

### EARTH'S LARGEST POWER SWEEPING RESOURCE ™

### Welcome to our July 2007 newsletter!

What's important, anyway -- at least important enough to expend resources to investigate?

by Ranger Kidwell-Ross

That's the question I ask myself when deciding what topics to write about personally, or when I set out to find usable information that's been written by others.

Topping the list this time is safety. Since our last issue, I provided expert testimony to a California attorney in a near-fatal accident involving a sweeper backing into a workman. Then, less than two weeks ago as I write this, a 51-year-old flagman who lived under an hour's drive from my home lost his life when a sweeper backed over him. This apparently



occurred while his back was turned flagging traffic from the other direction, and despite the sweeper having a backup alarm and rear-viiew camera.

As a result of these senseless tragedies, I've contacted two experienced milling contractors, 30-year industry veteran Mike Lucht and 35-year sweeping contractor John Dubbioso, and asked them to provide audio interviews on sweeper safety on paving and repaving jobsites. These are included in this edition of our newsletter. Perhaps through these and further coverage we can mitigate future tragedies of this sort happening to others.

For the past months I've been hearing about more employee problems than ever before. So, we have several articles by noted authors on several aspects of that issue. You'll find these useful whether you're the HR person for the sweeping department of a state DOT or the owner of a single sweeper looking to hire your first employee. When you're done reading them, you'll be better able to choose the right employees, and know more about how to compensate them and keep them happily productive.

For the first time I'm aware of, you'll find coverage of a story that I predict will prove to have enormous 'legs' in this industry: assessment of the amount of stormwater runoff pollution coming from parking lots, and how efficient parking lot sweepers are in removing it. The audio interview you will hear stemmed from the contact Robert Haley, MS4 Program

Coordinator for the City of Murphreesboro, Tennessee, made with me. His mission? To find out how to rate the efficiency of different makes and models of sweepers in terms of their ability to eliminate stormwater pollution from running off of the parking lots they clean.

But wait, it gets better... As is true in many, if not most, areas of the country, Tullahoma is assessing a stormwater pollution fee on its business community. As is typical, this fee is based on amount of impervious area (roofs and pavement) a business has. This far-thinking administrator is willing to explore reducing a given business' fee amount but wants a quantifiable way to do so. Currently, there is method I'm aware of to fulfill his request.

It's too early yet to see how this will play out, but my view is that it heralds the start of parking lot sweeper testing. After all, if a sweeper with a particular removal efficiency, used in a particular manner, will save a property manager significant money -- a portion of which they would then pay their parking lot sweeping service -- there's a powerful incentive. Since I've already heard of stormwater assessment fees in excess of \$1000 per month in some parts of the country, it seems clear we're headed in the direction of parking lot sweeper efficiency testing. Time will tell. However, this article did spur me to add an 'Environmental' folder to the Parking Area Sweeping portion of the WS.com website.

As you know, in street sweeping the need for pollutant removal is becoming more entrenched all the time. We have a two-part article on that topic by three stormwater consultants who have deep sweeping industry connections. If you're trying to reduce runoff pollution, you'll want to read what they have to say about the methodology of testing.

John Dolce, patriarch of the fleet management industry, has blessed us with another down-to-earth article on how to better manage your vehicle fleet. This one teaches even those who own a single sweeper how to benefit from the statistics relied on by savvy large fleet managers. If you manage a larger fleet, this same information will show you when to swap out your vehicles in order to save a bundle for your organization.

Ron Roberts' work is becoming more impressive all the time. Although initially more targeted for the general construction industry, his articles are readily transferable to sweeping contractors. This issue we are offering several of Roberts' stories, each of which is a great overview on his topic.

Thanks to Gabriel Vitale for his 'heads-up' to look into reprinting an article on employee theft he spotted in the June 2007 magazine of the New Jersey Utility and Transportation Contractors Association. As you'll read, it offers a number of ideas about how to stop employee theft before it starts, as well as to detect it when it's happening.

Gabriel also suggested making a pdf link to a print-friendly version of the newsletter that would contain all the stories in one pdf file. So, we did. You'll find it shown under the masthead. Now, you can print out the entire newsletter for reading away from your computer.

Unfortunately, there is no way to include the in-story links or audio files in the pdf, so you'll need to visit individual stories for those. Another difference is that, wherever there were only headers on the last page, these were omitted. However, you will find that each of the pdf

story files includes the web address for that particular story. Providing this addition takes an extra couple of hours of effort, so if you like this addition enough to have us do it again please <u>let us know</u>.

Okay, I waited until last even though it's pretty exciting stuff. We were one of only six websites in our category to win a U.S. APEX Award for Publication Excellence this year. And, if that's not enough to burst a button, my new book written for WorldPeaceEmerging.com, "The Rise of Biodiesel," was one of only 11 books/e-books chosen for an APEX Award this year, as well. If you want to learn about what biodiesel is and is not (and have a spare \$20), I suggest you buy a copy.

As you might expect, we'll be offering more about what it takes to switch your sweeper to biodiesel in the weeks and months to come. Expect this alternative fuel source – so new that Microsoft Word still flags it as a misspelling – to explode into availability in your area in the near future if it hasn't already.

All-in-all, you'll find plenty of reading you can use to make more money and/or become more professional and up-to-date in the sweeping industry. Have a topic you wish we'd write about? Then <u>let me know</u>. Our goal is to write about what you want to read.

As always, if you have a sweeping-related need please tell us about it. We'll try to assist in any way we can. I routinely reference WorldSweeper.com articles and studies, provide information from my "Fundamentals of the Power Sweeping Business," manual and put contractors and city officials in touch with others who may have answers to their information needs. By the same token, if you have a story you can provide, additional information on any of the topics we've covered – or need more details – please let me know. I'll be glad to help if at all possible.

Good Sweeping!

Ranger Kidwell-Ross, editor

By the way, if you don't have a listing yet in our <u>Contractor Locator section</u>, you are missing out on what is arguably the best advertising value in sweeping. At the same time, you'll be helping to keep WorldSweeper.com online and active. If you're a contractor who uses this website, please help support the site and, at the same time, increase the exposure for your company, by getting a <u>Contractor Locator listing</u>.

And, if you're not yet a naPSa member, we are still offering you an incentive to do so. For a limited time, when you <u>become a member</u> you'll get a \$50 discount on any <u>Contractor</u> <u>Locator listing</u> here at WorldSweeper.com.

If you like what you read in this newsletter or on the website, be sure to thank the advertisers who sponsored it. The only way for them to know you appreciate their support of WorldSweeper.com is to tell them!



© 2007 World Sweeper
All rights reserved.

**Newsletter Contents** 



### **Environmental Information for Sweeping Professionals**

### A Proposed Methodology for Linking Control Effectiveness to Receiving Water Quality

by Ranger Kidwell-Ross

A proposal to help link stormwater BMP control effectiveness for specific pollutants and flow to receiving water loadings, impacts and water quality objectives in order to help stormwater managers in the selection of design of BMP systems.

