

# Window Cleaning

Jan/Feb 2017

## magazine

*This issue...*

**Gardiner/AquaTap fusion**

***How the Gooseneck Valve came about***

**Hydrophilic Vs hydrophobic glass**

***We explain the science behind it***

**5 ways to make 2017 your best EVER!**

***Josh Latimer on tripling your business***

**The Cleaning Show 2017 London**

***Ionic Systems, Quartz Ltd and FWC interviewed***

**IWCA 2017**

***Why this event is unique***

***and much, much more...***



# THE UK'S LARGEST DEDICATED CLEANING & HYGIENE EVENT

## THE CLEANING SHOW 2017

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Entrance is free of charge  
and visitors will be able to:

### CALLING ALL WINDOW CLEANERS

#### THE WINDOW CLEANING CHALLENGE

The Window Cleaning Challenge is a lively and fully interactive feature at the Cleaning Show which will take place over 14-16 March at ExCeL, London.

The existing world record holder, Terry 'Turbo' Burrows, will take on all-comers who are trying to break his long-standing world speed record for cleaning three regulation-size windows.

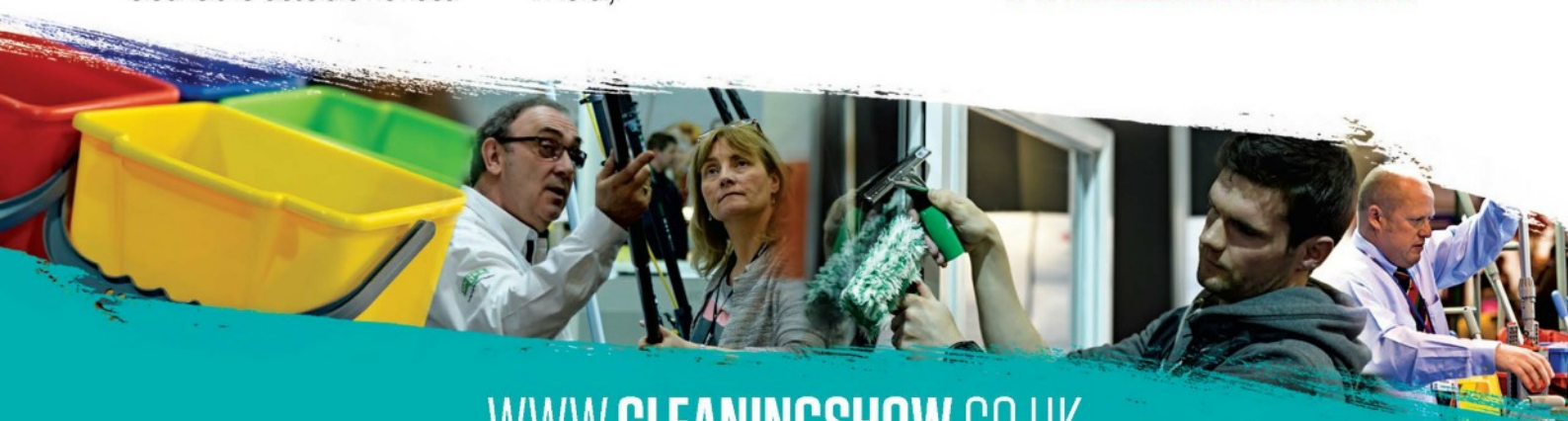
Terry will be on hand to offer tips and advice to all competitors from experienced window cleaners to absolute novices.



This year you don't have to break the world record, you just need to be the fastest on the day. There will be a £250 cash prize awarded each day to the fastest window cleaner and you can try multiple times, but can only claim your cash prize once (three individual winners in total).

- Source the latest products and services on the market
- View demonstrations and try out equipment first hand
- Gain knowledge about the key challenges and legislation affecting the industry through free seminars and workshops
- Challenge the world's fastest window cleaners in the world
- Meet with friends new and old at a series of social gatherings and association meetings
- Find bargains with special show discounts on products

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Issue 20

# Window Cleaning Magazine

# 03



## Editorial

Hey Readers,

2017 is here. We kick off with bags of self preparation articles. We want you to be the success you deserve to be. Check out my article on FOCUS and my buddies Josh Latimer, 5 ways to make 2017 your best year EVER! And DJ 'Coach' Carroll explaining the 3 core principles that will be your building blocks.

We are pleased to introduce a new writer, AC Lockyer of Softwash Systems, as he explains why we soft wash. Soft washing is the fastest growing window cleaning add on service but conversely soft washers find they are doing a lot more window cleaning than they used to. Soft washers will be checking out Window Cleaning Magazine for the latest.

The biggest events over the next couple months to attend are the Cleaning Show 2017 in London UK and the IWCA 2017 Convention & Trade Show Arizona USA. For both of these Window Cleaning Magazine will report back to its readers and we will hold LIVE FEEDS from the events.

To keep up to date with our LIVE FEEDS follow us at  
<https://www.facebook.com/windowcleaningmagazine/>

Peter Artusa is back in the magazine with his article on SYSTEMS and Carrie continues the epic story of US Vs UK Window Cleaning.

*Lee Burbidge*



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



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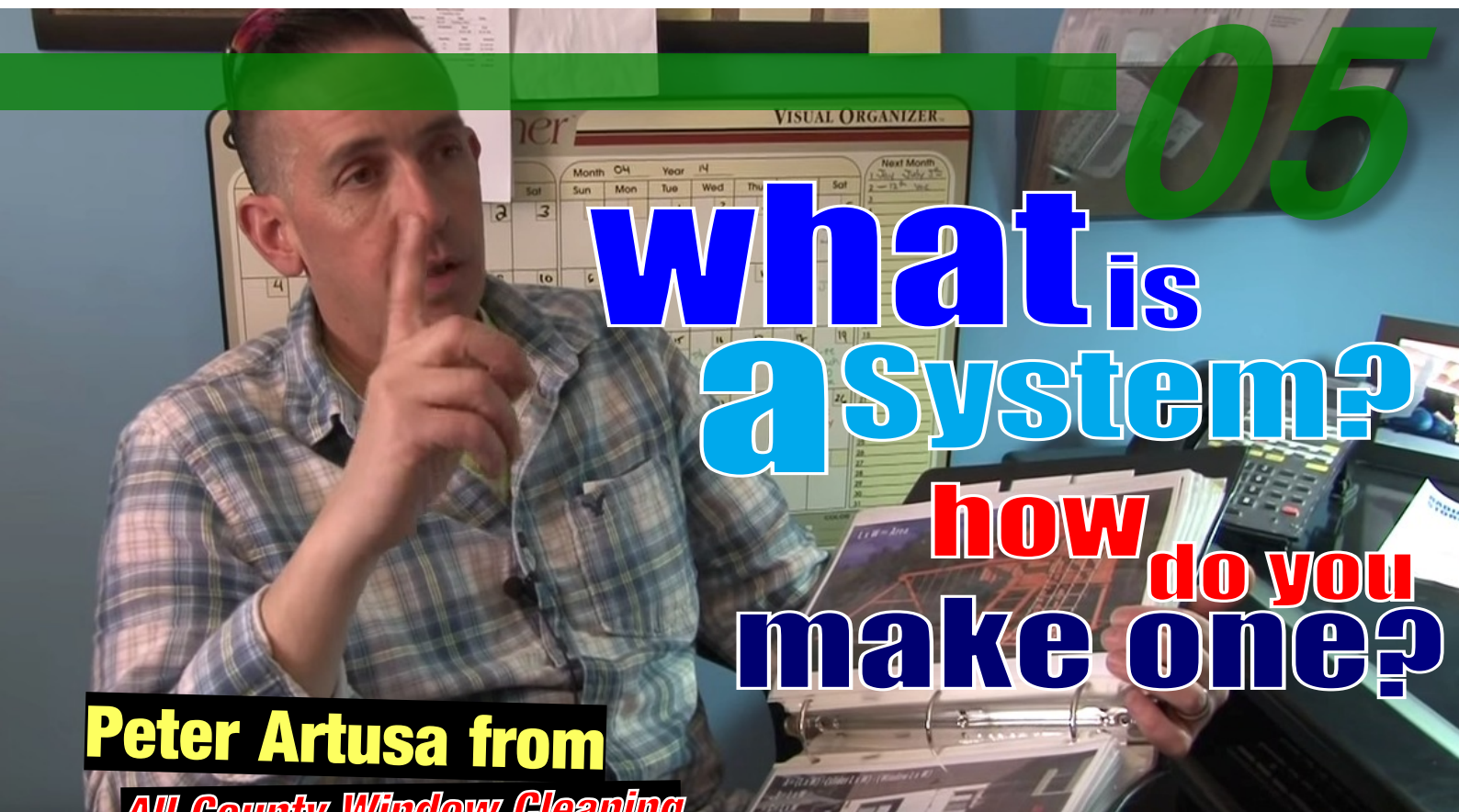
Charlie Price

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**Peter Artusa from**  
**All County Window Cleaning**

## So, what is a System?

The main definition that is found everywhere is this; “A system is a procedure, process, method, or course of action designed to achieve a specific result. Its component parts and interrelated steps work together for the good of the whole. Creating effective business systems are the only way to attain results that are consistent, measurable, and ultimately benefits customers”.

Systems and processes are the essential building blocks of your company, whether you realize it or not. Every facet of your business, sales, operations, technical and financial can be managed or improved by using a system.

Having business systems are a practical way to manage all areas of your business. They are a practical way to manage the important details of your company’s operations. For example; in our sales system, we have a subsystem called window types. The window types subsystem will have all types of windows that we have cleaned. Double pane, palladium, storms, casements etc. And this system and subsystem are the workhorses that deliver consistent results for our sales people. They are all on the same page and can identify window types with our customers.

Good systems take the waste and inefficiency out of your business and help you give your customers what they want every single time. No matter who in the company speaks to a customer, if they follow the sales system, they all sound alike.

Michael Gerber said, “Organize around business functions, not people. Build systems within each business function. Let systems run the business and people run the systems. People come and go but the systems remain constant” (E-Myth Revisited).

Another quote that I live by from Michael Gerber is, “Run your Company like a franchise”. Now let’s dissect that. This quote does not mean to own a franchise.

My interpretation is this... The largest franchises in the world all have systems. There is a constant that they live by. Let’s take McDonalds for example. If you today buy a McDonald franchise you will be taught to run your franchise just like every other McDonalds in the world.

You will market just like every other McDonalds, you will make French fries, pour a soda and clean the restrooms just like every other McDonalds in the world.

What does that mean for you? Well it is simple, when you hire a manager, they will manage just like all previous managers, when you hire a window cleaner, they will clean a pane of glass exactly like all the others, they will know how to change a rubber, just like everyone else, and this goes for every part of your company.

Why?? It is simple... Consistency... That is really it. When you hire a new sales person, manager or technician you teach them the system and they will be consistent and they never can say, “what do I do “ or “How do I do it”?? Because if your system is written properly all questions will be answered.

Writing a system can seem like a daunting task. So, start simple. Something as simple as making a pot of coffee. You know how to make coffee and you have a way to do it. Write it down, step by step. Until you achieve your goal. A pot of coffee. Now take this to the next step. Have a quick “systems” meeting with all employees that will drink the coffee and go over the system. See if there are other suggestions etc. Once this process is complete, rewrite the system and there you go. Your first system. Now “Anyone”



Company systems

*What is a system? How do you make one? Continued:*

that wants to make a pot of coffee in your office will know exactly how to do it. They will know where the coffee is, where the filters are, how much water, well you get the point. No-one should have to ask how to make coffee, and this system will be the most effective way to make coffee. Now move to different area of your business. You will also delegate other employees to assist you with the writing of whatever system you are working on. Make sure they are clear, concise and to the point. Always review with all employees before carrying out.

Each system you build will, in itself, generate economic benefits for your company. The systems you create will not differ much from there use, no matter what part of your company they are written for. You will need to innovate and have different meeting systems and processes within your organization. The goal is to create systems that are effective, efficient and enable you to build a business that eventually operates even without you.

Once you have identified your initial systems that you need it is time to improve, it's time to develop your business systems. In developing your systems, always start with the outcome, that is, how the task or job should look like when it is completed flawlessly. "A Nice hot pot of coffee" Then work backwards to figure out the best steps to achieve the outcome. Review your systems annually, with your management team. Our office does this in January and February, our slow times of the year. REMEMBER, the key is to make your system easy, efficient and foolproof so any of your employees can follow it.

Then, over time, encourage your employees, managers etc. to try to improve you're existing processes and systems. The more effective your systems are the more cost effective your business will run. Your employees will know where they stand and should not have to ask "why or how". Refer to the "system". Once your systems become better and better, your profit will increase and your company will become a force to be reckoned with.

To end with another quote from Michael Gerber, "A true entrepreneur spends their time generating ideas, but do not want to do the work, this is why an entrepreneur builds a world class business and a technician wants nothing to do with the creation. A world class company does not depend on the owner for results, it depends on the **SYSTEMS**. The owner learns how to replace himself in the functions he does not want to do by creating systems his people use. This frees the owner to have the **PASSION** to create".



This March, the biggest cleaning show in the UK opens its doors at the ExCeL London event centre.

