X has been an interesting one, the first SL-X (Mk.1) is quite different to the SL-X poles that we have now. Continuously improved by Gardiner's, it has remained the de facto standard by which all poles are still judged. Quite a remarkable achievement, considering the original became available almost 5 years ago.

Back in April 2008, I spent £402,12 on a pole that really changed not just the way I worked, but indeed changed an entire industry. Today's SL-X is much cheaper at £294 and even further improved over the original. What was the industry like when the original SL-X was launched?

Even though there were dedicated poles for residential work, most were too tall collapsed, and simply not light and rigid enough. Some poles got close, but were no match when the SL-X came out. What many people back then did was buy larger poles, and removed sections as they needed. What the market really needed was a dedicated lightweight residential pole, made by window cleaners for window cleaners, with all that knowledge put into the design and construction of a pole. What seems obvious now might not have been that clear back then. Very short collapsed height, yet still able to clean 99% of all residential properties, extreme lightness and rigidity, small, easy to use clamps and hard wearing poles that would last years. A true 25ft pole, not the "reach" number that many were marketing then (and still do.)

There was quite a bit of hype on internet forums regarding this new pole, as with any product there was a trial/prototyping period where any flaws could be exposed and improved. Some people were privy to try out these new poles and really created a tremendous anticipation for this new pole.

When something sounds too good to be true, it usually is, even in today's pole market. I suppose with a leap of faith I purchased this pole. But once in a while things are just as good as claimed. The SL-X was a real eye opener. Going from a glass fibre X-tel pole to this, might not have been a fair comparison, but I could see where the future was, all carbon fibre poles that offered superb rigidity whilst still remaining light and small enough to use every day, on every property without getting fatigued, And without battling the bounce that came with a lot of poles.

The original pole came with metal clamps, where the actual carbon fibre gripped the other section. When the Mk 2 SL-X came to market it had plastic clamps, where the plastic grabbed the carbon, an improvement where weight was concerned, and also pole longevity. No longer an allen key was needed to adjust the pole. Adjusting the clamp was made much easier with the thumb screw.



A clamp upgrade kit was produced where the original Mk. 1 could be upgraded to the new clamps. That I did, and it gave the pole a new lease of life.

Fast forward almost 5 years into the future, and I've only just retired my SL-X. I've used it every day, on every job. I do mainly residential properties, so I've not had the need to change to larger poles. Keeping the pole and pole hose clean and off the ground has been the key to reduce wear.

So why should you buy an SL-X today?

I think a lot of people have at least 6 thoughts on their mind when buying a new pole.

How light is it?

How rigid is it?

What is the closed length of the pole?

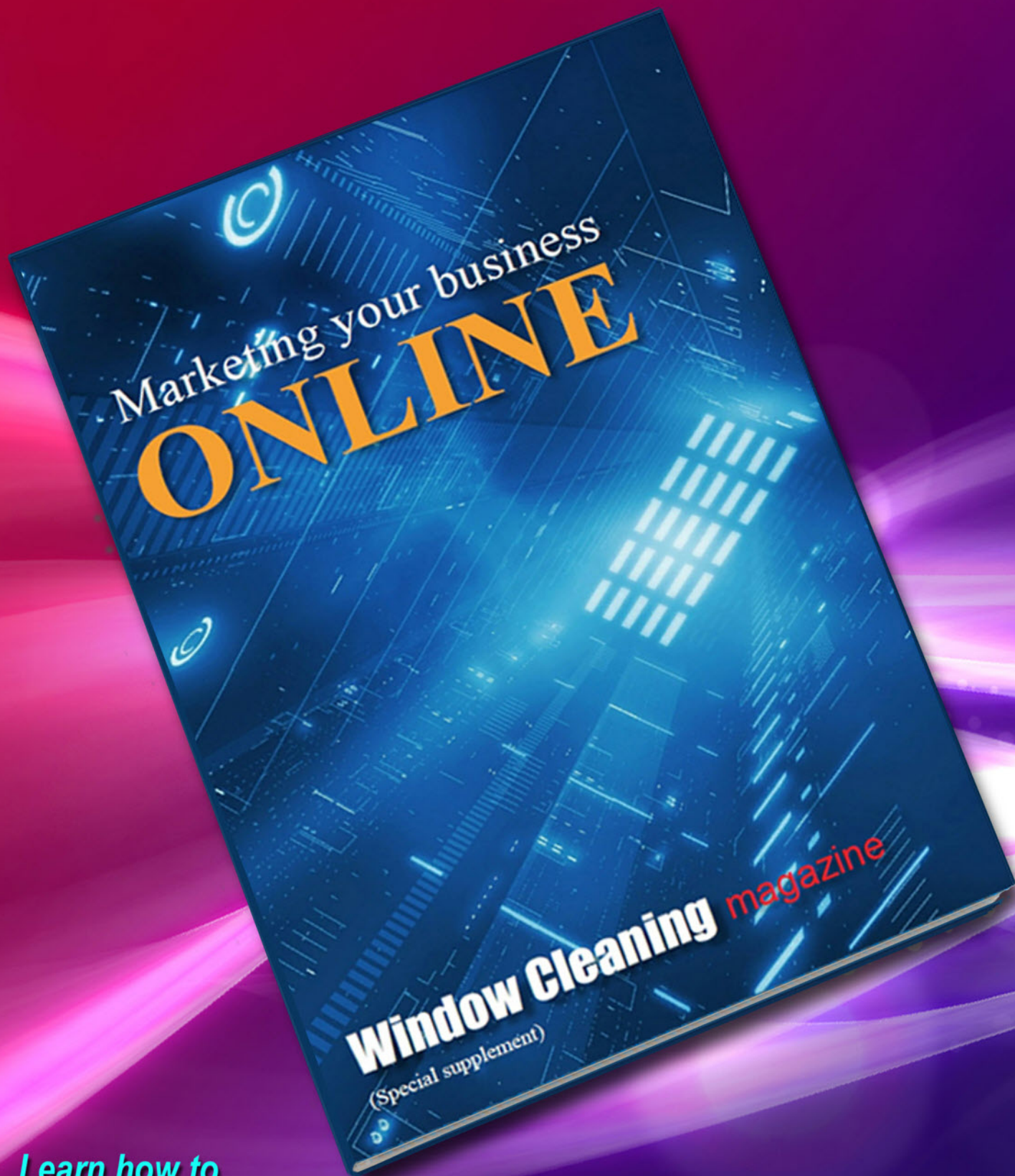
What is the diameter of the handle?

