

Headlines & More



NEFA's In-Person "Profit Fest" Conference Coming in October



NEFA IS EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE "PROFIT FEST: HOW TO MAKE MONEY IN THE DRYCLEANING BUSINESS" IS COMING TO WAKEFIELD, MA ON OCTOBER 28, 29 & 30.

"Profit Fest" is a unique blend of educational sessions, exhibits, and networking opportunities designed to help attendees prepare for the new opportunities facing our industries.

"This is exciting to be able to bring live programs back to the membership," Offered President Larry

Fish. "It has been too long, and we really want to provide a great experience for all our members. This will be one of our best programs yet, and I think it will be one of the best attended. I am sure most drycleaners and small businesses are feeling isolated, and need to rekindle that strong sense of Community. This will be the perfect opportunity.

"We changed the name slightly from the more traditional "Fall Fest" to reflect the need to focus on certain management areas," offered Executive Vice President Peter Blake, "and I know every attendee will benefit from the program.

GREAT SPEAKERS

Profit Fest will feature some of the best speakers in the industry -- as well as some new perspectives. Included in the program will be Jason Loeb of Sudsies in Miami, FL., David Coyle from In the Bag Cleaners and Maverick Marketing, Puzzle HR, and this years Drycleaner Spotlight will be Rechelle Balanzat from Julliette's Cleaners in Manhattan, NY.

TABLETOP EXHIBITS

Once again, Profit Fest will feature exhibits from the most progressive, diverse, and innovative allied trades in the industry. These vendors will showcase products, services, and equipment that will help you realize greater profits and productivity.

COMMUNITY

One of the greatest benefits of membership and conferences like these are the opportunities to network and learn from your peers. Profit Fest includes some great opportunities to connect with old friend and meet new ones. We will have the ever popular Silent Auction, a great cocktail reception, a blend a brainstorming lunch.

Save the Date, and check nefabricare.com for registration information and updates

North East Fabricare Association
www.nefabricare.com

JUNE/JULY, 2022

IN THIS ISSUE

Executive Director's Report: Make the Most of Clean '222

Idea of the Month: Inspect What you Expect6

DLI School to Host Introductory and Advanced Courses in August.....7

Member Benefit: Join the Conversation7

Insurance 101: How to Evaluate Coverage and Your Policies8

New Member Rewards Program Listings.....10

Allied Trade Members11

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE...

Make the Most of CLEAN '22

I HOPE YOU HAVE MADE YOUR PLANS TO ATTEND CLEAN. I WANTED TO PROVIDE SOME INSIGHT INTO ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS AND PUTTING SOME SYSTEMS IN PLACE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ALL YOU HAVE SEEN AND EXPERIENCED IN ATLANTA.

If you are like me, you go to these events and you get caught up in the excitement and the positive feelings. I admit it, I get re-energized and filled with a desire to improve everything. I get that feeling I am going to come back to the home office and light the world on fire with all these great ideas. All the new programs and services I have seen. I am ready to strive forward.

Then I get back, I am hit with the same pressures issues and challenges I left. I get dragged back into the same routines and bad habits. I have all great intentions of implementing new programs and policies, but I never seem to make that jump. You know what they say, "The Road to Hell is Paved with Good Intentions"

We all do the same thing. We lose focus and lose the energy and have a trouble recapturing the momentum we started to feel. Here are some ways to keep on track, and to keep your focus.

EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS:

It is a great idea to take copious notes. Review them when you get back to the hotel. Decide what is important to you. I think for the most part we all do that. Now take it one step further, for each educational session you attend. Decide on 3 take-a-ways. Three key concepts that resonated with you and you want to take back and implement. Take those three concepts, just the headlines -- not the details, and post them on a separate list combining key concepts from each program you attend. Then when you have the list, think about a key staff person in those areas that would implement those ideas and make their name down next to it. That will remind you to discuss the program with them. Next rank the ideas on a scale so you know which are the most important, best value, and will have the greatest return.