*What show are we talking about?* Well, The Cleaning Show 2017 of course. The event brings in over 5,000 people per show from all over the world and this year promises to be no exception.

**So why should a window cleaner visit this show?** The Cleaning Show has always had the fantastic support from the likes of Ionic, FWC and Varitech. We interview Ionic Systems and the Federation of Window Cleaners but first, we spoke to the team at Quartz Ltd responsible for organising the event.

**WCM: You are back at the ExCeL! What does the show have to offer visitors this year?**

**QT:** *This year we are delighted that the show is growing to almost double the size of the last Cleaning Show in 2015. With the move to London from the NEC we have seen a real upturn in the enthusiasm for the event once again and thousands of real high-quality visitors attending. So, this year we will offer a large exhibition with exhibitors who will be demonstrating their latest equipment and services including Kärcher, Unger, Nilfisk, Ionic, Varitech, Nationwide Window Cleaning, Window Cleaning Warehouse, Templa, Makita, the Federation of Window Cleaners and Alexander Swan and many others.*

*We also have a wide range of free-to-attend seminar sessions which have proved extremely popular in recent years and offer great industry insights, advice and training specifically aimed*



at small to medium sized companies. We realise that if people are going to spend a day at the show, we need to make it worth there while.

Of course, we will also be having a Window Cleaning Challenge as well. It's something of a tradition now, that window cleaners from all over the world come to challenge Terry Burrows on his Guinness World Record of fastest window cleaner. It's been a long time though since anyone came close, so this year we have a cash prize of £250 per day for the fastest window cleaner recorded. Terry will be on hand to demonstrate and offer tips, but he will not be allowed to enter. Anyone can give it a try and you can enter all 3 days, but only win once. So you need to encourage your readers to start practising now!

**WCM: Unger smashed it at the last show, Manchester 2015 in the innovation awards. What is the line-up this year?**

**QT:** Yes, we will also have the Cleaning Show Innovation Awards judged and announced at the show. It works a bit like the Chelsea Flower Show, as each stand puts forward their latest innovative products that have not been presented at a show before in the UK. We have an expert panel of industry judges who then view, try-out and debate who should win a prize behind locked doors – with the winners announced on the afternoon of day one at the show.

In 2015, Unger won the Best Window Cleaning Product with their nLite HydroPower DI Filter. At this stage we are still collecting in entries for the 2017 award, but we will be announcing the list of short listed products before the show, so that visitors attending can easily identify the newest and more innovative products within the market within the exhibition.

**WCM: You mentioned the seminar programme. How much of this will be relevant to window cleaners?**

**QT:** On day one, Tuesday 14 March, we take a look at the cleaning industry as a whole and some of the big issues impacting HR like immigration, the living wage and apprenticeships.

On the Wednesday, we have a morning session hosted by the Health & Safety Executive including a session on working at height, which is then followed by an afternoon session giving advice to SME's on how to grow your business.

This session should be particularly relevant to window cleaning companies who are looking for low cost, effective ways to promote their business. Presentations include advice on email marketing, social media, PR and general business advice.

For those of your readers who are also involved in FM, Thursday will look at the future of the FM industry with a panel debate and case studies including how robotics could change the way we work in the not-too-distant future.

The Federation of Window Cleaners will also be announcing the winner of the Window Cleaning Company of the Year at 3:30 on Tuesday 14 March within the seminar theatre area.



Moerman

**WCM: Who are the speaking stars of the show?**

**QT:** We have Jim Fitzpatrick MP officially opening the show on the Tuesday, followed by a keynote presentation by the chief executive of Keep Britain Tidy, Alison Ogden-Newton. Later the same day, Chris Edwards, assistant director of the Home Office Immigration Enforcement team will give a warning about illegal workers within the industry and how employers can protect themselves with a few easy work checks and how to spot commonly forged documents. We are also pleased to have Andreas Lill, director general of the European Federation of Cleaning Industries with us to discuss the state of the European market and how businesses in the UK could be affected by Brexit.

HSE have a whole team of speakers heading to the show to offer health and safety advice and to explain new strategies. Policy adviser Colin Chatten, who is part of the HSE's operational strategy team on Work at Height and Product Safety is one that window cleaners should definitely try to see. His presentation will be at 10:45 on Wednesday 15 March.

As mentioned earlier the Growing Your Business session on Wednesday afternoon is another unmissable opportunity for window cleaning managers. Expert speakers include Dan Weltin, Editor in Chief of Sanitary Maintenance who is flying in from the US; Darren Hepburn from NewZapp who will offer easy-to-action quick tips on email marketing; Suzanne Howe, MD of SHC who will show you which social media channel to use and how to achieve quick-win results; Chris Kloppe, MD of Mulberry Marketing Communications who will talk about the importance of reputation, how to control it and how to manage PR in a crisis and double-act Anthony Wilkey and Michelle Cachucho from Best Minds who will help you to identify ways in your own business to grow sales, manage your time and staff more effectively and ultimately become more



profitable. Who could ask for more?

**WCM:** I see Alexandra Swan is at the show, they have unique packages for window cleaners. Industry specific insurance is very important to us. What are they up to at the show?

**QT:** Alexandra Swan are keen to talk to Window Cleaning Businesses about their needs and to discuss options. This is an ideal opportunity to speak to someone face-to-face and get some individual advice. We all spend so much time trying to organise our businesses from a laptop or over the phone, but it can be so refreshing to actually look someone in the eye and talk through the options.

**WCM:** Systems, systems, systems, without software a business cannot grow. Who are the software kings and queens to look out for this year?

**QT:** You are right! We are in a digital era and it's a hot topic in all industries not just ours. There are no specific kings or queens, but we do have a management software zone highlighted on the show floor for small or large companies to discuss the possibilities of Smart Technology on offer. Two companies specifically recognising the importance of helping visitors are Templa Computer Systems and Leviy, both will be on hand to answer questions on how you can improve you're existing and new connections among customers and/or suppliers, from automatic invoicing to service delivery and performance. The internet of things is cost effective and can only help you and your business.

**WCM:** Will Guinness ever drop in to the Cleaning Show for the Window Cleaning Competition? I am sure Terry Burrows will be looking over his shoulder for them lol.

**QT:** Ha ha! The FWC are officially allowed to adjudicate times for the Guinness Book of World Records and we use their official windows for the challenge. So, if we think someone is very close to the time set by Terry Burrows in 2009 (9.14 seconds) or the record for the fastest female set by Deborah Morris at the 2011 Cleaning Show (13.28 seconds) then we will make sure we judge and film their attempt for submission to Guinness. It's certainly about time that the records were broken again and we would love it to happen in the UK. I am sure that Terry will not mind us mentioning that he is not getting any younger. We hope that the cash prize fund will encourage all visitors to have a go though.

**WCM:** The Manchester Show last year did really well for media coverage such as having the BBC at the event. What is planned for this year in London, do you know?

**QT:** Yes, it was great to have Steph McGovern and her team spending 3 hours at the Manchester Cleaning Show, even though it was a very early start for many of the teams and exhibitors! The coverage through BBC Breakfast was fantastic



*Terry Burrows Worlds fastest window cleaner*

as it really showed the size and importance of the cleaning industry.

We also had lots of radio coverage on regional and national channels and several articles in regional newspapers and of course trade press, who are always supportive.

You can never promise what coverage might be achieved and it's highly unlikely that BBC Breakfast will cover it in such a big way again, but we will be looking to engage with other channels and potentially later scheduled programmes, but we will just have to wait and see. Fingers crossed!

**WCM:** Soft washing is the fastest growing add on service for window cleaners. What soft washing and pressure washing big boys will be there?

**QT:** As mentioned we will have several of window cleaning equipment providers, but also Nilfisk, Karcher and a huge range of other cleaning equipment providers at the show.

If window cleaning businesses are looking to expand their offering, then this could be the perfect place to be inspired. There are always many show discounts at the show, but exhibitors are always looking to make new contacts. Even if visitors just want to see what's on offer and do some research then at least they can plan for the future and understand the cost implications for when they are ready to expand.





Filta Pura

09

ionic  
SYSTEMS



Ionic

**WCM:** Powered access and IPAF are equally important to the window cleaning industry. Will you have powered access equipment there?

**QT:** Unfortunately, there is not a huge amount of kit in this area on display, but we will have exhibitors such as HSS Reintec who offer hire solutions for powered access. As mentioned earlier, it might be worth attending the HSE seminar session first though so you know exactly what to look out for when purchasing or hiring equipment in this area.

**WCM:** How is the show divided I do not want to get lost.

**QT:** Well to start with there are directions on the website - [www.cleaningshow.co.uk](http://www.cleaningshow.co.uk) - to help you to get to ExCeL.

There are thousands of car parking spaces available or you can get the tube and DLR to Prince Regent which comes straight into the venue. The exhibition is large, but not unmanageable and we have a free show guide available to all attendees with a floor plan and overview of what can be found on each stand. We will also have a catering area within the exhibition hall where you can sit and plan the stands you want to visit. Alternatively, you can do this through the website before you get there.

There are a couple of zones including one for management technology and environmentally cleaning products, but for window cleaners most of the stands are pretty close together as they all want to be close to the Window Cleaning Challenge area.

As one of the best exhibition venues in the world, ExCeL also has all the facilities you would expect, including disability access and provisions, ATMs, high-quality dining options, bars and a wide-range of hotel options within the venue campus. We cannot wait to welcome the industry to this fantastic event again in just a few weeks!  
Avoid the queues on the day and register for your free-pass now online - [www.cleaningshow.co.uk](http://www.cleaningshow.co.uk)

## What does Ionic Systems say about the Cleaning Show?

**We caught up with company Director Reuben Reynolds.**

**WCM:** How many times have you attended this show?

**RR:** We have been exhibiting at the Cleaning show since 1995, with the anchorage range and abseiling service 1997 onwards promoting The Reach & Wash Systems & Training.

**WCM:** What attracts Ionic to this show?

**RR:** It is the shop window for the whole of the Cleaning Industry, a lot of our larger clients offer a wide range of services not just window cleaning, so they are visiting the show to see the latest offerings for all cleaning related products.

**WCM:** What advantages do you see in the venue, London?

**RR:** The London show attracts a lot of clients from London and surrounding Home Counties that The Birmingham show did not.  
On the flip side we do not get to see as many customers and prospects from the Midlands and the North.

**WCM:** How much business do you do at the show?

**RR:** More deals are closed at the show than the earlier days and I put that down to having a tried, tested and respected product range.

**WCM:** What products will you be showing off?

**RR:** We will not only be promoting all our Pure Water Cleaning Systems and New features and benefits to our water fed pole range. But will be promoting the unique Reach &



**"...CUSTOMERS ARE ABLE TO EVALUATE THE DIFFERENT POLES WE OFFER.."**

*Wash Support Services offering the widest range of external facade Cleaning solutions to the industry.*

**WCM: Do you get enquiries that are show related much after the event?**

**RR:** *Yes we get customers who are planning ahead to what machines and poles they wish to purchase in the future and then turn into sales later on.*

**WCM: What are window cleaners wanting to see more of at The Cleaning Show?**

**RR:** *We position our stand, so we are able exhibit all our poles for demonstration purposes. The water fed poles are extended up against a wall to the rear of the stand, so customers are able to evaluate the different poles that we offer, for weight, rigidity and ease of use.*

**WCM: One word you think best describes The Cleaning Show.**

**RR:** *Not sure about one word but here are a few. It is an important show for Ionic to see existing and new clients, that are looking for quality products and services.*

## What does the FWC say about The Cleaning Show?

Window Cleaning Magazine chatted to Beryl Murray of the FWC for their thoughts on why they continue their support for the The Cleaning Show.

**WCM: How many times have you attended this show?**

**FWC:** *Several times...if not all the past Cleaning shows.*

**WCM: What attracts you to this show?**

**FWC:** *Supporting window cleaners and the BCC; networking and a venue to present the FWC window cleaner of the year awards and promote our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.*

**WCM: How much business do you do at the show?**

**FWC:** *We join an average of 3-5 members at the shows.*



Terry Burrows & Beryl Murray, FWC

*Exhibiting at the Cleaning Show allows another opportunity for us to promote the Safety Accredited Member (SAM) scheme; IOSH training and membership. We also present the award for FWC's WC/Company & Employee of the year at this show.*

**WCM: What are window cleaners wanting to see more of at The Cleaning Show?**

**FWC:** *Window cleaning equipment, new products and offers. The Window Cleaning Competition gets a lot of attention.*





# 11

## Evo-Lite with rinse bar



Rinse bars have been hitting the window cleaning market for a short while now. **Why are rinse bars becoming more popular and integrated into brushes?**

Mostly, it is down to operator training and rinsing. If you have been out there for a long time cleaning windows and you have mastered the skill of rinsing glass, you will have over time built your technique for spot free glass and you will know what it takes to achieve that.

By improving the performance of a tool such as the brush head with rinse bars, it is possible to bring an operative up to speed quicker with less issues such as re-work or having to go back and re-rinse something. That is the direction and intention with manufactures and rinse bars.

Manufactures are trying different things with rinse bars. Where you place a rinse bar though is still very much up in the air. Some are putting it on the leading edge, some are hanging it out over the brush head its self and X-Line are placing rinse bars inside the brush itself!

