

Window Cleaning

Mar/Apr 2016

magazine

This issue...

Waterworks Powers Up
New machine on the market?

The cost of emotion

Three mental expenses you cannot afford

Keeping British gutters clear

We profile Space Vac

IWCA convention and trade show

What does it feel like?

and much, much more...

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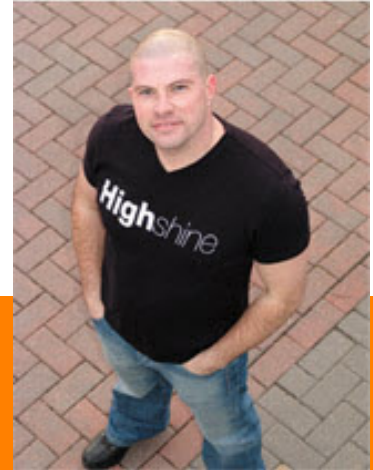
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Window Cleaning Magazine



Editorial

Hey Readers,

Now that my flights and my hotel room is booked for the biggest cleaning show in Europe, the ISSA InterClean (May 10th till the 13th 2016) my mind starts to organize and expect what I will get out of the show for the Window Cleaning Magazine coverage. We of course will be filming Booth Talk with our guest host Steve Blyth of J Racestein USA and so Steve and I will cover as many new innovations as we can. It goes without saying that you can follow things as it happens via my Twitter account as I tweet my way around. And I cannot forget our Facebook members too, who will also benefit from the 'real time' uploads of pictures and video footage.

This show in Amsterdam historically is the show that manufactures and suppliers launch their latest innovations for the widest possible audience in Europe. This year will be no exception. With rumors flying around of what may be revealed in this year show, frankly most of what is new to the market is shrouded in secrecy and adamantly guarded.

We can of course point you in the directions of such companies like Moerman, for example, who promises a big reveal at the show. Other companies such as Waspak will be demonstrating their latest in water fed pole safety, with their new cleaning suit aimed at taking the strain off window cleaners.

If you want to fly their, the flight costs are very reasonable for a return, with a flight time of around 1.5 hours from the Midlands UK.

I hope to see you all at the event.

Lee Burbidge

Visit our website and blog at www.windowcleaningmagazine.co.uk

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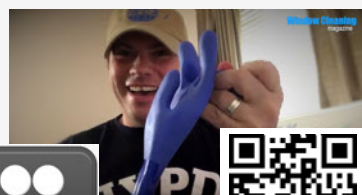
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What does it feel like?

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*G-Dive gloves from
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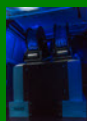
*The Moerman Combinator
How it goes together*



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Managing the employee forecast

By Peter Artusa

We have one of the larger window cleaning companies in the US called All County Window Cleaning. And employ between outside staff and office staff approximately 30+ people during the peak of season.

This can and does cause staffing problems within our organization. We are located in Northern NJ and service approximately 9 counties within NJ, NY and PA. We run 8 residential trucks per day which include 2 power washing/roof cleaning trucks per day plus 1 storefront truck. We have approximately 15 supervisors/technicians that are our "regular" employees. These are the guys and gals that have worked for us for many years and have committed to the All County philosophy.

I run All County as a family run company with core values dictating our work ethic, so you can only imagine what type of hiring dilemmas this causes. We close our company on December 23rd every year and reopen January 2nd.

All employees get laid off and collect unemployment till mid-March. Except for my

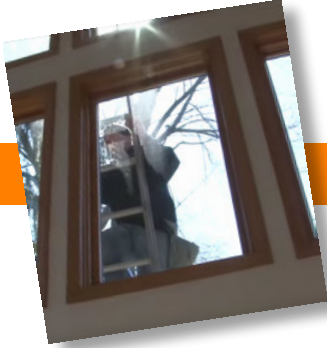
operation manager and my office manager.

We do continue to work during this time and we call in the key employees when needed. They are allowed to work 20 hours without infringing on their unemployment benefits.

This time of the year is when myself and my Office manager and operations manager go over the year, make improvement's, putting together marketing budgets and plans, inventory, equipment budgets etc. And the dreaded employment forecast for the year.

We find that we do not get the top of the line employees. We run many help wanted ad's throughout different Media's, such as Facebook, Craig's list and local college on line pages. We do not glamorize the position, we lay it out and explain what we are looking for and hope for the best. We constantly take applications and keep them in a file to draw on when needed. Once we start getting in applications and resumes it is at that point we start two piles.

One is the 'do not call' pile and the other is the 'do call' pile. Applicants that do not fit the All County scope are automatically put into the 'do not call' pile. This could be as simple as no car, no license, criminal convictions etc. Once we get a pretty healthy sized call pile we then begin that process. Again they are put into two piles. "No further



"EMPLOYEES ARE THE GREATEST STRENGTH.."

06

action" and "Continue", this process is done with a phone interview before the actual interview. We base this on phone demeanor, simple customer service questions and the all-important "Core" values questions.

The one's that pass this process are then brought into the office for the all-important, first, face to face interview. Again we allow them to talk, ask those questions pertinent to our systems and what we do... This is where we get a feel for them... Once this interview is over I go over this with my operations manager and start the process of seeing who we are bringing back for the final interview. This most of the time separates the good from the bad applicants. They then start our rigorous 2 week hands on training program.

We again loose people here. We loose some when we start drug testing or back ground checks.

Some of the pitfalls we experience are, after going through this process, we think we have the right person, go through our extensive training program, etc. etc. they just leave. No warning, no notice, just don't come back.... This is our biggest problem.

I try and do an exit interview, but sometimes it just does not happen. Now this might seem like a lot of time and energy, and it is... But we need good people that fit the mold of All County.

We also give all key employees an OMNIEA profile test. This tells us if they are what we are looking for too. We hope that once we go through the entire interview/hire process we have made the right choice and these people we we hire are going to be the right fit for our company. Sometime they are and sometimes they are not. It is a gamble, a roll of the dice. We treat our employees the right way. We do many employee related practices internally that help promote a healthy work environment that keep our employees wanting to work for us. Such as employee appreciation days... employee of the month/ year etc. and pay incentives. I have an open door policy for any of our people to discuss anything that might be bothering them. I try and run this company like the company I would want to work for. My employees are my greatest strength, they can also be my greatest weakness.

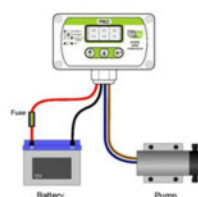


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A tried and tested design from pole-fed specialists, the eco flow has been developed by window cleaners in the field who know what they want from a window-cleaning product.

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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.

Electrical Specification	Value	Mechanical Specification	Value
Supply Voltage	7-18V	Enclosure material	ABS
Maximum drive current	30A	Water resistance	IP64
Typical drive current	2-5A	Dimensions (mm)	125(L) x 45(W) x 30(H)
Working temperature	-5 to 40C	Vibration accuracy	< 100mV

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Silo style static's by Ionic Systems

Are static system's right for you?

A static system is essentially a tank system that is stored inside a business premises or garage. Most static systems are plumbed into the water mains with pre filters screwed to a wall or other permanent structure. Because a static system is plumbed into the water mains this type of system will generate pure water 24 hours per day, seven days per week. It is important to mention that a solenoid switch must be installed inline so that when the tank is full, it cuts the water. Without a solenoid you will run the risk of chucking money quite literally down the drain as it bypasses the filters when the static tank is full. Solenoids are cheap to buy and I think are an essential part of a static set up. Alternatively, you can fill and monitor the tank manually. Multiple van users will find this difficult.

So what are the advantages of installing a static system for your window cleaning business?

The advantages are water on demand and not having to wait 6 hours plus for filling as is the norm on a van mounted system, one point TDS control if you run more than one vehicle in your business. Static systems also work out way cheaper to buy if using IBC tanks and marginally cheaper on consumable items such as filters and resin should you be running multiple



vehicles.

Other advantages are that you would only need a cheaper delivery only tank in your vehicle or even better still a trolley system. A static system is great also should you have your eye on expansion. You can build a fleet of window cleaning vehicles very quickly using your static system to service them. However, make sure the turn around water volume matches the amount of delivery units in your fleet.

Are there any disadvantages?

You will need space. If you are a self employed window cleaner and run your business from home then you will defiantly need free space in an out building, shed or garage. Be sure to protect your system from freezing. This can be done by insulating or using heaters during the winter months for when it drops below zero.

Those with business premises, usually space is not an

issue, however, when you install your system make sure that it is near the point where your company vehicles will fill up from.

If you get your static size wrong for your use or business projection and run multiple vehicles, you may find a situation where all the water has been used and vans still empty. Example, if you have three vans with 600L delivery tanks on board then you would be better off having a 2000L static system. Think about your business plan. Do you plan to expand?

What if I want to expand my window cleaning business?

Having the space to expand is essential here. If you run a business from home a garage might be great for

growing from 1000L to a 2000L but to increase further you may have to consider renting a unit or other business premises and let's face it, if you are expanding from 2000+ the money will be coming in thick.

IBC tanks Vs Purpose Manufactured

IBC tanks are usually cheaper than manufactured tanks and sometimes easier to daisy chain to additional units. You can find them online with 1000L containers selling from between £50 to £100 and if you are having them delivered the postage can cost between £45 and £55.

Silo style static tanks as sold by [Ionic](#) is perfect for the larger window cleaning company requiring a lot of water for a large fleet.



**A 2000L static system using
two 1000L IBC tanks**

Make sure your static system
is positioned as close to your
vehicles for filling as possible.



Take your BUSINESS into the 21st CENTURY

Does anyone think that business is becoming a crowded place? Business stats (in the UK) show a record 5.4 million private sector business start ups at the beginning of 2015, this is an increase of 146,000 since the previous year and 1.9 million more since the year 2000.

Small businesses accounted for 99.3 % of this number and 99.9% were small or medium sized (SME's). Those numbers are real big, right?

Let us drill down harder into those figures. The combined annual turnover of these SME's was £1.8 trillion! That's a whopping 47% of all private sector turnovers.

In the same year, from those stats, 4.1 million were non-employing businesses. Imagine being a part of that with your window cleaning business.