How long is it going to last?

How much money will it cost me?

The lightness and rigidity (bounce and declination) is still unequalled when it comes to the range of poles that are on the market today. Closed length and handle diameter are equally great. As regards to how long a pole will last is entirely up to how the user treats their pole. Keep the pole And pole hose clean and in my example it should last years. That takes us nicely into the cost factor. Full carbon poles are not cheap compared to fibreglass poles, but it's a minute fraction compared to your turnover over the years. I've used mine for 4,5 years, I know personally that over 95% of that time I've had that pole in my hands earning money. So multiplying that figure by your turnover gives you an indication of the actual cost vs earnings. Suddenly, the actual cost of a pole is very small indeed.

As a replacement for my SL-X I bought the Xtreme which is even lighter and is even more rigid. Perhaps more expensive but absolutely worth it. So would I personally buy an SL-X again if my circumstances remained the same? Absolutely. It is a perfect combination of all factors a user looks for in a pole. I fully recommended it.



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"Social/network blogs now account for around 25% of all time spent online in the UK"

"240 million hours are spent online watching video content on YouTube"

"29% of people think the placement of a brand on the search results page reflects the importance of the brand company"

"63% of people normally find websites via a search engine"

"Half of men and 3 out of 4 women access the internet from their phones"

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Here at WCM we try to tell you about all the trade organizations that are available to window cleaners no matter where you are in the world. Today we look at the Master Window Cleaners of America (MWC CoA) and we interview its current president, Kim Little.

WCM: So what is the MWC CoA? Why was this association needed?

KL: MWCoA is the acronym for Master Window Cleaners of America. We are an association of primarily owner/operator and smaller companies that specialises in commercial route and residential, low and mid rise window cleaning. We have members in almost every US state and Canada and even some international members. The reason it was needed was that this segment of window cleaners was mostly overlooked by the bigger association, and had no representation in the industry. The founder, Jack Nelson, saw that and his vision became a reality.

WCM: How does it differ from say the organisations such as the IWCA?

KL: Its focus is not the multi million, multiple employee organisation that is the target market of the IWCA, but the smaller owner/operator genre of businesses that populates the United States. Most of member's owners have companies that employ less than 10 people.

WCM: Does the MWC CoA make any profit?

KL: Well, as I don't have privy to any business records from the previous owners, I can't say. We just changed the business structure of MWC CoA and the new organisation is just getting started. But we are a non-profit corporation.

WCM: What can members expect from joining?

KL: We offer an private members only email forum that members can exchange ideas, tips comment on their experiences, etc. We also have a facebook page, and members can benefit from discounts from lead generation service to business travel and supplier discounts. We also offer regional educational and networking events several times a year. We also have an online store that members can purchase a variety of logoed items.

WCM: What are the costs of joining?

KL: We have very reasonable membership costs. Our dues are only 75 dollars US.

WCM: Do you run seminars or attend events?

KL: We have had many seminars across the US. That is one of our biggest benefits. We offer several free or low cost educational and networking events throughout the US each year. We conduct these events in independent locations as well as in sponsor or supplier locations. So far we have 2 events planned for this year, in Knoxville, Tn, in March and Louisville, KY in Sept. Our mission is to



Improve the image of window cleaners by offering opportunities that can enhance their professional image.

WCM: How is the organisation structured?

KL: Master Window Cleaners of America is now a non profit corporation (MWC CoA, Inc.). We will begin to work on our US IRA tax-exempt status within a few months. That is quite a lengthy process from what I have been told, so I am looking forward to getting stated on it soon.

WCM: What is the MCWoA agenda? What do you stand for?

KL: MWC CoA's agenda is to possibly be the voice of a segment of the industry that populates much of the US. We stand for the smaller guy, offering them the chances many of them cant afford or don't want to join.

WCM: The MCWoA is going through some changes. Can you tell us whats happening and what this will mean to its members and new incoming members?

KL: Masters has recently changed its structure. Formally, it was the personal business of the owner, or president, for example, John Doe, dba Master Window Cleaners of America. That drew much criticism from members of the window cleaning industry, and from that another association formed, the AUWC, the Association of United Window Cleaners. I personally have been a member since 2005, and have heard the comments rising from this. Additionally, members have never been assured that their membership dues haven't been 'just another steak dinner' for the owner. Taking all this into consideration, when the former president promoted me to president, I made a decision to take the organisation into a different direction. I decided to form a non-profit corporation and have a proper board of directors so it can get the recognition and respect it deserves. Members now have the assurance that its dues and the sponsor fees we collect will go directly into the operation of the corporation. Please don't get me wrong by saying that the former owners did not do that, as I don't have privy of their business records, but this now a way of assuring it.



WCM: What awards do you give out?

KL: We have in the past awarded our members in three ways. We have had a "Member of the Month" based on contributions to our forum, a "Thread of the Month" where as the most thought provoking email message of a month receives a prize, and our most prestigious was "Window Cleaner of the Year".