We sent **Steve Blyth** of **Window Cleaning Magazine** to **X-Line** HQ in Ilkeston, Derbyshire, UK and asked Steve to report back on the **Evo-Lite** brush head with new rinse bar option.

**Steve:** Already selling the popular Evo-Lite Dual Trim Ultra Lightweight range of brush heads, X-Line have decided to provide customers with a rinse bar option. On the surface this brush looks like any other Evo-Lite but with one massive difference. It does not take too long to notice what

has changed as the innovation is actually inside. X-Line has placed a tube in the centre of the stock and bristles that they call a rinse bar. It has multiple small jet openings to distribute pure water in a straight-line configuration creating a cutting action for cleaning and rinsing on the glass.

**What does this mean to X-Line customers?** Well they now have a choice between a rinse bar brush or pencil jet brush. But buying either one from X-Line *still* means they can interchange between the two options.

Dig deeper and you start to see more evidence that demonstrates real thinking from X-Line, that the rinse bar was not an after thought. The stock had to be re-moulded to embed the push fits. The push fits hold the rinse bar in place allowing the lowest profile positioning.

**How can the Evo-Lite rinse bar brush help you?**

Because the bar consists of multiple water jets when cutting on the glass there is less over lap issues with the rinse process. Two pencil jets, for example, have an overlap area







where an area between the overlap can be missed. A rinse bar helps to zap that gap.

Not so obvious advantages of this X-Line brush is when window cleaners are working at heights greater than three storey's.

At heights above three, four, five floors the window cleaner will tend not to lift the brush head that often at rinse stage. With the dual trim cut this contains pure water inside the bristles while rinsing. This allows an easier rinse effort and can create a nice large 'bubble' of water inside the inner bristles.

There are guys that have never learned to rinse off the glass too. You can walk out and see people 8 ft, 10 ft in the air rinsing through the brush! The rinse bar creates a wider rinse area so that you can get that rinse done quicker.



### Here are a couple reasons why you have a double trim.

First is, when you put the brush on the glass you want to get a splay, you want the bristles to splay out real nice getting into all the corners.

If you have a full trim brush all the bristles are going to sit on the top of the brush during the splay. With a dual trim, with a little extra pressure you get that nice splay of bristles but you also bring the inner bristles into contact with the glass usually stiffer bristles for scrubbing.

The splay of bristles helps you get in at the edge of the glass without having to knock the brush up to the frame.

The second feature we talked a little about was rinsing. When you release pressure and leave the brush on the glass you create a pocket for rinsing. Water is some what contained with in the outer bristles pulling those contaminates off the glass for you're rinsing action.

The feel of the X-Line brush for how hard you have to push, turns out to be a really nice mix of bristle material for performing those actions.





# Featured reader:

# 13

## Nick Blodans

My name is Nick Blodans and I am the Director of Sky High Window Services Ltd in Toronto, Canada.

My background in window cleaning started with a fascination with heights, construction, and rope work. Throughout my childhood I loved heights and anything to do with climbing. I was always climbing rocks and trees, which turned into cliffs, bridges, and the roof of my schools. As a teenager I worked in all areas of construction and gained a well rounded knowledge of most trades, tools, and heavy machinery. I did everything from concrete forming to the finished paint job. As a result, I jumped the ranks from an individual contributing labourer, to starting a subcontracting company where I managed a team of labourers working on contracts all over the GTA.

After a few years of working in construction, I turned down a supervisor role for a growing developer that I did work for, to attend college. My post secondary school was Pre-Firefighter services at Conestoga College, where I excelled in rescue techniques and firefighter operations.

Since I was such a rope nerd in school, I thought I would try my luck and obtain work with a high-rise window cleaning company on my summer's off, and the rest is history. Since that humble beginning, I ventured into the window cleaning world quickly learning everything I could as a sub-contractor for many of the largest high rise window cleaning companies in Toronto.

As a sub contractor, and with more years of experience down the road I trained and supervised window cleaners in many different areas of window cleaning; including bosuns chair, swing stage, boom/lift, ladder/scaffold systems and de-ionized water-fed (Tucker) pole. I also dabbled in high rise window caulking (fire proofing buildings around the GTA) and building restoration work to help round my knowledge of everything "working at height". In 2013, my father and I decided to go into business together and incorporated Sky High Window Services Ltd. and since then we have only been on the rise (pun intended). We have been exponentially growing every year maintaining over 100 building contracts in the GTA. We have worked on buildings up to 75 storeys using a perm-



Nick entered this picture last year in the IWCA picture contest 2016 and won.

anent rigged swing-stage system (the one in the IWCA picture) and have replaced glass, descending 670' using ropes.

Toronto is currently the No 1 city in the world for condominiums on the rise, and they are only making them more and more architecturally in other words complex and challenging for window cleaners.

Enter Rope Access. Although OSHA Window Cleaning Regulations somehow remain in the past (last renewed in 2012) Rope access is the way of the future for window cleaning in Toronto. More and more buildings we maintain are permitted rope access rather than traditional techniques such as swing-stage because it's proven to be safer, more cost effective, and allow for more technical/advanced manoeuvres without the negative affects on the body or the surrounding environment.

Rope access doesn't cause damage, it requires less manpower, it is less invasive/intrusive/disruptive and it's all rigged for easy rescue, making it the safest way to accomplish work at height.

The future of Sky High Window Services Ltd is to become the first IRATA based rope access window cleaning company, which will make for a safer and cleaner future for all of Toronto. With Rope Access, Sky High will be able to reach new heights, and tackle more architecturally unique buildings with efficiency, all while ensuring the safety of everyone at all times. (Thanks to Chris Purdy, founder of CRAS (Canadian Rope Access Specialists) that I am a certified IRATA technician. CRAS has brought IRATA and Rope Access to other parts of Canada.



# hydrophobic

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# Vs

# hydrophilic

## We have the science

Have you ever wondered what all this 'Hydro' stuff is? Or have you wondered why your pure water sheets nicely down some glass and is really rubbish at rinsing on other glass?

*Henry Grover Jr tells you why that is as he explains the science behind what is happening.*

Hydrophilic simply means water-loving. This type of surface attracts water such that it tends to sheet and not form drops. Hydrophobic surfaces on the other hand repels water forming water drops.

These two different surfaces are more accurately identified by what is called the contact angle (CA) of a water drop.

This number usually is between 0 and 180 degrees. It is because of this that we also have the terms super hydrophilic, and super hydrophobic.

A quick look at You Tube will show the difference between these. If glass has a CA below 90 degrees it is considered hydrophilic. Above that number and it is hydrophobic. Above 150 and the surface is super hydrophobic. Below 5 degrees the glass is super hydrophilic.

As we all know water passed over hydrophilic glass will sheet smoothly down the glass. It is this glass that window cleaners love since it helps in the final rinse process of window cleaning with a water fed pole. It allows scrubbing the glass clean to be a much easier task since there is a definite reduction in cleaning time.

Hydrophobic on the other hand is not liked by window cleaners since the water runs down the window in separated fingers, "rivering" down the glass. Hence more time is needed to scrub the glass clean. Also a tight slow rinse formation back and forth down the glass is required to ensure that every bit of the glass is rinsed.

Window Cleaners who specialize in Water Fed Pole (WFP) work would like to know exactly what causes the difference



in these two different types of glass surfaces. The answer is very simple and that is there is only one surface type.

Glass is naturally hydrophilic. The so called hydrophobic glass that we observe from time to time is the cause of surface contamination by hydrophobic low energy molecular groups that have filled the micro-pores.

If we look at different surfaces under an electron microscope some have smooth lumps and some glass has jagged peaks and mountains.

**Does the difference in micro texture have an influence over hydrophilic/hydrophobic properties?**

Since glass is naturally hydrophilic when we polish it with a microcrystalline silica or a cerium oxide, we do two things. We make it more rough, and we increase the overall surface area per cubic centimeter (CM). We increase the number of mountains, hills, and valleys. We also make it more hydrophilic.

**Is it possible to convert previously hydrophobic glass to hydrophilic by scrubbing with a bronze wool pad?**

Once again all soda lime window glass is naturally hydrophilic. So when we scrub or scour glass we are simply "deep cleaning" it. We are essentially removing most of its low energy hydrocarbon molecular groups. This can also be done by polishing the window with a high speed rotary machine, felt, and cerium oxide or a micro-crystalline silica.

The process for accomplishing this is relatively quick. In fact it is possible to minimize the time necessary to clean up after by limiting the polishing compound on the pad. Or to use what I call a "slow release compound" on the pad. This type of pad slowly releases the polishing particles into the water allowing the window cleaner to very precisely control how much product is used.





Once the window has been returned to its true nature, water will sheet down the window with a water fed pole very well.

#### **How can glass be both hydrophilic and hydrophobic within the same window frame?**

It is also not unusual to have windows reacting differently to water from one to the next. The reason for this condition is the same. It has to do with low energy molecular groups whether they be pollution; or possibly silicone fluids leaching out from the edges of the window; or it could be some other low energy molecular group.

#### **What has the surface tension of pure water got to do with anything?**

Surface tension of pure water has a number. This number is 72 dynes per cm. It is the reason why pure water behaves as it does on clean glass surfaces. If this number were reduced to 24 or less, water would actually sheet over or wet out glass surfaces that were treated with a hydrophobic sealant. Hence even glass that was contaminated by pollution would seem to be hydrophilic when water with a very low surface tension were passed over it. So it is actually possible to change the way water sheets over even hydrophobic windows.

To accomplish this we must add a very small amount of a surfactant that is called a super wetter. These will dramatically reduce the surface tension (ST) of water down to and below 24 dynes per square centimeter. The chemistries of such super wetter's or as I call them super soaps; are carbon based, silicon, and fluorine. The latter will take it down to 18. Surface tensions like this will allow the water to wet out even Teflon surfaces.

Window Cleaners that use WFPs will sometimes inject these super soaps into the main feed line. Just enough to lower the ST of the water so that it will sheet over the entire window thereby reducing the rinse time.

Another way to enhance the hydrophilic properties of glass is to seal chemically the surface with a water loving coating. There are specialty chemical manufacturers that have already developed molecules that do precisely this. They can be added directly to water and will react with glass forming a water loving surface. This new surface is not glass anymore. It is usually only one or several molecules thick. But it does work exceptionally well. These chemicals are either silanes, siloxanes, organics, or metal oxides such as titanium oxide. The latter is used for what are called low maintenance windows.

#### **Summing up.**

Hydrophilic glass is definitely preferred by window cleaners that use WFP's. But this in reality is the natural property of all window glass. When glass appears to be in part or whole hydrophobic it is rather the cause of pollution or low energy fluid contaminants. When these are completely removed the glass surface becomes hydrophilic once again.

The hydrophilic nature of glass can also be enhanced by making it more rough. Possibly by polishing it. Which gives it a different micro texture. It is also possible to make hydrophobic windows act as though they were hydrophilic by injecting a very small percent of a super wetting detergent into the feed line of a water fed pole. Further, it is also possible to change the glass surface to one that is very hydrophilic by means of chemical sealants.

As our understanding of hydrophilic and hydrophobic surfaces grows, you will learn about it here in Window Cleaning Magazine.

This surface science/technology will become an integral part of the window cleaning industry worldwide. Because of this we will be able to do things with water fed poles that before were not even imagined. This is the beginning of a series of articles I will be writing for WCM.

Hope you enjoy.

*Written by Henry Grover Jr.  
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# how the **AquaTap** tech got into the **gardiner** **gooseneck**

# 16

*By Lee Burbidge*

I remember back in August 2013 visiting a Scott's man called Peter Fogwill. He had just invented a water valve designed to save water for window cleaners. It fitted to the top of a water fed pole and by slightly rotating the pole in either direction, the operator was able to turn on or off the water supply.