There's no question that stormwater program managers need appropriate methods and tools, ones that can explicitly address the inherent uncertainty of BMP performance and receiving water quality. With access to scientifically-based, easy-to-use tools, stormwater program managers should be able to identify appropriate BMP selection and design characteristics having the highest likelihood of solving specific water quality problems. Another valuable tool would be if the information worked for development-level scale (say 5-300 acres) sites, but was also scalable for use up to a watershed-level area (say 10-100 square miles or more).



This was the stated goal of the <u>Water Environment Research Foundation</u> (WERF) in a request for proposal (RFP) the organization released late in 2006. One of the proposals came from individuals who have long been involved with testing in the power sweeping industry, Roger Sutherland (president of Pacific Water Resources) and Gary Minton (head of Seattlebased Resource Planning Associates). Their proposal was made in conjunction with Dave Felstul of Herrera Environmental Consultants.

Although their proposal was not chosen, the trio's sweeper-centric proposal was given much merit by a number of the review members on the WERF review panel. Their RFP concept, which is designed to help link stormwater BMP effectiveness to receiving water impacts loads, etc., will be of interest to those looking for an approach to explicitly understanding the

relationship between BMP controls and stormwater runoff pollution.

The information is provided via two articles in pdf format. Both are reprinted from Minton's bi-monthly, subscription-only newsletter, <u>Stormwater Treatment Northwest</u>.

Essentially, the trio's WERF proposal pointed out that typical pollutant loading models are based on the 'simple method' that assigns pollutant concentrations to various land use types: single and multi-family residential, commercial, industrial, freeways, and open space. Unfortunately, this format is not particularly useful, as it is not tied directly to the specific BMPs under consideration and likely to be implemented. They suggest an alternative format based on the explicit simulation of pollutants from srouce generation areas such as streets, parking lots, roofs, landscaped areas of various descriptions, and other special activity areas that relate directly to certain pollutant sources like construction sites or gas stations. Such a format of data collection and model simulation would allow a direct tie to BMPs and various LID treatments.

Says Sutherland, "What we currently think we know about street cleaning is that it appears that efficient street cleaning will reduce the frequency of high concentration occurrences in stormwater runoff for various pollutants such as metals, nutrients and suspended solids. Unfortunately, the data that has been collected to date may be flawed and here's why: The sampling and analysis methods used by most researchers avoid the measurement of particulate particles in the 100-to-400-micron range that can affect pollutant concentrations if controlled through BMPs such as street cleaning..

"Data is kept categorized by land use now, but what we need is a recognition of source area. I.e., is dirt coming from the street, and is its origin runoff from parking lots, construction areas, lawn fertilizers, etc.? If this information was available, it would go well with BMPs because people could be educated on ways to reduce specific runoff pollutants running off from specific types of source areas. Ideally, we should be able to show how the hydrologic response -- transformation of rainfall to runoff under the day-to-day weather patterns for a particular basin -- can be combined with an explicit understanding of what the types and amounts of pollutants are from each source area in that basin."

Following are the two pdf files reprinted from the May and July issues of *Stormwater Treatment Northwest*. For maximum clarity and understanding, these two files should be read in the order presented. However, the 'meat' of the topic is contained in pdf file #2.



Roger Sutherland is president of Pacific Water Resources. He may be reached by calling 503-671-9709, ext. 24, or via email sent to: roger.sutherland@pacificwr.com.

Gary Minton is president of <u>Resource Planning Associates</u>. He may be reached by calling 206-282-1681, or via email sent to: <u>mintonrpa@@cs.com</u>.

Dave Felstul is an engineer with <u>Herrera Environmental Consultants</u>. He may be reached by calling 503-228-4301, or via email sent to: <u>dfelstul@herrarainc.com</u>.



### **Employees**

### A Sales Compensation Plan that Supercharges Profits

Here is the single most powerful trick I know for supercharging your bottom line.

by Ron Roberts, "The Contractors' Coach



At some point in time, if you are going to grow your sweeping business into a concern that operates more than a couple of sweepers, you are going to need someone working on sales full time. Now, maybe sales is your thing and you want to do that full time. Fantastic. It's almost always best when a business owner is committed to selling. However, even if you sell successfully, over time you may still end up wanting to add another salesman.

If sales isn't your thing, then you will definitely need to hire a salesman if you want to become a real player in your market. Either way, you are going to be faced with the critical decision of "How should you pay your new salesman?"

Draw (salary) plus commission? Bonuses based on sales generated? Increased commission with increased sales volume? A higher commission for new customers? Straight salary with strong oversight?

All of these are commonly used approaches. Not one of them is likely to produce the profit results you seek.

If you let your salesman have his or her way, s/he will want a draw plus commission. Most will ask for a pretty stout draw and a relatively modest commission based on revenue sold. Don't agree to that!

Draw plus commission lines the pockets of your salesman regardless of whether s/he is making you any money. The purpose of draw plus commission is to drive sales volume. Don't fall into the trap of thinking sales volume is important.

Rather than just volume of work, you need your salesman to focus on *PROFITABLE* work. Let your competition sell the unprofitable work. That's work you don't want and you

certainly don't want your own salesman bringing it to you.

#### How do you get your salesman to chase profitable work? You align his pay to profit.

Put in place a pay plan that rewards for profitable work and punishes for unprofitable work. Basically, make him or her a pseudo-partner. It is surprisingly easy to do and I'm going to show you how.

- 1. The entire compensation should be based on commissions on gross profit (a commission rate often in the 20% range).
- 2. S/he should be guaranteed a minimum income, whether the earned commissions surpass it or not.
- 3. The commission rate should stay the same regardless of sales volume or profit generated.
- 4. If s/he doesn't earn his guaranteed minimum income within a reasonable time period, say 18 months, the salesperson is replaced.

With this approach your salesperson will be highly motivated to ask for the highest price possible. He will not leave \$100 on the table, because with a 20% commission, he would be leaving \$20 behind. An example will drive the point home quite clearly.

Let's say your salesperson has estimated that the total costs of sweeping (or other service you provide) will run \$10,000 over the time period of the contract or through completion. Let's look at how the usual approach, draw plus commission, compares against my recommended approach for driving desired sales behavior.

The salesperson being compensated with the standard salary plus 2% of sales has little incentive to risk losing a sale by raising price. If s/he sold the job at cost, the commission earned would be \$200. If the job was sold for \$15,000, a \$300 commission would be earned. The potential gain in commission would only be an extra \$100 (if sold at \$15,000) and yet that price would substantially increase the likelihood of losing the job.

The point: You salesperson will not raise the price to \$15,000 just to earn an extra \$100. Of course, you lose money if the job is sold at \$10,000 but the salesperson doesn't care as long as it's all about volume, right?