That was one of our members of the month winners that were voted on by the membership. I was runner up Window Cleaner of the year in 2007. Last year we had a hiccup in the program, but we are resuming the program again this year.

WCM: Are there any changes planned for your website, forum etc.?

KL: Our website, www.mwcoa.com will stay the same for a while with the exception of some minor changes. A couple of the changes made now are placing the membership directory open to the public again. We have also added an online apparel store. Our webmaster, Howard Connet, has been working tirelessly for our organisation since I assumed the position and is one of our founding members. I must say he takes pride in his work and is doing an outstanding job.

WCM: What do you do to tackle safe practice for your members?

KL: We intend on forming a safety committee to help with development of a safety manual. As a matter of fact we will have a safety class in our upcoming seminar in Knoxville Tenn. in March. We will keep emphasis on safety information that is necessary to the target market of members.

WCM: What information is also available to members?

KL: Our website is rich with information. We archive our forum entries so members can research the various topics; most of our seminars are recorded, and segments are posted to our website; we offer documents and forms and research materials that members can use and we have links to other industry sources.

WCM: Do all the board members run a window cleaning business when not working on association work?

KL: All of our members are window cleaners, so we each do window cleaning...hopefully daily...(Laughs)

WCM: What is the member split between WFP and ladder users? What are their views on the two methods generally?

KL: Well, I cant really say how divided our membership is between the methods. But if the topic comes up in the forum, there is a spirited and lively discussion. I personally use WFP and admit I hope I don't have to go back to the other method.

Now saying that, we all know there is a definite place for both WFP and ladder use. The older I get, the more I depend on WFP though.

WCM: You have your own window cleaning company? How long have you been going for?

KL: I own and operate Clear Carolina Window Cleaning, which is located near scenic Pinehurst, North Carolina. We get your "windows clear as the Carolina Sky". Shameless plug...sorry. I have been in business here since 2003.

WCM: What got you into window cleaning?

KL: In my former life as a police officer, I had the gambit of off duty security jobs, etc. and was burnt out with them. So one day I was taking a nature break at one of our fire stations and picked up a copy of Entrepreneurs magazine. It had an article about businesses that a person could start with little start up investment, but could offer big returns. I read window cleaning was one of those businesses. I thought I could do that and my first company, Crystal Clear Window Cleaning was born. (Original name isn't it?) But that was in 1987 or 1988, and window-cleaning businesses weren't as prevalent as they are now. My business grew rapidly and at one point I was making more money cleaning windows as I was as a police officer, but having benefits, I remained a full time police officer. I had to sell my business eventually to move to another area police department after a promotion to police supervisor. After I retired from active duty, I returned to my window cleaning roots.

WCM: What was your toughest job?

KL: Aren't they all tough at an older age?? Too many creaks and pops in the joints... But seriously, my toughest job was a seven story building in a retirement community. Photos of the job are on my website www.clearcarolinawindows.com/photos. The building was a remodeled hospital and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It took a helper and me, one week to do the job.

WCM: What single piece of advice would you offer a rookie or somebody that is thinking of starting up a window cleaning business?

KL: I don't think there is just one piece of advice I could give an upstart window cleaner. My advice would be to find a mentor and learn about the business before they start. Ask questions, learn technique, tools and learn safety aspects. The other advice I have is to join an association, like Master Window Cleaners of America, or one of the others, and take advantage of their educational opportunities to learn the industry.

WCM: Thanks for talking to us today Kim. We look forward to catching up with you at the IWCA trade show in Florida next month.

3 *Awesome* Memberships!



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	\$199 for 1 year- \$199 renewal	\$349 for 1 year- \$199 renewal Most Popular	\$39 monthly
Marketing Benefit Downloads	✓ 3 Total/Month	✓ Unlimited	✓ 3 Total/Month *Unlimited after month 6
Business Downloads	✓ 3 Total/Month	✓ Unlimited	✓ 3 Total/Month *Unlimited after month 6
Manuals and E-Books	✗	✓	Available after month 6
Business Planning Tools	✗	✓	Available after month 6
Past Members Only Webinars	✗	✓	Available after month 6
Members Only Private Forum	✗	✓	Available after month 6
50% Off all WCRA Events	✗	✓	Available after month 6
Live Members Only Chat	✗	✓	Available after month 6
10% Off WindowCleaning.com	✗	✓	Available after month 6
\$120 Off Customer Factor	✗	✓	Available after month 6
\$500 Off GlassRenu	✗	✓	Available after month 6
10% Off Reach-iT WFP's	✗	✓	Available after month 6
Gas Breaks	✗	✓	Available after month 6
\$249 Off PWRA Membership	✗	✓	Available after month 6
Unadvertised WCRA Specials	✗	✓	Available after month 6
3% Off the Entire WCR Store	✓	✓ + 2%	✓
5% Off the Entire WCR Store	✗	✓	Available after month 6
At Cost Printing	✗	✓	Available after month 6
WCRA Members Map	✓	✓	✓
WCRA Insured Directory	✓	✓	✓
WCRA RFP Service	✗	✓	Available after month 6

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The Water Control People *by Ian Sheppard*

Spring (Europe) Ltd is an electronics company based in East Sussex. The company has roots that go back to the late 60's when the company provided transformers toroids and resistors for the audio industry.

Today the business continues to provide these products together with contract electrical manufacture, development and design and consultancy also software and firmware protocols, design, PCB design and manufacture. We also produce a range on circuits for metal detectors and full-bespoke access and security control systems. Chances are if you have travelled through a main line rail station UK airport or seaport, it is our electronics that are at the heart of the access control and barrier systems used every day.