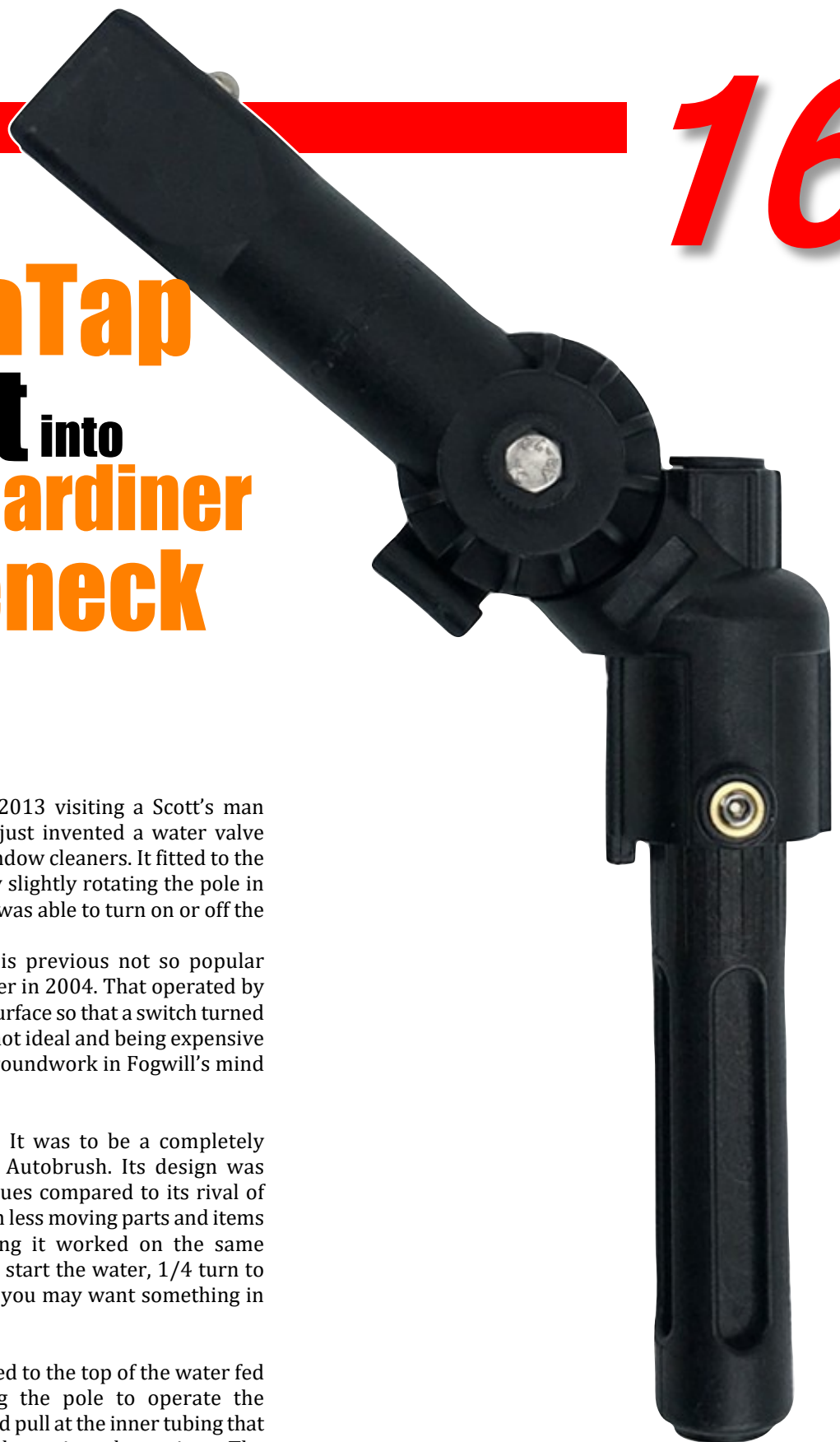
This was a long way from his previous not so popular invention the Autobrush earlier in 2004. That operated by knocking the brush against a surface so that a switch turned the water on or off. Although not ideal and being expensive to produce it was to set the groundwork in Fogwill's mind for a much better solution.

The AquaTap soon followed. It was to be a completely different approach from the Autobrush. Its design was simplistic and offered less issues compared to its rival of the time the Aqua-daptor. With less moving parts and items that could break or go wrong it worked on the same principle as a tap, 1/4 turn to start the water, 1/4 turn to stop the water, and like a tap you may want something in between.

The Aqua-dapter was also fitted to the top of the water fed pole but instead of twisting the pole to operate the mechanism, the operator would pull at the inner tubing that fed out from the bottom of the main pole section. The Aqua-dapter was a genius contraption in its own right and further models were released such as the MKII as it was refined.

With the Aqua-dapter costing twice as much as the AquaTap at the time, clearly fans would be divided. Fogwill's design took advantage of strengthened plastic and less moving parts thus reducing production costs.

Fast forward the water valve scene to 2016 and Exceed previously the Aqua-dapter guys went nano with a clever piece of kit, shrinking the Aqua-dapter capabilities so small it was designed to fit inside the pole inline!



The Uni-Valve hit the market.

Not to be out done 2016 also saw the development of a new AquaTap. The new tap had also gone 'semi' nano and instead of fitting a lightweight chunky plastic piece to the top of your pole it was now more built into the pole. The top section of the new AquaTap takes the shape of an angle adapter with the whole functionality for switching on or off the water activated with the same familiar movements.

With Uni-Valve already building a fresh fan base and selling well, the new AquaTap needed some catching up.



## "...PUT SIMPLY PETER WAS VERY PERSISTENT WITH HIS PRODUCT!"

What happened next was not only an attempt to close that gap but to partner with one of the most influential water fed pole manufacturers in the world.

### So how did AquaTap technology actually get inside the Gardiner Gooseneck Valve?

Alex Gardiner is a private individual. His company, Gardiner Pole Systems sell some of the most popular products in the World.

Getting an interview with Alex is difficult and to my knowledge Window Cleaning Magazine is probably the only publication he has engaged with over some number of years. So then, when Peter Fogwill had the great idea of pitching the new AquaTap to Gardiner Pole Systems this clearly was not going to be an easy task. As a matter of fact it turns out Fogwill had been pitching to Gardiner since 2013 when he had released the original product.

If he were to succeed in that task, he would have a fabulous chance of selling more units with a popular water fed pole manufacture that sold more poles than anyone else worldwide.

Fogwill tells WCM, *"Alex Gardiner wants products that look good on his poles as well as functioning well and so the original AquaTap did not really fit that bill at that time".*

The persistence of Fogwill paid off with an amazing collaboration and entwined patents that neither affect one another. The Gardiner Gooseneck Valve using AquaTap technology was born.

### So why was the name AquaTap dropped for the Gardiner range?

*"It does have a new name with us," Gardiner said, "after thinking long and hard about this we realised that the name 'Gooseneck Valve', best describes what it does. I did not want people getting confused with the original AquaTap, so my only reference will be that the new 'Gooseneck Valve' has AquaTap technology inside".*

### What turned this product around with Gardiner?

Fogwill told WCM, *"I think the turning point was when Alex let his best tester try a printed prototype and the feedback was 'every pole should have one'."*

The Gooseneck Valve with AquaTap tech is on sale as a stand alone, low cost product on Gardiner Pole Systems website. It will suit some users as it can be used without having to let go of the pole which is very handy for keeping more control.

With the collaboration of both Fogwill and Gardiner they have come up with a design using AquaTap technology that is not only aesthetically pleasing but super functional looking flawless within the rest of the Gardiner range.

**END.**

We asked Alex Gardiner how Fogwill was able to grab his attention, *"Put simply Peter was very persistent when it came to his product and he never gave up trying to get my interest. I decided that if I completely redesigned the look of the latest product and changed slightly how it fitted on to the poles it would work a lot better and would meet my criteria for weight, size and operation. The finished product is what Peter and I came up with that he built to our registered design."*

Fogwill recalls, *"I told Alex I could make him any valve he wanted and he sent me one of his stems and asked if I could design something similar. I had also offered him a handheld valve with the same technology but I am glad he didn't go for that, as it would have been a much inferior product. It would have however been better than off the shelf valves that are not streamlined enough to stop them getting caught on everything."*

*"They would also have had a much easier user-friendly on/off lever".*

Gardiner was skeptical at first with the AquaTap, but with modifying your work technique slightly the process of turning the valve on and off became natural and second nature. *"...Even I sped up,"* said Gardiner recalling his testing.





DJ 'Coach' Caroll

# becoming a better you 18 in 2017

This issue I am going to pivot away from the sales and marketing tactics I normally cover with you. Be it in 2017 sales and marketing is as important as it has ever been - I believe there is something you need focus on more.

If January 2017 marks your first year this article will help you tremendously - likewise a seasoned veteran will still find a nugget or two in my next 669 words.

Jim Rohn and Napoleon Hill. My two greatest mentors. These two men have shaped lives in more ways than we will ever know - today I would like to share with you 3 core principles I have learned that will be you're building blocks to a fulfilled life.

They are principles that have influenced change around the world and have helped men and women grow to their maximum potential. The most important thing to understand about personal growth is the absence of negative affects. You are never harmed by becoming a better you.

## **AMBITION**

More than likely this is what originally drove you to go out on your own. That "want" for more, for better improvement. That's what I call it.

Being ambitious is a way of life for any successful person. It's simply setting out to achieve something that you currently don't possess. That burning desire deep down inside that, if we aren't careful - we lose track of.

I ask you what is it that you desire? Take a moment and write that down. What is it that you want to achieve the most in this new year? Find that and stay focused on it.

## **DISCIPLINE**

You cannot have DISCIPLINE without ambition. As Jim Rohn puts it, "Discipline is ambition on fire." If ambition is desire; discipline is desire in motion. Day in and day out - it's the little decisions you make that keep you moving toward your goal.

You must take great care of discipline - without discipline you will be easily persuaded to leave the path you originally set out on. People will ask for favors, ask for your time, ask for your attention.

You must learn to tell them NO. No you will not give up your time. No you will not give up your attention. Unless it is on the path way to your purpose.

Discipline can be summed up as: doing what needs to be done, even when you don't feel like doing it.

## **PURPOSE**

Possibly the MOST important aspect of life. Why are you here? Have you ever asked yourself that question? What is the true meaning of your life?

This makes drifters uncomfortable. Drifters are people who go through life bumping off things. They often share their unwanted opinions about other's ideas and activities. You will find them broke, miserable, & begging you to join them.

You must stay away from drifters - they are infections and without ambition and discipline they will easily pull you into their state of mind.

Living a life of purpose is the only way to avoid drifting. Waking up each more with "definite purpose" as Hill calls it. Know why you are here, what you are going to do to make that "why" a reality and stopping at nothing until it is complete. The journey to find one's purpose can sometimes be long and difficult. It's the innermost workings of your mind and heart. The connection that drives you day in and day out.

One of the best lessons I took from the teachings of Jim Rohn is the principle of working on yourself more than you work on your career.

I invite you to take Mr. Rohn's challenge. Spend more time this year working on yourself. Building yourself. Growing yourself. Expanding yourself. The only thing in life that is constant is change. Don't get stale - improve.

Ambition, discipline, purpose. Three words that I hope will shape the next 12 months of your life and many more years to come!

Here is to a prosperous New Year full of personal development, growth and a better you!



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# what really makes a good window cleaner?

by  
**Carrie  
Guenther**



US Vs UK Window Cleaning Part 2

**M**y adventure in England with WCM and my new friends from Lake Tahoe Window Cleaning, USA, continued as we sped through the rolling green countryside to our next destination: Nottingham. The legendary home of Robin Hood and his gang of merry men is now the home of a bustling town full of windows needing to be cleaned. I was especially looking forward to this day because we were finally going to be doing some residential window cleaning, which is what my own business in the suburbs of Minneapolis, Minnesota is all about.

Tom Coyle is someone I related to right away. Not just because he's a mostly-residential window cleaner who knows and respects ladder-and-squeegee, nose-to-glass methods (though he is equipped and proficient in the skills of water fed pole as well), like me, but because he also seems to have a similar temperament and attitude toward his daily work life. I was looking forward to working in a style that is familiar to me. Unlike Jaime Poulin and her two helpers Josh and Cory, rope drops and water fed pole work is not a part of our daily work routine. I wanted to be able to really relate to my UK counterparts, and to share notes.

Tom Coyle got into window cleaning at 19, and now he's in his late 40s. He works mostly in and around Nottingham. He's dabbled in other things, like motorcycle restoration and construction work, but eventually started Tom Coyle Window Cleaning in 1987. Like my own work, 95% of Tom's work is residential. He doesn't really advertise, except for Twitter and his presence on social media; he gets his clients through referrals from happy customers, which is also how I roll.

I noticed that the clients who were home when our little motley crew (Tom, four Americans, and two camera people) went to clean their windows were warmly and openly fond of Tom. They were glad to see him and they clearly had a longstanding and trusting relationship with their window cleaner.

This is, hands down, probably my favorite part of being a residential cleaner. I love having strong relationships with

## “...I CAN'T WAIT TO GO TO LAKE TAHOE AND WORK WITH THESE PEOPLE...”

everyone in my life. That includes friends, family and clients, of course, but also includes my mechanic, my yoga teachers, and my pedicurist. They are - every one, in a way - my support system. They're essential, to me. I try to remember to let them know I appreciate them - whether in words, with a card in the mail, or by bringing something to offer Buddha on their altar - and most of them remember to tell me or show me the same sentiment.

The Lake Tahoe trio were wowing Tom and I with their skills as an efficient, quick, flawlessly functioning team. While Jaime hauled around the biggest ladder effortlessly - in stylish suede high heeled boots, no less - Josh and Corey flitted around and completed work at top speed while still paying attention to detail. Tom and I had a moment of doing nothing. Just standing and watching.

“I feel old,” he said.

I laughed. “I feel useless.”

Honestly though, I can't wait to go to Lake Tahoe and work with these people. Not only is Lake Tahoe reputed to be breathtakingly beautiful, but I want to experience what it's like to work on a team like that. They're super inspiring to me.

While it was natural for Tom and I to be slightly envious of having such a crew, we were also appreciative of our own reality. Working alone and residentially means long hours of quiet solitude, and this absolutely fits into my lifestyle puzzle of stuff-that-makes-me-happy. I love writing stories in my head when I work, sometimes about my clients themselves. I love people. I asked Tom if he could tell me something about his favorite client. He told me it's a one Mr. French, who is “always grumpy, but we get on well.” This man is probably similar to my own Mr. Silverman; a man so grouchy that the former owners of my business said not to even bother with continuing to clean for him; he's not worth it. But we get along like peas and carrots. As is so often the case with grouchy older folks, they're just terribly lonely and a bit angry with the world for leaving them alone. Because isn't that what we all fear? Being lonely when we are old?