### Now, let's look at my recommended approach.

Your salesperson earns nothing when the job is sold at \$10,000. However, \$1,000 is earned when the job is sold for \$15,000, and a whopping \$2,000 is earned when the job is sold for \$20,000. As you can readily see, under my system the salesperson will be very motivated to pursue the highest price possible. Very, very motivated!

Do to the potential windfall that can be earned, your salesperson will become a master at qualifying customers. Little time will be spent on price sensitive customers (who also happen

to be the ones who tend to be the fussiest about nit-picking everything about the job that you do...). Rather, your salesperson will aggressively pursue the customers who value your company's superior services and are willing to pay for them.

These are exactly the customers you want to be pursued because not only are they profitable; they tend to be far more loyal and far more willing to refer you to their friends, family, and professional associates.

Look at what you get when you are paying a 20% commission on gross profit. You pocket \$4,000 for every \$5,000 of gross profit your salesperson generates. Sure, a great salesperson will make a killing with this type of pay plan, but you're going to make an even greater killing.

You want your salesperson earning \$200,000 because that means s/he is contributing \$800,000 to your OH&P. Imagine having four such salespersons in your company. How well off would you be?

This is the type of pay plan that will draw top salespeople like flies. Where else in the sweeping industry, or any industry, are they going to have a chance to make that kind of money?

You know the difference between a \$50,000 salesperson and a \$200,000 salesperson? You go broke with the first and get rich with the second!

In summary, the best way to supercharge your bottom line is to implement a sales commission plan that rewards your sales force for generating gross profit. In doing so, you will make sure that they have your best interest in mind.

More information about Ron Roberts' and his company may be found on his website <u>FilthyRichContractor.com</u> You'll also find a link to sign up to his informative e-newsletter on his site. You may also reach Ron via email sent to ron@filthyrichcontractor.com.



This article was added to WorldSweeper.com in 7.07.



© 2007 World Sweeper.com
All rights reserved.

Parking Area Sweeping
Contents

Parking/Employees
Contents



# Sweeping Employee Training and Management

# Dealing With Negative Attitudes in the Workplace

by Gregory P. Smith

"I've got great people on my team. They just don't always get along. Sometimes I feel more like a referee than a manager."

They're here, there, everywhere. They upset managers and fellow employees--even themselves. Who are they? If you haven't already guessed, "they" are the negative employees most people encounter in the workforce at some point. If not carefully managed, they can suck the energy out of both your business and your personal life.



What is a negative employee? They are people

with poisonous attitudes and behavior patterns who negatively influence the people around them. Negative workers come is various shapes and sizes. Sometimes they spread rumors, gossip about coworkers, or bad mouth their superiors to their faces and behind their backs. Basically, they are unhappy people who resist the positive efforts of others.

Managers often hesitate to terminate them if they are productive or have special skills/experience. Sometimes managers do not understand the amount of stress a negative employee creates. It may be hard to accept a negative employee who did a good job did so at the expense of the productivity of others. Yet, ignoring or tolerating the problems and atmosphere they create can easily and quickly result in dissatisfaction among other employees.

## What can a supervisor/manager do when faced with this unpleasant dilemma?

#### First, analyze the situation.

How much does the person contribute to the overall success of the

office/department/business? How much do they contribute to creating personality conflicts with other employees? How does that unhappiness translate into reduced productivity and enthusiasm? How much of your time as a manager are you using to control the situation? What are the legal ramifications (if any) of discharging the employee?

#### Second, plan a course of action.

If you decide to try to salvage the employee, consider these tips:

**Discuss the situation with the employee.** They will probably profess ignorance of any problems, acknowledge the situation but blame the problems on others, or become defiant and try to play mind games with you. The employee may also voice his or her own complaints.

**Evaluate the employee's position**. Even a person with a negative attitude can have a legitimate complaint. Evaluate not only the employee's response to your remarks but whether the employee has legitimate concerns you need to consider. If the complaint is the basis of the person's negative attitude/behavior, resolving it should result in a more positive situation. Often, however, the complaint is either a smoke screen for the employee's behavior or has resulted from the person's own negativity.

**Focus on a behavior you want changed, not an attitude.** Accept the reality you may not be able to remake the person into an ideal employee, even if you are a great manager. However, you can specify an action or goal for the employee, and then follow through on the employee's progress. Once you see improvement, focus on another area. Always, of course, acknowledge the employee's efforts.

Conduct a team building workshop. Many times, personality conflicts are the result of misunderstandings that build up over time. Each individual has a different personality style and frequently, different personality styles clash with others. A team building session can help co-workers understand and appreciate each other in a new way. Packaged along with a personality profile or an individual behavior assessment, it can be a powerful tool in reducing conflict and improving communication between workers. Use personality profiles and assessments.

Consider assignments that will isolate the person from other employees and limit contact. Most work situations require cooperation and teamwork that make this technique unworkable, but it may be feasible in some cases. You may even encounter an employee who prefers isolation and is less negative when working alone. Unfortunately, negative employees often seek out fellow workers--either to complain about their job/boss/life in general, or to blame other employees as the source of their unhappiness.

**Set a limit and stick with it.** Managers have adopted the "three strikes and you're out" rule. Make the employee aware of the limits, tell them when they "strike" and remind them when they have only one "strike" left.

Third, terminate the employee.

If all else fails and the negative employee ignores your warnings and refuses to cooperate, it is time to consider termination. Once you decide this is the proper course, take action. Otherwise, you risk losing the respect and confidence from your employees. Before termination, discuss the situation with a human resource professional and seek legal counsel accordingly.

For a review of guidelines to follow prior to firing, <u>check out</u> our article on that topic by longtime labor law attorney, Steven Horowitz.

Greg Smith is a nationally recognized speaker, author, and business performance consultant. He has written numerous books and is the President and "Captain of the Ship" of a management-consulting firm, Chart Your Course International, located in Atlanta, Georgia. Phone him at 770-860-9464, or reach him via email sent to <a href="mailto:greg@chartcourse.com">greg@chartcourse.com</a>.





© 2007 World Sweeper
All rights reserved.

Back to Sweeping Employee
Training and Management



### **General Business Tips**

# **Define Your Difference To Stand Out and Make Your Business Shine**

by Erin Ferree

Thoughtfully defining your business-and your differentiation-will help you to understand who you are, what you do, and what makes you different.

Not many small businesses take the time to answer those core questions about their business, but those answers are essential to creating a strong brand identity, focused messaging, and effective marketing materials. Having these will make a stronger impression on your target audience. And, once you stand out, they'll be more likely to remember you when they have a need for your products or services.



Taking this step will make you stand out from your competition.

Just think of your competition -- and how they communicate about and market their businesses. So many people are out promoting their business without knowing these basic facts about their businesses, that if you have these elements in place, you'll outshine your competition.

In order to define your company's difference, you need to:

### **Determine your firm's characteristics:**

Who Are You: What is your business all about? What is your mission, and what are your values? Is one of your goals to expand into other areas besides sweeping, if you haven't already? What are these other areas, in order of planned expansion?

