

# contractor's corner

NEWS, VIEWS AND INFORMATION FOR THE FACILITY SERVICE PROVIDER

**BUSINESS NOTES**

## Four Habits to Help Grow Your Commercial Cleaning Business



### Build your business by providing what customers need

By DOUG FLAIG

**A**t the height of the pandemic, having a clean building was the most important thought in every property owner's mind. Today, priorities have shifted and commercial cleaning is not as

prominently featured. We celebrate that a worldwide health concern is under control and manageable, but at the same time need to adjust to a new uncertainty: how our customers' purchasing decisions may impact our commercial cleaning businesses.

To be a sustainable business in any industry, the mindset must always be about driving the business forward. That might sound exhausting if you're not in the habit of consistently setting and working towards your goals. However, once you've

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# Four Habits to Help Grow Your Commercial Cleaning Business

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implemented these habits, you'll become a company with a growth mindset.

There are four habits we work on with our teams, from leadership to management to our staff who provide cleaning services.

## SET WEEKLY GOALS

A lot of goal setting is focused on long-term achievements and there is a place for that. You need to be able to see the big picture and make that happen, but you also need to set smaller, more timely goals for the steps that will help you get there.

Smaller goals make success more achievable and empower you to celebrate 'wins' with your team. They also help build consistency in your operations and act as a yardstick for your larger goals. If you're not hitting the smaller goals, this gives you the chance to reassess and refocus, getting back on track to your longer-term goals.

To set small goals, work backwards from your larger monthly or yearly goals and set benchmarks you need to meet along the way. Pro tip: never miss a weekly goal review as a way to stay on top of your progress and stay on course.

## CHOOSE SMART TOOLS

One of the most challenging aspects of running a company is choosing the tech-

nology and tools that will contribute to your success, rather than simply supplying statistics that don't move you forward. This can require a balance of giving tools enough time to produce results, but also paying attention to whether those results are viable for your operations.

Take lead generation as an example. When you're working to grow interest in your services, you want to be very specific about the audience you are trying to reach. The strategy must be very tailored to that kind of customer, so they see that you know their needs. You develop a strategy and then monitor every aspect of the plan while it is being implemented. (This is where weekly goal setting can be a great benefit).

If your lead generation tools are not producing results, you need to know where you are losing the potential customer in the process, and then make changes to drive better results. Sometimes, the best tools are not the latest fads or trends, but rather a return to tried-and-true techniques that resonate with customers. Other times, you need to reach customers on a new level and smart technology can help you do that. Choose your tools carefully and evaluate them regularly for opportunities to improve the results.

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## contractor's corner

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# Four Habits to Help Grow Your Commercial Cleaning Business

## PRIORITIZE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

Client retention is key to running a successful cleaning company and that happens through developing solid relationships. Everyone on the team needs to know how to communicate and your role as the leader of the company is to teach them how to succeed.

For example, if a cleaner stains a carpet, they should know who to contact in your organization so the customer can be informed immediately. When you build a good relationship with your cleaners, communication will flow more easily which helps keep issues at a low level. When you build a good relationship with your customer, you can communicate issues and propose solutions that manage the problem for the customer, which builds trust in their relationship with you.

Relationships take time to build and communicating effectively is the key to making that happen, allowing your teams to hold each other accountable and take pride in their work. Communication also creates a bond of trust and reliability with a customer, so prioritizing communication is a critical contribution to growing your business.

## BE BORINGLY CONSISTENT

Assuming you are already providing great service, being consistent is an equally important factor in retaining customers. When a customer knows they can rely on you to do a good job, it is one less thing they have to worry about, and that raises your value as a service provider.

Consistency means you are adhering to standards in your business, building good habits, and becoming a reliable company. Think of how often you have had an experience

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## The Art of the Janitorial Cleaning Cart

Choosing your cart wisely will save you time and money

**T**he cleaning cart is a fundamental tool for cleaners and janitorial staff, easing some of the labour stress, increasing efficiency and helping to get the job done. Over the years, as commercial cleaning products and practices have changed, cleaning carts have evolved to meet the daily needs of cleaning teams.

Keep your carts performing at their best as mobile workstations, by communicating with your cleaning team to provide the best options for your teams.

### ASSESS YOUR NEEDS

Not all carts are created equal, so choosing a cart that addresses your building's or client's specific needs will help cleaners simplify their tasks, save trips to the supply closet and help carry the weight of some of the heavier equipment.

It's not just about cleaning supplies, consider what is important when the carts are being used. Are you concerned about noise? Will it need added durability for outdoor use? Where will you store the carts? These factors (and more) will help you decide on the right carts for your business.

Including components like garbage cans or spots to store signage can also be helpful when cleaners have lots of ground to cover in a shorter amount of time.

Between 2023 and 2028, the janitorial cart industry is predicted to grow 9.1 per

cent, so there will be more competition among manufacturers. Knowing what you need will help you avoid making duplicate purchases to correct a mistake, or updating your carts sooner than necessary.

### STAY UP TO DATE

As cleaning practices and tools evolve, so does the cart. For example, many of the older carts have spots for a string mop and bucket, but as companies adopt microfibre mopping options, the cart needs to be updated to stay at its most functional.

Do your research, follow the trends and adopt new practices to improve your performance. Look at updating your carts every few years to stay on top of the evolving industry and to consistently provide the best tools for your team.

By taking a deep dive into what you are looking for, the needs of your building and the best ways to make the job easier, you will be able to narrow down the best choices for your business. Staying on top of industry changes and trends will ensure that you don't find yourself falling behind with outdated carts that don't do the job. Janitorial carts can speed up work, cut labour and make cleaners happier in their work. Consider the factors mentioned here to make sure you invest in the best janitorial carts for your needs.