So what keeps you on top and ahead of the game? Is it your companies Unique Selling Point (USP), the quality of your customer care, the quality of the service you provide and the equipment that you use? Yes - all of the above and some more.

It is a sad fact that most business start-ups do not pass the first 3 years in business and mainly because of cash flow. With an ever-crowded market place, cash flow is more 'King' than ever before.

Water fed pole manufactures and suppliers are helping businesses with available finance on expensive, quality equipment, but is there more that you can do to reduce your exposure to other areas that might prevent your business growth such as debtors?

I have an old Office Manager friend called Greg; he used to have this saying that has stuck with me over the years, "Are we getting the business? Are we getting the money?"

I remember in my early 2nd year of business, panicking over making the payroll run and actually considering the use of my credit card to tie me over for the Christmas period. The invoices

"I explain why getting customers to pay online was an important part of my business. And I find out why GoCardless is attracting a lot of attention."

By Lee Burbidge

were out there but for some reason November and December (Christmas) became a slow month for customers 'paying the bills'. It was a sharp lesson learned, thankfully the payments were made, the credit card was saved and that small band of staff that I had collected all got paid for Christmas. Disaster averted.

Greg and his 'saying' brought comfort to me at the time and to this day every now and then we tell each other those lines as I pass through the reception area. And I smile with a fond memory of the support he gave me.

Anyone will tell you that the more window cleaners are hitting the streets and starting up in window cleaning, the more this attraction of a low-end investment could move the industry into a 'buyers' market on the prices people will pay for window cleaning services in some areas of the UK.





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“One way of showing USP and forward thinking is to offer your customers an easy armchair payment system”

It can depend on where you have decided to operate your business in regards to how competitive your area of work may be. Rural Wales for example Vs. the inner suburbs of Scotland, or London Vs. the Midlands. Getting ahead of your competitors is an essential part of business. Customer loyalty for varied reasons can be strong. As long as you make their life easy and provide a top service, there should be no reason for a customer to change.

To get ahead, it is helpful to get all of your money in. It is natural for a small window cleaning business to have debtors. As soon as a job is cleaned, if no one is there on the day to pay, you have a debtor.

Example: A residential window cleaner could earn £200 per day (UK – some areas differ), but collect only £100. He now has £100 worth of debtors.

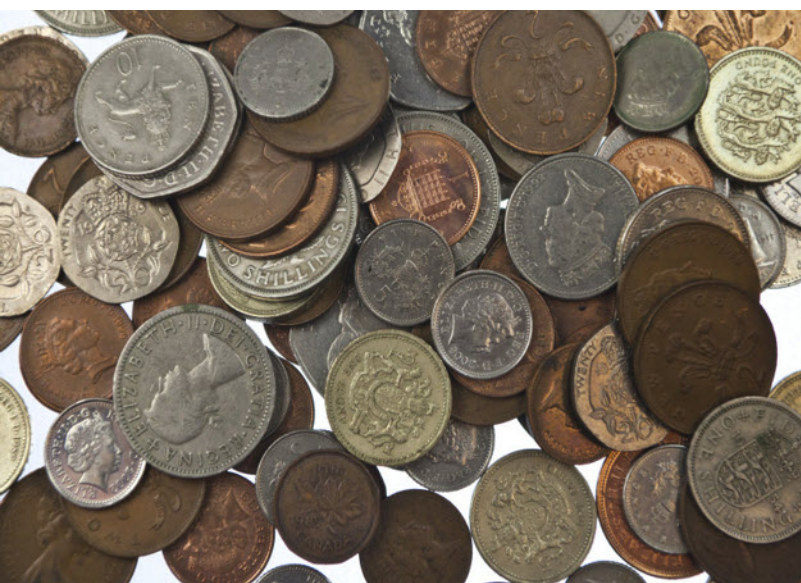
One way of showing USP and forward thinking is to offer your customers an easy armchair payment system. This can help reduce the length of time you have that customer as a debtor or to reduce the number of bad debtors you may attract. Too many window cleaners write debt off, with comments such as, “ ... I can pick up two new jobs tomorrow.” Or “... it costs more to chase it.” – Why should you loose out?

Whereas these comments are true, would it not be sensible to put something in place that might reduce potentially the level of good and bad debtors within your business? Something that meant you no longer had to do another 4 hours collecting after window cleaning all day?

When I pick up a new residential customer and I am explaining how the company works, I get two pleasing eyebrow raises. First they can see that my window cleaning company is professional, a sign written van, uniformed, badged up with the Master Guild of Window Cleaners ID card, proper business card (that does not have a VistaPrint logo etc. on it) and professionally printed literature.

Then I go on to explain.

- 1) The business accountability: When they are not in, we leave a professionally printed slip with all of our contact details.
- 2) Our ethics and reliability: We explain that we write the time we arrived and cleaned the windows, the date, money owing on account and signature of the window cleaning operative on the slip.
- 3) We offer confidence in our service: We explain that the info on the professional slip will correspond to the tracking data in our vehicles (First eyebrow raised, customers love this!)





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“We take a look at GoCardless and investigate how they can benefit the window cleaning business owner”

- 4) We show the ease at which they can pay: “You can pay online? Wow!” – is usually the response and second eyebrow raised. There is a third eyebrow raise and that’s on the new gleaming windows they get, but that’s a whole article on its own lol.

There are many companies out there that offer ‘payment’ services but today we thought we would look at GoCardless and investigate how they can help you reduce your debtors and make life a whole lot easier for you and your customers.

This month we speak to Nicola Anderson, VP Marketing from GoCardless

LB: How long has GoCardless been around?

NA: *GoCardless launched in 2011 with a mission to provide the UK’s small businesses with a way to accept payments by Direct Debit. We are now the UK’s leading Direct Debit provider, working with businesses of all sizes. we process more than £1 billion per year for over 14,000 businesses.*

LB: Window cleaners tend to hold back when it comes to being charged on top their hard -

earned cash. But a window cleaners time is expensive and it can be a wasted when collecting money, not including the cost spent on vehicle fuel or family time missed out on. So what would be the trade off for business owners getting their life’s back?

NA: *At GoCardless, we want to make sure the UK’s small businesses have control over their payments and that they’re always paid on time by their customers. Our product means small business owners, including window cleaners, can spend less time chasing late payments. We want to put an end to sleepless nights worrying about cash flow and allow these SME’s to spend time on growing their business rather than chasing outstanding invoices or payments.*

LB: So how does it all work?

NA: *We’ve built our product to make getting paid as easy as possible. It takes just 5 minutes to sign up for an account online at www.gocardless.com.*

After you sign up to GoCardless, you can email your customers a link where they can securely enter their bank details and set up payments to you. You can then automatically take payments when you clean your customer’s windows, so the days of

GOCARDLESS

Recurring payments made simple

GoCardless makes collecting by Direct Debit easy for everyone from individuals to multi-national corporations.

“14,000 BUSINESSES USE THIS SERVICE, PROCESSING ONE BILLION PER YEAR.”

chasing unpaid invoices are gone.

GoCardless also connects to top accountancy software packages so you can set up payments at the same time as sending invoices to your customers. We're also integrated into window cleaning software such as Cleaner Planner and Aworka.

LB: What support do you offer?

NA: *We have a UK-based support team that offers phone and email support from 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.*

LB: Can you drop familiar brand names that already use GoCardless?

NA: *We work with all sizes of business, from individuals up to multi-national corporations. From gyms, personal trainers and local sports clubs to the likes of The Financial Times, Virgin, the UK Government and Tripadvisor. More than 200 window cleaners currently use GoCardless and in total, we have more than 14,000 businesses using the service. Collectively, they're currently processing £1 billion per year.*

LB: Can you benefit the more you use GoCardless?

NA: *The more you use GoCardless, the less time you need to spend worrying about cash flow and late payments. On average, our customers tell us they save an average of 16 working days per year. It's also much cheaper than other payment methods such as credit card and PayPal meaning on average they save more than £2,000 per year.*

LB: What is the difference between GoCardless and GoCardless Pro?

NA: *Our standard product costs just 1% per transaction, capped at £2. There are no additional fees above and beyond this. This is the easiest way for business to take payments from their customers,*

using a subscription plan with either fixed or variable monthly amounts.

For larger organisations wanting a white-label solution, we also offer GoCardless Pro. For £200 a month, a business can have their own Service User Number along with white-label payment pages and white-labelled emails. Pricing on our Pro product is between 1p-60p per transaction, depending on volume.

LB: What does 'capping' mean?

NA: *With the standard version of GoCardless, you pay just 1% of each transaction (so if you're taking a £20 payment, we'll charge you 20p). Our transaction fees are capped at £2 per transaction. What this means is you'll pay a flat fee of £2 for any transaction of £200 or more.*

LB: What if a payment fails?

NA: *From time to time, a payment can fail due to insufficient funds in the customer's bank account. We'll automatically notify you if this happens and you'll be able to retry the payment from the GoCardless dashboard. There are no additional fees for retrying a failed payment. On average, 70% of failed payments will be successful on the second attempt.*

LB: What about refunds?

NA: *You can easily issue a full or a partial refund from the GoCardless dashboard. We won't charge you for this.*

LB: What will the customer experience be?

NA: *Your customers just have to click on links you provide via the website or an email to set up payments to you. They simply enter their details on that page and we'll send them a confirmation e-mail with details of the payment. You can see a sample of the customer experience at www.gocardless.com/example-checkout.*

LB: What about security?



NA: *The good news is you never need to deal with any payment details yourself, so there are no worries around being PCI compliant, etc. Your customers will enter their payment details on our secure hosted payment pages and we'll automatically encrypt sensitive data in our system. We use military-grade RSA encryption and are authorised for the provision of payment services by the Financial Conduct Authority.*

LB: **Is there a portal where payment details are taken over the phone? Are there any data protection considerations if choosing to take payments this way?**

NA: *Your customers can securely set up a payment by clicking a link on their smart phone, tablet or PC. As our payment pages are all mobile-friendly, it's easy and convenient for your customers to set up a payment.*

LB: **With GoCardless Pro, there is also the**

option to set up a payment via a phone call?