What You Do: What are the unique services and/or products that you offer? Study and contrast your business with the competition. Are there niches you serve that others in your market area do not? Do you have, for example:

- Quieter or more dust-free sweepers?
- Uniformed employees?

- 24-hour access?
- Website and/or email access?
- Property condition checklist or checking procedure?
- GPS on your sweepers?
- Backup sweeper available at all times?
- Any other competitive advantages?

Who Is Your Competition: Who offers the same or similar services or products as you? Who are you consistently quoting your service against? These are your closest competitors, the ones with which you should be most concerned in the definition process. The more you know about your competition, the better you will be able to differentiate your sweeping company from theirs.

#### **What Makes You Different:**

How are you different from those competitors? What specific areas of service do you offer that they don't? Can you cite advantages in how you conduct your business? Do you offer a wider scope of services? Do you serve a wider geographic area?

Be careful to avoid the differentiators "better," "faster," and "cheaper"-they're either too subjective or too difficult to maintain as your business grows and matures. Your differentiators should stay with you for the life of your business.

### Plan for your best customers:

Who You Can Best Help: Determine who makes up your target market. It's best to determine everything you can about the companies that have become your best clients.

Do they tend to be remotely managed or have onsite property managers? What's the size of property or client firm you seem to do best with? You may even want to consider facts like the typical age, race and sex of the property managers or points of contact you have had the best success with.

**How Best to Reach Them:** Once you know who you want to help, the next step is to determine how to let them know that you can help them. This means determining how to market your business and which types of media are best to get your message out.

There are many new media possibilities, some of which your competitors may be missing out on. These include: Online directories like <u>Superpages.com</u> and <u>YellowPages.com</u> Local Internet search directories through <u>Google</u> and <u>Yahoo!</u>.

Which Differentiators Will Compel Them: Creating differentiators will also help your target clients to identify with you. If you know enough about them to show that you specialize in their industry and their problem, then they're much more likely to hire you.

Defining Your Difference by answering all of these questions allows you to thoroughly

understand your business and to better communicate with your customers. When you are specific about what you do differently from your competition, customers can easily identify you as the most appropriate business to meet their needs. It truly simplifies your marketing and promotional process. Plus, the more differentiation you can show, the more likely it is that you won't lose a contract because another contractor is willing to beat your price per sweep by a few percentage points.

Ideally, the above process is done prior to initially creating your brand and marketing materials. However, most readers of this article will already be in business and have those items in place, whether or not you're happy with them and the results they help you to achieve.

Periodically, no matter what size business you have, it's a valuable process to reevaluate your company in terms of the information discussed above. That's the best way to ensure you continue to grow toward your long-term goals, and that your brand and marketing efforts will do their part to make you stand out from your competition because they will communicate your brand differentiation.

#### **About the Author:**

Erin Ferree is a brand identity designer who creates big visibility for small businesses. As the owner of elf design, Erin is passionate about helping her clients stand out in front of their competition and attract more clients. Her "Define Your Difference Branding



Workbook," which <u>is available</u> FREE by signing up to her free twice-a-month newsletter, will help you with your brand definition - the most important step in the brand identity design process. You may contact Erin by email sent to: <u>elf@elf-design.com</u>.

If you have questions or comments on this article, please <u>let us know.</u>

This article was added to WorldSweeper.com in 7.07.



© 2007 Erin Ferree and World Sweeper

All rights reserved.

Parking Area Sweeping
Contents

Parking/Business Tips Contents



### **Growing Your Business**

# **Empowerment + Training = Leadership = Profitable Growth**

You can't afford to be the only one making decisions, pushing quality, selling work and ensuring your customers are happy. You will never build a successful sweeping company by being the only leader.

by Ron Roberts, "The Contractors' Coach"

Are you trying to build a business or are you trying to work yourself to death?

The question constantly runs through my mind when chatting with contractors about their situation, their dreams and goals, and their frustrations.

You cannot personally oversee everyone who works for you. The rough rule of thumb has always been seven employees per leader. It then follows that for your company to grow beyond seven employees, you will need to recruit, develop and empower leaders.

# Most small business owners are guilty of overlooking the impact leaders have on their business' growth. That's a guaranteed path to burnout.

Add a contractor's natural inclination to be distrustful of his employees' work ethic and quality -- especially in parking area sweeping where work product and productivity is naturally harder to monitor -- and you end up with an individual who resists handing over the reins of control to his crews, much less grooming one or more to lead.

Your business needs leaders. Leaders make you money. Leaders allow you to spend time chasing work and building valuable relationships. Leaders set you free.

#### Constantly fighting fires? Develop leaders.

If you've been unsuccessful getting someone to step up and lead, you probably didn't follow the tried-and-true 4E approach, with which I include an added A:

- 1. Educate
- 2. Enable
- 3. Empower
- 4. Engage
- 5. (Hold) Accountable

#### **EDUCATE**

Teach them how to lead. Help them understand how to communicate, motivate, and delegate. Give them constant feedback until they become accomplished leaders. Show them how to fill out paperwork. Show them who to call for supplies and repair parts. Show them how to solve problems and think through decisions.

#### **ENABLE**

Give them the tools and information they need to get the work done right and to make good decisions. Set them up for success. They need to know your expectations, the schedule, the budgeted man-hours, quality standards, the safety standards, proper equipment maintenance, etc. Think about this: the opposite of 'enable' is 'disable.' You certainly don't want to do that to your leaders.

#### **EMPOWER**

Give them the authority to make decisions and the opportunity to learn from their failures. Don't solve their problems. Make them bring solutions to you. Every time you bail someone out, you weaken his or her ability to excel under fire.

#### **ENGAGE**

Make sure their goals are well aligned to your goals. Make sure they understand how they personally benefit when your business goals are met. Put yourself in their shoes and answer the question "what's in it for me?" Until they understand the personal benefit of delivering the results you need, they will not go the extra mile for you.

#### (Hold) ACCOUNTABLE

#### Hold your leaders accountable.

Make sure they plan their work. Make them communicate with their sweeper operators and other crews. Make sure they don't cut safety corners. Make sure they complete they paperwork. Make them hit your quality and productivity targets. Hold them accountable to their job.

No matter how well you've prepared them for success, many leaders will slip into bad habits.

Don't let them off the hook. Remind them of the required goals. If all else fails, demote them. Not everyone was wired to lead.

## Again I ask, are you trying to build a business or are you trying to work yourself to death?

If you want to make real money, you are going to have to lean on others to get the work done properly. You can't do it all yourself.

More information about Ron Roberts' and his company may be found on his website <u>FilthyRichContractor.com</u> You'll also find a link to sign up to his informative e-newsletter on his site. You may also reach Ron via email sent to <u>ron@filthyrichcontractor.com</u>.



This article was added to WorldSweeper.com in 7.07.