SOURCE:FC&M Magazine



# How Commercial Cleaners Can Help Customers Achieve Their ESG Goals

Cleaners and companies can work together towards a greener planet

By PETER J. SHELDON SR.

**C**ompanies are increasingly focused on achieving their environmental, social and governance (ESG) goals in today's business landscape. Commercial cleaning services can be pivotal in helping organizations meet these objectives by implementing sustainable practices that minimize environmental impact, enhance employee well-being, elevate brand reputation and optimize supply chains.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF REDUCING INDUSTRIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Commercial cleaning services can sig-

nificantly contribute to reducing a business's environmental impact. Companies can minimize their carbon footprint and help protect the environment with eco-friendly cleaning products and practices. These products are often biodegradable, non-toxic, and free of harsh chemicals, reducing the release of harmful substances into the ecosystem. Commercial cleaning services can also utilize energy-efficient cleaning methods and equipment, reducing energy consumption and lowering greenhouse gas emissions.

Commercial cleaning services can also help businesses by minimizing their water

usage with optimized cleaning processes and water-efficient technologies. This conservation effort reduces the strain on water resources and lowers the associated costs for businesses.

Moreover, implementing effective waste management strategies can substantially reduce landfill waste, promoting a circular economy and diverting valuable materials from becoming harmful pollutants. By embracing these sustainable practices, commercial cleaning services empower businesses to operate in an environmentally responsible manner, aligning with their

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# 2024 CMM In-House/ Facility Management Benchmarking Survey Report

Annual survey highlights trends, values and challenges for in-house service professionals

By KATHLEEN MISOVIC

**F**inding and retaining qualified employees, staff absenteeism, worker safety and decreased budgets with increased expectations continue to be some of the most critical issues in-house service professionals face today, according to respondents of CMM's 2024 In-House/Facility Management Benchmarking Survey.

As facility managers split their time between caring for buildings and managing staff, their concerns fall on both facets of their responsibilities. On the staff management side, most (30 per cent) listed employee health and safety as their biggest concern, followed by employee training (29 per cent), employee retention (26 per cent) and concerns that their employees use products properly (15 per cent).

On the building management side, respondents focused on maintaining areas and surfaces (such as restrooms and floors) to preserve building inhabitant health and improve facility image. Almost half (48 per cent) reported that restrooms are the most problematic area to maintain and keep clean, followed by carpeted surfaces (17 per cent), multi-surface areas (11 per cent), hard floors (nine per cent), entryways/foyers (eight per cent) and food service areas (eight per cent).

In addition to staffing and financial issues, respondents also listed environmental challenges – such as garbage disposal, solid waste management and energy conservation – among the critical issues facing facility professionals today. It is an issue

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# How Commercial Cleaners Can Help Customers Achieve Their ESG Goals

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ESG goals and contributing to a healthier planet.

## IMPROVED HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF COMMUNITIES, EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS

Commercial cleaning services can help businesses improve the overall health and well-being of their customers, employees and community by reducing exposure to harmful chemicals and pollutants, improving indoor air quality, enhancing hygiene practices, and reducing the risk of illness and infection. By using eco-friendly cleaning products and practices, commercial cleaning services minimize the use of harsh chemicals that can cause damaging irritation to the human body.

Proper ventilation and air circulation improve indoor air quality and overall health. Additionally, commercial cleaning services prioritize maintaining a clean and hygienic environment by regularly disinfecting surfaces, equipment and common areas, reducing the spread of germs and bacteria. This proactive approach helps create a healthier workplace, reducing illness-related absences and fostering a more productive and energized workforce.

## ENHANCED BRAND REPUTATION IN A WORLD THAT VALUES SUSTAINABILITY

Commercial cleaning services can help businesses enhance their brand reputation by demonstrating a commitment to ESG practices. This can lead to positive publicity and recognition for green initiatives, attracting environmentally conscious customers, employees and investors. Building trust and loyalty among stakeholders is another benefit of having a strong ESG profile.

Customers and large corporations increasingly demand that organizations they choose to conduct business with operate responsibly and sustainably. Commercial cleaning services can help companies meet these demands by applying sustainable practices and demonstrating a commitment to ESG principles.

In addition, commercial cleaners can help businesses improve their relationships. By implementing sustainable practices, companies can reduce their environmental impact, leading to enhanced relationships with regulators and the com-

munity, benefiting businesses in several ways, such as reduced regulatory scrutiny and increased public support.

Commercial cleaning services can help businesses achieve ESG goals and improve their overall success. By implementing sustainable practices and demonstrating a commitment to ESG principles, companies can enhance their brand reputation, attract new customers and investors, improve their relationships and minimize their environmental footprint.

## ENTERPRISE SOLUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAINS

Commercial cleaning services can help organizations achieve ESG goals by providing enterprise solutions for sustainable supply chains. This includes comprehensive waste management programs, energy-efficient cleaning equipment and practices, green cleaning products and techniques, supplier diversity programs and fair labour practices.

For instance, comprehensive waste management programs can help businesses segregate, recycle and compost waste, reducing landfill waste and the use of incinerators. Energy-efficient cleaning equipment and practices can help companies reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions. Green cleaning products and techniques can help them reduce their use of harmful chemicals and improve indoor air quality. Supplier diversity programs can help companies support small and diverse businesses. Fair labour practices can help enterprises guarantee workers are treated fairly and paid a living wage.

In addition to these direct environmental and social benefits, sustainable supply chain management can help businesses improve their financial performance. Companies can reduce operating costs by reducing waste, energy consumption and the use of harmful chemicals. By supporting small and diverse companies, businesses can build stronger relationships with their suppliers and gain access to new markets. And, by ensuring that their workers are treated fairly, companies can improve employee morale and productivity.