NA: *With this option, your business will need to comply with additional requirements - our team would be more than happy to explain this in more detail.*

LB: **Can a window cleaner take a card reader out with them? What's the signal like? How many can they order? What do they cost to set up?**

NA: *There's no card reader or special hardware required. Your customers can just use their own device to set up a payment (either their smart phone, tablet or PC). We find this is much more convenient for both you and your customers.*

LB: **What case studies can you demonstrate?**

NA: *You can read some of our case studies at www.gocardless.com/stories/.* **END.**

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Waterworks reveals new system

Power Up HD reels by Waterworks have been around for some 18 months now. They have done very well in the UK, and are now showing promising great sales in Europe. For any one that does not know what a Power Up reel is, essentially it is a neat bit of kit that boasts the worlds only electric window cleaning reel specifically designed for micro bore hose.

How often have you had to hand reel in 100 metres of hose by hand? It is not fun at the best of times. It is hard work and time consuming. Not to mention risking manual handling and RSI issues. Power UP puts a stop to that. We spoke to the CEO of Waterworks, Jordan King on the latest product reveal as Waterworks enters the systems market. They enter the arena with a sexy looking system that promises to be the most efficient delivery system in the world.

WCM: Were you surprised at the popularity of Power Up HD?

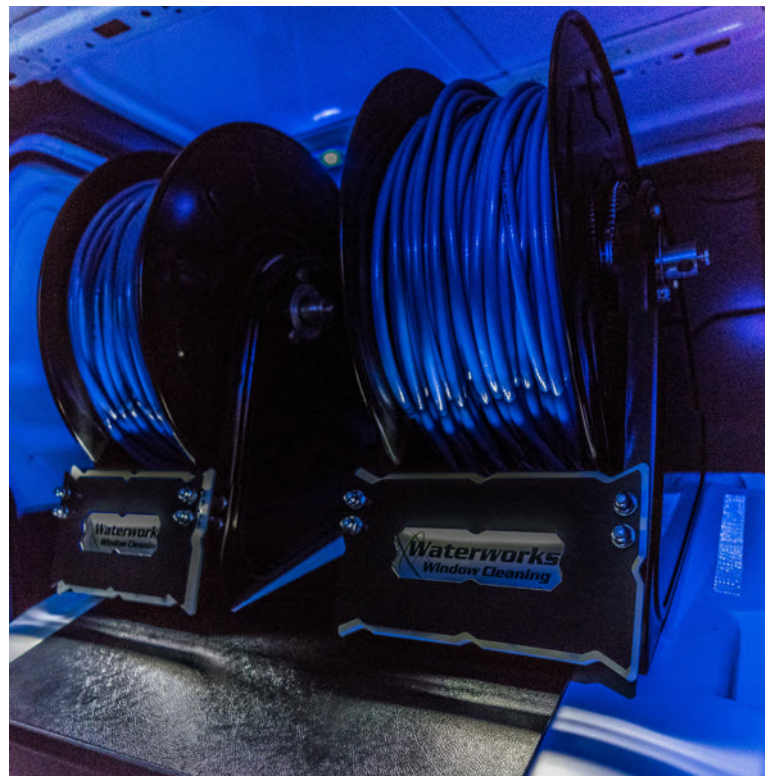
JK: *I cant say that I am surprised I have always had a confidence in the product but it was getting the message out to as many window cleaners as possible that helped a lot.*

WCM: Did it take much convincing for window cleaners to take this new reel onboard?

JK: *Trying to talk window cleaners into Power Up is probably not the best approach as people can be sceptical at the beginning and not willing to part with hard earned cash so easily. I found the easiest way was to let window cleaners use the product. I discovered*

then that the more people that used the product the more the product was purchased. In fact this is why we are considering a UK tour. Window cleaners pass their experience on to others. So essentially although I started to talk to window cleaners about Power Up it was users testimonial that has won this product over.

WCM: Before we touch on the new system that actually comes with the Power Up as standard, can we ask you why you think torque and speed is important on the Power Up?



“..WE CALLED IT THE 700L BECAUSE WE WANTED TO BE DIRECT AND TO THE POINT..”

JK: To start with all other automatic hose reels are more for your garden hoses or built for hydraulic hoses. Power Up is designed specifically for micro bore and window cleaners and so speed is important because of the length of hose, and the amount of stops per day. Torque is important because if you get a snag on a bush for example, whereas other hoses will pull out the bush or stretch micro bore hose, the Power Up avoids this.

WCM: Do you think some of the success of the Power Up is down to its price bracket?

JK: Partly, the Power Up is perfectly priced for window cleaners and is the cheapest electric reel around. In fact it is half the price and twice as good of any electric reel on the market, but the best of it is, is that it is very specific to window cleaners.

WCM: How more efficient does a Power Up reel make a window cleaner?

JK: Let me use external ports as a comparison. When you use a fixed Power Up reel with your system in comparison to using external ports, we can realistically say you can save around 2 to 3 minutes per job and this includes packing away the equipment.

A two man team working from one van making 30 stops per day can expect to save an hour to 1.5 per man per day. That's a lot extra income if you can fill that with work. Plus when you throw in the health and safety advantages of reduced fatigue, RSI, manual handling this has to tick all the boxes for serious window cleaning companies.

WCM: Why has Waterworks moved into selling systems?

JK: Because I saw a gap in the market for affordable professional systems that would fit perfectly with Power Up. Why purchase all the loose bits that make up a DIY system when for just a tad more money you can have a system that is well thought out and can be upgraded as your business grows.

WCM: So, tell us about the new system. What is it called?

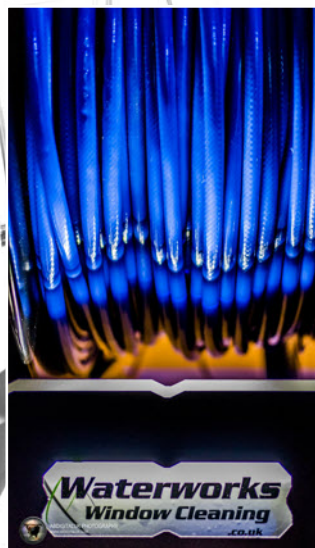
JK: It is called the 700L from Waterworks. We called it the 700L because we wanted to be direct and to the point. We just wanted to call it what it says on the tin. This will be a super high value system that will be easy to install and easy to upgrade at a later date.

WCM: 700L for 700 litre capacity. That is an unusual capacity. I have not seen that before?

JK: We have a 500L coming out later but we have started with the 700L as we felt this would be more appealing to a greater number of window cleaners, since it would cater for up to a 2 man team comfortably, providing sufficient water for the whole day.

WCM: You are doing a delivery only system?

This delivery system has a pre moulded recess that fits perfectly Unger's nLite Hydro Power DI so that it can





be run as a DI. Later an RO option will be available.

WCM: Who is the target market for this product?

JK: All window cleaners are our target market but what is unique here is that it will appeal to the DIY window cleaner who will see that this quality product is well within their price range with very little down time applied in getting up and started. After all why spend your spare time building your own system when instead you are able to grow your business in that time for just a few extra pounds more.

WCM: What if a new starter was unable to get enough cash at the beginning to start off? What options are there for these window cleaners?

JK: Although this system is very affordable, we have teamed up with Kennet Leasing to help those wanting to start up but do not have a bean to begin with. The beauty is that once you have started the Kennet Leasing option, it could also help a window cleaner for any future upgrades.

WCM: What will Kennet Leasing offer on this system?

JK: At the moment finance is available to Ltd companies only but sole trader finance will be coming soon, so keep an eye on our Facebook page [waterworkswindowcleaningltd/fb](https://www.facebook.com/waterworkswindowcleaningltd/fb)

WCM: There are some simple but very clever features on the 700L system?

JK: So we are trying to be effective with all aspects of the system when we are working with the back doors open. We find that the internal lighting of the van can drain the battery so we have added a task light that

actually illuminates from inside the tank allowing you to not only work around your van in the dark but you can easily see your pure water level within side the tank. There will be a remote control available for this feature. This task light looks absolutely awesome.

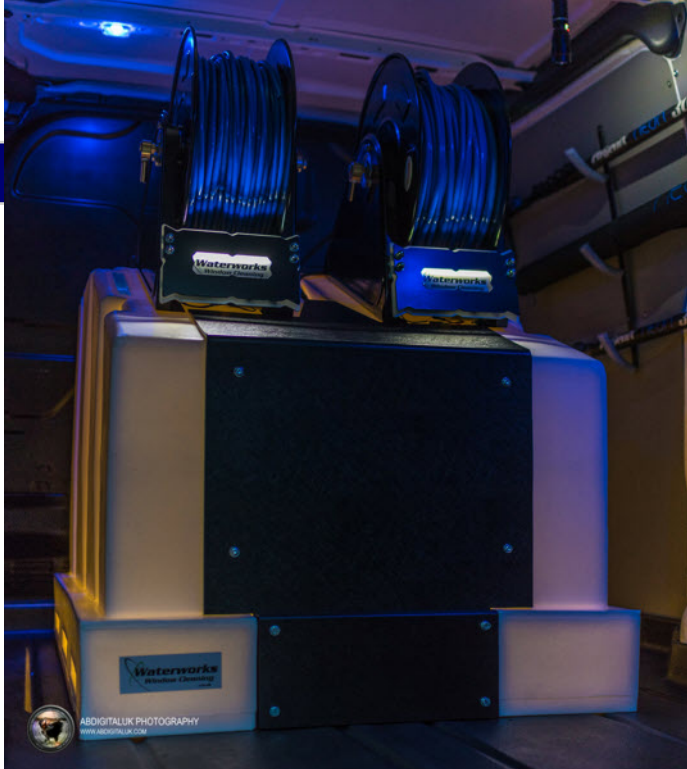
We do have other nice feature options such as the universal through floor pulley kit which allows you to work securely with the van doors closed. The option of HD hose guides are also available if closing the back of the van is not that essential.

The 700L is the only system on the market that comes with the HD Power Up reel as standard. Our reels are fixed securely on the tank via purpose-moulded threads, so no drilling into your tank is necessary. This gives you more room in the van for other equipment. I would like to mention also that the tank system its self is designed to be positioned side ways as well. So if required it can be gained access via the sliding door if that is more appealing to the window cleaner.

