

WINTER 2025

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ISSA
CIMS CORNER

NEWS, VIEWS AND INFORMATION FOR THE FACILITY SERVICE PROVIDER

NEW TECHNOLOGY



Combining Real-Life & Virtual Training for Ultimate Skill Development

The future of training just got real

By NICKIE DWYER

Everyone learns in different ways. The challenge for many businesses is finding a training method that allows each associate to understand and retain what they have learned over time.

Simulation-based training is com-

monplace in the healthcare, aviation, military, and defense industries. Now, it's becoming a more popular option within facility management and the skilled trades – and the benefits are proving to be unmatched.

IMMERSING EMPLOYEES IN LIFE-LIKE TRAINING

Simulation-based training presents immersive, interactive scenarios that mirror tasks and challenges that workers will face on the job. In healthcare, for example, med-

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SUSTAINABILITY
One Solution,
Endless Possibilities



SIMPLICITY
Floor Care
Made Simple



MADE IN CANADA
Perfect Finishes for
Every Space



PRODUCTIVITY
Revolutionize
Floor Maintenance



DUSTBANE
Give Meaning To Your Cleaning

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SUSTAINABILITY



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- Ideal for contract cleaners aiming for **efficiency** and **quality**

Combining Real-Life & Virtual Training for Ultimate Skill Development

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ical students will meet a simulated “patient” who presents with an array of symptoms. Students can then diagnose and treat the patient, with no risk to a real human being.

In facility management, the concept is the same: trainees receive a task they will be required to perform in the field, in an environment that mirrors the real one they will work in – without any risk to the learner, equipment, or facilities.

At SSC Services for Education, which provides facility management, custodial services, and ground management for K-12 schools and higher education institutions across the United States, simulation-based training is a core element of professional development offerings available to employees. Employees and employers alike have seen the positive impact of simulation training in daily operations, both for frontline associates and within apprenticeship programs for the skilled trades.

TAPPING INTO TECHNOLOGY

Workers can do simulation training entirely in-person, with real recreations of environments and tasks. However, this training is more applicable and realistic when delivered through technology.

For example, associates might have to learn the proper procedure for replacing a ceiling tile in an office from start to finish. A simulation training scenario can walk them through each step – from the moment they open the office door to the clean-up after they have completed the task.

Technology-based simulation training allows businesses to develop customized scenarios – including everything from specific locations to the required tools that team members will encounter in their day-to-day jobs.

In addition to web-based simulation training, many programs offer a virtual reality (VR) component, complete with VR goggles similar to those found in an arcade. VR truly immerses employees into the test environment, allowing them to “walk around” their space, use their hands to interact with tools and materials, and effectively train in a real-world scenario, with no risk in making mistakes.

BANISHING VR MISCONCEPTIONS

A common concern SSC Services has

heard from associates who use VR training in the facility maintenance space is the risk of motion sickness like nausea or dizziness.

When thinking about VR, many people automatically visualize viral moments of people running into things wearing VR goggles, or getting sick on a VR roller-coaster. However, these scenarios involve fast-moving examples that make the brain feel like it’s not in a safe space.

Facility management VR training is slow paced, with no rapidly moving environments or scenes. When using VR for facility management training, employees are simply visualizing themselves doing tasks like walking into a library, identifying an air duct, walking over to it, and repairing it.

Another common misconception is that VR training requires a large, empty room or open space. Realistically, employees can safely participate in VR training while seated, or in a small, five-by-five or seven-by-seven foot space.

BUILDING MUSCLE MEMORY FOR SAFETY

Beyond staying up-to-date with the latest technology, many practical benefits arise in utilizing simulation-based and VR training in facility management.

Safety is a key concern for facility managers when training new associates. With VR training programs, every simulation and knowledge check has safety procedures built in, which creates “muscle memory” for the safety steps that the learner needs to take to implement the task in the real world. Simulation training also allows for risk-free trial and error, and gives team members the confidence to learn hands-on while making mistakes they can learn from, without the real-world consequences.

Facility maintenance team members can use simulation training to learn how to replace plumbing systems without the risk of bursting a pipe or flooding a building, or learn to rewire electrical systems without the obvious electrocution risk. For associates who learn better by taking a hands-on approach, this is a great way for them to dive in without risking their own safety, the safety of others, or potentially causing damage to facilities or equipment.