In today's competitive business environment, it is more important than ever

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# Facility Productivity Strategies Unleashed!

By JON HILL

**I**mproving facility cleaning and maintenance productivity is more than just an objective. It is essential. Innovative strategies can enhance a facility's productivity rather than merely cleaning and maintaining it. It can lead to cost savings, occupant satisfaction and increased operational efficiencies.

Let's consider not only your building's potential but the abilities of your team. Embracing innovative solutions and processes can transform any cleaning or maintenance crew into a united example of productivity and enhanced cleaning.

## THE EVOLVING ROLE OF FACILITY MANAGERS

In recent years, facility management has evolved from a primarily operational role to one encompassing strategic planning, sustainability and technological integration. Facility managers no longer merely maintain physical spaces with mops and buckets;

they now play a crucial role in enhancing workplace efficiency, reducing costs and ensuring a healthy environment. To succeed in this changing landscape, facility managers must adapt to new challenges, and leverage their experience and knowledge.

This profound transformation is driven, in part, by innovative technology, evolving team dynamics, knowledge database, experienced problem-solving and the goal to deliver high-quality services while optimizing budgets. Embracing change is becoming – or will become the norm – in the future. Transitioning from once-manual to automated processes will empower efficiency, accuracy and innovation, driving organizational growth in the digital age. A recent *Straight Talk!* with Jeff Cross segment delved into five pivotal topics that every facility manager should master for the future.

What innovative tech facility managers

should know about:

In an era where technology evolves at breakneck speed, facility managers must stay attuned to the latest advancements. Modern facilities increasingly adopt smart solutions, IoT devices and AI-driven analytics to optimize operations. These innovations enable real-time monitoring, predictive maintenance and enhanced security. Embracing such technology not only improves efficiency but also elevates the overall customer experience.

Architects have adopted frameworks like building information modeling (BIM), architectural standards and computerized maintenance management systems (CMMS) to streamline building workflows and enhance decision-making. Understanding these frameworks will assist in designing your workloading efficiently and effectively.

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# How Commercial Cleaners Can Help Customers Achieve Their ESG Goals

for businesses to prioritize ESG goals. Commercial cleaning services can help companies achieve their ESG goals by providing enterprise solutions for sustainable supply chains. By implementing these solutions, businesses can reduce environmental impact, improve social responsibility and enhance financial performance.

## CORPORATIONS DEMAND ESG ACCREDITATION DURING THE RFP PROCESS

Corporations increasingly demand that their suppliers and partners have strong ESG credentials as part of their procurement processes. This is driven by several factors, including growing mindfulness toward the importance of ESG issues among consumers and investors, increased regulatory pressure on companies to improve their ESG performance, and the need to mitigate the risks associated with climate change and other ESG issues.

By requiring their suppliers and partners to meet specific ESG standards, corporations can help to ensure that their operations are sustainable and responsible. This can lead to several benefits, including improved brand reputation, reduced costs and increased access to capital.

In addition, demanding ESG accreditation during the RFP process can help corporations identify and partner with suppliers and associates that share their values and commitment to sustainability. This leads to deeper relationships and more successful, long-term collaborations.

Some specific examples of practices that businesses might be looking for in their ESG partners include:

- Using green cleaning products and practices that reduce harmful chemicals and pollutants.

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# Facility Productivity Strategies Unleashed!

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## BUILDING A TEAM FOR THE FUTURE

The facility management team of the future demands a blend of traditional and modern skill sets. Effective leadership, communication and adaptability remain paramount. However, facility managers must also cultivate expertise in data analysis, technology implementation and sustainability practices.

Of course, culture is the foundation of good team cohesion. We consulted with InnerWill Leadership Institute ([innerwill.org](http://innerwill.org)) to support our team and build a future-ready team focused on professional development, cross-training and nurturing a culture of innovation. Encourage collaboration among team members and foster a learning environment that embraces change. Diverse teams with a mix of skills and perspectives are better equipped to tackle the multifaceted challenges that the future holds.

## KNOWLEDGE DATABASE: UTILIZE WORKLOADING

Workloading is a pivotal aspect of efficient facility management. By accurately documenting and analysing workloads, facility managers can optimize resource allocation, plan maintenance schedules and ensure that tasks are completed in a timely manner. Embrace digital tools for comprehensive record-keeping and utilize data analytics to gain actionable insights into workload patterns.

Workloading also plays a significant role in justifying budgetary needs and evaluating the efficiency of the facility management team. By leveraging this data, facility managers can make informed decisions, allocate resources effectively and maintain a high standard of customer service.

## STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS CONCERNS

Addressing challenges and complaints head-on is an integral part of successful facility management. Efficient help desk management is the cornerstone of exceptional customer support, ensuring timely resolutions and satisfied customers. Managing and resolving complaints fosters a positive relationship with customers. By better understanding how your customer uses the facility, your company can use predictive analytics to mitigate common facility issues,

reducing the frequency of complaints.

Teams that employ a root cause analysis (RCA) methodology to collaboratively dissect issues, identify underlying problems and develop practical solutions are more effective in dynamic environments. This systematic approach fosters better decision-making, enhances problem-solving and prevents recurring issues. Facility managers should implement preventive measures to ensure optimal performance and customer satisfaction.

## BUDGETING: DOING MORE WITH LESS

Whether overseeing a facility operation or managing a building service contract, facility managers face the perennial challenge of doing more with less. Tight budgets demand resourcefulness and prioritization. Start by conducting a thorough budget analysis to identify areas where cost savings are possible without compromising quality.