Being your own boss, however, no matter how lonely and occasionally stressful, seems to be worth it, across the board. This goes for nearly every cleaner-business owner I've ever met, with or without employees.

“I see my old window cleaning boss now and then,” says Tom, “and he says now he wishes he'd given me the raise I asked for!”

After working with Tom in Nottingham, I noted five big differences in the residential cleaning that we do in the states, versus what Tom does in the UK.

One, the houses are itty-bitty, compared to the multi-million dollar suburban-American monstrosities that are our typical clients' homes. I mentioned this in the first article: Britain, to Americans, is miniaturized. Either there's a lot more money to be thrown around in the States, or Americans are just more gaudy about showing it. But smaller structures means less climbing, and not climbing as high. Don't mistake our little crew of yankees, we are all thrill-seeking ladder-monkeys and love to climb, the higher the better. It's just clearly safer to stay closer to the ground.

Two, the windows themselves are different. Most do not have screens, are much smaller, and there are fewer per home than we're used to. Stained glass is far more common in these homes. And for some reason, the sills and frames around the windows in the UK seem to hold onto less water.

This leads to the third big difference which is drying technique. Behold, my American windies: “The Scrim.” At first glance and touch, the kind of towel Tom uses every day felt like a super un-absorbant linen dish towel, to me. One of the scrim Tom handed to us reduced me to giggles, and I said it looked like the shroud they wrapped Jesus in. It was that antique-looking and that disintegrated. But these things can absorb a ton of moisture. We were all impressed. There was also something Tom used specifically for stained glass windows. It was a sort of shammy that resembled a sea-creature, made of something that felt like synthetic suede. It was the first time any of us had seen such an invention.

The fourth and maybe the biggest, time-factoring difference in residential cleaning between us is the fact that in the UK, they rarely do the interiors, and when they do, the windows rarely have screens. Wiping screens is a boring and time consuming process, but we have a lot of bugs and seasonal tree-debris in the states, and they are necessary.

On this day, I learned about a squeegee method from my fellow Americans from Lake Tahoe Window Cleaning, which I came home and tried to perfect in my work in the fall. It's a technique they called the two-pull technique. At first discussion, with their accents, I thought they were saying, “two pole,” and I think I started tuning out. More pole-talk. When they demonstrated it, I learned that its a way to clean windows that requires less movements with the squeegee, so it's faster. Jaime's brother, who got her started in the business, was insistent on his workers perfecting it, because compared to the fan technique, it saves time and cuts down on mistakes. Rather than four or more side-to-side movements common to the fan technique, it uses two movements: The first goes along the top and right edges of the frame, all the way to the bottom, and the second gets what's left, and edges the left side of the frame. The proportions between the size of the squeegee and the size of the pane of glass have to be right for it to work. I still don't have this skill down as solidly as my fan technique, but I'm a believer. It is faster, and I'm working on it.



## "...I OBSERVED A FEW GRUMBLES, EYE ROLLS AND COMMENTS FROM THE UK CREW..."

At one point in our workday in Nottingham, Lee asked both Jamie and I, at separate moments, to do an estimate for one of the homes in Tom Coyle's round. We both came up with roughly the same number. Until I had this learning experience working with cleaners in the UK, I wasn't aware that there is a huge difference in how much window cleaners charge. But there are a lot of factors that even out this seemingly large difference in price. For example, instead of once or twice a year, their clients are being serviced every four to six weeks. True, we Americans - in places where it gets really cold, like Minnesota and Lake Tahoe - may have to make our budgets stretch in odd places because there are less months out of the year that we work, but then we charge a lot more for our services. The other big difference is that it's much less common for UK cleaners to include the interior windows with their service, whereas that is the norm for 60 to 80 percent of our clients. Doing the interiors not only means wiping screens, it means putting up with pets and sometimes children, chatting with clients, moving furniture, dealing with the ridiculous variety of expensive shades, blinds, drapes and other window treatments, and being more careful about drips than you are outside. All of this takes up a lot of time, and makes the service much more expensive. As a result, window cleaning is often considered, in my country, to be a luxury item, and most of our clients are above-average in wealth. In the UK, clean windows seems to be something the average person can usually afford.

The following day we worked in Sheffield with Rich Atkin and Craig Booth.

This is probably very typically-American of me, but the only thing I knew about Sheffield, England was from the movie *The Full Monty*. In the first minutes of the movie, they try to explain why the characters are so desperate for employment, and they illustrate the general decline of the Sheffield economy from metal-industry-giant to the financially depressed situation in effect when the movie took place, which leads the main characters into a career as male strippers.



While we were told the basics about his friends Rich and Craig, Lee told us very little about the larger crew we were to work with in Sheffield, but did imply to me that I may consider them to be a bit of a rough crowd. Now... I can make friends with just about anyone, and have done so across the globe, especially with other manual laborers, because I identify with them most, so I eagerly awaited the challenge. I got it.

Our own crew were all late to work the next day, which probably seemed even more inexcusable given the fact that all we'd had to do was roll out of bed and travel down a few elevators. We had stayed in the hotel that we were to clean windows for. When we all finally assembled on the sidewalk next to the nice white work vans of Atkin & Son Window Cleaning, and were given neon yellow safety-vests, and safety waivers to sign, I observed a few grumbles, comments and eye rolls from the UK crew. I didn't blame them in the least. The atmosphere was prickly for the first portion of the morning.

At first, I thought Lee had been kidding when he said we'd be cleaning the hotel where we were staying...maybe because at that point I didn't realize the size of Rich's crew, but I didn't think it was possible for us to do a building that big.

We did it. It took a while, and of course the normal team was not functioning efficiently or smoothly with the likes of us Americans and all the stops and starts that filming anything requires. Without us there, they would have finished much sooner. It took two WFPs with hoses reaching from the vans parked at the curb clear across the rooftop of a lower portion of the hotel. The WFPs, like the one we tried in London, reached the eighth floor, and we were all anxious to try them. I found that they were lighter than I expected, but awkward to maneuver without practice, of course. We also worked with squeegees and



Corey, Carrie, Jamie and Josh





Jamie Poulin in shot during filming

some of those were on extension poles.

Three interactions stood out during this experience in Sheffield, for me.

The first was my automatic thinking as a residential, nose-to-glass window cleaner who has had some awkward experiences with accidental sightings in the past. I'd expressed - the previous evening - my nervousness about "seeing things we shouldn't see" through the hotel windows, which I was reassured would not be an issue. Of course, when using a WFP, you're on the ground, so it's not. Duh.

The second was while cleaning some lower-level windows by hand alongside one of Rich's workers. He made fun of the small size of my scrubber (the nerve! It's not the size that matters...) and asked why I used it. I explained that I'd gone from having a desk job to taking over a window cleaning business and working my wrists to the max for long hours, and my wrists had started giving me a lot of pain. During my second season, I had started doing all my scrubbing with my left hand to take the stress off my right.

But the weight of a full-sized scrubber meant that soon my left wrist started giving me stabbing pains, so I switched to a smaller scrubber and started carrying around a squeeze bottle of soapy water with me. He laughed again. I reminded him that I only do residential cleaning, and that - unlike him - I am female and built smaller, and I'm also in my forties and my body just doesn't work perfectly anymore. He was a bit more friendly to me after that.

The third interaction that stands out to me was doing the windows on the ground-floor lobby alongside another one of Rich's crew. He was a quieter man, with tattoos on his neck, and also did not seem excessively friendly. I helped him with some garden-level windows and was glad to have a chance to show I actually had some skills with a squeegee. Rather than being impressed, he seemed to think it was strange that I thought I needed a drying towel. One huge difference between commercial and residential cleaning that I always manage to forget is Speed versus Detailing. Then we grabbed some extension poles for the rest. I had never done windows this way before, as a pair, with one person scrubbing and the other squeegeeing with a pole, right behind you. This guy was incredibly fast. I literally could not scrub fast enough. He'd end up waiting patiently for me to finish before squeegeeing off the glass in mere seconds. We actually laughed quite a bit during that last portion of work.

The group photos we took, after the job was done, show nearly everyone smiling. I think it's safe to say that it ended up being a good morning.

The night before, our own crew had dinner with Rich and Craig (the latter also contributed the use of his powerful drone, to add some breathtaking shots to the footage for the documentary Lee was making.) Both were really friendly guys, very clearly businessmen and hard workers, experienced in their game, and worthy of respect. Rich's dad - now retired - had started his business cleaning glass in his youth, during the dark and deprived days just after WWII, which is now Atkin & Son Window Cleaning, going strong for 70 years now. Craig moved back and forth between the UK and the States before finally staying put in his homeland and establishing his own company, Anglian Cleaning Services.

While we made our introductions, Lee and Rich tried to decide where to go and eat. The topic of conversation amongst the rest of us inevitably turned to shop talk ... mostly about water fed pole systems - comparisons of methods, water composition and processing - and our recent experience with the enormous WFP in central London. Again, this is not my way of cleaning windows, and my personal knowledge about it is minimal, so I was quiet a lot of the time, but the conversations soon progressed





*Down time for US and UK crews*



*Carrie trying her hand at cleaning a large hotel*

toward more of the “I can’t believe you’ve never heard of (fill in the blank) ...!” variety, and I became aware that I was hearing quite a bit of “dialogue.”

You know, dialogue: when everyone is trying to talk and show what they know; just sort of waiting to talk, without really listening, responding to, or even processing what the other is saying. Also known as one-upping one another. Part of the reason I’ve felt uncomfortable in groups - both in-the-flesh and online - of “windies” in the past is that technical and competitive banter either bores me to tears or makes me involuntarily roll my eyes, but I do realize it’s part of the culture of this industry and that I’m extra sensitive to it. That’s just not how I talk to friends. It doesn’t feel genuine to me, or friendly. I felt the urge to remind everyone that the purpose of this documentary was not to compete, or to prove which country’s window cleaners are “better.” The purpose was to learn from one another and see how other peoples’ work lives are, as a way of understanding why we do what we do, and - more importantly - what makes a good window cleaner, all around.

We ended up going to a very noisy and crowded Asian buffet. Our table was long and seated ten people, five on each side. In the chatter and confusion of getting there and getting our food, I never did give my “Let’s try not to be so competitive” speech. I needn’t have worried though. The next day was fine.

During dinner, us Americans sat at one end of the table, and at one point we were talking about our work in the states, what we loved about it, and how coming to the UK had taught us so much just by getting another angle on our industry, and a perspective from another culture, which - compared to a lot of other places on the planet - seems so

very similar to our own. Imagine reaching even further and hanging out with other windies even farther abroad. I can’t wait.

Jaime Poulin put it well, and tackled the purpose for my ungiven-speech, when she pointed out that what makes a good window cleaner isn’t any specific skill, equipment, method or product. It’s not about how much money is earned and how big you grow your company. It’s about being aware of all the different ways to do this job, and being willing to learn about all of it. It’s about being balanced and knowledgeable.

My own conclusion may sound contradictory, but I think it’s just as true. What also makes a good window cleaner is adaptability to specifics. Identifying the needs that your particular clients have, and becoming the best at attending to those needs, so that eventually they can’t imagine their lives without you. And the other big one, for me: we must stop putting ourselves down for being cleaners. In every country in the world, people look down on cleaners. This is programmed into our thinking by our own societies.

As the world holds consumerism to be more important than other basic values that all people can relate to, the ideal life is painted to be one where being stressed out and annoyed with your work life is normal, and to chastise yourself for not earning more, not having more, and not being more ... is normal. It’s not. And it’s definitely no way to be happy. Just be okay with what you have now. Appreciate that your work is less stressful than most, and be grateful for that simplicity. That is also what makes a good window cleaner.

(I welcome feedback on this and other WCM articles via Facebook at my profile, Carrie Guenther, or on my business page, The Window Ninja.)



# why we Softwash



*By AC Lockyer*

## *How soft washing began for me.*

In 1991 I found myself asked to leave Abilene Christian University in Abilene, Texas, USA. I had just proposed to my then girlfriend making her my fiancé and wanted to find something I could do to support us in the near future. After packing up all my worldly belongings, all that a college student could have, I started my drive back to Florida where I was from to like many college drop-outs live, back at my parent's home.

During my ride home I would stop off at rest stops calling collect home to update my trips progress. During one of these calls I asked my dad for a tip of what might be a good business to start. He explained that he had the family painter out to paint our home and that during the prep the painter went on the roof and pressure washed it. He explained that the roof came out great and how he thought roof cleaning might make a great business. I completed my trip home mulling over in my head what that business might look like and how I could accomplish the goal to create a future for my soon to be bride and I.

Now understand I am a third-generation entrepreneur, and business comes naturally to me. I never wanted to be a business owner, rock star. A professional fisherman was more what I had in mind. However the genetics of my father and grandfather kept tugging at me and when I arrived home, new priorities set in. I was getting married and it was time to start a business and make a life. The business I chose would later become soft washing and start a cleaning revolution.