WCM: What about installation of the system?

JK: This system can be delivered to the customer on a pallet and slid comfortably into the back of a customer's vehicle should they want to install themselves. We will be releasing a video that will help show the correct way to fit, and this will be supported by any further assistance from Waterworks. Alternatively if you are





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Reel and so in fact you could use it as a normal reel.

WCM: Where do you see Waterworks in five years time?

JK: *Wow! That is a deep question, but one I can answer very well. I see Waterworks proving its self in the market further with new innovations and good quality products that are accessible for all.*

WCM: What is the cost of the 700L delivery only and when is it available to order?

JK: *The 700L is from £1,295+vat. Available for install 30th April 2016, so pre-order now!*

not that good at DIY we can fit the system for you.

WCM: What controller does this system have?

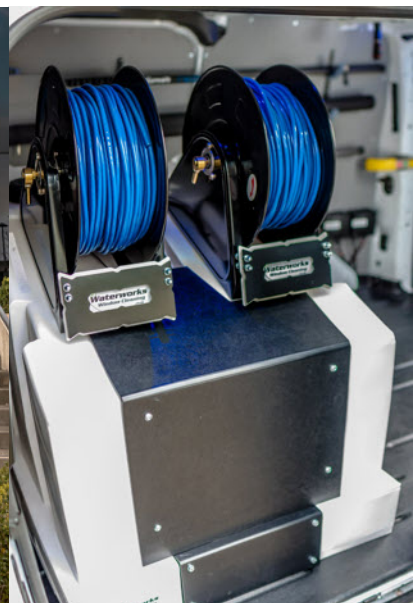
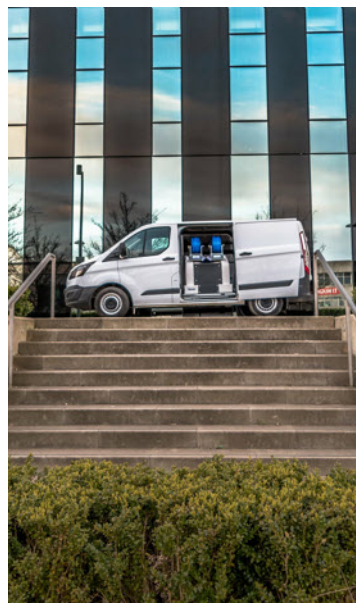
JK: *It will run from quality Spring controllers for flow etc. and the standard system will come with a bullet proof push button which controls the reels.*

WCM: Why the need for the bullet push button?

JK: *Because if the battery goes on the remote while out working or you are near the system at the back of the van, this simple durable button is there if needed.*

WCM: What happens if the reel ever failed, can you manually wind in the micro bore?

JK: *Yes you can. Should anything go wrong and it rarely has, there is a winding handle that can be used. The resistance is no tougher than a regular manual wind in*



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18 DJ Coach Carroll

Window Cleaning Magazine's serial entrepreneur

The cost of emotion: 3 mental expenses you cannot



AFFORD

I was not supposed to be an entrepreneur. I was supposed to be a chemical engineer. I was supposed to go to one of the eight colleges where I had been offered football scholarships, and drink beer and go to classes I hated and flirt with girls and play ball. But I did not do any of that.

Instead, I started my first company, EasyPro, a landscaping company—and made my parents very nervous, not to mention a little bit bummed.

After all, as a lower-middle class kid born to a city employee and a preschool teacher, and raised in Kentucky, I would have been the first in my family to go to college and play ball on a real team. Nope. Instead I mowed lawns and dreamed of earning money. Why? Because making some green made a lot more sense to me than running around on it.

I really wanted to do my own thing, rather than sit through years of classes I did not care about. I started with \$300, which I used to buy a push mower and a trimmer—and have since grown it to a million-dollar business that services three states. I am not afraid to make choices that go against what other people expect of me. I am used to it! One thing that has threatened to trip me up, more than others expectations of me, however, is the way I feel about what I am doing.

Look, I am not an emotional guy, but I am human, and if there is one thing I have learned about business is that the less I pay attention to feelings, even the good ones, the better off I am.

My approach to business—sales, marketing, accounting, all of it—is to think and behave more like a machine by putting systems and practices in place to reduce your dependence on thoughts and emotions so you can rely on process to make progress instead. I believe that anyone who gets tripped up and slowed down by their business does so because emotions start gunking up the works. Your job is to grease the wheels

and get that stuff out of there.

Here is the three emotions that should raise a red flag for you, and how to deal with them.

Problem Emotion #1: Self doubt

During one of my first cold calls, the man on the other end interrupted my long-winded, aimless pitch and said, "Listen man, what are you selling?" I had never had anyone ask me that, and it stopped me cold. I knew what I was selling—my lawn care services—but I did not actually know what I wanted from him—a sale? An appointment? I froze, and then did the thing I had never done before or since—I hung up. Click. I said to myself, *Maybe I don't know what I'm doing. Maybe I should not call strangers.* I was wrong—and I proved it: EasyPro's ten biggest projects came from cold calling. If I hadn't pushed passed that doubt, I'd be broke.

Engaging in self doubt is like stepping into wet concrete. It's hard to get out of it, but you have to try. Because the longer you stay in it, the more likely you will remain stuck. You start to think limiting thoughts and pass on opportunities. Self doubt does your competitors' jobs for them. It also starts the excuse machine: *I don't need to make this many calls; I'll just email them; I'll follow up next week.* It's a long, slow death. You don't need me to tell you this is a bad thing, and yet, even though you know it, it has a way of sinking its teeth into you and the longer it does, the

harder it is to fight it off.

THE FIX: Pull the plug. Just because those thoughts come up doesn't mean you have to listen to them. Yank the plug on them instead of doing what most people do, which is shunt more energy toward those thoughts to "see" if they are real. The more attention you pay to them, the more real they become. Of course I experience self doubt—I'm not denying that. But I do not let it run my day. Right after I have a bad sales attempt or someone hangs up on me or whatever, the first thing I do is not lick my wounds, but immediately pick up the phone again and make my next call. The only thing that dispels doubt is action.

Problem Emotion #2: Excitement

If you've ever been to any sales conference, you know they practically pump this stuff into the room. Sales people need motivation. And sure, being excited is fun, it's great, and it's motivating—but it can also sap your sales if you let it dictate *when* you sell.

Why? Because as soon as you feel excitement, you take your foot off the gas. The temptation is to stay with the feeling rather than push passed it. Disagree if you want, but I've seen it happen. You land a sale or close a client and end up spending more time talking about it and revelling in it than making your next call. Maybe you take the afternoon off, let other work slide. Allowing excitement to rule you is a recipe for uneven sales cycles, because the next time your excitement drops, guess what? You feel worse and start to feel self doubt (see how that works?). What you do not want is extreme peaks and valleys—great for movies, bad for business.

THE FIX: Recalibrate your excitement gauge. I am not saying you should not feel excited or even thrilled when great things happen. But do not let the party go on too long. And also make sure that excitement is earned—I see so many entrepreneurs whose markers for excitement are all wrong. They get excited about having made 25 calls. Save that excitement for when you close one. Do not get too over the moon when you receive ten interested emails; those sales aren't real until you've got the checks to back them up.

Problem Emotion #3: Contentment

This is tough because it's what everyone wants: To feel good, comfortable, confident. I do not begrudge you that, but I do not want you to run your business by it. When you are fine as is and feel like things are "good enough," growth slows, sales funnel shrinks, and profits level out. Trust me, this is the entrepreneur's worst enemy, because it deceives you into thinking that if things are fine, they will always be fine, and that is not necessarily the case.

THE FIX: Shift out of autopilot. To keep yourself from getting a little too comfy, you have to envision a better version of where you are, a more powerful goal to reach for. So you hit some goals this year and did better than expected? Great. Time to make new ones. Time to risk and reach for more. It's not that you need to be antsy or miserable always, but you and your business is best served by never settling. People tell me all the time, "DJ, you are just never going to be happy. You always want more." And that is not true—I am happy. I am happiest when I am striving for something worth achieving. I am just never *satisfied*. And you should not be, either.



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AWHOLE NEW WORLD 20

Cleaning windows in Scottsdale, Arizona for Window Cleaning Magazine



by
**Carrie
Guenther**

I saw the post on Facebook in one of the window-cleaning groups I belong to. William Champion (which I checked is really his real last name) of Champion Window Cleaning in Scottsdale, Arizona, had posted in the early fall, “Hey, all you window cleaners in the frozen North, contact me if you need work in the winter months.” During the following months, I arranged to go out to Arizona for a week to work for William. I combined it with a weekend hiking trip with my sister in nearby Colorado.

I want to share my window cleaning adventure in Arizona -the learning and growth, the joys and anxieties, the stunning views, the WFP’s, the FWP’s and, of course, the thrilling characters.

Now, window cleaning is window cleaning, and I assume there are similarities wherever you go in the world. The thing that excited me the most about this

particular “winter business trip” of mine was the opportunity to learn – finally – about water-fed-pole systems. Of course seeing the differences between the homes and landscapes of Minnesota and those of Arizona was equally fascinating. Generally, I work alone and I really look forward to working with a crew of other squeegee-geeks. I was also eagerly anticipating meeting the kinds of clients that William Champion serves.

My business, Window Ninja, is tiny. I took it over from the founder, a close friend who ran it for 12 years, and had just finished my third season as owner. I have about 150 clients. For those unfamiliar with how residential window cleaning works in the Midwest, most clients get their windows done twice a year; once in spring and again in the fall. It’s normal to get interiors and exteriors done in the spring, followed by an exteriors-only cleaning in the fall. Active work months are mid-April through mid-



November. May and October are busiest, enough to keep a solo owner-operator hopping all week long. August is like hearing crickets chirping; the phone rarely rings. I do almost zero commercial work, which is what I prefer, because it frees me up to travel in the winter months. My methods and skills are what the former owner taught me: just ladders and squeegees, no need to complicate further.