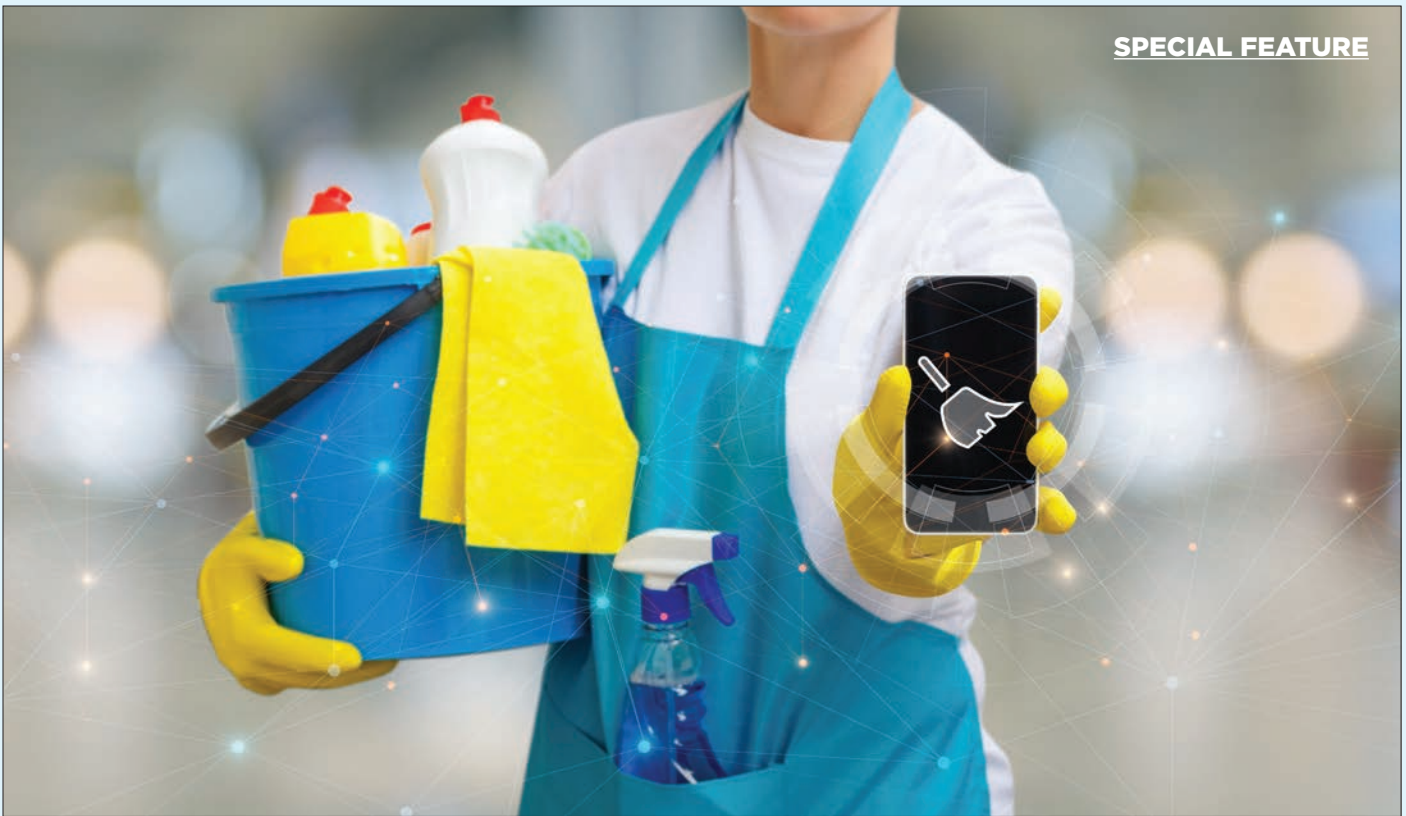
Implement technology-driven solutions that automate routine/project tasks and reduce labour costs. Negotiate favorable contracts with customers, vendors and suppliers to optimize working capital. Use customer profitability information to measure which sales segment to pursue based on resource alignment and profitability. Ensure resources are positioned and ready to service your targeted customer base. By managing budgets and seeking innovative cost-saving strategies, facility managers can strike a balance between efficiency and quality.

Facility managers who navigate these challenges and opportunities with vision and adaptability are poised to lead their organizations toward a successful and sustainable future.

It will take a collective industry effort to really make the change required. Facility managers need to use their experience and knowledge to design new products and services to accommodate the changing customer demands.

— Jon Hill is CEO of Cobotiq and presents to business managers how to create and implement profitability information. He is a frequent speaker and presenter on the future impact of automation and technology in the cleaning industry.

SOURCE: ISSA Articles



# Technology & Building Service Contracting

By KEVIN BARTON

“**T**echnology doesn’t define our operations; it can only enhance them.” When presenting to future or current clients, this has been one of my favourite rebuttals in addressing technology integration into our operations.

It isn’t that we are resistant to technology – quite the contrary. My question has always been: Is it as effective as it has been sold to be, and how do we make it work for us versus us working for it?

Clients hear about the theory of operations, bells and whistles, a new horizon on cleaning innovation, etc. My brain begins to hurt because what they heard about that new piece of technology was cost savings, efficiency and better outcomes. And while we absolutely want all those things too, the question of how to deliver those outcomes is often left to us – the service provider – to answer.

## TECHNOLOGY INFLUENCES STRATEGY

As I reflect on my 25+ years working for building service contractors (BSCs), technology has always influenced our strategy from entry-level management to leadership levels. When I first entered the industry, touchless dispensers were all the rage. But look how far we’ve come. Today, we can manage frequencies of service, customer throughput, predictability cleaning and waste levels. Not to mention the dispensers are even smarter and we can manage the levels of paper in them any time.

Historically, our industry has been defined by productive labour. We sweep, mop, remove trash, dust, vacuum, rinse and repeat; say that fast in a meeting and clients love it. They want to know that we know the business, we know how to manage it, we know best-in-class processes and procedures, and that we use the best in

cleaning technology, chemistry and equipment. But do we?