## **Need for soft washing.**

When I arrived home and settled in, my father made a small investment in the start of this new business, a Dodge D-50 pick-up truck and a \$400.00 pressure washer from Sam's Wholesale Club. It was a modest start at \$2,000.00 US. I then like all new entrepreneurs targeted my family and begun pressure washing roofs. This was a big mistake as I realized I was blowing off the aggregate from the shingles and sand blasting my knees from the back blast. Obvious damages were occurring.

You see Florida is a very hot and humid environment. Our state bird is the mosquito and our state flower is the mildew plant. Many kids who parents make work around the house here in Florida have often cleaned mildew off patios and their furniture with household bleach. We also know this cleaning is not long lasting and the mildew and fungus returns within three to six months. What was growing on the surfaces here in Florida wasn't dirt it was actually mold, mildew, algae, fungus, lichens, mosses, bacteria and viruses. It was ALIVE, and pressure washing only gave it a haircut







while damaging the surface the FUNK was on.

I drew on my vocational education in horticulture (plant sciences) and the only jobs I had to date being working in plant nurseries and growers. I knew that there were algicides and fungicides on the market that could kill and control the mildew and fungus off the surfaces but could they be mixed with bleach (sodium hypochlorite)? I launched into a six-month R&D period to come up with the best chemical combinations and how to spray / deliver them onto the surfaces. I decided that agriculture based spraying systems were the way to deliver my new solutions and decided to end my relationship with pressure washing.

### Benefits of soft washing

Originally, I was a snooty roof cleaner. I didn't clean houses or drives. No, wood decks or fences, that was pressure washers work. I was a specialist. I was a roof cleaner. So as I began to refine my craft, (as of yet not called soft washing) the chemicals would run off the roof onto the eaves, house, drive, decks and fences making clean streaks in them. Soon customers were asking me to clean these surfaces too. I resisted and in 1992 a freak hail storm would hit the metro Orlando, Florida area and 100,000 roofs would be replaced from the damages caused by the hail. Suddenly I was not a snooty roof cleaner anymore. I had to clean houses, decks and fences to survive. While cleaning these surfaces I would notice that many of these surfaces had been cleaned in the past by pressure washing. There was most of the time also noticeable damage left behind by that technique of cleaning. I knew there had to be a better way.

After the hail storms of 1992 I began cleaning everything around a home, not just roofs and my business sky rocketed. I found out that this new technique I was developing didn't cause the damage of pressure washing on these surfaces but rather gently cleaned the surfaces and often time saved the property owner thousands of dollars over replacement or restoration of the surface. Our well known trade phrases came to exist at this time like "Safe Roof Cleaning" and "Safely, Chemically, Without Pressure Washing" soft washing as a business was born all though soft washing as a term would not be born until much later. My equipment and process was called The Mallard System, for my love of ducks, and I renamed my small company Mallard Systems.

For the next 17 years soft washing would be referred to as the Mallard System for cleaning roofs and exteriors.

As my company aged so did my projects cleaned and we noticed an interesting, though unintended, side affect. The properties and surfaces I was cleaning were staying clean much longer than pressure washing. In most cases four to six times longer. Seems the route of treating mold, mildew and algae as a pest was completely sterilizing the surfaces treated and new growth was having to start completely from scratch resulting in a longer lasting clean and more

value to the property owners we served.

### The alternative to pressure washing

As I advertised my service and begun to compete in the marketplace I noticed there was a stark difference between how I approached cleaning exterior surfaces and how pressure washing companies did. I even noticed that there was generally even a difference between the professionalism of how I had structured my company and how most pressure washers operated. We were becoming an alternative to pressure washing in not only technique, style and equipment but also in operation and professionalism.

Pressure washing as a technique was very old school. Even the equipment had not changed much in nature for over 50 years. Every new innovation or product offering was just a snap on, bolt on, screw on adaptation to the same old pressure washer. I began to realize that soft washing was the first real change to the age-old problem of cleaning surfaces in generations. We were now a viable alternative to pressure washing.

Pressure washing because of the erosion it causes while







cleaning “could” in the hands of a lessor responsible person “employee” cause severe and costly damages to surfaces. It didn’t solve the problem of microbial / organic staining just giving the growth a haircut and spreading the microbial spores “seeds” around the further infest the building surface. It didn’t truly get a surface clean it just gave the short-term appearance of clean while leaving the surface still impacted with the seeds and roots of the mold, mildew, algae and bacteria.

Soft washing on the other hand, actually addressed the root cause of the staining not only cleaning the surface but also disinfecting as well. Now we had a real alternative to pressure washing that avoided the common damages of pressure washing, with a much longer lasting result. Soft washing had become the newest and latest revolution in the exterior cleaning industry.

### How soft washing changes things

Soft washing later around 2009 actually earned its name. Phrases like soft wash or soft washing, non-pressure or low-pressure started to gain traction in the market place. One early pioneer Tim Aselton from Tallahassee, Florida likely started calling it soft washing first. That name sang to the average consumer and this technique had its new name.

In 2010 we started defining soft washing as, “The process for use in cleaning building materials in which an agricultural style sprayer is only used to deliver a chemical solution onto a surface in which the chemicals do all of the cleaning and absolutely no pressure cleaning is needed.” This is how we had cleaned at Mallard Systems for nearly 20 years. Soft washing has key benefits over pressure washing. After now twenty years of use we had solid defendable criteria like,

Soft Washing Uses 1/3 The Water of Pressure Washing.  
Soft Washing Lasts Four to Six Times Longer Than Pressure Washing.  
Soft Washing Actually Disinfects The Surface.  
Soft Washing Caused Little to No Damage to Building Surfaces.

With the arrival and wide-spread use of the internet in the late 1990’s we saw soft washing spreading across the USA. Soon in the later 2010’s we begun to see worldwide interest and appeal. Now in 2016 we have seen soft washing emerges as an industry in over 20 countries.

### Building a professional trade

For soft washing to continue to flourish we needed to focus on striving for professionalism. Some of the struggles we face are items like safety, environmental regulation and professional standards. Because of the low cost of entry into this industry we often times have unprofessional operators tarnishing our industry. Calling one another higher towards self-regulation is key.

Standards for safety are set by the government but through training and certification we need to make sure as an industry we set a great example for all our employees and operators coming home safely every day. Just one fatal accident can cost all of us in the soft washing industry in higher insurance rates. Standards for chemical carrying with vehicles are also set by the government but I see over weighted and over the legal limit vehicles carrying bleach every day. A few chemical spills or a well-publicized accident with a soft washing truck can create a stigma that will hurt us all and put us under the microscope of local department of transportation. Unprofessional looking trucks, rigs and uniform less employees will make us look like hacks and vagabonds causing consumers to loose trust in our abilities and drive down our prices with their lack of respect. We all need to do our part to protect this great opportunity soft washing has given us and call each other higher.

### Onward to the future

Soft washing is absolutely the hottest thing going right now in the cleaning industry. It affords us new opportunities where government regulation is impeding pressure washing with regulation, soft washing leads us in new directions avoiding or complying with these regulations in new ways not considered ten years ago.

Soft washing is new and fresh to the consumer and addresses their concerns they once held with pressure washing. Soft washing as an alternative to pressure washing is custom made for the markets turn towards more earth friendly and less evasive services around their homes and businesses. We are positioned as an industry for unprecedented trust and growth in this sector. Soft washing represents a blessing to so many displaced by economy, down-sizing and other disruptions in their lives to start anew. The future of soft washing is bright and promising as long as we all focus on honoring this great opportunity with honesty and respect. Let’s not look at soft washing as a new trick or a short cut, but rather embrace it as a new beginning to solving the age old problem of keeping our dwellings and businesses clean.

*AC Lockyer is the owner of SoftWash Systems in Sanford, Florida USA and patriarch of the Soft Wash Cleaning Industry. He can be reached at [www.SoftWashSystems.com](http://www.SoftWashSystems.com)*

# The elusive perfect match:

## slip Vs rubber



"JOB DONE!"

By Wagga

### Slip sliding away....

When we talk about "traditional" window cleaning, we generally mean using a ladder and a squeegee but of course it goes back beyond this stage. It harks back to a time when most would use a Chamois leather to clean the windows.

This does not bear thinking about when you think about how hard it is. Most of us window cleaners have used a scrim or microfiber cloth to clean the odd door or Georgian window.

Then the squeegee gained popularity and it was a big step forward but it does have its own set of problems. One of those problems come in the form of slip or how easy it is for the rubber blade to glide across the glass. It's something that can vary a lot depending on the type of rubber you use to the type of soap you use. The vast majority of window cleaners will use washing up liquid and although it does have some cleaning power, getting the right amount of slip is what is going to be the most important factor.

There have been many attempts at getting that elusive perfect match between the best rubber and the best slip. Whilst using a squeegee, slip is crucial for getting good results. To prove this, all you have to do is to use just water on a window making sure you have no residual washing up liquid on your tools, then clean the window with the squeegee. It won't be easy, it will squeal and it will drag. The water will tend to run and you won't get the accuracy that is required to make a good job of it.

So, you use some washing up liquid and the job's a good-un! Not quite, there is more to it as there always seems to be in life. Some rubber blades are better than others in the slip department and that also goes for washing up liquid. So the question on everybody's lips is this "what's the best combination?" This is again not easy to answer because as soon as you ask this question to a group of people, you will tend to get different answers. One of the reasons for this is that as an experienced window cleaner gets towards the ideal combination, there tends to be less and less in it.



Using washing up liquid also has another advantage. It will tend to hold the water in "suspension". Basically, what this means to the window cleaner is that it will help prevent runs. Again to illustrate the point, try window cleaning with just water. Apart from the other things I mentioned about this, you will notice that the water you used has the propensity to run down the window from the top and also to "bleed" in from the sides. So, as long as you have done a reasonable job with the squeegee in the first place, the washing up liquid will tend to hold the residue largely in place.

Back to the main thrust of the article – the slip, you will know when you have got a good combination. I was short of my favoured solution one day so decided to use what I'd considered not worth trying. A budget washing up liquid I'd never tried before; Tesco's own brand lemon. I've tried a lot of liquids in my time but I was struck by just how much slip that this gave me. Also it gives a good finish with very little white streaks when it dries.

This brings us nicely to the actual rubber involved. This also has a lot to do with the slip you will get. So far I have tried using Ettore, Razr and Black Diamond with this washing up liquid and the results as far as slip goes are as follows: Black Diamond best followed by Razr and then Ettore. These are all soft rubber although the Razr seems a bit harder than the other two. So that's it job done? Not quite since it's never as simple as it first seems.

Black Diamond rubber wins hands down for slip but will wear out rapidly. Razr rubber which incidentally comes in red has to be the overall winner here simply because it is a good all rounder. It gives excellent slip *and* it will last a long time so at the end of the day, it's a trade off.

In conclusion, it's crucial to have good slip when using a squeegee for good results especially if using it on a pole. The fact is though, many will have their own favourite combinations but if you've been having problems with this issue lately then it won't do any harm to try Tesco's own brand of washing up liquid and Razr rubber available from Window Cleaning Warehouse – "Job Done!"



# 5 ways to make 2017 your best ever 28

*By Josh Latimer*

I was born in Flint, MI to a lower middle class working family and no one in my circle of influence owned a small business. That's why when I decided to start a cleaning business almost everyone thought I had lost my mind!

It was the spring of 2008 directly after a major financial crisis in the United States when I left a "safe and secure" job with JP Morgan Chase bank to start my window cleaning business. In addition to this major leap of faith, my wife was pregnant with our first child, Maverick.

I remember that my own Mother wouldn't talk to me for a full week because she was absolutely sure I was about to ruin my life. (love you Mom!)

The first few years were hard and we struggled financially. By year three I had slowly started to learn about business systems and the concept of working "on" my business rather than "in" my business.

My company tripled that year.

From there forward we kept growing like a rocket ship and I learned a lot along the way. We started producing \$30,000 per month, then \$70,000, and even \$100,000 a month in revenue eventually became common place.

I sold my business about two years ago and moved my family to beautiful Costa Rica. The month I sold the company it generated \$186,000!

I can speak from first hand experience that the upside of a simple cleaning business is much bigger than what most people believe it to be. The benefit I enjoyed the most was only working 5 hours a week in my business the last two years I owned it. The company continued to thrive even though I was largely "hands off" in the office.

For a guy like me with an original goal of making \$500 a week just to survive, to reach a level of success like this was almost unthinkable in the beginning. I can assure you that I am not special or particularly intelligent but I did things in my business that most other companies do not.

The real secrets for massive growth and freedom are right in front of you and are much simpler than you may realize.

Today, I want to give you 5 simple and guaranteed ways to make sure 2017 is your best year ever.

## **#1: Get Clear On Your Goals**

Most people have a general idea of what they want to accomplish in life but they fail to create actual goals. There is a big difference between a dream and a goal and it is important to make sure you understand those differences. Here are some tips.

Set S.M.A.R.T. goals by making sure they are:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Realistic
- Time bound

One of the common mistakes I see is to not attach a specific date to each goal and without that your goal is merely a dream. Another problem is when your goals are not razor sharp in terms of how specific and measurable they are.

Lastly, make sure you actually write your goals down and review them daily.

## **#2: Learn To Delegate**

Business is a team sport and it is not possible to grow a significantly sized service company without building an incredible team. Remember that your primary job is to be the "coach" not the "quarterback" and letting go of certain responsibilities is key.