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contractor's corner

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International Cleaning Week

Honoring Cleaning Professionals Around the World

International Cleaning Week takes place March 23-29, 2025. The week-long event hosted by ISSA, the worldwide cleaning industry association, and supported by ISSA Canada, introduces innovative new resources to empower cleaning-industry professionals globally.

For five consecutive years, ISSA has hosted this celebration at the end of March. This year, ISSA will expand engagement opportunities by featuring new resources designed to showcase the cleaning industry's critical role in protecting public health and boosting economic impact.

"International Cleaning Week 2025 represents a transformative moment for our industry," said ISSA Executive Director John Barrett. "The new Spotless Spaces Competition, enhanced partnership toolkit, and comprehensive programming provide significant opportunities for our industry to demonstrate its value and impact."

International Cleaning Week 2025 offers multiple new engagement pathways including:

- **Spotless Spaces Competition** – This exclusive ISSA-member benefit allows cleaning and facilities teams to showcase their exceptional environments on a global stage. Members can nominate their spaces by February 14 to highlight their critical work in maintaining clean, safe, healthy facilities.

- **Comprehensive Partnership Toolkit** – This expanded resource features branded graphics, pre-written social media content, and e-

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Combining Real-Life & Virtual Training for Ultimate Skill Development

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CONSIDERING THE PRACTICALITIES

Technology-based training is an investment in employees. The financial commitment is offset by the ability to train a large number of associates effectively and efficiently through smart scheduling and rotations.

With simulation training, it's essential to build out a schedule explaining who will be using the technology, reserving their time block, and detailing what they are expected to accomplish within that window. Employees not scheduled for simulation training can remain working in the field or participate in other forms of education.

The training schedule is similar for VR. It's not necessary to have a large quantity of VR goggles or simulation training subscriptions. Employers can assign associates blocks of time to utilize the available goggles. Organizations simply need to set schedules that are appropriate for their associates' growth and the organization's needs.

When training is complete, the programs offer reports with beneficial information for employers. While different programs and technologies will come with different offerings, some of the most common features employers can access include:

- **Completion rates:** Percentage of assigned learnings an associate has completed.
- **Pass/fail recaps:** Number of successful and unsuccessful attempts an associate has taken in a certain scenario.
- **Lifetime statistics:** Overall company data on hours of training completed, as well as data on specific associates' progress over time.

Some simulation training platforms offer technology that can incentivize training. As associates complete courses or hours of training, they can earn points to redeem for gift cards, prizes, and more. When choosing a simulation training company, investigate supplemental details, such as incentivized training, to add additional value for your workforce.



MEASURING ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT

In addition to continual employee development, determine the additional business impacts of a new training method. Set associate goals in tandem with simulation training. Think about milestones your organization is looking to achieve. At SSC Services, employers track the amount of time spent on each work order that matches up to a simulation training scenario, as well as the number of recalls that occur after a work order has been resolved. Improvements in those numbers can correlate to training success. Regardless of what is measured, it's important to set reasonable goals and choose a milestone that can be reflected in the data.

As technology continues to improve and evolve, employers must lean into change. Simulation and VR training are becoming more popular and prevalent, and the benefits extend far beyond ease of use.

The goal of any training program should be to help associates retain knowledge while allowing organizations to improve processes. Businesses that use simulation and VR training programs will see tangible changes in both associate performance and business operations.

– *Nickie Dwyer is a training and development manager with SSC Services for Education, an industry-leading provider of educational facility management services. She is passionate about building highly skilled teams and creating opportunities for growth at all levels of the organization through frontline development programs, management training, and apprenticeships.*

SOURCE: CMM Online



Winning Contracts

By ADAM POVLITZ

In the competitive commercial cleaning industry, mastering bidding and estimating is crucial for business success, particularly for carpet and floor jobs. Accurate and effective bidding ensures profitability, helps build trust, and nurtures long-term client relationships.