Nobody wants to hear or talk about the C word any longer (COVID-19). While we aren’t going to talk about it here, we better understand and embrace how it propelled the industry into the future faster than I suspect many of us are ready for. Labour shortages, supply chain issues, validation of service delivery – COVID-19 highlighted areas that, as an industry, we have taken for granted, while it simultaneously reshaped client perception of our services and how we deliver them.

## BSC TECHNOLOGY IS BETTER THAN EVER

So, what does the future look like for BSCs? Brace for impact and try this one on for size:

“Our operations are rooted in the most

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## How Commercial Cleaners Can Help Customers Achieve Their ESG Goals

- Introducing water conservation measures to reduce water usage.
- Recycling and composting to reduce landfill waste.
- Using energy-efficient cleaning equipment to reduce energy consumption.
- Providing ongoing training and certification protocols to employees on sustainable cleaning practices.

### SUSTAINABILITY IS PART OF AN INTELLIGENT BUSINESS STRATEGY

Companies prioritizing ESG as a core pillar within their value system are more likely to attract and retain top talent, improve their overall success, and be considered responsible and trustworthy by consumers and investors.

ESG is essential for businesses to improve their brand reputation. Consumers are increasingly interested in doing business with companies committed to sustainability, and a strong ESG performance can help businesses attract, and retain customers and staff.

Third, ESG can help businesses mitigate risks. For example, with a robust environmental management program, companies can reduce their risk of environmental accidents and liabilities.

In addition to the reputational and financial advantages, ESG can help businesses improve their performance. By creating a more sustainable workplace, companies can boost employee morale, professional pride and productivity, while also reducing absenteeism and turnover. This can lead to increased profits and enhanced shareholder value.

Overall, ESG is an essential factor for smart businesses and commercial cleaners can help make

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## Technology & Building Service Contracting

effective integration of technology and productive labour to drive to the highest quality outcomes by validating service delivery.”

And then it’s followed up with this:

- We can install autonomous vacuums and floor scrubbers, and reduce labour costs by 30 per cent. This is validated by GPS mapping, time and date stamping, and utilization data of run time in manual and autonomous mode.
- We can aggregate all data from restroom and breakroom visits, provide cleaning based on usage versus frequency and reduce labour costs by an additional five to 10 per cent.
- We can more effectively manage supply usage to near 100 per cent utilization, and reduce supply and labour costs by an additional five per cent.
- We can validate the time our employee entered and exited the restroom with a completed checklist of tasks performed.
- We can respond within 10 minutes based on alert notifications from either NFCs (near-field communications) or QR Codes.
- Inspections of services give us leading and lagging performance indicators and recommend adjustments based on those metrics to improve service delivery further.
- The good news is this does make us better, it does improve service delivery, it does reduce costs and this should be your wake-up call if you aren’t prepared.

### WHICH SIDE OF THE TECHNOLOGY CURVE ARE YOU ON?

We should all ask ourselves, which side of the bell curve are we on today and how do we get over the proverbial “hump?”

As an industry and as individual contributors, we must embrace technology. It will continue to evolve and become more and more prevalent in our everyday operations. We will be evaluated on the technology we use, how we integrate it and how we validate the outcomes. As technology becomes more of an integral need versus a want from our customers’ perspective, we must embrace those solutions, maximize the benefits and outcomes, and rethink how we deliver our services.

Our operations may not be defined by technology today, but it is the future of how we operate.

Autonomous cleaning is here to stay. We

can now measure the return on investment in actual labour and efficiency savings, and validate run time and cleaning effectiveness. Not to mention, the unit doesn’t have good and bad days, and it doesn’t mind working holidays and weekends.

We’ve all seen them: digital display of available stalls, QR codes, client throughput counting, etc. Technology will allow us to move more towards on-demand cleaning versus frequency-based cleaning for more efficient utilization of resources and better outcomes.

I was fortunate enough to have led the largest conversion install of enMotion® towel dispensers when they first came out, which was well over 1000 dispensers. I was an assistant manager running janitorial operations for a manufacturing company. I earned a Six Sigma Green Belt certification for the cost savings of both labour and supply costs. Today, that dispenser tells us when it needs to be refilled. This ensures soap, towels and toilet paper are always stocked.

Today, my employee walks into a restroom and a Bluetooth beacon pings the iPad mounted to their cart. The system validates when they entered and exited, and what tasks they completed. I have irrefutable proof with pictures of what was completed and the measurable outcomes, the best defense possible if you receive a service complaint.

I have a love affair with our industry. We impact so many lives daily, employee development that allows us to promote them, ensuring clean facilities for millions of people – everyday. And yes, it can be thankless at times, but it is never dull, and it looks like the next five years will be even more interesting than the last 25!

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— As president of aviation and janitorial services with Flagship Facility Service in Texas, Kevin Barton is responsible for managing and directing all services related to aviation and janitorial operations. He leads a team of over 4000 employees, servicing millions of square feet daily for high-profile airports and customers in the private sector. Barton, with more than 25 years in the industry, is an expert in facility best practices, account transitions, and developing unique solutions for challenging environments.

SOURCE: ISSA Articles

# Save Money & the Environment

Get started by following these six practical sustainability strategies

By STEPHEN P. ASHKIN



**T**he professional cleaning industry is increasingly pivoting toward sustainability. This shift is driven by a growing awareness of environmental issues and the realization of the economic benefits of eco-friendly practices.

A cornerstone of this transformation is the concept of dematerialization, which involves reducing the overall material footprint by buying less, opting for smaller materials (whether this means products or office space) and choosing items that are long-lasting and efficient. My column explores the benefits of dematerialization and details six sustainability approaches the cleaning industry can adopt, emphasizing informed consumerism and technology utilization.