We design and build a range of lottery card dispensers which feature remote reporting on sales, fault maintenance and diagnostic reports via a GSM modem. Through this diverse range of services and products is the pump controller produced specifically for pure water window Cleaning. The advent of water fed pole window cleaning radically changed the window cleaning industry and allowed cleaners to work from ground level being both safer and more effective. Early WFP system consisted of a water tank, battery, pump and pole and while being safer and giving time savings there were some issues.

With a pump running flat out, the current drawn from the battery was high together with high amounts of water used to do a days work. The pump working flat out meant that it was common for pumps to fail after a short period as either the pump motor or pump pressure switch burned out. The high pressure in the system also meant connections and hoses wore quickly leading to lost working time while they were repaired or replaced. To stop the pump and water flow you either had to twist or kink the hose. Even with flow stopped at the brush head the pump continues to work against the restriction building up pressure in the system to a point where the pump pressure switch is activated. As the pressure switch cuts, out the pump is operating at maximum, working as hard as it possibly can and therefore drawing maximum current from the battery. As the switch opens it is under great strain. The high current and the fact that the pump is an inductive load (with stored energy) means that the pressure switch contacts are likely to arc and eventually they will fail.

Around 2005 we were approached by a local cleaning company in the South East, UK to address these problems. They recognised that if the speed of the pump could be controlled there were many benefits

- Less wear and tear on the pump
- Extended life of the pump motor
- Less current draw from the battery means the charge lasts longer
- Reduced pump speed means less water is used
- Less water used per job means more jobs from the same tank

The first pump controller was named in house as the 'V1', it was an analogue controller, which turned the pump on or

off and regulated the speed of the pump. There was an immediate effect in that the cleaner was now using less water and was able to cover more work per tank. Added to this was that pump reliability improved as it was no longer running flat out. Downtime was reduced and connectors and fittings lasted longer.

The next development brought a control, which did not rely on the pump pressure switch to stop the pump. Having the control manage the pump stopping meant there was no longer stored energy arcing across the pressure switch contacts. Referred to as Dead End (DE) the control has stopped the pump and water flow. The pump is no longer under full load when it stops this has an advantage as less energy is drawn from the battery. The V3 analogue control came into being with a dial to control the speed of the pump and a second switch on the side to adjust DE calibration. You can still find some of these older controllers out there working day in day out. Further development ushered in digital displays providing the user with more information as to battery state, more accurately control the pump and provide some instant fault diagnosis.

- A means to calibrate the control to each system
- Manual and auto calibration
- Battery volt meter
- Low battery cut off
- Pressure switch activated
- Flow stopped (DE)

We were being asked for controls that would be able to trickle charge a battery, control the filling of a water tank or a hot water system. WFP distributors were also asking us and the system builders to produce and provide bespoke controllers.

The latest generation controls are a world away from the early analogue as they not only control the pump speed but provide a useful tool to help manage the whole system. Advanced Micro DE testing now means that while the flow is stopped the system can be left in dead ended for long periods with no additional pressure build up in your system. Battery management allows the latest controls to display the current battery voltage shutting the pump down if the voltage is low preventing long-term damage to the battery cells. The V11 also features an easy to use low battery cut off over ride meaning that you can complete the day work in confidence.

We have also worked to ensure the new generation of digital and analogue controls are as energy efficient as possible. The control current draw is in the micro amps range.

The range of controls available now include

- Standard V11
- Charging
- Auto tank filling
- Hot water management of either gas or diesel heaters
- TDS measurement
- The all New V11 Analogue
- Mains controllers
- Radio remote options
- Bespoke controller and display systems
- 240V AC controllers
- 24V display systems

We work hard to design controls that are both flexible and rugged in every day use. We also believe our continued success rests with our distributors and the end users. To this end, we offer product support to both our distributors and direct to end users if required. The controls have a 12-month warranty from date of purchase.

To further support the distributor and end user there is a frequently asked questions section on our web site www.springltd.co support and FAQ. You will also find some useful video of the controllers in a working system.

There are a range of 'how to video's' with others in the pipeline.

1. How to use auto calibrate your controllers
2. How to use the low battery cut off over ride

The controls are engineered to work with the pump pressure switch in line. We have in effect overengineered the controller as we could do with out the pressure switch. However in rare cases should the controller fail with out a pressure switch the following may occur:

1. The controller will re-test the DE every few seconds.
2. The pump may keep turning on and off (cycling)

3. The system pressure may build.
4. The hose connections may fail.
5. Damage to the pump and controller.

Our solution allows us to provide even greater protection against pressure damage to your system. While the control will operate with the pressure switch disconnected, we recommend that it be left in line.

We supply most major WFP distributors in the UK – Europe and beyond, this allows us to brand the controllers to each distributor supporting both their brand and market. This very successful model means the window cleaner benefits as our distributors are able to offer a very competitive price for the controller and include them in a range of packages and systems.

For the full list of distributors, please see our web site www.springltd.co Full range stockists.

This is not the end of the story as there are many exciting projects coming in 2013 including a unit that can run from mains AC or Battery DC power source, units with a timer and others.

spring pro Water fed pole pump controller



A tried and tested design from pole-fed specialists, the eco flow has been developed by window cleaners in the field who know what they want from a window-cleaning product.

The use of a pump controller significantly reduces wear on the pump, especially when compared to a flow restrictor. Reducing pump speed reduces power used and mechanical wear.

Dead end detection detects when water flow is restricted (i.e. when the pole has been disconnected from the hose) and safely shuts down the pump, further reducing power and wear. Simply reconnect the pole and the pump will start up again.

Fine control of the flow rates means water use is kept to a minimum, allowing you to complete more jobs on the same tank, as well as being eco friendly. Less water uses less resin, which extends the life of your resin cartridges.