© 2007 World Sweeper and Ron Roberts

Parking Area Sweeping Contents

Parking/Growing Your
Business

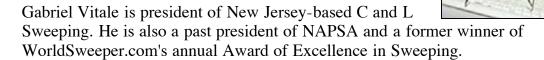


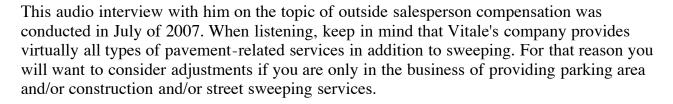
### **Employees**

# Gabriel Vitale's Overview and Tips for Outside Salesperson Compensation

Here are some ideas for how to structure compensation when hiring an outside salesperson.

interview with Gabriel Vitale by Ranger Kidwell-Ross





<u>Click here</u> to listen to Vitale's professional overview that includes tips on structuring the compensation options for an employee who is selling sweeping and other pavement-related services. (MP3 file is approximately 8.5 minutes long.)

You may reach Vitale via email <a href="mailto:Gabe@sweeping.com">Gabe@sweeping.com</a>



© 2007 World Sweeper.com
All rights reserved.

Parking Area Sweeping Contents

Parking/Employees
Contents



# The Latest Products and Info For the Sweeping Industry

# New Mystic Washer Offers Promise of Better, More Cost-Effective Pressure Cleaning, With Water Reclamation Option

July, 2007

Product allows faster washing of flat or vertical surfaces and allows used water to be reclaimed in environmentally-sensitive areas and situations.



by Ranger Kidwell-Ross, editor

Clayton Boyd has been involved in the power sweeping and property maintenance business for over three decades. During that time, he has seen that cleanliness ranks as a top factor in determining where people live, dine, shop and play. I know from his reputation that he is well aware that many see external cleanliness as equally important asthe cleanliness inside a store or complex.

With this in mind, at the last NPE tradeshow I was intrigued when Clayton confided to me he was developing a revolutionary new pressure washing system. It would, he said, be far more efficient and environmentally better to use on flat surfaces, but also be usable on vertical walls, as well.

Recently, Clayton called to say his machine was completed and that he was starting rollout of it. Called 'Mystic Washer,' from initial appearances it looks as though Clayton has hit upon a machine that is unique in its scope of operation.

Boyd's new manufacturing and sales startup company for the Mystic Washer, Water Works Connection Inc., is Florida-based. As can be seen from the photos, the Mystic Washer is

designed to provide water containment as it cleans flat surface areas. Not as evident is that it can be changed to a heavy-duty pressure wand system by turning one valve and without shutting down the power source.

"The Mystic Washer," Clayton said, "needs only one person to operate and maximizes valuable operator time. It's a 4000-psi flat surface cleaner and hand wand all in one unit, and is as easy to run as connecting to a water source and starting the engine. The machine produces consistent quality and, at the same time, cuts cleaning time by as much as 60% to 80% compared to a standard pressure washer. It also eliminates operator fatigue. Payback for the machine does not take long.



"The Mystic Washer has been designed to clean flat, vertical and hard-to-reach areas. It is crafted with high quality materials including stainless steel and aircraft aluminum. Operation is very user-friendly. It also eliminates overspray, something common to other pressure washing systems. Because there is no back-and-forth action on pavement, such as there is with a wand-held pressure washer, cleaning is very even and thorough. Plus, the Mystic Washer eliminates 'zebra striping' even when the operator overlaps the path. You'll find the Mystic Washer is built to handle the toughest of jobs.

"Our introductory pricing for the Mystic Washer is \$6895. In addition to the basic machine, that includes the detergent tank, lance gun and holder, and the rear mist deflector. For people in geographical areas or situations where they need to contain all the water used during cleaning, we also offer a vacuum containment attachment system as an option."

For more information, contact Clayton Boyd by calling 1-866-920-8801. For more information, visit the company's website, located at: <a href="www.waterworksconnection.com">www.waterworksconnection.com</a>.



© 2007 World Sweeper
All rights reserved.

<u>Industry Updates</u> <u>Contents</u>

<u>Site Map / Table of</u> <u>Contents</u>



# **Legal Issues in Parking Area Sweeping**

# **Protecting Your Company From Employee Theft**

by William McNamara

Employee theft and abuse impose an enormous cost on businesses. According to the 2006 Report to the Nation on Occupational Fraud & Abuse ("Report To The"



*Nation*") published by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners ("ACFE"), the average cost of employee theft is \$159,000. U.S. businesses lose 5% of their annual revenue to fraud. Compared to the U.S. Gross Domestic Product, this translates to approximately \$652 billion in fraud losses annually. Even more alarming is that the cost of embezzlement schemes at businesses with less than 100 employees is 20% more than at larger entities. The average loss suffered by the smaller organizations included in the Report to the Nation was \$190,000 per scheme!

If the impact of employee theft is so pervasive, the question becomes why and how do employees steal from their employers? Embezzlers' motives may vary from personal financial troubles to greed, jealousy or anger, but they are energetically creative in their methods and universally abusive of the trust placed in them.

One common method used to embezzle money from construction companies is **the theft of daily deposits**. This is a simple cash fraud scheme in which a partial or an entire deposit is stolen. In this case, actual or expected receipts do not equal the deposits for a specified period.

**Accounts receivable fraud** is also a popular activity among employee fraudsters at contracting companies. This type of fraud involves the manipulation of customer accounts receivable and sales in order to steal cash and other assets from an unsuspecting employer.

**Lapping customer accounts**, a common form of accounts receivable theft, involves stealing a customer payment made on account and concealing the theft by applying a payment from a second customer to the account of the first customer whose payment was stolen. The misappropriation of the second customer's payment is concealed by applying the payment of a third customer; the payment from a fourth customer is applied to the account of the third

customer and so forth. Typically, the embezzler steals more than a single payment. Employees involved in lapping schemes must have access to, and responsibility for, customer billings and receipts. Since invoices to different customers are usually not for the same items or dollar amounts, this cumbersome scheme eventually falls apart, especially if the perpetrator goes on vacation or is out of the office for any period.

**Inventory schemes** involve scrapping good inventory and selling it, using sales return schemes and purchasing frauds. Stolen inventory may include raw materials or standard work items, such as tools or backpack blowers, for personal use or for resale by the employee. Signs to look for include unexpected or frequent out-of-stock conditions, and unexplained increases in cost of goods sold with corresponding reductions in gross profit margins.

Other assets tend to be stolen less frequently than cash or inventory. They tend to be small in size, portable, lack owner identification and be easy to sell. Unusual or frequent purchases of certain types of equipment, such as laptops and PDAs, could be indicative of asset fraud.

Payables and disbursement fraud often involves collusion with other employees and/or third-parties. Kickbacks are a favorite because they generally enrich the employee without employer awareness. In this scheme, an employee with the authority to purchase materials or services receives a benefit from a vendor in the form of cash, gifts, services, trips or employment favors for relatives. In return, the employee may buy inferior or excess goods and services, or agree to pay a higher price. Since employees in management positions who have the power to override internal controls are often involved, kickback schemes can go on for a long period of time before being discovered.