## (1) BUY LESS

Dematerialization is a crucial strategy in reducing the environmental impact of the cleaning industry. By purchasing fewer

and smaller items, companies can significantly reduce the imbedded energy and impacts resulting from the manufacturing, operation, and disposal of the product or material. This approach involves selecting concentrated cleaning products that require less packaging and transport, high-performing tools and lightweight equipment. It also involves choosing office and warehouse spaces that are not too large for the organization's needs.

## (2) CONSIDER QUALITY, DURABILITY, AND REPAIRABILITY

Investing in high-quality, long-lasting cleaning tools and equipment might entail a higher upfront cost. However, this strategy leads to significant savings in the long run due to improved performance, as well as reduced replacement and repair costs. This approach also lessens a company's or facility's environmental impact by minimizing its equipment disposal and

replacement frequency. Opting for tools and equipment that can be easily repaired – rather than replaced – further extends equipment life and reduces waste.

## (3) CHOOSE SECOND-HAND AND REFURBISHED ITEMS

Embracing used or refurbished items – especially computers, furniture and even cleaning equipment – is another key sustainability practice. By purchasing second-hand computers and other electronics, cleaning companies can reduce e-waste and the environmental harm associated with manufacturing new equipment. Moreover, this approach is often more cost-effective, providing access to necessary technology at a fraction of the cost of new items.

## (4) PRIORITIZE SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Selecting used and fuel-efficient vehicles is both an environmentally and fi-

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## 2024 CMM In-House/ Facility Management Benchmarking Survey

most facilities are taking seriously. A majority (76 per cent) of survey respondents reported that their facilities are working toward improving their sustainability practices and lowering their carbon footprint. Some of their sustainability practices include:

- Switching to green cleaning products and more efficient equipment.
- Implementing a zero-waste program.
- Installing solar panels, solar canopies and a solar power plant.
- Switching to LED fixtures and low-flow toilets.
- Monitoring water usage.
- Planting more greenery.

A new question added to the survey this year asked about respondents' plans to implement artificial intelligence (AI) technology in their building management practices. The majority (41 per cent) said they have not implemented AI technology in their building management. However, almost a quarter (24 per cent) reported they are in the early stages of exploring AI solutions for specific tasks, five per cent reported they have partially integrated AI technology for various building functions, and two per cent have fully embraced AI technology, utilizing it extensively across all building operations.

More than half of respondents admitted that the cost of technology implementation is a concern for them, with 18 per cent responding that it is currently beyond their budget, and 40 per cent responding that they are exploring cost-effective solutions. The cost of technology implementation is manageable for 12 per cent who reported they are actively investing in technology. Cost is not a major concern for five per cent, who have allocated a substantial budget for adopting technology in building management.

Download the full survey [here](#).

SOURCE: CMM Online

## Save Money & the Environment

nancially prudent decision. For businesses that require travel, using fuel-efficient or hybrid vehicles along with encouraging employee carpooling and public transportation can drastically reduce carbon emissions and fuel costs. Leasing vehicles can also be a sustainable option, offering the flexibility to upgrade to more efficient models as newer technologies become available.

### (5) LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY TO REDUCE TRAVEL

The use of technology, particularly virtual meeting platforms, plays a significant role in reducing the need for travel. By conducting meetings with clients and staff online, cleaning companies can significantly cut down on emissions and expenses associated with travel. This not only benefits the environment, but also saves time and resources.

### (6) PRACTICE INFORMED PURCHASING

The cleaning industry is a frequent target of greenwashing: the practice of companies marketing their products and services as ecofriendly without providing

proof of substantial environmental benefits. Cleaning industry professionals must critically assess claims and certifications to ensure that the advertised sustainable practices genuinely contribute to environmental preservation.

### REAP THE BENEFITS

Adopting these six sustainability practices provides both financial and environmental benefits. Financially, companies and facilities can expect lower operational costs due to decreased material consumption, a reduced need for fuel and transportation, as well as fewer expenses for equipment replacement and maintenance. Environmentally, these practices lead to reduced waste, lower carbon emissions and a smaller ecological footprint, contributing positively to sustainability efforts in our communities and across the globe.

— *Stephen P. Ashkin is president of The Ashkin Group, a consulting firm specializing in green cleaning and sustainability. He can be reached at [steve@ashkingroup.com](mailto:steve@ashkingroup.com).*

SOURCE: CMM Online

## ISSA Hygieia Networking & Leadership Conference Lands in Canada

ISSA Canada and the ISSA Hygieia Network are excited to present the Hygieia Networking and Leadership Conference at the Delta Hotels Toronto Mississauga, in Mississauga, ON, on Thursday, April 25.

“We’re thrilled to announce our upcoming networking and leadership conference,” said ISSA Hygieia Network Program Director Dr. Felicia Townsend. “We invite people to come and learn about the significance of workplace relationships and creating allyships through discussions led by our phenomenal line-up of speakers.”

With a theme of *Workplace Allies: The Power of Having Someone in Your Corner*, this conference offers attendees an opportunity to gain new strategies on how to become better advocates and supporters of employees from every

level within an organization. Additionally, they will gain insights into how they can make their organizations more inclusive for everyone to thrive.

Karen Craggs-Milne will kick the session off with her *Turning Good Intentions into Real Impact: Gender Equality and Allyship at Work* workshop. This session will provide a great opportunity for attendees to learn what it takes to achieve gender equality and how to promote allyship within the cleaning industry.

Attendees will then be “inspired” by a panel of experts who will share their individual industry journey’s and motivate attendees to develop a plan for success.