The three button interface is simple and intuitive to use.

The battery voltage is available at the touch of a button. Advanced features will shut down the unit when the battery is too low, preventing irreversible battery damage.



Copes easily with demanding daily use

Extends the life of resin cartridges

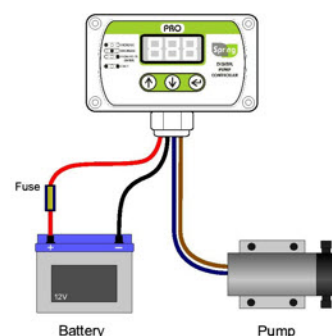
Controls water flow accurately and dependably

Dead-end detection saves battery power and extends life of pump

Displays battery voltage

Unit is sealed to IP64, stopping water ingress

Easy to use and simple to install



Electrical Specification	Value	Mechanical Specification	Value
Supply Voltage	7-18V	Enclosure material	ABS
Maximum drive current	10A	Water resistance	IP64
Typical drive current	2-3A	Dimensions (mm)	115x65x40
Working temperature	-5 to 40C	Voltmeter accuracy	+/- 200mV



Soapbox

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If you wish to write in and share your knowledge or experience or you would like to respond to any letters here or to any article or subject discussed in this magazine, then feel free to send your copy and/or pictures to:

Info@windowcleaningmagazine.co.uk

Hi

A couple of questions. First: working in the rain. I know that using wfp in the rain is ok. I tell my customers this and some accept it, others don't. It would be really good to have an explanation of the science behind it in writing. Do you know where I can get this? Second: How do the windows get dirty if not by rain carrying pollution?

Many thanks

Steve

Hi WCM,

Many thanks for a great magazine. It's a great help for a newbie (2months) like me. I've got a few residential solar panel jobs lined up without a suitable pole! I'm looking to buy a 47ft Xtreme from Gardiner because I see this as giving me the rigidity I'll need for the roof angles. Before I splash out £998 +VAT on this pole could you advise on any other pole alternatives that will do this sort of work (preferably cheaper)? Any advice would be much appreciated. Thanks,

Tony

Hi Steve

Thanks for your letter to WCM.

Residential customers are most concerned when it comes to window cleaning in the rain. As soon as black clouds loom and you turn up to a residential property we sometimes get a puzzled look from the customer and the dreaded comment, "your not going to clean them today are you?".

Truth is, rain is as pure as what is in your tank. I have measured the TDS of rain falling straight down at 001!! And out of a running and overflowing gutter at 010!

A fine film of dirt is already on the glass before it starts to rain. Due to the surface tension of water, the water beads into circles, so when the rain dries, it re-arranges the dirt into circles as the bead dries. This increases the concentration of solids.

By cleaning the glass you remove this dirt. Other considerations might effect the work such as hard, fast rain. This could hit surrounding brick work and drip on to glass, for example. But you would also get wet and catch a cold lol

Does this help?



Hi Tony

There are many options for you on the market to suit your specific needs but before you make a choice please take a look at two articles in this issue, 'How hard are you working' by Steve Blyth and 'Myth Busting with Perry - 'Lets talk water fed poles'.

Hi

I am looking for a very simple, straightforward contract form. I do not normally use them, but have a new customer who would like to have a formal agreement to lock in pricing and terms. I am not really concerned with the legal side, as my thought is that I am not going to force someone to do business with me. Just want it to state the terms and look professional. Do you have one to share?

Thank you.

Teresa

Hi

By joining associations such as WCRA you will have access to all the business template forms you will ever need. Alternatively, you can draw up something that is acceptable in a word document. After all, you are simply stating your terms.

Contributors please note -

Submissions to the SOAPBOX section of the magazine will soon be able to submit their letters via our submission form within the members area of the magazine which is currently being given a makeover.

Contributors who would like to submit articles can also do so via the members area or via the email address below.

Info@windowcleaningmagazine.co.uk

Great ideas put forward from readers. Tell us what you think.

- Create an FWC section.
- From the forums section covering key points.
- More information on Health & Safety.
- (I love this one and it made me laugh) A Latte with Lee.... An interview over coffee.
- News on free business workshops.
- Twitter section "best quotes".

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To dog-ear or not to dog-ear?

By Wagga.

“ ... JOB DONE! ... ”

Most window cleaners have heard of dog-earing, many have tried it. Some have found it helpful, some not.

What is dog-earing and is it worth doing to your prize squeegee?

The idea of dog-earing a squeegee, is to help you get right to the edge of the window you are trying to clean without riding over the window seals thus leaving as little soap on the edge next to the frames, so there is as little detailing to do as possible. The better result you can achieve the more efficiency, the less time it takes and we all know, “time is money”. Therefore, the idea of dog-earing, is to bend the ends of your squeegee down a bit at the ends so the rubber won't lift up as much, especially when you encounter rubber sealed windows. Then, as you “point” the blade into the corners it will leave a much better finish and much less of a line right round the window. But, this can be a little disappointing. It always seems that it is nearly there but not quite and it is just that little bit frustrating. A bit hit or miss, shall we say?

I use a pole with a Wagtail on the end for much of my work as I have done for quite a few years and before WFP became a feasible proposition. I did all the usual dog-earing techniques but generally it was mediocre at best though there was some improvement at least. I got to thinking; “if only there was some way to improve this”.

One of the big problems with using a pole with traditional equipment, as you will appreciate, is the detailing problem. It is a lot easier if you can reach like on the ground but unless you are up on the ladders, then you can't.

I would find this frustrating, having to wrap a scrim around the pole and try to detail the edges. It all took too long and was just too impractical, so one day I decided to sit down and have a real good look at the squeegee and try to figure out just what was happening.