**Inflated or false invoice schemes** are often undetected for the same reason. In these cases, employees submit false invoices for payment or they purchase goods and services in excess of the company's requirements, thereby stealing company funds. In this case, the perpetrator has the authority to approve payment, or they conspire with someone who has the authority. Employees also plot with vendors to submit inflated or bogus invoices.

When it comes to embezzlement, the single biggest deterrent to preventing fraud is to let employees know that someone is watching. Oversight methods that can be used by contractors include:

- *Get personally involved*. Understand the administrative processes of your company and, if feasible, retain exclusive authority for all writeoffs and vendor payments.
- Segregate job duties. Distribute responsibility for receipts, postings and deposits, even if it means doing the reconciliations yourself. Cross-train employees and rotate duties in the office.
- *Establish daily reconciliations/deposits*. Match daily receipts to deposits. Directly deposit payments and instruct the bank to send cancelled checks to your home.
- Conduct background/credit checks on all employees. Investigate past job history and credit reports to assess fraud risk.
- Secure fidelity bond/employee dishonesty insurance. Coverage is inexpensive and may reimburse losses from embezzlement and non-employee theft.
- Encourage employees who witness a fraudulent activity to come forward. One-third

of fraud cases in small businesses are detected through tips, of which more than 60 percent come from employees.

Embezzlement is one the most insidious crimes for any business, but it can be prevented with internal controls and a method of checks and balances. On an average, 42 percent of fraud victims recover nothing of their loss. Therefore, if you suspect that fraud is happening in your business, proceed quickly but cautiously using outside forensic experts, such as a Certified Fraud Examiner ("CFE") or Certified Public Accountant ("CPA") to help build the case for a favorable outcome.

This article was reprinted with permission from the June 2007 magazine of the New Jersey Utility and Transportation Contractors Association. For more information on that organization, go to <a href="https://www.utcanj.org">www.utcanj.org</a>.



© 2007
World Sweeper
All rights reserved.

Parking Area Sweeping Contents

**Parking/Legal** 



### **Sweeping Up Milling Debris**

# Safety: All-Important When Sweeping on Milling Jobsites

# Sweeping on paving/re-paving jobsites is perhaps the most dangerous of all sweeping jobs.

by Ranger Kidwell-Ross

In June and July of 2007, I was contacted about two instances of serious injury involving a sweeper and a flagman. Both were on milling jobs and involved a ground worker being backed into by a sweeper. Unfortunately, one of these was a fatality. In both cases, due to onsite noise, the worker was unable to hear the sweepers backup alarms, both of which were operating normally.

Operating a sweeper during re-paving operations is never the same from one jobsite to the next. For that reason, only experienced sweeping companies usually even bid on the jobs. Then, only senior operators are sent to operate sweepers on milling sites.

Even then, accidents happen. Primarily, this is due to the variable nature of what occurs during paving operations. All types of roadways are paved, which creates many different scenarios for how both the sweepers and all the rest of the jobsite equipment operate. Also in play is what might be called 'the rush factor.' Many milling operations have strict lane closure times that must be adhered to, and the nature of the sweeping function means the sweeper often still has work to do when the majority of the rest of the crews go home. When this occurs, the sweeper operator is sometimes left on the job without the proper safety personnel or equipment. For example, an attenuator may not be needed while flaggers are onsite, but be necessary if flaggers are no longer present.

Another factor is that the sweeper, which in most other types of sweeping jobs is on its own, is often mixed in closely with the rest of the equipment and personnel on milling jobsites. This naturally increases the likelihood of accident or injury to ground personnel.

#### As a quick checklist, on milling jobsites:

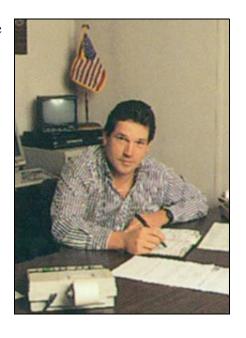
- Have the right sweeper for the job, and an experienced operator at the controls.
- Make sure all of the sweeper's safety equipment is 100% operational.
- Use only operators who know when unsafe conditions exist and who have the

forcefulness to not operate the sweeper in an unsafe manner.

- Try to separate the sweeper from other equipment and personnel on the jobsite whenever possible.
- Ideally, have an overall safety officer on the jobsite whenever more than one milling machine is in operation.
- At minimum, have a ground-based 'watcher,' whose job it is to ensure no human or other obstacles can be struck, whenever the sweeper is backing up.
- Document in writing any safety (or other) concerns you have with the General Contractor, so these will be on file.

Following are links to audio interviews with two long-time sweeping industry veterans with many years of experience with sweeping on milling jobs, as well as with other types of sweeping. In their interviews, these contractors each provide their take on dealing with safety on paving jobsites. Mike Lucht, president of <a href="Progressive Sweeping">Progressive Sweeping</a>, <a href="Inc.">Inc.</a>, has been a sweeping contractor for 30 years. Mike is also a founding Board Member and past president of what is now the <a href="North American Power Sweeping Association">North American Power Sweeping Association</a> (NAPSA). <a href="Click here">Click here</a> to listen to his mp3 audio interview, which is about 13 minutes in length (approximately 12mb in size).

You may reach Mike Lucht via email sent to: <u>mlucht@prosweep.com</u>.





New York-based John Dubbioso is president of Three D Maintenance, has been in the sweeping business for 35 years, and was also a founding Board Member of NAPSA. Click here to listen to his 12-minute mp3 audio interview.

You may reach John Dubbioso via email sent to: <a href="mailto:jdubbioso@cloud9.net">jdubbioso@cloud9.net</a>.

If you have questions or comments about this article, please <u>let us know</u>.

This article was added to WorldSweeper.com in 7.07.



Back to Milling Table of Contents



# Fleet Management Information for Sweeping Professionals

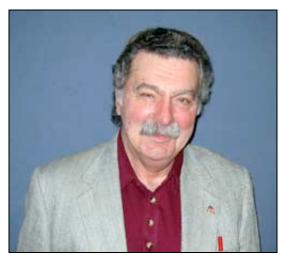
# The 50/50 Rule: A Discussion of Relative Maintenance Costs

by John Dolce

This article is adapted from information provided at the National Pavement Exposition West in late 2006.

One of America's icons of fleet management provides food for thought when to get rid of current vehicles in your fleet. Are there vehicles in *your* fleet that are breaking the 50/50 rule?

Let's begin by talking about repair costs under warranty. After all, that's when your maintenance costs will be the lowest. Unfortunately, that's also



when some people neglect to take the action needed to get reimbursed by the manufacturer. Don't let that happen to you with your newer vehicles. Be sure to keep track of your potential warranty items so you don't have expenses for what should be warranty-covered problems.

Remember: In the first year or so after you get a vehicle, your costs should pretty much be warranty-covered aside from the consumables, like tires, fluids, filters and so forth.