For more information on the 2024 Hygieia Networking & Leadership Conference, please visit the ISSA Canada website at [www.issa-canada.com](http://www.issa-canada.com).

# A Message Worth Repeating: Take Action to Prevent Repetitive Strain Injuries

**O**n International Repetitive Strain Injury Awareness (RSI) Day, February 29, the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) reminded workplaces to take action to prevent one of the leading causes of workplace injuries in Canada.

Work that requires the continual repetition of movements, such as lifting, typing or twisting, can potentially lead to an RSI. These injuries develop slowly over time and can be painful and debilitating, affecting the tendons, muscles, nerves and joints in the back, shoulder, neck, hands, arms and other parts of the body. As well as a worker's ability to perform duties, they can impact mental wellness and quality of life.

According to the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada (AWCBC) National Work Injury, Disease and Fatality Statistics report, there were 10,211 accepted lost-time injuries due to musculoskeletal system and connective tissue diseases and disorders in Canada in 2022 (up 2.5 per cent from 2021).

Many repetitive strain injuries, however, can be prevented by implementing the following measures:

- **Eliminating repetitive work:** Structure jobs so workers can rotate through different tasks using different muscle groups. Mechanize certain tasks, where



possible. Encourage workers to take short, frequent rest breaks.

- **Improving workstation design:** Create workstations that fit the worker, and allow for standing, sitting or sitting-standing positions. Provide appropriate tools and equipment to reduce the force needed to complete tasks, and to avoid muscle strain or awkward postures or positions.

- **Providing education and training:** Train workers on the causes, how to best prevent these injuries, and how to recognize early signs and symptoms.

To help workplaces create awareness about RSIs and prevent injuries, CCOHS has free resources available on the [Repetitive Strain Injury Awareness Day](#) website.

SOURCE: CCOHS

## Musculoskeletal Disorders

Painful disorders of muscles, tendons, and nerves that develop over time from tasks that repeatedly cause stress and injury to tissues.

### Common causes

- **Material handling:** injuries due to repeated lifting, pushing and pulling
- **Workstation design:** poor match between worker and furniture, equipment, and layout
- **Repetitive motion injuries:** risk factors due to awkward body motions, and tools
- **Inadequate job design:** pace of work, production pressure, lack of sufficient time to recover from work

### Watch for symptoms

- Pain
- Joint stiffness
- Muscle tightness
- Redness
- Swelling of the affected area
- Numbness
- "Pins and needles" sensations
- Skin colour changes

### What workplaces can do

Hazards are best eliminated at the source. Focus on eliminating repetitive patterns of work through job design changes:

- Automating tasks
- Increasing the variety of tasks
- Moving between different tasks
- Distributing work more evenly

If elimination of repetitive patterns of work is not possible, focus on:

- **Workplace design:** fitting the workstation to the worker
- **Tool and equipment design:** providing tools that decrease the force needed and do not require awkward positions
- **Assistive devices:** using carts, hoists, or other mechanical handling devices
- **Work practices:** training workers, allowing rest periods, and giving workers more job control

Be aware of the causes and develop a prevention program. Educate and train workers, encourage early reporting of symptoms, and identify and control job-related risk factors.

## Four Habits to Help Grow Your Commercial Cleaning Business

as a customer that is inconsistent with what you anticipate; it likely lessened the trust you had in the brand and perhaps impacted your decision to spend money there in the future.

It is important to remind your cleaners and managers how to celebrate consistency so that it continues to be a strong asset for a customer choosing your company. Keep the motivation high for continuously providing excellent levels of consistent service.

### SPEND THE TIME

We live in a time of more uncertainty than we might have had a few years ago. When the business landscape changes, commercial cleaners feel an impact and that is certainly happening today. However, we have been through impactful times before, and one of the things we can offer our clients is the certainty of good, reliable service.

As an industry, we are important in the daily achievements of other businesses. By ourselves to a high standard of operations and being dedicated to those customer relationships, we can grow our own commercial cleaning businesses while remaining a much-appreciated constant in a changing landscape.

— *Doug Flaig is president of Status Building Solutions, a janitorial services franchise organization. Flaig has spent over 20 years in the world of multi-unit retail overseeing hundreds of franchise retail locations. Prior to joining Stratus Building Solutions, he served as Chief Operating Officer with Safe Facility Services, a janitorial services provider headquartered in Thousand Oaks, CA.*

SOURCE: FC&M Magazine, REMI Network

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**April 25:** **ISSA Hygiene Networking & Leadership Conference**, Delta Hotels Toronto Mississauga, Mississauga, ON. 9:00 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. (Eastern). [Click here](#) for more information.

**May 1:** **BSC Webinar: The Secret to Success in Business is Retention**, 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. (Eastern). [Click here](#) for more information.

**May 6:** **ISSA Webinar Reveal: Updated Value of Clean® Tool**, 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. (Eastern). [Click here](#) for more information.

**May 15:** ISSA Hygiene Webinar, **Juggling Act: Thriving as a Working Parent Across Every Stage of Parenthood**, 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. (Eastern). [Click here](#) for more information.

**July 16, 18, 23 & 25:** **CMI Train the Trainer**, Virtual Event, Noon to 4:00 p.m. (Eastern). [Click here](#) for more information.

**November 18-21:** **ISSA Show North America 2024**, – Mandalay Bay Convention Center, Las Vegas. [Click here](#) for more information.

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## How Commercial Cleaners Can Help Customers Achieve Their ESG Goals

a difference. By prioritizing ESG, companies can improve their financial performance, reduce risks, enhance their brand reputation, and attract and retain top talent.

— Peter J. Sheldon Sr. is the Chief Strategy Officer at Anago Cleaning Systems and facilitator of the company's system wide ESG implementation program. Anago Cleaning Systems was recently awarded an EcoVadis Silver medal Sustainability Rating, placing the brand in the top 25 per cent of companies within the facility services industry focused on ESG initiatives, based on a scoring system in environmental practices, ethics, labour, human rights and sustainable procurement.