Let's explore the top five best practices that can set you apart:

1. Thoroughly understand the scope of work.

Before submitting a bid, it's crucial to fully understand the scope of the work required and client expectations. This includes:

- *On-site inspections:* Always perform thorough on-site inspections. Assess the size, condition, and unique cleaning requirements of the space. Pay attention to flooring types, soiling levels, and any special considerations.
- *Client interviews:* Engage with clients to understand their expectations, previous experiences, and preferred schedules. Tailor your bid to meet their specific needs.
- *Detailed notes and photos:* Take com-

prehensive notes and photographs during your inspection. This information is invaluable when creating a precise estimate and can serve as a reference point during the job.

In-person visits give you the chance to share your story and get a clear understanding of what the client expects. Building a personal connection and providing outstanding service will significantly boost your chances of winning the bid.

2. Develop a comprehensive pricing strategy.

Creating a competitive yet profitable pricing strategy is essential. Consider the following elements:

- *Cost of materials and supplies:* Calculate the cost of cleaning solutions, equipment depreciation, and any additional required carpet or floor products.
- *Labour costs:* Include wages of your cleaning staff, taking into account the time required for the job and any overtime that might be necessary.
- *Overhead costs:* Factor in your business's overhead costs, such as insurance,

administrative expenses, taxes, and transportation.

- *Profit margin:* Ensure your pricing includes a reasonable profit margin that reflects the quality of your service and expertise.

A comprehensive pricing strategy ensures fair, competitive rates that enhance profitability while meeting client expectations and needs.

3. Leverage technology for accurate estimations

Using technology can enhance the accuracy and efficiency of your estimates:

- *Estimation software:* Utilize professional estimation software tailored for the cleaning industry. These tools can help automate calculations, reduce errors, and speed up the bidding process.
- *Mobile apps:* Mobile apps for site inspections and data collection can streamline the process, allowing you to gather and organize information on the go.
- *CRM systems:* Customer relationship management (CRM) platforms can track

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Global Cleaning Industry Weighs in on LEED-EB Version 5

Feedback sparks positive change in the recognition of frontline workers

By STEPHEN P. ASHKIN

For two decades, the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy for Environmental Design for Existing Buildings Rating System (LEED-EB) has set the standard for green cleaning programs. Today, approximately 30 per cent of all cleaning products are green-certified, and more facilities and service providers are recognized for their sustainable cleaning practices. To maintain the rating system's rigor, the USGBC updates LEED-EB every five years, with Version 5 currently in development.

The USGBC's main challenge for this update is balancing the interests of various industries, each vying for more points on LEED's 110-point scale. These points signify the importance of industries pertaining to cleaning services, building materials, HVAC systems, and water/energy efficiency in a facility's sustainability rating. Advocacy groups, labour unions, and communities also seek prioritization of their issues in sustainable building construction, operations, and maintenance.

THE CLEANING INDUSTRY TAKES A HIT IN ROUND ONE

In April, the USGBC released

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client interactions, preferences, and history, which allows you to create more personalized and competitive bids.

By using technology, your business boosts profitability and efficiency, making it more competitive and client-friendly.

4. Present a professional and detailed proposal.

A well-crafted proposal can make a significant difference in winning a bid:

- *Clear and concise format:* Structure your proposal clearly, with sections for scope of work, pricing, scheduling, and terms and conditions.

- *Cost breakdown:* Provide a breakdown of the cost per cleaning service. This upfront transparency builds trust with the client.

- *Highlight your expertise:* Include information about your company, certifications, and past successful projects, and align your solution with the client's needs. Testimonials and case studies can also strengthen your proposal.

- *Visual aids:* Incorporate photos, diagrams, and charts to illustrate your points and make your proposal more engaging.

A professional proposal demonstrates your commitment to quality, instills confidence in your clients, and clearly conveys the value and scope of your services.

5. Follow-up and communication

Effective communication is key to closing deals and ensuring client satisfaction:

- *Timely and regular follow-up:* After submitting your bid, follow-up with the client to address any questions or concerns. Keep in mind that this may be a lengthy process and could require several follow-up communications. This proactive approach shows your commitment, setting you apart from competitors who fail to follow-up.

Winning Contracts

- *Regular updates:* Keep clients informed throughout the bidding process and the duration of the job. Regular updates on progress and any unforeseen issues help maintain transparency and trust.

- *Feedback and adjustments:* After completing the job, seek client feedback and be prepared to make necessary adjustments. Continual improvement based on client feedback can enhance your service quality and reputation.