I first looked at a squeegee that had no modifications whatsoever and tested it out on the glass. I went very slowly (difficult when you're used to going fast) What was immediately apparent was that the rubber blade will ride up over the seals on the windows unless it's got traditional wooden frames where it is a bit better. This we already knew.

The next thing I did was to do the conventional dog-earing technique of bending the channel at both ends in toward the tips of the rubber. This, it is said, helps to keep the rubber “planted” on the glass so it will be less likely to ride up over the window seals.

Again, I tested this out, carefully “pointing” the squeegee into the edges and corners. Improvement for sure but certainly not the whole answer. So I began to ask questions, why is it riding over even though it's dog-eared. If I carefully point the squeegee into all the right places, will it be better? But, no. It didn't matter how carefully I squeegeed the window, it wouldn't work properly.

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Again, I decided to sit down and really think about this. It was then that I noticed that if the rubber blade were cut closer to the edge of the channel then this would marginally improve things along with the dog-earing. Having done this I noticed that the rubber *above* and on top of the channel was longer and it seemed to me that *this* could be the problem. But what could be done?

More cups of tea and a brain wave later, I rushed to the shed and armed with a Stanley knife, complete with a new blade I cut a slice off the top of the rubber, making it narrower.

It certainly wasn't easy cutting a rubber to a good standard but I managed it. Great I thought, that's it! Try it out. Didn't work. The rubber *needs* to be a bit longer so it can flex to the right angle and take out any imperfections and variations, giving a sort of cushion and spring to the blade.

For a while I was stumped and decided on a Water Fed Pole system which has its own problems but the problem of dog-earing kept bugging me.

After a fresh look at the squeegee once again at a later date, I wondered if there was a way of "raising" the tips of the metal squeegee to *point* to the corners of the rubber like two fingers pointing right to the tips so it would not be able to lift off the glass.

The only solution seemed to be cutting into the metal channel about 10mm in from the edge and about 5mm from the top with a hacksaw. (Please see the video we have made on this subject). After this I prised out the two "tabs" and got them pointing towards the very tips of the rubber. Just where I wanted them. Then, I bent the two "tabs" just like the old style of dog-earing, in toward the rubber. After cleaning up the rough metal edges with a file, it was ready for a test run.

Soaping up a window I test the modification out...eureka! I was well pleased with the results. It kept the rubber planted on the glass and it was a revelation.

Most of the time, I could not believe my eyes it was so good. During the next few months, I used the modification in the field and found that it worked on everything that I used it

on and it cut out at least 70-80% of detailing. This was especially valuable for pole-work.

There were some downsides though. One of them being that the rubber would wear faster on the edges. This I quickly realised was not such an issue because this new style of dog-earing was quickly paying for itself in the speed and quality of work that I could achieve especially at height on a pole. The rubber is just one of those things that become dispensable. Trying to save on rubber isn't going to be worth it.

The other downside was a little more serious. This involves the weakening of the metal tips of the channel. After a while, it is possible for one end to break off. At first, I was disappointed but again I figured that it was well worth it because of the vast improvement that this new type of dog-earing made to my work. The only "tabs" to have actually broken off however, were from early Wagtails and certainly, none of the conventional stainless channels.

If you want to have a go at this, first look at the video and then perhaps try it on an old channel. Sometimes it may take a little trial and error to get right but just don't over-do it. Just give it a slight bend at first, and then progressively bend it more until you are happy with it.

There is more to come on this subject and I will show you how to improve the channel on your squeegee even more...so don't miss my next article and video.

See Wagga's video in the WCM website members area



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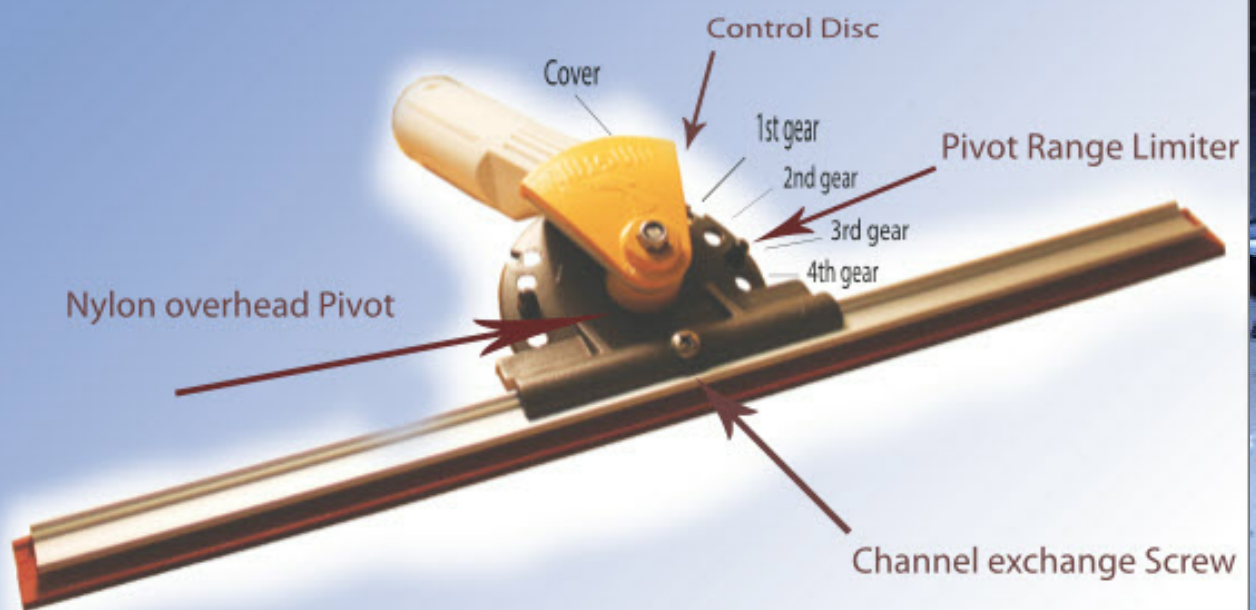
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Introducing the Wagtail PC PIVOT CONTROL