Minnesota is a beautiful place, and aside from Alaska (which has lakes) we have the most lakes of any of the United States: numbering over 15,000. That is a lot of fresh water. Aside from the obvious curiosities I had about the differences in clientele, I am also a nature-geek, and so I was nervous and fascinated by the extreme contrast in environments, especially in regards to water.

Some of the biggest factors in how window-cleaning practices differ from place to place are climate related. Temperature, seasons, precipitation, and landscape (think water bodies, mountains, vegetation) have huge effects on the way any given area's windows are maintained. Exploring those differences are my purpose as a travelling-window-cleaner-journalist. Here I chose three climates to compare and contrast, assuming the readers of Window Cleaning Magazine come from a variety of places. Just for fun, let's look at some facts about the climates in Minnesota, Arizona, and the United Kingdom.

Arizona has an average annual rainfall of just over ten inches, compared to Minnesota's annual precipitation (some of it in the form of snowfall) of

between 25 and 35 inches. Average rainfall in the UK is in the ballpark of 30 to 35 inches per year. The rainiest month of the year in Arizona is in August, with 3.5 inches, on average. In Minnesota we get about 4.5 inches in the summer, and December usually dumps about four inches of rainfall on the UK.

I visited Scottsdale in December, when the average high for is 68 F (20 C), and normal rainfall is about .001 inches. In Minneapolis it's usually below 20 F (-6 C) and snowy. In the UK it's around 45 F (7 C) and rainy as hell.

After stirring for a few hours in my airline seat, passing over exotic mountains with canyons and rivers carving through, I arrived in Scottsdale on a Sunday night. Mr. Champion picked me up, saying, "Yoga starts at 4:00. You want to go?" I may not be as dedicated as William (honestly... who goes to yoga seven days a week?) but I've been a yogi for 12 years, and I was thrilled to dive right into the Scottsdale fitness scene.

"I trade window cleaning for my gym membership here, and can have guests whenever I want. So, welcome." William said, pointing out the large, tall windows with beautiful mountain views as we walked through a gym I could never afford to belong to.

Scottsdale feels driven and active, but its forward motion stems from an almost biting sense of competition and material success. The money is there for the taking. Extreme wealth is everywhere. From the small slice of life I saw there, there did not seem to be an arts-scene. The buildings are newer, and blend in smoothly with the colours of the desert. The businesses are chains. Things feel sterile, and people talk about cars and shopping much more than, say: spirituality, art openings or organic gardening- the kind of things I hear about coming from Minneapolis.

Then there were the gated neighbourhoods. In the suburbs of Minneapolis, there may be a small handful of these. In Scottsdale, nearly *all* of William's clients live in gated communities. The carefully groomed and landscaped neighbourhoods, many of them had uniformed guards who write down details of whom you are and why you are there. You needed codes to enter. Sometimes, there was another code to enter the driveway, and yet another to enter the house.

Compared to me or anyone I know, William Champion is *constantly* on his phone. Twelve years in the game, and his business is booming. I can see him growing and expanding further in the coming years - surpassing what already seems to be a lucrative career. He grew up in the area, and has known some of his employees since high school, including his

"...IT WAS AGREED ON THAT AS WORKERS GO, I KICK ASS."

brother Chris. Depending on the time of the year, he employs between two and five people. He'd never had a woman on his team before, but by the time I left, it was agreed on that as workers go, I kick ass.

The first day of work, something weird happened... it rained. With his coffee in one hand and cigarette in the other – William, his employee, and I stood dejectedly on his balcony overlooking a wet parking lot. Baffled, I asked, "So ... it actually rains here?" This sent the two men into rants about how it *never* rains, *especially* in December. This led to accusations about how *I* must have brought the rain *with* me, and the cold too. It was in the mid 50's, balmy for December, but jarring for them. I laughed at their complaints of having to wear sweatshirts and long pants.

In the latter half of the day, the rain subsided enough to do a rare commercial job at a fitness-fashion store. When I climbed into one of William's two white conversion-vans, the first thing I noticed as we eased over speed bumps and approached stoplights was the massive, sloshing presence of the 250 gallon water tank inside the van. Ignorant about water-fed-pole systems, I asked, "You do not just hook up to the client's garden hose?"

"Ah, no." He responded, "there is a bit more to it, than that."

So began the schooling of the Window Ninja in the arts of WFP. William explained the type of water used, what goes into making that water, and why. When we arrived, parked, and set up construction cones, I learned the mundane-yet-interesting differences in the way I arrange my supplies and equipment in my work vehicle, compared to other cleaners. I also learned how to hook up hoses, how to unreel and reel, how to attach the poles, and the brush techniques essential to using a water-fed-pole. My anxiety about wasting water in such a dry climate was met with a very blunt and realistic response... "That's how window cleaning is, here", followed by, "During the rest of the week, you will see why we do it this way,



and why there, sometimes is no other way."

We moved mannequins and displays of running shoes and tennis-skirts, reaching behind hanging signage and whipping through the insides with the use of a short ladder and squeegees. Outside, forcing my water-waste protests aside, I took to WFP work like a fish to water. But I also thought to myself, "In this climate, maybe window cleaners should charge clients to clean their windows *and* water their gardens, simultaneously."

Next day at work was more typical: four people in two vans, and sun that actually got uncomfortably hot, especially at midday. The routine seemed to be that two people would drag one or both hoses around the sides of the house, while two others would go with a bucket, squeegees, short ladders and drying-towels to work on the insides.

Blue surgical shoe covers were always used. I never use shoe covers. I prefer climbing ladders or out onto roofs with bare feet. This, I was informed, is extremely dangerous. I will probably start using shoe covers next year.

Many of William's clients I met throughout the week were similar to my own. As I worked, I listened to William's conversations with them. You could tell how long he had worked for some of them, and how fond they were of him and his services. Some told





stories of changes in their family, of home renovations. Some told of kids and grand kids struggling in college, or hooked on opiates. Some stories could apply to anyone you meet in life, while others were of eye-roll able, first-world-problems. Just like my clients.

But oh ... *the money*. I thought *my* clients had money. No. Not like Scottsdale money. Some of the homes could only be described as palatial. Palace-like. Fortresses. Villas. And these grandiose mansions would often just be one of several homes the clients owned. I had a hard time wrapping my head around the amount of money in Scottsdale.

One final house we did was built into the side of an arid, steep rocky hill - studded with cacti and overlooking a desert valley. Far off in the distance, you could see a walking path reaching into the hills. Champion Window Cleaning's largest telescoping water-fed-pole was hooked up. It reached over three stories high to get to the windows along the back wall of the home. Feet sliding on loose rocks, narrowly avoiding the dangerous cacti you are never supposed to touch with human skin, we pulled over a hundred feet of hose around the house. To really do this successfully, I mused, you need to be part mountain goat.

William turned to me at one point, saying, "Can you imagine trying to use a ladder on this sh*t? You could never do it."

Another time, at a different home with enormous windows wrapping around the entire back wall, overlooking a lavish pool area and a scenic view, he asked, "Can you imagine how long this would take using ladders and squeegees? We would be here *all day*."

Even though I am nowhere near the point of investing in a water-fed-pole system for my own business, I can absolutely see why it is necessary to so many other window cleaners.

The most memorable of William's elite clients was Mona, the eccentric wife of a successful surgeon. William and one of his workers had discussed Mona earlier in the week. My ears perked up. The employee was complaining, recalling that she had, on several occasions, answered the door in a bikini and stilettos.

"So," I asked, "Is that a bad thing?"

"Well," he said, "it can be, when you're, like, seventy-five years old."

I decided immediately that I loved Mona, and could not wait to meet her.

The day came to clean Mona's house; the uppermost mansion perched atop a large ridge overlooking a stunning view of the valley below. We pulled up and parked, and as I was snapping photos of the view from the driveway, I heard her. She spoke with a heavy, charming Lebanese accent. I turned

around, and there she was, a vision dripping in gold, descending a large staircase that cut through her landscaped hillside. Teetering on five-inch stilettos, she made her way down each step. A blinding flash of neon orange drew my eyes to her fingernails, inches long, clutching a letter she intended to mail. The mustard-coloured velour pantsuit. The big, false eyelashes, and bright pink lipsticked smile. I fell in love with Mona just like I knew I would. Inside the house, I tried not to let my jaw drop at the sight of her glass-enclosed wine-cellar with its fifteen-foot ceiling. Or her quirky, brightly coloured art pieces; or her stunning view spanning 360 degrees.

I did five precious and huge windows inside, and at some point Mona noticed I was female, and new. After asking William, "How many men are on your crew?"

He responded, "Three men."

"And one woman." I answered.

"Ohhhh!" she peered at me closer, all smiles, and we spoke about how I was only in town to work for the week. She wrapped up four homemade chocolate chip cookies in napkins, and handed us four bottles of water to take home.

On the way, William handed around envelopes of cash tips from Mona. We shared stories of clients each of us have "fired," or "almost fired," for being pains' in the ass. William confessed that in all his years of cleaning Mona's windows, they had indeed butted heads several times.

At one point, she tried to fire him. "Go ahead, Mona," he'd said. "Good luck finding someone else that'll put up with your crap." Years later, they are still together. That is long-term, working loyalty, and it really is something I aspire to in my own business relations.

Later that evening, on our way to yet another yoga class, William's phone rings. He sighs laboriously when he sees that it is Mona calling, muttering that he hopes nothing is wrong. Then he answers, putting the call on speaker phone over the Range Rover's sound system.

"William," she says, "That girl today ... she is so good, so nice ... *why don't you just keep her?*" William and I laugh out loud, because she could just as easily be talking about a homeless puppy.

"Thank you, Mona," I say. "I will for-sure come out and work for a longer time next winter." As she hangs up, I look out the open window, over the golden sandy mountains, and the soft pink sunset sky. The cacti reach their limbs high into the landscape. I know that I will.

Wagtail ripe for modification

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"JOB DONE!"

By Wagga

Over the years I have grown to like the Wagtail squeegee a lot. I have used them for over 15 years now. I like them because they are light and ergonomic. They helped me get over my "Tennis Elbow" because of those very ergonomics. They even helped me get off my ladders.