If you don't get the bid, ask why. This is important. Getting feedback will help you refine your approach for future bids. Every new proposal is an opportunity to highlight your company's value and gain valuable insights to learn and subsequently improve.

Adopting these best practices can significantly improve your success rate in bidding and estimating for commercial cleaning, and carpet and floor projects. Thoroughly understanding the scope of work, developing a comprehensive pricing strategy, leveraging technology, presenting professional proposals, and maintaining effective communication are all critical components. Implementing these strategies will help you win more bids, and ensure that your projects are profitable and clients are satisfied.

Remember, in the competitive commercial cleaning industry, attention to detail, professionalism, and consistent quality service will set you apart.

— Adam Povlitz is CEO and president of Anago Cleaning Systems, one of the world's leading franchised commercial cleaning brands. With over 1800 franchisees across North America, Anago is a leader in technological advances related to business operations and facilities services.

SOURCE: CMM Online

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Embrace the Rise of Autonomous Cleaning

Research before you buy to boost your facility's cleaning efficiency

By RAYMOND FYLER

As the influence of autonomous cleaning rapidly expands across trade shows, industry publications, and the internet, facility maintenance teams must navigate beyond the noise to make the right decisions regarding autonomous equipment for their business operations.

The growth of autonomous cleaning got a boost during the COVID-19 pandemic with the renewed importance placed on cleaning. At the same time, businesses have struggled with labour shortages, forcing them to look to alternative ways of boosting efficiency, such

as robotic cleaning. These labour challenges are impacting just about every industry across the continent, from hospitality, healthcare, and education facilities to sports and entertainment venues. Ultimately, facility maintenance teams must identify cost-efficient ways while also maintaining a clean environment.

Facility managers committed to doing their due diligence have been researching all aspects of autonomy to see if it makes sense for their cleaning teams. However, before purchasing robotic cleaners, key considerations go beyond the return on investment. As a facility manager, you should consider the equipment's features and benefits, the avail-

ability of training and support, and how its use will affect management within your organization.

ANALYSE THE FEATURES AND BENEFITS

When considering an investment in robotic equipment, you must first understand the current cleaning jobs performed within your organization and what you expect to accomplish from moving to robotics.

Are you looking for a robot with remote deployment? Robotic cleaners linked to an app can work without someone present in the building. You simply set the robot's schedule online, and it

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Global Cleaning Industry Weighs in on LEED-EB Version 5

its proposed changes to LEED-EB: Operations & Maintenance for the first public comment period. LEED-EB is the leading green building rating system, with more than 100,000 certified commercial and institutional buildings, as well as more than 500,000 certified homes worldwide.

While the initial proposed changes offered overall improvements, they fell short in:

1. Adequately recognizing the importance of cleaning in safeguarding occupant health.
2. Ensuring worker training in proper cleaning protocols.
3. Addressing the equity challenges faced by low-wage cleaning service workers.

The global cleaning industry mobilized to voice its concerns in response to these shortcomings. Industry members submitted hundreds of comments, and industry representatives met directly with USGBC leaders to address the credits and prerequisites impacting the cleaning sector.

Key organizations involved in this mobilization included ISSA, Building Service Contractors Association International (BSCAI), Cleaning Coalition of America, Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC), International Facility Management Association (IFMA), 32BJ Training Fund, and Green Cleaning Network China. Individual service providers, product manufacturers, distributors, and consultants joined them. This collective effort led to significant changes in the latest LEED-EB version released for the second public comment period in September 2024.

SECOND TRY BRINGS IMPROVEMENTS

One of the most notable changes to come out of the second comment period was the increase in points al-

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will deploy and clean based on those directions.

If you want proof of performance, autonomous equipment can also provide that. Robots can share high-level data showing your workers' hourly productivity, the total square footage cleaned, and more. The specific features for you to consider vary depending on your overall business objectives; some robots can use recycled water to meet sustainability goals, while others operate at different noise levels and with different safety ratings.

An additional benefit of investing in autonomy is that it shows clients and facility inhabitants that you are committed to innovation and maintaining a clean environment.