It can be difficult to allow others to step into an important role for your business, especially if you are a perfectionist, but you need to think long term and learn to "coach-up" those around you to the level of competency they need to thrive in that role.

## **#3: Become Obsessed With Sales**

Sales and revenue is the lifeblood of all successful organizations yet so many small business owners get distracted with other issues and areas inside their business.

Yes, there are many parts of your business that need your attention but if you do not make sales the foundation in your business it will be a hard road to travel.

Create a culture of sales inside your company and serve your clients at a high level because this really is the fuel in the tank of your small business growth.



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#### #4: Focus On Systems

Most people I work with don't understand that they already have "systems" inside their business. The problem is that they are all trapped inside your head and most of them are not very good!

Write down "how" and "why" you do everything you do in your company so that it is more consistent and easily teachable to others.

From the way you answer your phone, maintain your equipment and make new sales, everything needs to be done in an organized and methodical way. Creating the correct systems for your business is the key to your future freedom!

#### #5: Get Accountability Partner

Many small business owners operate as a "lone wolf" and it is a huge mistake. Try to build relationships with other like minded entrepreneurs and meet with them weekly if possible.

Accountability is the secret sauce to achieving your goals in record time. If you are the smartest and most successful person you know, then find some new friends that will continue to push you and challenge you. Every single high achiever I know either has a mentor or is in a mastermind group so why should it be any different for you?

The key to having a great 2017 is really all inside your head.

Will you do it?

Will you create clear goals?

Will you hold yourself accountable to achieving them?

I want to encourage you to do so because the next 12 months will come quickly.

*Joshua Latimer*

[www.TheGrowthVault.com](http://www.TheGrowthVault.com)



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# window cleaning work of art

# 30

Many window cleaners might consider their window cleaning skill as a work of art, indeed some have gone further and acquired the amazing skill to draw animals such as scorpions, birds and even dinosaurs as they circle the glass expertly and illustrate into the soap.

One window cleaner from Velden, Bavaria in Germany decided that he too would dive into window cleaning artistry, only a little more permanent than just soap on glass.

Rici Oldag, 34, runs his window cleaning business, Oldags Fensterreinigung ('Fensterreinigung' is German for Window Cleaning) He lives and works approximately 37 miles from Munich and has been window cleaning for 13 years.

Most of his work is residential but he does have storefront commercial work too.

In his area of Germany customers tend to be a little parsimonious, before they pay for a window cleaner they will do it themselves, he tells WCM with a big smile. This is why nearly all-residential customers are cleaned no more than twice per year. Frequency of window cleaning can change from town to town and different again from town to the countryside. Monthly residential is carried out in some parts of Germany. In any one day, Rici will clean 4 to 6 properties. His store front windows are all monthly.

Drawing has always been his hobby, Rici tells Window Cleaning Magazine.

He goes on to say, "When I started to put my drawings on to my own t-shirts and equipment, other window cleaners wanted them too."

Rici's style is unique; his designs now extend to Zippo lighters, energy drink cans as well as clothing, BOAB's and buckets. (The full range is here <https://www.oldschoolwindowcleaner.de>)

We love the Storm Trooper illustration on the BOAB (Bucket On A Belt), we do wonder, however, if the demand for Princess Leia would increase given the very sad news of the actress Carrie Fisher passing away last month.

**WCM: Which items did you start to illustrate at the beginning?**

**Rici:** I started it back in 2014, making t-shirts for myself





then selling them on my website. All the other stuff came later, decorated BOAB's, Zippo lighters, stickers etc. Every piece is an individual production, hand made. I only make them to order.

**WCM: What is the most popular design?**

**Rici:** The black T-shirt with the strap line 'The Window Cleaner' with a 'peace' sign.

**WCM: What do people ask for the most in terms of illustrations for the bucket on a belt (BOAB)?**

**Rici:** That has to be the 'Amen' image with the praying hands. It's a powerful image and very personal to the buyer.

**WCM: Window Cleaning Magazine is always looking for interesting front cover pictures. We chose one you had professionally made for your business. Who is the girl in your profile picture?**

**Rici:** Yes I wanted to use a photographer for my website. The girls name is Kathrin Massing, she was great to work with. Maybe someday we will see more of her in the future.

**WCM: What is the most unusual window cleaning item you have illustrated on to?**

**Rici:** Well object wise, it has to be the window cleaning leathers. I illustrate the image but I have to use my friend's skill for applying the image. You see it has to be specially branded onto the material. This is done using wood branding equipment. It's painstaking work to say the least.

**WCM: It is clear you are a big Unger fan. Tell the readers what Unger gear you rock!**

**Rici:** I use the Unger nLite water fed pole because its less expensive and as good, if not better, than the expensive poles here in Germany. I rock with the Unger Ultimate squeegee, the handle is carbon fibre and super light, I also use the Unger ErgoTech and Unger strip wash.

**WCM: Love your taste regards the Ultimate and rocking a classic Unger squeegee too. Why do you like Unger so much?**

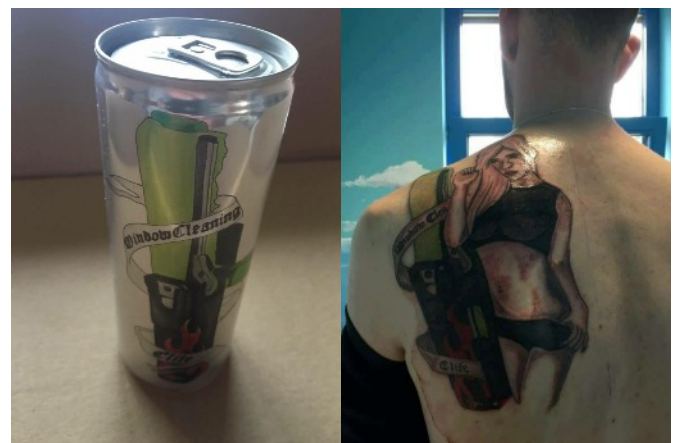
**Rici:** I think they have the best equipment in Germany. It's hard to get stuff from Wagtail, Ettore, Moerman's Excelsior, locally etc. The UK and US get all the toys! I ordered some Ettore stuff from the US but the customs duty was very high. It killed it.



**WCM:** That will be the single market factor. I defiantly think a trade deal between the EU and the US would help with that. Thank you, Rici for sharing with our readers today.

Just incase you missed it guys, check out Rici's website for all the cool stuff he can provide here [www.oldschoolwindowcleaner.de](http://www.oldschoolwindowcleaner.de)

Magazine front cover photographer; Headhunterphoto by M.Koch <https://www.facebook.com/Headhunterphoto/>





# how focused are you?

By Lee Burbidge

**Are you really focused on building your window cleaning, pressure washing and soft washing business? Are you? Really?**

To become successful you need to really want it, you have to be so focused that your critics do not even get a look in, you have to BELIEVE in yourself and your mission. You have to have the conviction.

I have always been a dreamer, a tryer. From my early teenage years I was in awe of my Uncle's screen-printing business. He made a lot of money, working his own hours and he employed local help. I remember sitting in his office chair, or taking pretend calls in the secretary's office, I imagined that the business was mine, that I was the boss.

Everybody has those 'school friends' you know the ones, the ones you hang around with through out your school life; the ones that like to point out faults in you, personally. I had one just like it and with some reflection it was not I with the faults, it was he with the insecurities. I tolerated it because despite everything, we had a friendship history and I actually liked the guy and we did do a lot of fun things. His insecurities were not always evident. But this would extend into our young adult life.

One day, he persuaded me to start a window cleaning business with him. I had just been made redundant from a print sales position and the printing industry was what I set my heart on at that time. Unfortunately, the print trade did not do well in the early 90's. It was the tail end of a massive recession that started way back on Black Monday in October

1987. It was the largest stock market collapse since the market crash of 1929. But even in the mid to late 90's some trades had spent their capital just surviving....

I remember starting the business with my old school friend then quickly dividing it. My friend had no idea of marketing and was head strong on charging prices I felt were far too low.

And so I set myself a goal, to build my window cleaning business. It was only residential at this stage but it quickly grew.

Back then £10,000 PA was a good salary for a Graphic Designer or Print Salesman and £1000 per month upwards was a near executive pay, or a well paid middle management position.

I remember being focused; I had £200 per month work already from the split with my business partnership. Not much at all, but it seemed like a million bucks at the time.

You see I made it. It was all me. **'I made this'** – *where have you heard that before lol?*

As a solo enterprise, the first thing I did was join the Federation Of Window Cleaners; I made up some flyers and began to 'build'. I lived on a council estate and started with my local area.

I hear window cleaners knock the FWC, IWCA or the MGWC but employers associations are the non-profit organisations to join as a window cleaner. I have heard this over my years in the industry and that's ok. If it's not right for them or they do not see the value in these memberships then that was one point to me at the time.

## “...HE LAUGHED AND MOCKED ME. I STILL REMEMBER THE WORDS TODAY..”

I saw the value in the FWC immediately and it was not because of the 50p discount off a squeegee rubber or a van sticker... I saw value to my business on DAY ONE by joining the FWC back in 1999 for other reasons; it helped with work and credibility amongst other things. You had to be insured to join. So off I go with a focused mind, building my empire.

I remember reading a book called the Midas Method by Stuart G Goldsmith back in 1991, way before I started my business. I was a sucker for ‘get rich quick’ schemes at this time. As I was building my window cleaning business in 1999 I always remembered its core message.

It talked about the secret of success and belief, to believe in ones self, to goal set. It asked the reader: ‘Do you know what you want?’

It would give you exercises to complete at different stages of the book as it attempted to train the readers mind for success.

Between ‘91 and ‘94, I must have picked that book up a half dozen times.

Looking back, today the message of that book was lost in its original marketing I think. It was marketed at those wanting to get rich fast, but actually it was equally relevant as a business tool for success.

It explained the power of visualising. It tried to teach the reader to visualise success. By doing this it attempted to inspire and alter the mind, and in the right dedicated hands it would super focus your goals to realisation.

I mentioned about the importance of visualising your goals recently in Josh Latimer’s Quick Talk Podcast when we discussed how my business grew to 60 staff.

Those ideas were still in my grey matter when I began to build my window cleaning business in 1999. It would rise from a poor £720 PA to £15,000 PA... then it rose to £20k, then £35k, it started to break the 100,000 mark, 200K, 300K, 400K, 500K, the money coming in just kept climbing North!

I remember getting my first commercial window-cleaning job in 2000. It was to be cleaned internally and externally.

The windows were those horrible old 60’s style steel frames. The job was HUGE and it seemed like miles of glass at the time. I charged £250 for the job every two months! In those days we worked off ladders and it was pretty hairy too at times. I needed help with this job and so I asked my old school friend to help me.

As we worked, we talked as we moved our way around the building. I told my friend of my vision and where I wanted to take my new business. He laughed and mocked me and I still remember the words to this day... he laughed and said, “You think you’re going to have lots of people working for you and lots of vans”... I felt knocked!

But I ignored the critic and continued with my focus.

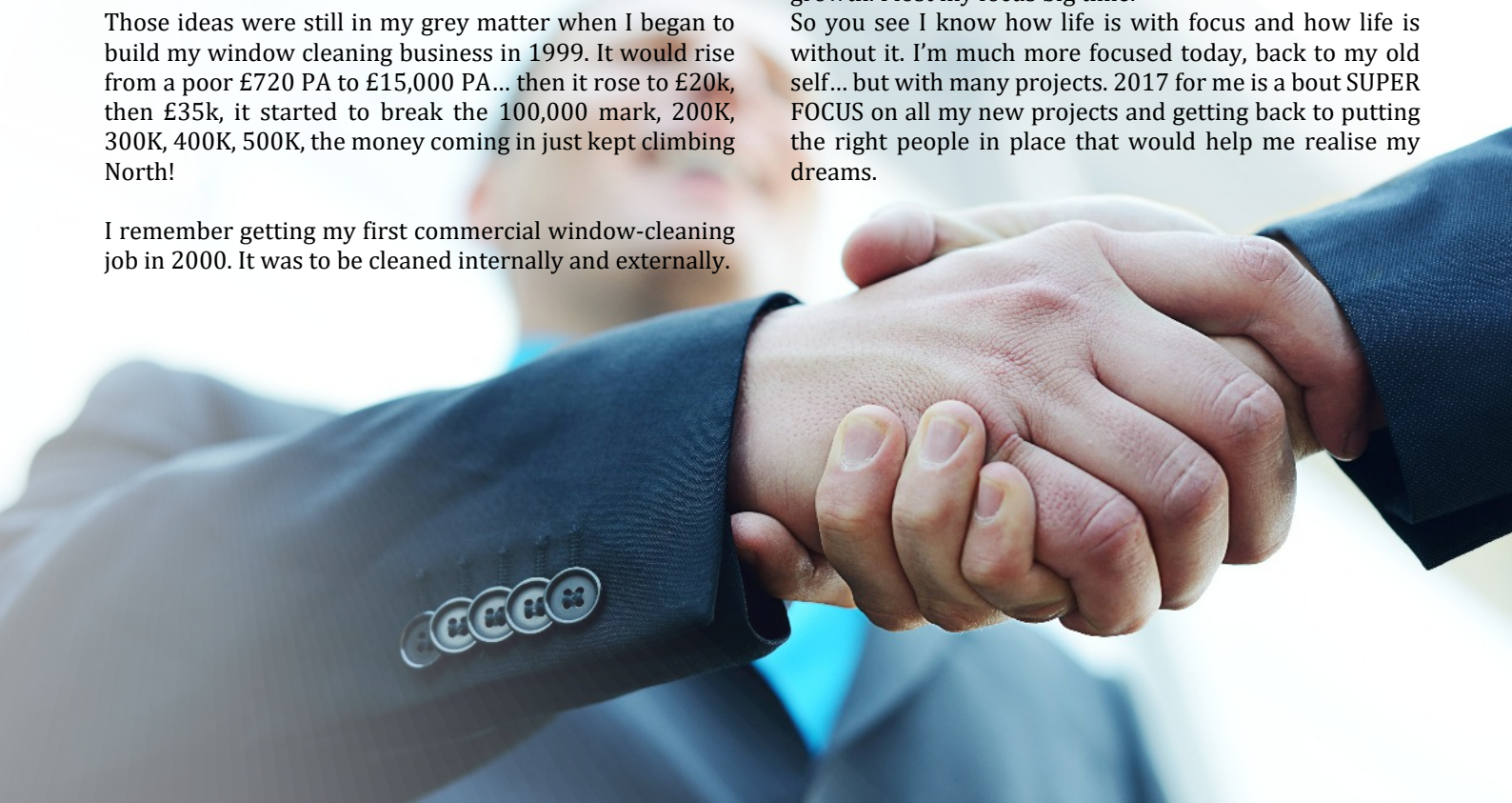
I do not see that friend anymore. I did see him walking along the street the other month (no car anymore), with a plastic bag under his arms filled with sandwiches as he head off to his warehouse job. I reflect sometimes and think if only he was less insecure he would have tasted success with his early venture. He gave up his window cleaning business many, many years ago. I sometimes wondered if he had believed in himself a little more his business could have been a real success. But he also lacked drive and determination.