And just how did a Wagtail get me off ladders? Well it's simple and the story goes like this; I had tried to use a fixed blade squeegee, fixed to a pole for the upstairs windows of my domestic round. I found this almost impossible since in reality you need to be almost *directly* in front of the window that you are cleaning to be able to be successful. Not only this I could not get the edges right and these needed to be detailed by taking the pole down once more and wrapping a scrim around the end of the pole. Altogether a very tedious and time consuming exercise and one which I quickly abandoned.

Enter the Wagtail invented by Willie Erken of Australia. He invented a squeegee that actually swivels as we all now know. The swivel action was seen by many to be a gimmick when it was first launched but gradually it was realised that it was much more than that.

When I first got my hands on a Wagtail squeegee, I found it intriguing and it did not take me long to realise its potential. It does take time to get used to the weird ergonomics but once you "get it" there will be no stopping you. Once I got it, there was no stopping me as most of you now know and it did not take me long to figure out that it was awesome on a pole especially with the flipper Wagtail; that is the one with the pad so you do not have to bring the pole down to change tools. You just wet the window then flip the

pad and blade it off - magic!

After a bit of practice, I found that the swivel of the Wagtail became a great asset in reaching windows that a fixed blade just could not, but then the problem of detailing remained and this is where I developed a new type of dog-earing.

This is where you bend the ends of your channel in order to stop the rubber of your blade from leaving a line of soap all round the window. It helps keep the ends of your rubber "planted" to the glass so it doesn't override the rubber edges of the window. I did not invent dog-earing but I developed it a bit more so it is now a lot more effective.

Once I had my channels dog-eared in the "new way" it was a revelation and it made cleaning upper windows that much easier. What I did find however, was that when making straight pulls was that the top edge of the window usually *still* needed to be detailed. It was a problem I pondered over for quite a while until I came up with a detailing tool that bolted onto the Wagtail. This stayed in place with a small micro-fibre cloth attached with a clip. This cloth would be frequently changed around to find a dry spot. Changing the cloth takes less time than bringing the pole down to wrap a scrim around the top and anyway, adjusting the cloth would be done at more strategic times such as when moving to the next house.

This modified Wagtail would naturally stay planted on top of the pole as it will not work downstairs especially because I found that the pad was better fixed so that it flipped over the *top* of the channel instead of underneath.

It did not stop there of course since I had designs on altering the Wagtail that I used for the downstairs windows. Here I did the dog-earing thing but kept on experimenting with pads and blades. I have used most



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of the Wagtail range but to be honest, I sometimes get confused with which is which. This doesn't necessarily matter too much as the principle of the Wagtail is still apparent in them all. However, I have my favourite one as I expect many of you do. Mine happens to be a mixture of Wagtails.

Now I am going to let you into a secret. My particular favourite tool is a mixture of old and new and comprises of the blade of the Combi, the handle and yellow disc of the original flipper (riveted on) and a very early type of pad that I found still available; this being held on by the latest blue Velcro clips. Another tip is to cut the pads at an angle as in the picture:

The final secret to this particular Wagtail is the angle that has been sawn into the ends of the channel as you

can see in the picture.

This combined with the dog-earing to my mind, makes this one of the best squeegees ever. The angles that have been cut into the ends including the blue clips, will give the most awesome clearance between the very tip of the blade and the frames where previously, because the channel was cut at the normal 90%, it would tend to foul the window frame at certain angles and thus push away from the edge leaving that characteristic soap trail.

Another good thing about the old style pads that I now use, is that they have the Velcro on both sides so that you can turn them round but mainly, the Velcro on the other side acts as a stiffener so the pads are not as floppy so are easier to control.

Finally, I like to use a high quality soft rubber in this modified Wagtail which I cut at an angle to match the angle in the channel – "Job Done!"



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keeping British gutters clear



In this issue of WCM we profile a British company called SpaceVac. They are responsible for helping to keep British gutters clear. Here with interview the MD of SpaceVac, Colin Lewis.

WCM: Thanks for speaking with WCM, Colin. Can you begin by familiarizing the readers as to whom you are and what you are about exactly.

CL: We are SpaceVac Technologies Limited based in Northampton, UK and we are the Worlds leading number one manufacturer of high level vacuum cleaning and inspection systems.

WCM: What is the core part of your business?

CL: Our core business is supplying Gutter Vacuuming equipment to the Cleaning Industry.

WCM: Why did you consider window cleaners as a viable source of business?

CL: This is our natural client base – working with buildings and heights.

WCM: What is your best seller and why?

CL: Our best seller is the SpaceVac 900 Wet and Dry system – hard working, tough and capable of most industrial, commercial and domestic work both externally and internally.

WCM: What height can you clear gutters at?

CL: We can work to heights of 14 metres comfortably with one operator. However we can reach up to 16 metres.

WCM: Gutter cleaning is a great add on service for window cleaners can the same be said about internal high level building cleaning?

CL: Most definitely, you are limited to the amount you can charge when cleaning windows, as our case study demonstrates, the added income can quite easily grow to be your main source of income for even less hours.

WCM: What selling points can be used to convince customers to consider internal high level cleaning from their window cleaner?

CL: Experience and trust – your regular customers will already trust you with their property, and knowing that you are trying to save them expensive repair costs will go a long way.

WCM: Gutter clearing is an add on service that is included more and more by window cleaners. Have you seen this trend?

CL: This is our fastest growing sector – the return on investment is quickly achieved when selling this add on service.

WCM: Why is it important to have gutters cleared and cleaned out on regular schedules? This is a great regular service window cleaners can capitalise on.



Colin Lewis, MD of SpaceVac,
filmed for WCM TV's Booth Talk



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CL: Having your gutters cleaned regularly will stop long-term issues relating to rotten roof leaves and fascias.

WCM: Can using SpaceVac equipment help towards health and safety compliance?

CL: Indeed – using a SpaceVac system means there is a lot less compliance because the operator works from the safety of the ground. The gutters can be viewed via cameras.

WCM: How productive is this method compared to using ladders?

CL: Higher, safer, faster – that is our motto.

WCM: You have backpacks? Tell us about them.

CL: Yes, we have our own brand of backpacks – predominantly used for internal cleaning.

WCM: Are the backpacks suitable for gutter cleaning? What about capacity?

CL: At this stage, they can only be used for internal dry dust vacuuming and our largest capacity vacuum is 11 litres. We are developing plans for an external Wet and Dry vacuum in the year.

WCM: You will need mains power for these products and so the customer has to be in when you arrive to carry out a gutter clean. Is there another way around this?

CL: We have systems that run off both mains and generators – our 110v systems lose approximately 15% of suction – still more than capable in handling the toughest of jobs.

WCM: Your units are Nilfisk tech. how long have you been in partnership with them?

CL: We have been working with Nilfisk for over 10 years in the cleaning sector – be it vacuums, pressure washers,

scrubber dryers or parts.

WCM: Why Nilfisk?

CL: Simple – Nilfisk are the recognised world leader in industrial cleaning products. We want to provide the best possible solution to our customers right down to the vacuums.

WCM: How durable are these gutter vacs?

CL: The vacuums are designed for industrial usage – with simple maintenance and a yearly service, these vacuums will last up to 5 years. Nilfisk offer a standard 2-year warranty on all their products – that's longer than any other manufacturer.

WCM: Are they water proof? Can you clean gutters in the rain? Risks?





CL: *All though the poles are waterproof, the electrical side is not – however we do sell rain covers for all our systems meaning these can be used outside.*

WCM: **What risk assessment would a window cleaner have to consider?**

CL: *Like all occupations there is a limited amount of risk – however our system reduces this risk significantly. Having a working knowledge of your environment and the building you're working on is always going to be needed.*

WCM: **What are your gutter pole sections made of? How heavy are they?**

CL: *Our gutter poles are made of Carbon Fibre and only weigh 750g per 2m length – at 14 metres that is only 5.5 kgs.*

WCM: **How important is diameter?**

CL: *On gutter cleaning, anything less than 50mm will see problems with blockages. Our specially engineered heads almost remain the same diameter unlike our competition ensuring a complete hassle free system.*

WCM: **How would they survive if dropped from a great height?**

The poles are very tough and designed for daily frequent use. We have yet to have a pole returned because of damage! Unfortunately the Vacuums themselves are not – anything electrical dropped at



great height will not survive!

WCM: **How can window cleaners sell this service to their customers?**

CL: *Like all good sales people should – sell on the benefits – a regular clean will prevent £000's of repair costs in the future.*

WCM: **Do residential customers respond differently than commercial customers when it comes to a gutter clean service?**

CL: *Both residential and commercial customers are equally receptive to this fairly new aspect of cleaning. If pitched properly, both customers will see a great return of your investment.*

WCM: **How much more money can a window cleaner make if they were to buy a gutter vac and then begin to add this to their services?**





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CL: *Dependent on the area this process can be charged between £40 and £100 for each inspection. We recommend two inspections per year – one in the autumn when the leaves have fallen and one just after winter – March / April time.*

WCM: **Explain EU regulations and how they affect gutter vacs.**

CL: *The new legislation only affects domestic vacuums and our systems are classed as industrial.*

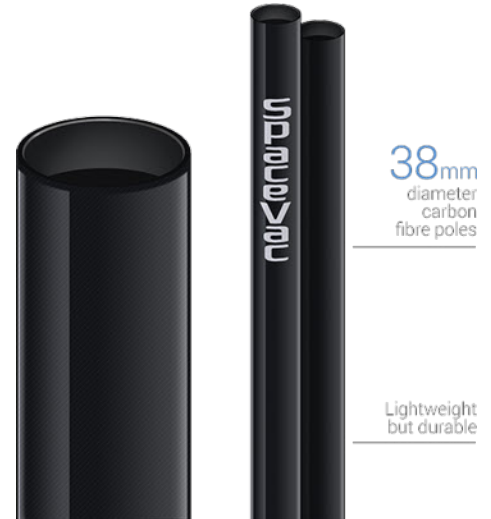
WCM: **What is the ROI if a window cleaner decides to buy a gutter vac?**

CL: *When can a window cleaner begin to make money? At £40 per clean and with the average system costs £2295, the ROI is realised within 58 clients – dependent on the number of clients or the type i.e. Residential or Commercial – the ROI could be as little as one month from purchased.*

WCM: **Are you able to give a case study example?**

CL: *Yes of course. Let me use a company called Veritas Premier Window Cleaning Services in this case study.*

VPWS was a Sole Trader window cleaning business in Towcester, Northamptonshire, he had around 400 customers of which through the spring and summer 75% (300) required a 4 weekly clean and the remainder an 8 week clean. The charge was £10.00 per property on average a property took 15 min's using a professional



reach and wash system. These six months, produced an income of £3500 pm, or £21k for this period.

