



Newbie Dry Cleaning Investor Dives Headfirst into Wet Cleaning

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Textile Care
Laundry Profile

Over a three-year span, industry newbie Brad Manasco purchased several Mississippi dry cleaning plants and two Certified Restoration Dry Cleaning Network (CRDN) territories. In an effort to improve his new enterprise — Blue Ribbon Cleaners and CRDN of Mississippi (Blue Ribbon Cleaners) — he worked for free to learn the ropes; conducted research on the best cleaning methods; and visited with industry experts about needed equipment updates. His first critical operational change was to swap out dry cleaning for more efficient, less costly wet cleaning.

Eco-Friendly Wet Cleaning

The result is an operation that processes 98 percent of incoming garments using wet cleaning, including wedding dresses, textile restoration items, shirt laundry, and delicate wools, cashmeres, silks and synthetics. Offering free pickup and delivery, Blue Ribbon Cleaners provides CRDN restoration services for both textiles and electronics; commercial laundry services, including ironed table and bed linens; wedding dress cleaning and preservation; and residential laundry services; among others.

“When I was studying dry cleaning I kept seeing references to wet cleaning,” said Manasco. “So I researched wet cleaning and compared it to dry cleaning.” In doing so, Manasco met with Mike “Stucky” Szczotka, co-owner of Poseidon Textile Care Systems® (Poseidon), and several textile care professionals who utilize wet cleaning.



After months of due diligence, Manasco reequipped Plant 1, in Hernando, Miss., by replacing an old dry cleaning machine with a 60-pound capacity Poseidon Wet Cleaning Machine, two 60-pound capacity Poseidon Dryers, and a 20-inch Poseidon Flatwork Ironer. A few months later, he updated Plant 2, in Madison, Miss. This time, he installed two 60-pound capacity Poseidon Dryers to work in concert with an existing wet cleaning machine.

Wet Cleaning Boosts Production & Lowers Costs

Manasco believes wet cleaning significantly improves throughput production over traditional dry cleaning, and when the costs for



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each are compared, wet cleaning is thousands less. “The initial investment to purchase a wet cleaning system is about a third of the cost of purchasing a dry cleaning machine,” he said. “Plus, we are more productive with wet cleaning by far. I can wet clean for two-thirds of the cost of dry cleaning.”

New technology makes it possible to wet clean everything from silks, wools and cashmeres to cottons, linens and synthetics, according to Manasco. Thus, Blue Ribbon Cleaners now processes nearly everything using its Poseidon wet cleaning machines. The remaining 2 percent is dry cleaned at Plant 3, in Cleveland, Miss. But, Manasco plans to eventually phase that out.

How Poseidon Technology Works

The Poseidon wet cleaning system is simple to operate, eco-friendly and effective, he said. Loads move from the Poseidon Wet Cleaning Machine into a Poseidon Dryer, where they are dried to about 10 percent residual moisture. Garments are then finished using presses and/or tensioning equipment, just like they are after dry cleaning.

The wet cleaning machine features a freestanding, soft-mount design, which makes it simple to install without bolt-down. Generating extract speeds up to 400 G-force for superior productivity, it delivers complete control over water temperature by degree (up to 194 degrees), wash rotation speed and duration, water levels, bath cool-down by degree, and automatic chemical injection. Operators simply enter a program number and press start.

Similarly, the Poseidon Dryer offers several programmable phases/steps in the drying process, as well as sophisticated control over multiple variables within those phases, including oven temperature, drum temperature, drum rotation action and G-force, timed reversing, and moisture sensing control technology. Many of

these drying variables have never been offered before and most have not been programmable, according to Manasco. “Poseidon’s programmable phases allow for the control necessary to protect garments when they are their most vulnerable — at the beginning of the dry cycle when they are saturated with water and at the end of the cycle when they are nearly dry,” he said.

Growing the Business

Located in an area of strong residential and business growth, Manasco is optimistic about the future of Blue Ribbon Cleaners. To capture more revenue from his demographic, he invested in a Poseidon 20-inch Flatwork Ironer. It single-handedly launched Blue Ribbon Cleaners’ commercial laundry business by 40 percent. It works by quickly and automatically ironing damp table and bed linens after they are wet cleaned. The ironer, which automatically adjusts ironing speed to match the moisture content of items, dries and irons linens simultaneously.

“It’s so much faster than what we were doing before,” said Manasco. “Now we can efficiently process table linens for caterers, special events and the hospitality industry.”

Focused on providing a high-quality product with top-notch customer service, Manasco admits to enjoying the ride ... As proof of his efforts — and just two years after purchasing the business — Blue Ribbon Cleaners received the DeSoto County’s Best 2019 Award from the DeSoto’s Times-Tribune.

“I love the fast-paced nature of this business,” said Manasco. “Washing and cleaning clothes is like therapy to me. I’m fortunate to be able to serve my community and be my own boss.”

To discover more about Blue Ribbon Cleaners, visit dablueribboncleaners.com or call 662-469-2559. To find out more about Poseidon Textile Care Systems, visit poseidonwetcleaning.com or call 800-256-1073.