I have seen FOCUS on both sides. Back in 2008/2009 my business took a hit in the after math of the Bank Crisis that had kicked off with Lehman Brothers going bankrupt.

Clients closed accounts with my company, trimmed down services and consolidated.

After a few years of this and the wrong choice in managers I lost ‘drive’. I bumped along for so long living off organic growth. I lost my focus big time.

So you see I know how life is with focus and how life is without it. I’m much more focused today, back to my old self... but with many projects. 2017 for me is a bout SUPER FOCUS on all my new projects and getting back to putting the right people in place that would help me realise my dreams.





# why the IWCA events are unique

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You have events and then there are *events*. Ask yourself this; do you want to earn more money, build a successful business, and offer your staff the best equipment and tools for the job at hand? Do you want the care and attention you deserve with product support and training? Well look no further than the **2017 IWCA Convention & Trade Show** to be held in **Arizona USA, February 8-11 at the We-Ko-Pa Resort Conference Center, Scottsdale.**

**IWCA President, Noa Pedersen** puts it beautifully when he says, "Along with the best networking opportunities in the industry, there are a wide range of seminars for every aspect of window cleaning and for every member of your team. In between taking in educational sessions you will spend time with the industry's leading manufacturers and distributors as they show off all that window washing has to offer".

I want to tell you a business secret. If you want a successful business, what do you think you need in order to achieve that? Motivational speakers? Insider tips? "I was broke once..." type speakers?

Is that all your business needs? What...? You want to know how to scale up into a multi-million-dollar business? You want to know how to close more bids? You want training? IWCA has all of that! But here's the secret your business needs MORE. It needs the full package and I am here to tell you that the IWCA is the only event that I can see that offers the full package.

I take nothing away from any other amazing events and training venues, you must go to them if you see value in them for your business. Most of these guys I know personally. But here's the deal. **This is why I think the IWCA event is UNIQUE.**

What's the point in learning how to make your business into a million dollar company without the support structure? Without protecting that support structure?

Are you talking **SYSTEMS**, Lee? Systems do play a part but it's not what I am driving at. Besides, you can get that anywhere too. The one thing that most events fail to deliver for their attendees is staff development and safety.

Just take a look at any event schedule. Money, money, money, growth, sales, training. That's all good, I'm all for it but safety and staff development is hardly ever mentioned. Sure there might be 5 minutes on it somewhere. But only as a footnote if you are lucky in one or two classes.

As far as I can see only the **IWCA actively engages with OSHA**. They actively push the safety agenda because they know it's a big key to your business success. They want to drive the safety standard, because it is so important to your business.

Not only are you and your staff working safely, your prospect clients will see you work safely too – it will win you work! I know – I have taken this approach myself with my own window cleaning company.



**I have won new business solely because of the safety accreditations my company has. Where I come from SAFETY comes before PROFIT.**

Take a look at the IWCA schedule for the 2017 event and you will see what I mean. You will see not only a hands-on safety schedule but lots of classes on how **safety can help your business** too.

"It's a no brainier dude!" I hear you saying. And you are right!

**2017 will be dominated by the new OSHA ruling** and the Safety Director, Stefan Bright will diligently explain all during a session titled **Breakfast With Stefan Bright** (Convention Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February, very early). I understand Stefan will also wear a Chefs hat and personally crack the eggs for your omelettes. *I'm fibbing of course.* He doesn't own a Chefs hat.

Health & Safety education provides a full business package. This knowledge and experience will put your business ahead of the game. The IWCA is helping business owners understand their responsibilities for the safety of themselves, the staff that they hire and the public that they need to protect. And let's not beat about the bush, there are safety **LAWS** and **REGULATIONS** you need to know as an employer!

When safety goes *wrong* all that stuff you learned about profit, profit, profit goes straight down the drain, drain, drain.

**Employee engagement should be a top priority and so should be safety.**

**Richard Branson** said, 'business is about people'. I couldn't of said that any better myself.

I quote again the **IWCA President, Noa Pederson**, "On a personal note, I want to thank the IWCA leadership team, including our management company and our Safety Director, Stefan Bright. This year has brought out the best in those that want to see this association and industry become a better and safer place. I've never been more proud to be part of a group of individuals that has dedicated themselves and inspired each other to push our association to be better than ever".

For registration, Schedule of Events, Printable Brochure, What's included with your registration?

<http://www.iwca.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=845297&group=>



### New X-Line brackets

**X-Line** has just released a new addition to their popular X-Line System. The raised platforms are designed to save bending over when reeling from the floor or from the floor of the vehicle.

I know from personal experience of doing both how much effort is involved. Having a sturdy chest level platform has to be a bonus in any window cleaner's eyes.

The bracket positioning allows easy winding in with the added bonus of creating additional floor space. *I bet you're now thinking, what you can fill that floor space with?*

The brackets can be easily retrofitted to any of the three sizes of X-Line Systems out there by simply bolting into the existing framework.

If the X-Line reels don't take your fancy, the brackets can be customised to fit any reel of your choice. Want to have a HD electric reel installed? No problem, the setup accepts these types of reels too. They can also install under floor hose guides, allowing you to operate the system with your doors closed.

So do your back a favour and get on the 'blower' to X-Line, because at a £100 each tag price, these are a steal.

For more information regarding these raised reel platforms, please give them a call on 0115 9394444. Website: <http://www.xline-systems.co.uk/>

### New Black Diamond distributor for Scandinavia

Black Diamond announces and welcomes Fönsterputsbutiken as their new exclusive Black Diamond distributor in Sweden, Norway and Finland. Fönsterputsbutiken is owned by Ivan Pleinadius, World Champion in Speed Window Cleaning and owner of one of Sweden's largest window cleaning companies Putsarkungen. ([www.putsarkungen.se](http://www.putsarkungen.se))

Black Diamond, makers of the popular Black Diamond squeegee rubber had been looking for the right partner in Scandinavia for some time. Casper Schjorring, the big boss at Black Diamond told Window Cleaning Magazine "We have found Ivan Pleinadius to be the perfect partner. He values quality but also knows how to clean a

window. You cannot get any better than a World Champion's approval, right?"

#### Ivan's word on the product:

"Finally, they have developed a Squeegee rubber in between hard and soft. Hard rubbers are not flexible enough and soft rubbers wear so fast. I'm so happy that finally I find a manufacturer that makes a quality squeegee rubber in between these two issues. I have personally tested and used the rubber and I am delighted with the quality in Black Diamond's medium squeegee rubber. If you miss to try this versatile and durable squeegee rubber you will regret it!"

– **Ivan Pleinadius** Multiple Swedish champion and IWCA World Champion in Speed Window Cleaning.

For further information contact

Black Diamond Squeegee, [cs@blackdiamondsqueegee.com](mailto:cs@blackdiamondsqueegee.com)



### How much squeegee rubber does it take to clean the Shard, London?

It takes 17 [IRATA](#) Accredited window cleaners 3 months to clean. Once the clean has been completed, they start the whole thing all over again. The frequency of cleans for the Shard is 4 times per year.

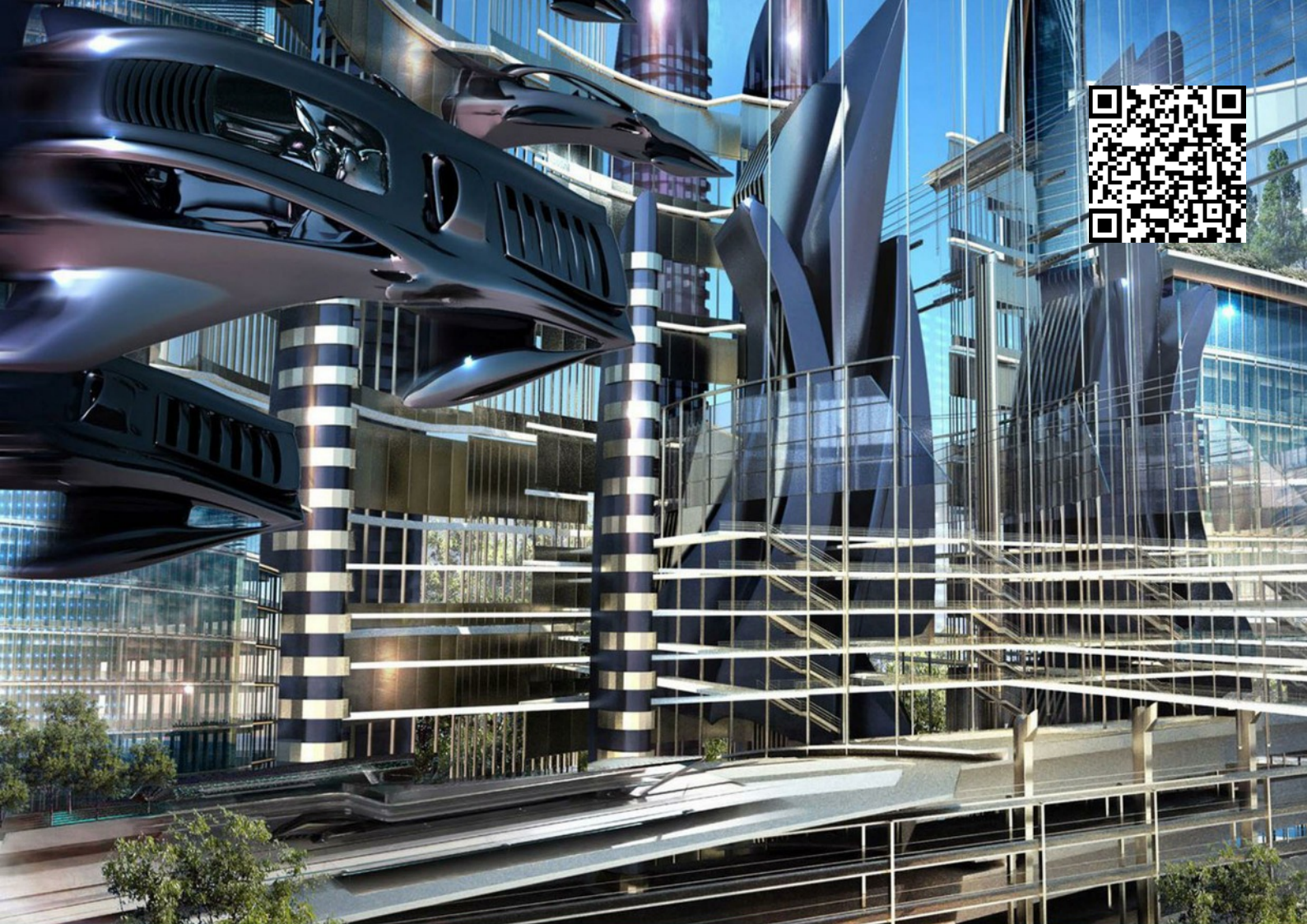
1,300 [Unger](#) squeegee rubbers are used per clean ( 5,200 pieces per year) on this iconic building that towers over the London skyline. The spend on squeegee rubber alone is around £10,500 per year.

#### Now – how about bidding on this job?

There are 11,000 glass panes in the building. The area of the glass façade is 56,000 sq metres (602,779 sq ft), which equals eight foot-ball pitches.







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