In the autumn and winter, due to dark nights and inclement weather (and his family holiday) the frequency of window cleaning was extended to every 8 weeks on average, and a few not at all. Consequently his window cleaning income for Oct to March reduced to £12k.

As a complementary service he investigated a number of options and found SpaceVac the inventor and manufacturer of High Reach gutter cleaning vacuum systems, he researched, compared, talked to his customers and arranged a demonstration with SpaceVac.

He purchased a SPV7124 SpaceVac 700 with 50mm carbon fibre poles and 135 degree head and tools. It cost him less than £2295.00 excl vat. SpaceVac delivered and trained him on that first day.

*200 of his customers accepted his advice that a gutter clean was necessary, prudent and he was the best person to carry out the service, as his customers knew, trusted and respected the service he provided. The cost of a gutter clean was set at between £40.00 and £60.00 per property and on average took 30 minutes to complete. Through this low season, with a new complementary, added service he made just over £10k or maintained, in fact grew his income through this previously difficult time. He also worked fewer hours and earned over twice as much per labour hour with SpaceVac. The outlay on the equipment was a quarter of his window cleaning equipment. He is happy to recommend SpaceVac – reaching new heights. **END***





THE NEW UNI-VALVE 30 FROM EX-CEED INNOVATION

by Lee Burbidge

I remember some years back attending an open house for Aqua-dapter owned by Steven Jones. It was the launch of the Mark II in which we made a film for WCM TV. The Aqua-dapter invented by Steven was a revelation at the time. It was essentially a device that fitted between the brush head and a telescopic pole. Once the inner hose was connected to the device it operated by way of tugging on the pole hose at the base of the water fed pole, this would turn the pure water flow supply on or off.

It was a great water saving device back then and changed the way that window cleaners would think when it came to saving that liquid gold sloshing around in their water tanks. These days things have moved on a bit for Steven and now his new company Ex-Ceed Innovations appears to have taken this tech one step further. We caught up with Steven to explore his latest water saving innovation the Uni-Valve.

LB: You are no longer making Aqua-dapters? They were a great piece of kit.

SJ: The Aqua-dapter was a great success selling many units in the UK, USA, CAN, AUS and DEN.

Still, Aqua-dapter had its negatives, that niggled me over the years. The negatives, where brought about by mixed comments from users of the Aqua-dapter: 1) Too Heavy 2) Too Long 3) Not versatile 4) Springs Breaking.

Users put up with the negatives because they loved the way Aqua-dapter worked. At the same time the rise of super-lite poles increased the focus on super light equipment. This became more paramount, something needed to change.

LB: Ex-Ceed Innovation. How did you come up with the name and why?

SJ: I got together with my brother and we started to work together on the Tubeless pole.

My Brother used to own a fishing tackle company called Ex-ceed, that I liked the name of, I also liked Innovation so I simply joined these two names together.

This made a lot of sense to me as I intended to innovative to the point of any innovative product out there my products would exceed them, hence Ex-ceed Innovation.

LB: You must put a lot of thought into solving window cleaning problems?

SJ: Yes I do, being a former window cleaner, water fed pole and traditional 2000 - 2013, some things used to bug me. I remembered that I hated water spraying out of the brush with the only methods of stopping this where valves that needed to be picked off the floor or trigger valves that created a loop of



Lee with Steven Jones

hose, and worse still pinching the hose. Yes my brain works overtime designing products to make life easier, that is what its all about.

LB: Tubeless water fed poles sounds like science fiction but its actually a very really neat idea. Explain to those that do not know what it is and why you came up with it?

SJ: Well tubeless is only a term as it still has a tube, but what I mean by tubeless is the fact it as no hose permanently attached.

Instead of having each pole with its own hose, one hose connects to all poles, this is done with a simple but very effective method.

There is one 15 mtr pole hose attached to the hose reel via a barbed connector, and on the clever end a protective cover that protects the fitting called a sleeve ejector.

There is a small piece of hose that comes out the brush end of the pole and a male fitting at the base of the first section of the pole.

When you connect the sleeve ejector to the base of the pole it tucks inside the pole out of site, and when you extend the pole the sleeve ejector goes up the pole as it is connected to the top section. The sleeve ejector is

The Aqua-dapter (old) compared to the Uni-Valve (new)



more than a protective cover, it also enables users to disconnect from the pole base.

The reasons so many people are going tubeless is because again it makes life easier but also saves money on replacing fittings. Each time you put your poles away, there is no hose hanging in the back of the van, no water dripping from hoses, in use, less snagging because the fitting is now inside the pole not trailing on the floor, very easy pole changing, and cleaning poles due to not having to take sections off a pole with hose attached.

This method is definitely better than existing methods, as the popularity is showing.

LB: Is there any advantages of using your blue hose with these tubeless pole kits?

SJ: Yes, all our products have a purpose, the blue hose is firm, that is needed in disconnecting and connecting the sleeve ejector from the pole.

Also being dragged on the floor I would not recommend cheap PVC hoses, you pay cheap, you get cheap, I believe. As Uni-Valve is a perfect companion to use with tubeless it is vital that the hose will have good burst pressure. Any method of water control attached to the top of the

"I DESIGNED MY OWN COMPLETE GEARING SYSTEM.."

pole needs a good burst pressure hose, this becomes apparent in the summer when hoses start to swell twice as thick!

LB: Can you convert any pole as a tubeless pole?

SJ: *Almost, the only problem I have is when the user wants to change fittings on the pole like carbon goosenecks, the hose being attached in the top section of the tubeless pole prevents this.*

If the carbon goosenecks are not taken out the pole then fine it can be used but not switching fittings like from resi-neck to gooseneck.

No issues with standard angle adapters and plastic goosenecks mind. But you can use the Uni-Valve with carbon goosenecks.

LB: Are you happy just selling kits now? At one time you had the Ex-Ceed water fed pole.

SJ: *Yes totally, I think poles are a touchy subject and people like to choose what pole they like, so I am not going to try to force people to buy my pole just for the tubeless. Also many users already have poles that are perfectly fine so do not need a new pole, kits are the best way.*

LB: The Uni-Valve is a great innovation, and it is getting awesome feed back.

SJ: *Yes feedback is very good, in fact I have not had any one yet that has not liked it, that speaks for its self.*

LB: You cannot control the water flow rate?

SJ: *You can as long as you put one of our lightweight control valves at the brush head, you adjust manually to the desired flow.*

LB: Why the cost of £30.00?

SJ: *With all the R&D and tooling costs running into tens of thousands of pounds, we believe that £30.00 for the best control valve on the market is a good price.*

LB: Can you the Uni-Valve work with a tubeless kit?

SJ: *Yes, as I designed the tubeless kit around the Uni-Valve, if it wanted to be added by the user later it can.*

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EX-CEED
INNOVATION

LB: How does the Uni-Valve exactly work inside?

SJ: *I designed my own unique gearing system that is very robust. As it is unique we have applied for a patent.*

LB: Can you replace parts inside or is it a sealed unit?

SJ: *Yes the parts can be replaced but I really do not think they will need to, as they are strong parts.*

LB: I can see other applications for something like this on a slightly bigger scale such as in soft washing, for example. How many other applications do you feel this technology has?

SJ: *Yes there are other uses which I will definitely investigate.*

END



IWCA convention and trade show 2016

What does it feel like?

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By Lee Burbidge

February 2016 ushered in 'Success Under The Sun' as the International Window Cleaning Association (IWCA) rolled out its annual convention and trade show. I last attended one of these back in 2013 Florida where I shouted from the rooftops about the advantages of networking with fellow window cleaners during the round table breakfast mornings. On this trip in 2016, I felt something that I had never felt before.

This year the convention and trade show was again in Florida, attracting a decent number of people but held at a much smaller venue than previously. The weather was unseasonably colder on a couple of the mornings and I was teased slightly by my US friends and accused of bringing over some of the British rain as we were subjected to showers on more than one occasion. It does not get that cold even in Florida's winter time! But this was by no means to dampen any spirits for attendees as the show really kicked off with a packed room at 8.00am as Keynote speaker; Mike Michalowicz began his mesmerising talk.

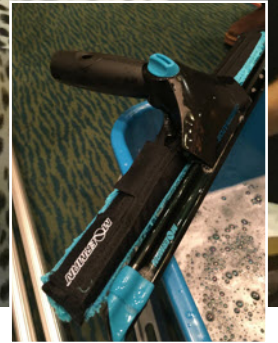
Mike, is a born entertainer and teacher, I learned a lot as I 'belly ache' laughed during his stories that covered varying topics from building a million dollar company, business coaching, working on your business and not in it and how most businesses' only have to make a 5% change to hit targets for big growth. I learned a lot in that first hour which ended with a book give away called 'Profit First'. Profit First is written by Mike, and it tells the secret of a simple system that would turn a cash-eating business into a money-making machine! Best of all it was given away for FREE! A signed copy too!

The trade show at the IWCA attracts all the big names, and I mean ALL the big names. I love how the industry here supports the trade association's trade show, something I have not yet seen in the UK. Attendees are a different barrel of fish here too, 99% of attendees are serious about growing their business and are not afraid to pay big bucks for the stuff that is going to help them achieve that. They are open minded and always willing to learn. I have not met anyone yet who has claimed that they 'knew it all'.

Because of this I can see why any manufacture or supplier who is anyone would attend here. They know that they would be tapping into a serious pool of business owners. You can see this type of guy chatting at the bar outside convention time with other window cleaners over a plate of Buffalo wings, willing to learn from one another on how to grow their business instead of ending blind drunk in a beer tent somewhere. It is why an event like this attracts the big names. They know that they will sell to this crowd. The same quality of attendee, attend venues such as The Huge Event in DC, The Cleaning Show UK and the ISSA Amsterdam in Europe.