SEEK TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Now that you have researched the features and benefits of autonomous equipment, you are ready to engage with suppliers. However, before making a significant purchase, think through what your operation will look like once the robot is on-site.

Depending on the type of robot, the technology can range from straightforward to sophisticated. Determine whether your facility management team will be able to understand and implement the technology. Ask if the technology provider has someone available to train staff in the facility and how the provider will respond if an issue occurs. For example, if crews have a problem with the robot in the middle of the night, what service agreement is in place to resolve the issue? If a robot is out of service, it's like a human employee calling in sick; you still need to figure out how to get the work done.

Another factor to consider is the availability of parts, particularly if the robotics manufacturer is located outside of the United States or Canada. As demand for autonomous equipment increases, more providers are shipping parts to warehouses in North America and expanding locations of service centres. Speed of service is critical to operations, so knowing that your parts are on hand or just a drop ship away could mean the difference between a frustrating experience and a successful deployment.

Embrace the Rise of Autonomous Cleaning

CONSIDER THE EFFECTS OF AUTONOMY ON MANAGEMENT

The next consideration before purchasing and implementing a robotic cleaner is its effect on personnel within the organization. Taking the following proactive steps can help ensure your facility meets its strategic business objectives.

- Clearly communicate the autonomous equipment implementation plan to your team so everyone understands their roles.
- Identify a contingency plan for training and support as well as for technical issues.
- After implementation, identify potential operational pain points.
- If you identify areas that need adjustments, retrain team members to improve the efficiency and productivity of your cleaning operation.

If you properly communicate the value of autonomy to your team members, they will understand that robotic cleaning won't replace their jobs but instead enhances their work. Ease their concerns about task changes by explaining that the robotic cleaner will allow them to transition to more meaningful, high-touch functions that benefit facility visitors the most. For example, when robotic equipment frees up their time so they can clean the windows at the front entrance, they can positively affect the visitor experience by greeting everyone who enters.

EMBRACE THE TRANSFORMATION

Autonomous cleaning equipment is here to stay. When facility managers plan and execute its implementation properly, robotic cleaning enables organizations to provide healthier, safer, and cleaner environments.

Finding the right trusted partner will help you navigate challenges and evaluate the technology for potential gaps. With the right steps in place, you can take your facility's cleaning operation to the next level.

— Raymond Fyler is the director of Equipment Sales & Service at BradyPLUS. He brings valuable insights into cleaning robotics and operational efficiency, driving innovation for his clients and transformational changes in the field.

SOURCE: CMM Online



Smarter Floor Care

Unlocking Efficiency, Safety and Sustainability

By CAREN OLMEDO

For building service contractors and facility service providers, effective floor care is more than a routine task, it's an essential component of operational success. Yet, many organizations face challenges that hinder their efficiency, from hazardous conditions to employee turnover and inconsistent training practices. Addressing these issues requires a smarter approach to floor care that enhances processes, reduces costs, and aligns with sustainability goals.

IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEMS

Floor care challenges often stem from systemic issues, such as:

- **Hazardous areas:** Slip-and-fall incidents account for 40 per cent of workplace injuries in Canada, often due to unaddressed residue or surface damage. How confident are you that your facility has identified these high-risk zones?
- **Flooring types:** Understanding the

flooring type, care, and maintenance practices can be a real challenge leading to expensive mistakes, damage and hidden costs. Are your cleaning methods optimized for the specific flooring materials in your facility?

- **Inefficient processes:** Managing multiple SKUs, training gaps, and inconsistent cleaning practices can lead to operational inefficiencies. When was the last time your business audited its cleaning processes?
- **Sustainability pressures:** Customers and stakeholders are increasingly demanding eco-friendly practices. Are your vendors aligned with your environmental goals?

Auditing your floor care processes can feel daunting, but leveraging partnerships with industry experts can make the task manageable and insightful. For example, engaging partners to conduct **site surveys** can uncover overlooked hazards, improve workflows, and recom-

mend tailored solutions.

STREAMLINING OPERATIONS

Efficiency begins with simplification. A common issue for contractors is managing an overwhelming number of products. Reducing SKUs by consolidating to multi-purpose solutions can:

- Reduce inventory costs and storage needs.
- Simplify training for cleaning teams, ensuring knowledge retention.
- Know your environment to ensure effective removal or application of floor care solutions.