When you get back to the plant, make it a priority to meet with those staff people you have highlighted in those areas to review the broad ideas and to get them thinking of possible implementation strategies. That way you will have a greater likelihood of staying on top of the ideas that are most important.

Don't get overwhelmed with too many great ideas and projects. Prioritize them. Look at what you feel will have the most impact. If you come back from Clean with a notebook of ideas, it can be daunting to go through and you can get paralyzed by over commitment and over analysis.

VISITING EXHIBIT BOOTHS:

When you are on the show floor, you are going to see new products, services, equipment, automation devices, and more. You will see the best the industry has to offer. Everyone has a cell phone now, so use it. Take pictures with a purpose. When you see a piece of equipment that you like, an innovative service, or even some new supplies



*Peter Blake,
NEFA Executive Director*

Continued on page 4



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Making the Most of Clean '22

Continued from page 2

that catch your eye: document it. Take a picture of something that will remind you WHY it caught your interest. Your pictures should trigger a recollection of what you found special. Take a video of someone demonstrating it. Have a record you can refer to.

I bet many of you are just like me and can't remember names or people. Take a picture not only of the service or equipment, but snap a picture of the salesperson you spoke with so you can go back and continue the conversation.

If you find something you are intent on investing in, after you take the picture text it to a key manager telling them something like, "just saw a great piece of equipment to help increase efficiency. Ask me about it when I get back". That way they will also begin to get invested in the idea and will help you start implementation.

SOCIAL EVENTS:

There is so much value to be had throughout the entire Clean Show Experience including all the off-floor activity. The cocktail parties, the company dinners, etc. Make sure you go to DLI/TCATA reception on Saturday night where you can meet your peers from around the country. I have a terrible memory at times, so don't be afraid to take a few pictures of people you meet and make sure you have their name badge in the picture. That way when you are

back at work a couple weeks later and you have a question for that person, you can look back and see who it was and how to contact them.

The real key to taking advantage of the opportunities you will find at Clean or any event like this is to be organized. You will return to your own operation and be ready to make all the changes you have envisioned. You will be ready to invest in your company, but all too often we lose that momentum and weeks go by before we start to implement the programs. All too often we never take the steps necessary because we either have forgotten or don't have the same drive we initially felt.

Don't let that happen to you. Document the best ideas. Work to get buy-in from your key staff. Make sure you have proper documentation and information to get the help you need to succeed. Conferences like this can be a great opportunity, but only if you act.

Peter Blake

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Inspect What You Expect



HAVE YOU TOLD YOUR EMPLOYEES WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM? ARE YOU MAXIMIZING THE POTENTIAL OF YOUR STAFF?

Many owners and managers never tell their employees what level of

production is expected of them. Put yourself in your employee's place. How much would you do if you did not know what was expected? Without a standard to meet, many employees will not be fully productive, and instead the likelihood is they will make the hours fit the workload.

"This is one question we are continually asked," commented NEFA Executive Director Peter Blake, "and it continues to be an important topic. On average, what production level can you reasonably expect. One of the keys I find is that anything measured seems to grow. If you aren't inspecting the production levels -- or counting and evaluating, the minute you start, production will

likely increase. When you stop inspecting and counting, over time you tend to revert back and counts will go down. In order to keep people mindful, and aware -- you have to Inspect what you expect. You have to measure the results you want to achieve. It is just human nature to strive to hit a target, but only when the target is being measured."

DLI has produced some great information on production standards including averages that you can use as a rule of thumb. The information on how to measure production, and how to set standards is covered in Technical Operating Information No. 674. It is available on the DLI's "Encyclopedia of Drycleaning" of you can get a copy by contacting Peter Blake (617-791-0128, peter@nefabricare.com).

"Understanding your current production and your potential production can be critical to your success. Keeping in mind the adage: INSPECT what you EXPECT can really help you maximize your resources. If you need advice or help, call Peter Blake at 617-791-0128.