SOURCE: FC&M Magazine



# The ISSA CIMS Standard and the Building Service Contractor

How the industry leading standard is elevating the commercial cleaning sector

**T**he ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS) is a standard many have heard of, but many more are now mandating to work in their facilities.

The CIMS Standard is the first consensus-based management standard that outlines the primary characteristics of a successful, quality-driven cleaning organization.

Why? Because it is designed to assist organizations thoroughly understand their customers' service requirements and manage their organizations in a manner that is predicated on ensuring quality, efficiency and overall customer satisfaction.

Post-COVID, facility owners and managers are striving to ensure public health and safety in their buildings. As such, they are increasingly looking toward commercial cleaning companies who have achieved CIMS certification to service their facilities.

ISSA Canada recently held a Coffee Talk Forum which took a look at the CIMS Standard from the building service contractor perspective. The episode featured ISSA Canada's Building Service Contractor Council Chair **Ken Hilder**, and representatives from the BSC sector — **Christina Worobec** (*Scandinavian Building Services*), **Yiannis Boutsalis** (*Impact Cleaning Services*) and **Robert Scott** (*Bee-Clean Building Maintenance*), who discussed why their companies became CIMS certified, and what CIMS has done to not only strengthen their businesses, but also elevate their companies to an elite level.

The conversation began with representatives outlining how they became aware of CIMS and why the decision was made to achieve certification. Impact Cleaning Services has been certified since 2009, while Bee-Clean has maintained certifica-

tion since 2010 and Scandinavian Building Services since 2016.

Boutsalis highlighted the benefits of the CIMS certification, including consistency in health and safety practices, supply chain management, as well as operational outcomes. He also mentioned that the process of becoming CIMS certified took approximately six months and involved a significant team effort. In addition to the benefits Boutsalis mentioned, Scott added that the certification also helped Bee-Clean build out its Environmental Social Governance (ESG) programming, a subject that is currently a top priority of many companies.

When Scandinavian began the certification process, Worobec said that she found it somewhat daunting, but quickly realized that it was a practical exercise to document existing processes and identify areas for improvement. She emphasized the importance of having a team effort and subject matter expertise when implementing required changes.

For Impact, the CIMS certification provided a universal language for their business to expand across Canada, and it raised the company's standards above minimum requirements. All of the participants agreed that the CIMS certification was a valuable investment for their respective businesses.

The conversation concluded with guests providing tips to those who may be interested in pursuing CIMS certification for their own businesses. Everyone agreed that the entire process was a worthwhile one, and they maintain their certifications as it does provide their firms with a competitive advantage.

To learn more about the CIMS Standard, visit the [ISSA Canada website](#). To watch this episode of *Coffee Talk Forum*, please visit the [ISSA Canada YouTube Channel](#).

# Stand Out From the Crowd

Validate services to build lasting trust.

**Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS) Advanced by GBAC** assures excellence for quality - driven building service contractors and in-house organizations that strive to maintain hygienic environments for the benefit of building occupants.

 **80%** Reported **Sales Growth**



 **79%** Reported an **Increase** in **Customer Retention**

 **79%** Reported a **Decrease** in **Employee Turnover**

 **3/4** Reported a **Profit Increase**

 **9/10** Reported a **Reduction** in **Operational Expenses**

 **88%** Reported an **Increase** in **Productivity**

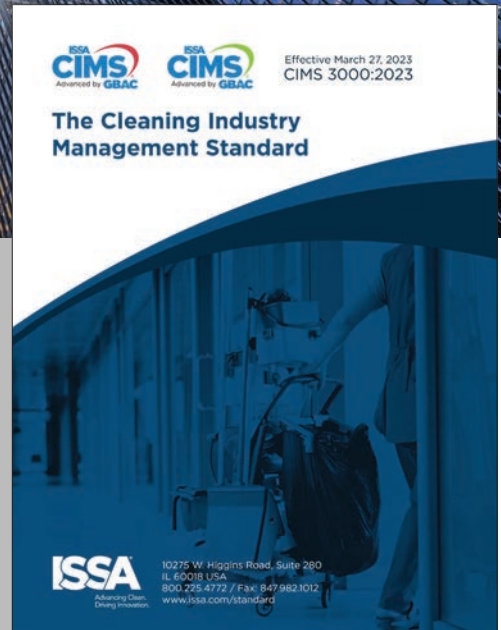
 **85%** **Reduction** in **Work Related Injuries**

Learn more



[cims.issa.com](https://cims.issa.com)

# Occupant Safety Concerns? We've Got You Covered.



## Why Choose ISSA's Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS)?

Choose CIMS Advanced by GBAC to achieve optimal operations in your organization.

- A comprehensive certification for quality driven building service contractors and in-house cleaning organizations.
- Created to maintain hygienic environments for the benefit of building occupants.

Download the Standard  
[cims.issa.com](https://cims.issa.com)

*“The CIMS Standard assures TCS employees and customers that systems are in place that instill quality service for all and that we will continue to refine and improve our delivery of services to benefit all stakeholders.”* – **Rada Bishenkevich | Project Manager**

### Enhanced Criteria

The CIMS Standard has been bolstered by critical elements from the GBAC STAR accreditation program.

### Evolved Certification

The first major update of components for the CIMS Standard since its inclusion of the Green Building (GB) elements aligning with LEED building certification requirement.

### Empowered Organizations

GBAC's expertise in infection prevention best practices will help cleaning service providers support their customers and help internal stakeholders create more hygienic environments for building occupants.



For more information visit [cims.issa.com](https://cims.issa.com)