After that, if you had a large enough fleet you could predict with a high degree of accuracy when to replace your vehicles. Fortunately, even with a small fleet -- or a single vehicle -- there's a phenomenon that will help you decide when to replace your vehicles as long as you track your repair costs well. You can do this by tracking the relative proportion of labor vs. parts in your vehicle repair costs. It's something you definitely should rely on when you're managing your fleet.

(Dolce offered a handout that showed repair work for an actual fifty vehicles was \$760,000, and that a little over \$360,000 was for parts and a little over \$390,000 was for labor.) The point is that we know with large fleets that, until major items start breaking, about fifty percent of repair costs are for parts and fifty percent will be labor.

If you look at your expenses for maintenance on your vehicles, whether you fix them inhouse or you do it with a vendor, for whatever dollars you spend in labor you should be spending about an equal number of dollars for parts. If a particular vehicle is violating the 50/50 rule, on average, there's something wrong.

(This is true only if you use your real costs, which in the case of the example were \$65/hour. For more on valuing the actual costs of in-house labor, see Dolce's article entitled 'Determining Whether to Work on Vehicles In-House or to Sub Out the Work.' There's also a link to this article at the bottom of the page.)

However, bear in mind that if the vehicle is only two to three years old you're going to be labor-intensive, since most parts that break will be relatively minor. Then, as a vehicle gets older the repairs will tend to become more parts-intensive. That's because on older vehicles you're going to start replacing major items, like transmissions, rear ends, chassis rebuilds and doing take-apart engine work. In between, what I call 'head in the oven and feet in the freezer,' the vehicle should adhere to the 50/50 rule.

This general rule means that if you see you're spending two dollars in parts to one dollar in labor (or, conversely, two dollars in labor to one dollar in parts on a consistant basis) then it's time -- maybe past time -- to evaluate whether you should continue to repair the vehicle. It's a 'mathematical indicator point' where savvy fleet managers often choose to rebuild, scrap or sell a given vehicle. Your overall costs shouldn't be that parts- *or* labor-intensive, whether the work is being done in-house or by an outside vendor. Keep in mind that using the information you collect for a current vehicle is a good way to analyze when to sell the next vehicle you purchase of the same type.

Another indicator of vehicle aging is calculating a vehicle's repair cost, as a percentage of its total maintenance cost to its residual value. When this figure hits 30% in a given year, chances are it will rise to 50% the next year, 100% the year after and then approach a whopping 350% the following year.

\$70,000 Chassis – Mtd. Equipt.											
	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr4·	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	
Prin	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	-	-	-	~	-	
Int	3,500	2,800	2,100	1,400	700	- ,	-	-	-	-	
Parts / Labor	1,455	2,475	3,780	3,690	3,495	3,375	3,800	4,500	8,500	22,425	
Fuel	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	
¢/mile 15,000	1.50	1.53	1.57	1.51	1.45	.47	.49	.54	.81	1.74	
Resale	49,000	39,200	31,360	25,088	20,014	14,056	12,845	10,276	8,221	6,577	
% Maint Residual	3%	6%	12%	15%	17%	21%	30%	44%	103%	341%	
							Replace Target Evaluation  Target  Target  Repair Repair Replace Replace Replace Replace				

07/27/2007 12:12 PM

So, when a vehicle's repair cost hits 30% of the its residual value a professional fleet manager recognizes a serious evaluation -- and accompanying decision -- needs to be made. Typically, this means either removing the vehicle from the fleet and replacing it, or subjecting the vehicle to a major rebuild. Looking at the typical example shown in the graphic above, this decision would be mandated in year seven.

The 30% 'mathematical indicator point' is a motivator to be proactive, rather than reactive, which benefits the company whether it's growing, consolidating or staying the same size.

It is important that you maintain a vehicle maintenance system that can forecast all this for you. Only by keeping good repair numbers will you have objective information that tells you when it's time to replace a given vehicle. For that reason, your work order should have a place to call out parts and labor. However, I suggest you also put in codes for components, so you can tell what needed replacement. Also note whether the work was scheduled, unscheduled, standard protocol, or warranty work. One reason is that unscheduled work also carries other costs to it, since the machine often must be towed, the route is missed, etc.

Best is to use an accounting program that has a maintenance package attached to it. That makes it easy to analyze these types of costs. Or, if you just have two or three vehicles, you can do it by hand as long as you keep track of your overall repair ratios as they occur so that you don't lose track of the big picture.

The above information needs to be used as a guideline, not gospel, and tailored to your individual fleet management situation. However, by using this rule of thumb you should be able to minimize your fleet management costs.

John E. Dolce has more than 30 years of experience operating fleets of various types and sizes, in both the public and private sectors. Dolce conducts university-level seminars on vehicle maintenance, management, and fleet management in the US and Canada, and has written two texts on the subject. John Dolce can be reached at (973) 226-9061.

Dolce offers a handout called 'Daily Vehicle Management Activity.' This is available for download as a pdf file from <u>WorldSweeper.com's forms area</u>.

Two other fleet management articles by John Dolce are offered on the WorldSweeper.com website. These are entitled <u>'Managing Tomorrow's Fleet Assets Today.'</u> and <u>'Determining Whether to Work on Vehicles In-House or to Sub Out the Work.'</u>



Back to Fleet Management
Information

© 2007 World Sweeper



### **Environmental Issues**

### The Movement Toward Verification of Stormwater Runoff Pollutant Removal by Parking Area Sweepers

Until now, cities and other public agencies have targeted only streets for a reduction in runoff pollution. Now, with the widespread advent of stormwater runoff fees for commercial properties -- which can run in excess of \$1000/month for larger properties in some locales -- there is growing interest in finding a way to gauge parking lot sweeper effectiveness. Since a reduction in the fees paid could result, there is an increasing interest in having an independent test that would show whether or not particular parking lot sweepers are effective in reducing runoff pollution.

by Ranger Kidwell-Ross

In the past decade an enormous interest has sprung up concerning how effective sweepers are at picking up pollution from streets. Until now, that has not carried over into the parking lot arena. From the inquiries I have received over the last six months, that is about to change.

During the past few months I have received more than a handful of inquiries on this topic from contractors, permitting agencies and affected property managers. They all want to know what I can tell them about the pickup ability of the current lines of parking area sweepers. Here's why:

In recent years, municipal and other authorities in many areas have begun collecting a stormwater fee from the business community. This is usually based on the amount of impervious surface area of a given property. The more pavement and roof areas, the higher the fee. And, in some of the larger complexes, the cost per month can run to a significant figure.

As a result, property managers are trying to find ways to reduce or eliminate their liability through showing they are handling their stormwater runoff such that pollution from their property is not ending up in the runoff stream. In some cases, where the business property's runoff is collected into a storm sewer system, this is done by outfitting the catchbasin(s) with the new crop of filtration and other systems designed to capture pollution before it can go further. Regulatory agencies in some areas are now offering fee discounts for properties that have such filters installed, typically based on the independent testing results supplied by the filter manufacturers.