Patent Pending

We now know that Pivoting squeegees are faster, have further reach and have excellent accuracy on extension poles and most importantly use less arm strain

Wagtail has enhanced this pivoting action in their new Pivot Control Squeegee 'Wagtail PC'



Previous

1. Pivot bearing resistance
2. Lack of pressure when turning
3. Pivot range too wide
4. Force vectors applied to opposite side of disc to the direction of the squeegee channel
5. Fatigue on moving parts
6. Wayward pivoting at extreme heights

New Features

1. Nylon collet
2. Pressure applied in the desired direction
3. Adjustable pivot range
4. Force vectors directly applied from above the working plane
5. Nylon movements
6. Controlled pivot



50

Early to bed, early to rise. Advertise, advertise, advertise.

One of the biggest secrets to successful marketing is understanding that marketing is just a numbers game. You need to put the time in and make contact after contact in order to reap the big benefits.

One man committed to his marketing campaign is Nick Long of Longs Window Care, Inc in Hingham Massachusetts.

Nick started his business when he was 23. At first he worked for a fairly large company until deciding to go it alone. We caught up with Nick and asked him about building up a successful window cleaning business.

WCM: Hi Nick. How did you view your window cleaning business at the start?

Nick: *I worked as little as possible and made the business revolve around everything at the beginning. I wanted to do personally... golfing, playing and recording an acoustic project and going to the beach pretty much everyday during the summer.*

It wasn't until about 7 years later when I found out I was going to be a father and so I kicked everything into high gear - doing what I should have done all along, growing my business.

WCM: So what gives...? You have come so far in your business since you kicked it up a gear. When did you start all this?

Nick: *What gives? I unleashed the animal in 2009 - that's what gives. I started my business in 2003 but really I didn't start running a real business until 2009.*

WCM: What jobs did you do previously to your window cleaning business? Were you in sales and marketing?

Nick: *No past experience. I actually hate sales with a passion. I have always loved marketing but did all the wrong things until I really started doing some in depth research. Read a ton of books and listened to everything Chris Lambrinides said during a webinar a couple years ago. I came up with a strategy that I thought would work well for me.*

WCM: That is great, so you understand marketing very well. That is an advantage don't you think?

Nick: *It is now, definitely. It isn't something that just happens over night. It's something you have to wrap your head around and do research on for your particular area before you understand where you should start.*

WCM: What was the hardest thing you found about growing your own business?

Nick: *I think to start - obviously getting the phone to ring, then finding good reliable loyal help who take pride in their work. Those are the two things I feel like you have to have in order to run a successful business.*

WCM: Tell us about your generalized pricing structure? What offers work best? How do you tempt people?

Nick: *We charge per window and offer 20 window packages. Some start around \$199 and go up to \$349. I don't have to tempt people. We stay in front of people all the time with so many mailings a year that people recognize us and know whom to call when they need one of the services we provide.*

WCM: So what does your current campaign consist of and when do you start your campaigns?

Nick: *Our campaigns are always on going. We do a minimum of 6 a year. I usually start pushing in the Spring like everyone else once the weather breaks.*

WCM: You spend a lot on a lot of leaflets. Run us through the cost of your campaign?

Nick: *Yes, we definitely spend quite a bit. Generally our minimum cost per campaign is about \$15,000 and can go up to \$27,000 depending on the time of year and how hard I want to push. I always do a minimum of 50,000 postcards no matter what.*

WCM: What is your ROI (return on investment)?

Nick: *Typically (depending on season) we generate \$4-\$5 per dollar spent.*

WCM: How do you deliver your leaflets? There is so many to deliver.

Nick: *I use a printing company that addresses them and delivers them right to the post office. Once the routes/towns are decided on I never have to think about it again until the phone starts ringing.*

WCM: What works on your leaflets?

Nick: *You want my secrets? Hmmmm... I don't know about that. I will say - a simple message. Something that*

grabs peoples attention in the first three seconds of someone seeing your postcard. That is always my goal. A great headline is the first place to start, coupled by an offer people think they can afford. It's all about presentation once you have their attention.

WCM: Do you do telesales?

Nick: We call clients from previous years but never cold call.

WCM: What percentage is your business residential/commercial?

Nick: We are 99% residential

WCM: Do you market to commercial differently from residential, if so, how?

Nick: We generally do not market to commercial. If we get a commercial call we will do it but typically our expertise is residential.

WCM: Do you use any USP in your marketing such as online payments etc.?

Nick: Our USP... I would say is that we are upfront about pricing right on our postcard, which offers convenience to our clients. There is no guesswork for the homeowner. About 90% of our calls schedule on their first call right over the phone.

WCM: What has been your most fruitful campaign to date?

Nick: Probably the one we just sent out.. 106,000 postcards. My educated guess as to how fruitful it is going to be - about \$8-\$9 per dollar spent.

WCM: Does the recession affect your sales?

Nick: I don't think so. I have grown the business by over 200% since 2009. In a time when people are not spending money because of the recession I have pushed that much harder and it has paid off.



WCM: What new marketing ideas are you going to try in the future?

Nick: I think there are always ways to improve our campaigns so I am always brainstorming and writing ideas down for those. We are also going into our 10th year in business so there will be a new website design and extensive SEO work. We are also going to be marketing more to our current clients in 2013.

WCM: Any advise to the readers on marketing and growing a successful business?