Additionally, maintaining consistent cleaning schedules and reinforcing training through repetition helps ensure best practices are followed long-term. These measures not only reduce errors but also lower employee turnover by creating a supportive work environment where staff feels empowered.

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Global Cleaning Industry Weighs in on LEED-EB Version 5

located to cleaning, rising from just one point in Version 4.1 to five in Version 5. This five-fold increase underscores the value of cleaning in maintaining healthy and sustainable buildings. The additional points are expected to lead to better worker training, more thorough cleaning practices, and increased demand for green products and services. These changes will likely boost the financial standing of companies that meet the new LEED requirements.

The second comment period for LEED-EB v5 also brought significant updates related to sustainability and social equity. These updates positively affect the 100 million frontline cleaning workers worldwide by addressing wages, benefits, training, and worker protections.

LEED-EB v5 also provides up to 13 points for waste management, with a focus on workers who handle, sort, and manage waste, recycling, and composting. These points further highlight the essential role that cleaning staff play in achieving sustainability goals.

Version 5 brings a greater emphasis on safety and procedural training, highlighting ergonomics and using personal protective equipment (PPE) such as headgear, eye protection, respiratory gear, and fall prevention tools. The updated standards also ensure that staff have the right to take breaks, access essential services, and receive protection from extreme weather conditions, such as during snow removal or while working outdoors in high heat.

A POSITIVE OUTLOOK FOR LEED-EB v5

Although LEED-EB v5 is still being finalized, it is moving in a promising direction and is slated to be formally released early this year. The latest updates benefit facility occupants, the environment, and the global cleaning industry, high-

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Third Annual Chili Cook-Off Heats Up Orleans Despite Freezing Temperatures

The Third Annual Chili Cook-Off, benefiting Cleaning for a Reason — an ISSA Charities™ signature program that provides free home cleaning services for cancer patients in Canada and the United States — was an outstanding success.

Held at the Taproom 260 in Orleans, ON, the event defied the frigid -25°C temperatures as over 160 guests gathered to sample the flavorful creations of eight seasoned chili chefs.

This year's Chili Cook-Off was so popular that many of the chili chefs ran out well before the end of the event. Despite the shortage, Shannon Hall wowed fans with her quick-thinking improvisation, serving up a special “Mac ‘N Cheese cas-

serole” that became a hit with attendees.

The competition crowned Matthew Lewis, a veteran of several culinary contests, as the winner with an impressive score of 163 votes. Event organizer John Riches tied for second place with a score of 144.

Four celebrity judges presided over the event, adding excitement to the tasting experience. Beyond the delicious food, the event raised over \$7,000 in preliminary fundraising efforts for Cleaning for a Reason.

If you'd like to support this impactful cause, contributions can still be made through the [GoFundMe](#) page for the Cleaning for a Reason Chili Cook-Off.

Celebrating a Year of Community & Connections

The past year was filled with incredible achievements for ISSA and its members. Together, we strengthened our community, built meaningful connections, and made a lasting impact on the cleaning and facility solutions industry. Take a moment to relive the highlights, and see how collaboration drove innovation and excellence.

Looking ahead to 2025, we're excited to continue expanding our network and advancing our shared mission. Thank you for being an essential part



of the ISSA family—let's see what we can achieve together in the year ahead.

Not a member? Don't miss the chance to connect with industry professionals. Join today at www.issa-canada.com.



What's in Your Cleaning Chemicals?

Safe and effective cleaning means understanding the science of cleaning chemicals

By DR. GAVIN MACGREGOR-SKINNER

The cleaning industry plays a vital role in maintaining health and safety, ensuring that workplaces, public spaces, and homes are free from harmful pathogens and pollutants. Most people spend 90 per cent of their time in built environments. However, for facility managers who are responsible for cleaning and maintenance, and for frontline essential cleaning professionals, understanding the ingredients in cleaning products is critical – not only for the effectiveness of the cleaning products but also for the safety of the workers who use them.

ISSA, the worldwide cleaning industry association, emphasizes the importance of training in the cleaning industry, conducting in-person workshops for “essential cleaning

professionals.” These workshops highlight the significant knowledge gaps among workers, particularly in their understanding of the chemicals they handle daily.