Where a collection system isn't already onsite, however, it is typically cost-prohibitive to retrofit one. So, savvy property managers are starting to work with their sweeping contractors to try and convince regulatory agencies that their program of regular sweeping is removing the pollution prior to runoff. The problem is, regulators want hard numbers, not speculation, about the removal efficiencies of any systems in place, including sweeping. And, no such testing process has been developed for the sweeping industry.



### Creating a better quality of life

The following audio interview is conducted with Robert Haley, MS4 Program Coordinator for the City of Murphreesboro, Tennessee. In it, Haley discusses the requirements his organization has for allowance of a reduction in stormwater fees for a business property located in his area of jurisdiction. He also touches on what other providers of stormwater solutions are providing, and expresses his agency's interest in having independent sweeper testing results that would show the overall effectiveness that parking area sweeping can attain. Here is the link to this audio interview, which is in mp3 format and is approximately 13 minutes in length.

You may also want to visit the City of Murphreesboro's <u>stormwater information website page</u>, which includes a pdf link to the City's stormwater fee ordinance.

If you have any questions about any of the above ideas, feel free to <u>contact</u> the WorldSweeper.com Team for a further explanation.



© 2007
Used Sweepers of America
All Rights Reserved. World Sweeper
All rights reserved.

Parking Area Sweeping Contents

**Parking/Environmental** 



#### The Rise of Biodiesel

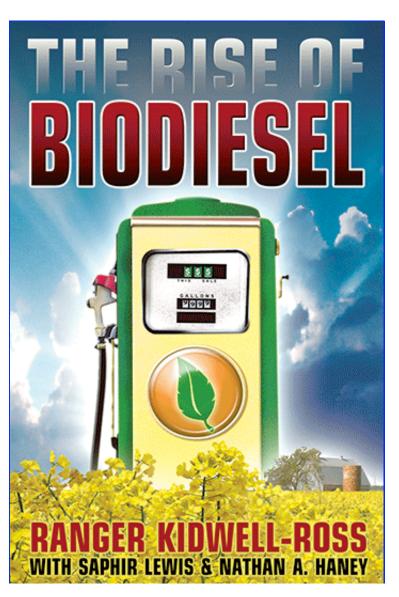
An award-winning book on the emergence and potential of biodiesel by WorldSweeper.com's editor, Ranger Kidwell-Ross

Because of biodiesel's demonstrated ability to reduce engine emissions while drastically increasing average engine life, it is predicted to soon become widely available throughout the world. However, even though biodiesel offers a number of significant advantages, the use of arable land for fuel -- instead of food -- is already emerging as a 'hot button topic' around the world.

The fact is, due to political and other factors, the population of the United States is currently far behind in recognizing and utilizing biodiesel. This 60-page book is designed to educate the general user of diesel on what biodiesel is and is not, as well as provide an overview of the fuel's emergence as a top choice worldwide. If you have even a single vehicle powered by diesel -- and who doesn't if you're in the sweeping industry -- then you'll want to know the information in this book.

Prior to publication, The Rise of Biodiesel has already





become one of only 11 books and/or ebooks to





win a coveted U.S. national APEX Award of Excellence in the Communications Concepts annual review process. The 92-page publication is currently available as either an online e-book or in paperback for \$19.95 through the publisher, <a href="WorldPeaceEmerging.com">WorldPeaceEmerging.com</a>. Prior to purchase, you may view the Table of Contents and the first chapter of the publication at no charge. <a href="Here's a link">Here's a link</a> to the preview information in pdf format.

<u>Click here to order</u> your copy in paperback.

If you like what you read, <u>here's where to go</u> to purchase either the e-book or the paperback version online. The cover you see on this page is for the paperback edition.



© 2007 World Sweeper
All rights reserved.

Return to
WorldSweeper.com Home
Page



# Webinars: The 21st Century Way to Train

# Webinars Offer the Power of Learning -- Without Being There!

by David Newman, Vice President, Business 21 Publishing

With the ever-increasing demands on your time, the last thing you have room for in your schedule is professional development, right? Wrong! Professional-strength training is available as close as your nearest telephone and PC using the latest in audio conferencing. It's easy, affordable, and effective.

Audio conferences are electronic meetings where participants call in from different locations and listen to a speaker, or group of speakers, who are experts in their topic areas.



Audio conferences are interactive, meaning that participants can ask questions in real time. They are considered the most cost-effective form a training because:

- 1) you can invite as many colleagues as you'd like to listen in on a single phone line;
- 2) you incur no travel expenses; and
- 3) employees are back at work immediately after the session ends.

**How do audio conferences work?** When you register for a conference, you receive an 800 number and a PIN number. About five minutes before the conference is to begin, you dial the 800 number, then you'll be asked to enter the PIN number followed by the pound key. An operator will then patch you into the conference.

What is a webinar? A webinar is similar to an audio conference. You dial up and listen to the speaker over the phone. The difference is that in Webinars you view the handout dynamically on your computer screen. Registrants will receive the URL and instructions prior to the event.

Can my colleagues listen in as well? Absolutely. With most audio conference providers, the conference fee is for a single phone connection, and most companies have several people listening at once via speakerphone in a conference room. There's no additional cost. Audio conferences deployed as a training resource in this way could very well be the most cost-effective form of professional education available on the market today.

**How do I get the handout?** You typically receive an email before the event that contains a hyperlink so you can download the presentation either in Powerpoint or Adobe Acrobat format.

Can I ask questions? Yes. In fact, one of the benefits of attending a live audio conference event is the ability to ask the expert speaker a specific question relevant to your own situation. Most audio conferences have some mechanism for asking questions, either in real time over the phone or submitted via live chat or email to the conference moderator,

Can I get a CD for use later? A CD, which stands for Compact Disc, is an option with most webinars. The CD recording of most audioconferences is available after the live event is over. The CD from any given webinar is an audio recording of that conference. You can listen to the CD in a CD player, exactly as you would a music CD, or using the CD drive in your computer. CDs typically include all handout materials as well.

What is a transcript? A transcript is a written account of the conference. Most companies also make the transcripts of their conferences available as an additional purchase.

Audio conferences are truly the 'next best thing' to being there when it comes to skills training and professional development. Once you try this type of learning, you'll find it to be the most cost-effective form of training available.

David Newman is VP of Product Development for Business 21 Publishing, a professional webinar company. Their organization offers a number of seminars per month, on topics like sales training, human resources, safety and more. WorldSweeper.com will soon be entering into a partnership with Newman's organization to offer some of the webinars that are pertinent to the sweeping industry needs on the WS.com website. For more information, Newman may be reached via email sent to: <a href="mailto:dnewman@b21pubs.com">dnewman@b21pubs.com</a>.



© 2007 David Newman and World
Sweeper
All rights reserved.

<u>Site Map / Table of Contents</u>