Nick: Yes. Do your research. Watch what your competition does and what they don't do. Catch them asleep behind the wheel of their business. Hate your competition and become the competitor they hate. Stay focused, committed and drive your business to be what you want it to be. If you're a lazy bum and put things off until tomorrow it will never happen. It all starts with you. Work seven days a week if you have to.

WCM: AWESOME ADVICE! Thanks Nick.



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Designed with 36% More Carbonfibre than Super-Light.

Fitted with TUFF Clamps and a full set of spares.

All poles are also fitted with :

304 Stainless Steel fittings

Awesome Efficiency at work

3K Carbonfibre Surface

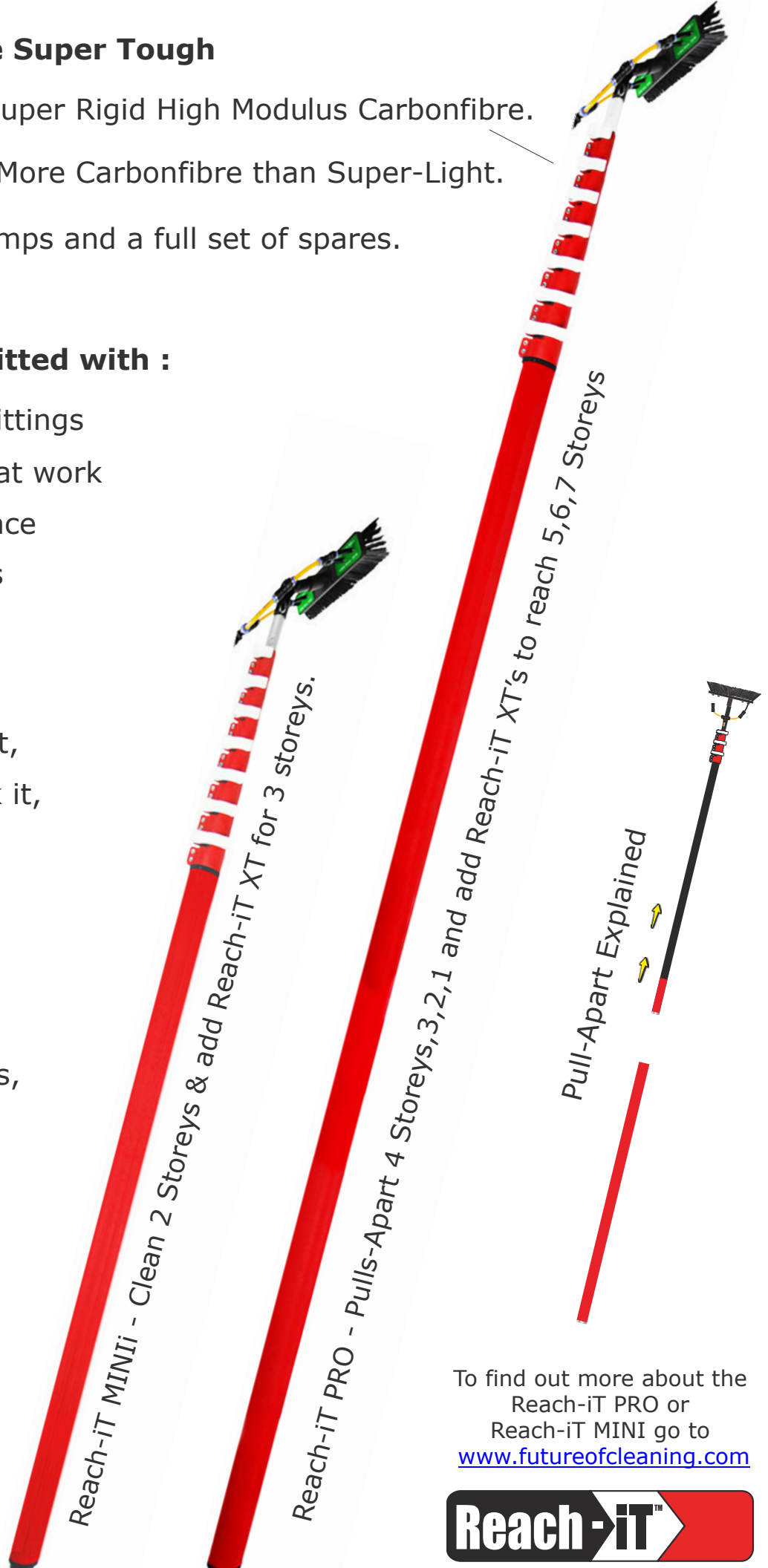
Protective Pole-Skins

2 Year Warranty

We will still replace it,
if you are able break it,
No Charge.

End Defenders

Indestructible Poles.
Toughened End-Caps,
304 Stainless Steel.



To find out more about the
Reach-iT PRO or
Reach-iT MINI go to
www.futureofcleaning.com



Import direct or cut a "deal" locally from www.clearvuesolutions.co.uk



Quality Tools for Smart Cleaning

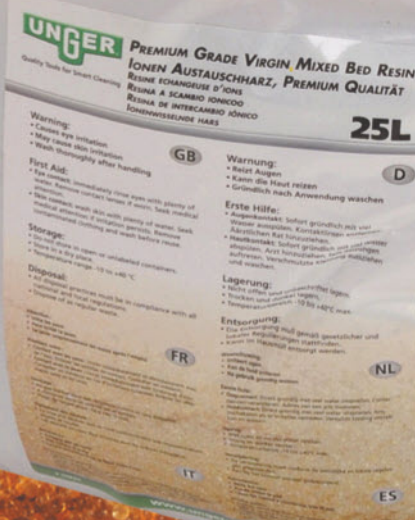
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