Cleaning is an investment in human health, the environment, and an improved bottom line. ISSA aims to bridge the knowing-doing gap (the disconnect between knowledge and action) by providing essential insights into the ingredients found in cleaning products and the potential risks associated with their use.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INGREDIENT KNOWLEDGE

ISSA research highlights the alarming fact that 90 per cent of participants could not recall a single ingredient in the cleaning product they used at work. This lack of

awareness poses a significant risk to both workers and the environments they clean.

Cleaning products are categorised into general-purpose cleaners and specialty cleaners, such as kitchen, bathroom, glass, carpet, floor care, and furniture cleaners. Each of these products may contain a wide variety of chemical ingredients, each with its own specific purpose, such as surfactants, solvents, bleaches, enzymes, and more.

Understanding these ingredients is crucial because different chemicals may react differently when combined or when exposed to various conditions, such as heat or light. This awareness is not just about knowing what is in the product but also understanding how these chemicals inter-

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Smarter Floor Care: Unlocking Efficiency, Safety and Sustainability

ENHANCING SAFETY

Safety risks associated with floor care are not just seasonal. Year-round hazards, like spills or neglected maintenance, can result in costly liabilities. Partnering with experts to identify these risks during a **site survey** ensures proactive care, preventing accidents and disruptions. This approach also fosters a safer environment for employees and visitors alike.

SUSTAINABILITY: A STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Sustainability is no longer optional, it's an expectation. By choosing suppliers with robust Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs, you can align your organization's goals with impactful initiatives, like "Buy 1, We Plant 1," or giving back to the community. Collaborating with local, Canadian vendors ensures access to reliable partners invested in your long-term success.

Beyond environmental benefits, sustainable cleaning practices also yield operational advantages. Certified eco-friendly solutions reduce waste and extend the lifespan of cleaning equipment and flooring materials, maximizing ROI while supporting green initiatives.

BUILDING A SMARTER FUTURE

Smarter floor care is more than maintaining clean surfaces, it's about creating efficient, safe, and sustainable processes that contribute to the success of your business. By auditing your operations, leveraging expert support through site surveys, and prioritizing training and sustainability, contractors can unlock significant growth opportunities while reducing costs.

The question is: Are you ready to take the first step?

— *Caren Olmedo is the Marketing Specialist at Dustbane Products Ltd. She can be reached at colmedo@dustbane.ca*

What's in Your Cleaning Chemicals?

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act and what safety precautions should be taken.

COMMON INGREDIENTS IN CLEANING PRODUCTS

Surfactants: These are critical in most cleaning products, helping the product to wet surfaces, emulsify greasy soils, and lift away dirt.

Solvents: These dissolve soils, making them easier to remove. However, some solvents can be hazardous, especially when inhaled, so proper ventilation and protective equipment are essential.

Builders: Builders adjust the pH of the cleaning product, optimizing cleaning performance and suspending soils.

Bleaches: These chemicals oxidize and remove soils, often lightening the colour of stains. Bleaches can be particularly hazardous if mixed with other chemicals, such as ammonia, leading to the production of toxic gases.

Enzymes: These accelerate chemical reactions, breaking down soils more effectively.

Chelants: These bind to positively charged metal ions like calcium and magnesium in water, to prevent them from interfering with the cleaning process. Without chelates, more surfactants would be needed, or users would have to use more cleaning products, increasing the cost and potential exposure to chemicals.

Biological additives: These break down organic soils into smaller particles, allowing them to be more easily emulsified by surfactants and removed.

Preservatives: To ensure that cleaning products remain effective for months after production, preservatives are added. These prevent the growth of bacteria or mould within the product itself, which could otherwise degrade its effectiveness.

RISK ASSOCIATED WITH CHEMICAL INGREDIENTS

While the ingredients in cleaning products are designed to be effective, they also come with potential risks. If used incorrectly they can be toxic, explosive, flammable, self-reactive, oxidizing, or corrosive. Exposure to certain chemicals can cause health issues ranging from minor irritations to serious conditions like asthma or cancer.

Inhalation of volatile organic com-

pounds (VOCs) from cleaning products can worsen indoor air quality, leading to respiratory issues. The way a product is applied can also influence exposure levels. For example, aerosol sprays disperse chemicals in fine droplets, which are more likely to be inhaled, whereas pump dispensers emit larger droplets that are less likely to be inhaled but may cause skin contact issues.