Do you have an idea you would like to share? E-mail it to peter@nefabricare.com

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DLI School to Host Introductory and Advance Courses in August



THERE IS STILL TIME TO REGISTER FOR UPCOMING CLASSES TO BE HELD AT THE DRYCLEANING AND LAUNDRY INSTITUTE'S SCHOOL OF DRYCLEANING TECHNOLOGY IN LAUREL, MD.

DLI is the industry leader in all fabricare training. Their combination of classroom, practical, and virtual training allows students to master lessons in an optimal environment. Lectures provide instruction students apply on the latest industry equipment to develop and reinforce their new skills.

INTRODUCTION TO DRYCLEANING

Summer courses will start with the association's signature "Introductory to Drycleaning" course geared toward helping those with

only a year of industry experience or less.

Topics include: sorting drycleaning loads; operating a drycleaning machine; cleaning silk, satin and other fabrics; removing coffee, ink, grease and other stains from clothing; pressing pants, coats and skirts; and using tensioning equipment to improve finishing quality. It will take place during the week of Aug. 8 to 12.

ADVANCED DRYCLEANING

On the heels of that course, DLI will present its two week "Advanced Drycleaning" class from Aug. 15 to 26 for graduates of its introductory course or individuals with a few years of experience in the industry.

The comprehensive course will cover additional topics such as fabric identification, wetcleaning items, customer service techniques, industry regulations, plant workflow and much more.

Tuition for each course varies depending on DLI membership level. For pricing and other information, as well as registration, visit dlionline.org.

MEMBER BENEFIT...

Join the Conversation

EVERY TUESDAY MORNING AT 11:30 EST, CLEANERS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY JOIN TOGETHER ON DLI/MAC'S PEER-TO-PEER CALLS.

The calls are designed as an open forum for members to ask questions, pose thoughts or ideas, and to voice concerns over the latest happenings. On the calls, people share their ideas, problems and successes. Some of the cleaners who participate have very large operations, while others have only one location and just a couple of employees. But, they all say they gain meaningful information to help their business succeed in difficult times.

"This is one of the best new programs developed for our members," offered peter Blake, MAC Executive Director. "It is a great way to get feedback from the people that are facing the same challenges, the same issues and are trying to accomplish very similar goals. You have tis community of people ready and willing to offer their experience, and I hope you will take advantage of it. One of the best benefits membership gives you is access to a tremendous community of people who are invested in your success."

The calls start at 11:30 a.m. EST. To join, go to:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84063392764>
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Meeting ID: 840 6339 2764



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Insurance 101: How to Evaluate Coverage

By: Jackie Smith, Insurance Expert formerly of Henderson Insurance, columnist for Cleaner & Launderer



DON'T SKIP THIS ARTICLE BECAUSE YOU THINK IT WILL BE BORING OR YOU ARE INSURANCE SAVVY AND KNOW WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW. I HAVE WORKED IN THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY (AS WELL AS OWNING MY OWN DRY CLEANING PLANT) FOR TOO MANY YEARS TO COUNT.

Insurance policies are filled with too many words for the average person to understand and if you ever tried to read it, you would definitely fall asleep. I am going to try to be brief and hit the highlights of what you need to know. Some will be things you have never thought about. If you have additional questions, you need to call your Insurance Agent. There are many Insurance Agents around but the best business decision you can make is choosing an agent who knows your business. You might feel an allegiance to your brother, sister or cousin who is an Insurance agent but do they REALLY know your business and what you need? It may not seem important but in the event of a claim, this could be devastating. You can afford to pay a customer for a \$100 blouse but you need the best protection in the event of a CATASTROPHIC loss.

I dealt with dry cleaner business owners every day. Here are some of the everyday questions I received and answers to some of them so you can have some insight into what to expect of your Policy.