Perry Tait of Reach-iT is a water fed pole manufacture based in China. Reach-iT claimed a huge booth at the trade show and Perry describes it perfectly when he





says, "We sold a lot at the IWCA Trade Show", Perry continues, "When we attended the IWCA we wanted to position ourselves amongst the big boys and in front of the other brands as a coming of age for Reach-iT. We feel really strongly that we were able to achieve that. We got amazing feedback and some amazing interaction with members of the board. We wanted to promote ourselves as a fully developed solution, which we are. We are getting window cleaners that are able to clean windows with our products 2 to 3 times faster than anything we gave them or anyone else gave them before. We are not playing in any other league as everybody else and we wanted to make that statement very clearly. The feedback and sales we got for a small event was super big and well worth the attendance".

The trade show felt warm and inviting. It was obvious to all that the trade hall was full of experts ready to share their experiences.

So was there anything new for window cleaners? Well, there was two or three things I would like to mention. It was nice to see Black Diamond displaying the now famous Back Diamond squeegee rubber on their booth.

But amongst all the black rubber my eye were drawn to something new and something blue, the G-Dive gloves. Basically these gloves come with an inner lining pair made from acrylic. The main glove which is made from a Triple Dipped PVC material goes over the inner lining and creates a warm, air tight and dry environment for your hands using scuba diving tech. These gloves are perfect for window cleaning in those cold weather days. I also think they will be awesome for soft washing, as they are also chemical resistant. Casper Schjorring, CEO of Black Diamond, when asked what was the best thing he liked about attending the IWCA trade show, "I would say the amount of pro's together at one place from a manufacture point of view is the major draw for me".

Sean Gavin, CEO of RHG and Tucker Pole Systems attended his Tucker booth and handing out free brush heads to attendees. A new hybrid brush for the Tucker line that consisted of an inner 100% hogs hair section surrounded by nylon white bristles. Sean was handing these out like candy. The only prerequisite was that Tucker wanted user feedback. That did not seem like a tall order to me at all for a free brush!

One of the most exciting things for me at the trade show was using for the very first time the Combinator by Moerman. When the Liquidator squeegee channel first came out, it created quite a storm. The Liquidator channel had specially designed end clips that eliminates the need to detail the edge of a window with a cloth.

Moerman went further and brought out the



Travis Hermann

Mike Michalowicz



Team Ettore



Window cleaning competition

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Combinator that made it possible to use the Liquidator channel with a strip wash as a flip tool or my favorite, as a one pass tool. Genius.

A show is not a show without Unger or Ettore involved and true to form these two pillars of the window cleaning community were on display at the trade show. Unger displayed a sea of green as it proudly showed off its new innovation called the Stingray.

The Stingray is essentially an indoor window cleaning system that uses pads and a special 3M-Scotch Guard cleaner. Ideal for maintenance cleans with added extensions to reach higher glass areas.

Ettore were out in force celebrating their 80th year in style. The whole Ettore team were kitted out in blue matching baseball tops. It felt like they would all burst out into a baseball game at anytime.

When you take a look at the members on the IWCA Advisory Board, Ettore, Unger, IPC Eagle, JRC, Detroit Sponge all of these companies are massive players in the window cleaning market and have been around since the beginning of time. This unique collection of goliaths are rarely seen coming together in this way and surly another string to the IWCA bow.

Meanwhile whilst the trade show bustled with keen window cleaners the classes oozed 'come learn something'. The schedule did not disappoint with something for everyone at every level from Understanding Your Team to Growing Your Business: How we went from \$60,000 to over \$Million to the current topics of today such as Mike Draper's Are You Prepared for Impact that provided valuable advise and explanation and clarification of the new recent IWCA/GANA joint agreement on cleaning glass. The choice of classes provided further networking opportunities that attendees found great for business and great for new friendships.

Outside the event product demonstrations were in full swing. Here window cleaners got to use the latest equipment and were able to ask questions about the products which helped get a real understanding of whatever it was that excited you on the day.

Later still, the International Speed and Medley window cleaning competition echoed with excitement as window cleaners fought for the winning medal. The winner was Ivan Pleinadius who achieved best score of 14.85 for the speed competition and Paul West with

his time 1:37.25 with only 3 errors in the Medley.

The last time I had attended an IWCA event, I never went to the end of convention Auction & Awards Banquet. I some how considered the idea of giving out awards and patting each other on the back was a little pomp and ceremony, something I felt was largely unnecessary. This changed for me, when I felt the excitement and inclusion as I sat down for a 3 course meal. I have not seen this or felt this anywhere else. Not in DC, not in the UK or Amsterdam. What I felt that night.

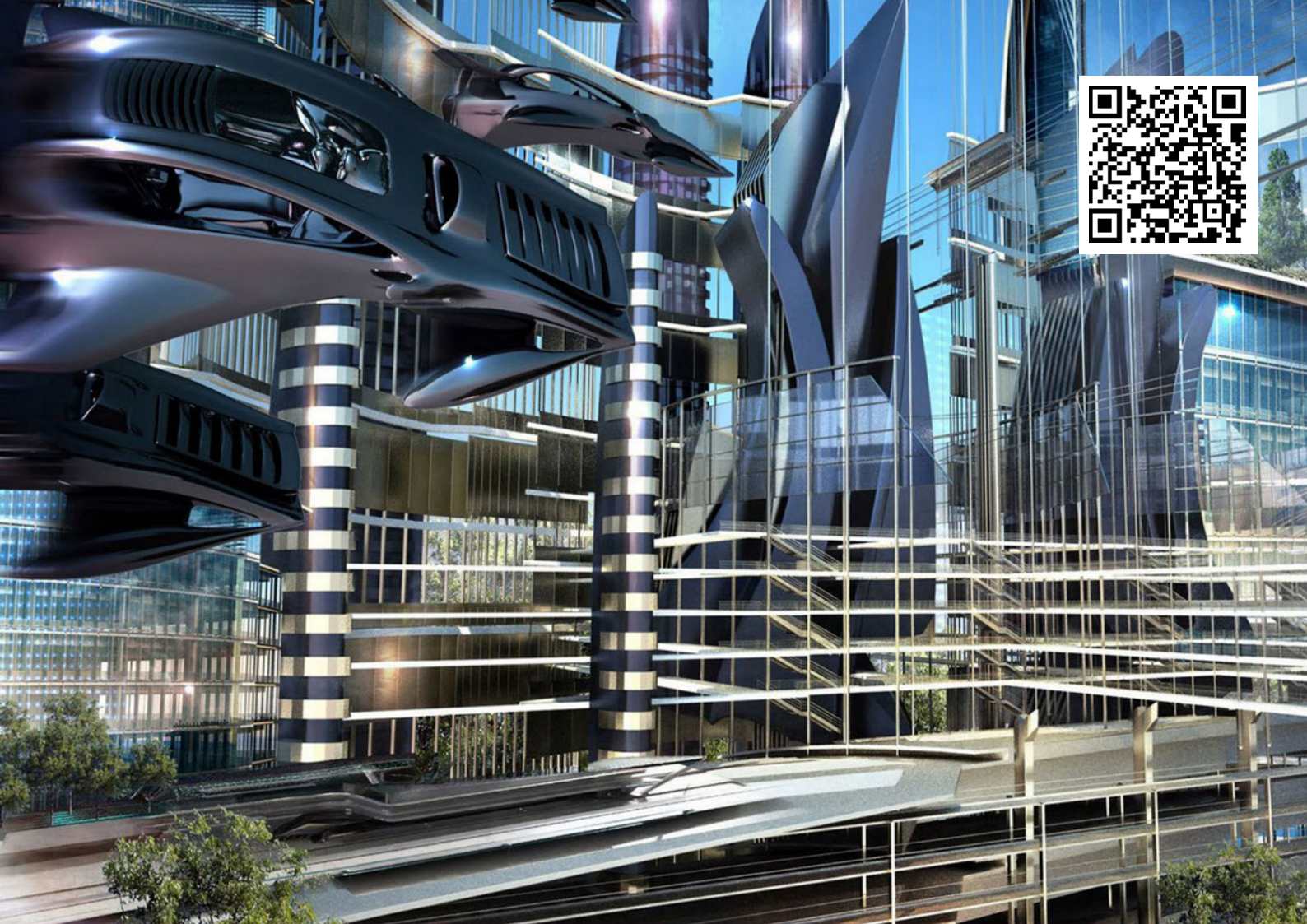
Regular window cleaners sat shoulder to shoulder with industry leaders amongst a sea of round tables. The room was electrifying. The IWCA saw Immediate Past president Travis Hermann hand over the reigns to a fresh faced Noa Pedersen who's father, Carl Pedersen was IWCA President back in 1990! 26 years ago! Noa would of had a sticky candy face back then, surely?

Now I get it. The love in the room for each other and for the IWCA's goals and missions was palpable. Window techs rubbing shoulders with manufacturers. I loved how past presidents are still valued and honored and the respect shown as we all stood in silent for those that past away. Window cleaners are awarded for their outstanding work and loyalty and outstanding window cleaners are recognized such as Jand Demczur, the window cleaner that saved lives on 9/11. Jan used his brass Ettore channel to cut through dry wall after finding himself stuck in a lift with others as it filled with smoke. It was humbling to see the room stand and applaud Jand after Lawrence Green described this emotional story in full.

The charity raising for the selected charity in the given area of the convention was a real nice touch too. The auction threw up some funny moments as items were auctioned off such as a picture of Stefan Bright (Safety Committee) suspended in a harness looking very uncomfortable in the never region. Erin York invited the room to bid on the picture and taunted Stefan to buy it with, "your not going to let your junk be thrown in a trunk are you?", priceless comedy timing as the room erupted in laughter. I made a lot of new friends this trip and I got to catch up with old friends too. Well worth the attendance.

So what did the IWCA banquet, convention and trade show feel like?

It felt AWESOME. See you next year in Arizona and who knows we might even give you a free printed copy of Window Cleaning Magazine.



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