CUSTOMER CLOTHING (Bailee): It is a VERY important coverage that you must have on your policy. Agents who are not familiar with the dry cleaning industry frequently do not understand this coverage and only provide a minimum amount, if any. Make sure your policy has this coverage. In addition, your customer clothes need to be covered for PROCESS DAMAGE, MISSING CLOTHES, and CLOTHES IN TRANSIT (you may have routes). An Insurance agent unfamiliar with the dry cleaning business might not realize how important this coverage is. Unlimited bailee is the best possible coverage so ask for it. The Insurance industry is changing. Previously unlimited bailee coverage was easy to find. Now the Insurance Companies are setting limits on the bailee coverage. Review your inventory values to determine the amount that is adequate for you. Just make sure your policy has this important coverage.

DEDUCTIBLES: Almost every coverage has a deductible. Business personal, property, customer's clothes, money, signs, glass coverage all have deductibles. Try to live with the highest deductible you are comfortable with. Higher deductibles means money in your pocket since the Companies will give additional credits for these higher deductibles. Business income/interruption coverage also has a deductible. This deductible is measured in terms of hours. Yes, hours. Before the coverage applies, you can have anywhere from 24 hour to 72-hour delay before the coverage applies.

LIABILITY: All of the business owner's policies include liability

coverage. Your landlords are instrumental in determining how much liability coverage you must have. Landlords require a certain limit which you must maintain. It is important to discuss your liability limits with your agent. He/she is equipped to recommend the best coverage for you.

CHANGES IN YOUR BUSINESS: Being the busy business owner that you are, often you do not think of notifying your Insurance agent of any changes you have made. Did you buy new equipment? **CALL YOUR AGENT.** If you were to have a large fire loss, you need to have this equipment covered. Make sure your equipment values are up to date. Did you move or close your location? **CALL YOUR AGENT.** Policies need to be cancelled properly or you may be subject to additional premium due. Did you incorporate, or form an LLC? **CALL YOUR AGENT.** Did you finance a new piece of equipment or pay off an existing contract? **CALL YOUR AGENT.** In the event a loan is paid off, it is important to notify your agent. I had an insured who did not inform us that he paid off a finance contract. He had a major loss and that finance bank was named on his settlement check. It was taken care of but it resulted in time wasted for him. Did you sell your business or buy a new one? **CALL YOUR AGENT.** Again, policies need to be cancelled properly. Otherwise this could result in earned premium that you will be responsible for.

EQUIPMENT BREAKDOWN COVERAGE: Mechanical breakdown coverage is a coverage on many dry cleaner policies. If the machine is not working because of wear and tear or rust and corrosion, **THERE IS NO COVERAGE.** The coverage is not meant to be a "maintenance" policy. If your equipment is old and worn, it will NOT be covered. And more importantly, if you do not maintain your boiler (water softener program), don't expect the Insurance company to pay. Scale build up or holes in the coils are generally considered wear and tear. Occasionally a claim is paid in error under this coverage. Insurance companies do make mistakes

WORKER COMPENSATION: Most States require this coverage if you have employees. The premium is based on the amount of payroll you have. These policies are auditable. This means when the policy is issued, you give your best estimate of what you expect your payroll to be for the next 12 months. At the end of the policy term, the Company will ask for your actual payroll. Some Companies only want a 1 page sheet completed. Some Companies want a questionnaire and copies of your 941 forms. Some Companies want to come out and see your payroll records. If your payroll is higher than estimated, there will be money due. If it is lower, you will get money back. **DO NOT IGNORE THIS AUDIT.** If you do not respond to the audit inquiry, the Company will process an "estimated" audit. This audit is approximately 15% higher than the estimated premium. You will be responsible for paying it. **SO** always comply with the final audit request!

This is a short summary of a complicated subject. It is imperative you deal with an experienced professional. Your personal Insurance agent may not be able to handle the coverage needed for your business. If you are unsure where to go to find an agent, contact your Dry Cleaner Association for some recommendations.



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Operations Manager at
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