Moreover, some chemicals in cleaning products can react with substances in the air, such as ozone, to produce secondary pollutants like formaldehyde, which are harmful to human health.

THE ROLE OF LABELS AND SAFETY DATA SHEETS (SDS)

Understanding the chemical ingredients in cleaning products is not just about safety but also about compliance. Products containing hazardous chemicals must be accompanied by a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) that provides detailed information on the chemical's identity, health and physical hazards, exposure limits, and necessary precautions.

However, as mentioned, many workers do not know how to interpret the information provided on these labels or in an SDS. For instance, terms like "handle in accordance with good industrial hygiene and safety practice" are often too vague for workers to implement effectively.

To address this, it is crucial for employers and facility managers to provide training on how to read and understand product labels and safety data sheets. Workers should be taught to recognize hazardous chemicals and understand the risks associated with them. For example, labels might list a solvent like 2-butoxyethanol under different names like butyl cellosolve or butyl glycol or ethylene glycol monobutyl ether (EGBE), making it difficult for workers to identify if it is a hazardous substance.

MAKING INFORMED CHOICES

As the industry moves towards safer and more sustainable cleaning practices, there is a growing need for education and technical assistance to help protect the health of buildings, occupants, and the environment. ISSA is partnering with universities and community colleges to develop

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Growing Your Cleaning & Maintenance Services Business

Building Your Business in 2025

By ALEX CARAVAGGIO

Now is the perfect time to refine your strategy for growing your commercial cleaning and maintenance business. Increasing your client base doesn't have to involve a hefty financial investment — it's about focusing on innovative, actionable tactics that deliver results.

Here are the top six easy-to-implement tips to help you attract more clients and set your company up for success this year.

Leverage referrals and testimonials: Referrals and testimonials are powerful tools for building trust and credibility. Satisfied clients can become your best ad-

vocates, so don't hesitate to ask for referrals, and publish them on your website and social media channels.

Optimize your online presence: An effective online presence is critical for attracting potential clients. Ensure your website and social media profiles are professional, current, and informative. To enhance your online visibility:

- Use local SEO strategies, such as optimizing your website with location-specific keywords (e.g., "commercial cleaning services in [city]")
- Regularly post content that positions

your business as an expert in the industry. Topics could include cleaning tips, maintenance best practices, or industry trends.

- Encourage satisfied clients to leave positive reviews on your Google Business Profile and Yelp.

Focus on networking: Building relationships within your community can lead to valuable business opportunities. How to start:

- Join local professional associations and attend networking events to connect with decision-makers in industries that

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What's in Your Cleaning Chemicals?

tools and educational resources that help businesses and disadvantaged communities make safer choices in their cleaning practices.

For those who are involved in the cleaning and maintenance of any type of building, the key to safe and effective cleaning lies in knowledge and understanding the ingredients in cleaning products. By being informed about the chemicals in these products and the potential risks they pose, you can ensure that the products you supply are used safely and effectively. This not only protects the workers who use these products but also contributes to a healthier indoor environment for everyone.

— *Dr. Gavin Macgregor-Skinner is the Senior Director of the Global Biorisk Advisory Council® (GBAC®), a division of ISSA. He is an associate professor at the Penn State College of Medicine. As an infection prevention expert and university professor, he works to develop protocols and education for the global cleaning industry to empower facilities, businesses, and cleaning professionals to create safe and healthy environments.*

SOURCE: FC&M magazine

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Global Cleaning Industry Weighs in on LEED-EB Version 5

lighting the crucial role of cleaning in sustainable building management. The revised rating system stands to elevate the value of cleaning while advancing both sustainability and social equity.

To learn more about how LEED-EB v5 will benefit the cleaning industry, watch the ISSA video at commonline.com/LEED-Version-5.

— *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.*

SOURCE: CMM Online

Growing Your Cleaning & Maintenance Services Business

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need cleaning and maintenance services.

- Partner with complementary businesses, such as property management or office supply companies for cross-promotional opportunities.

Offer customized solutions: Clients appreciate tailored solutions that address their specific needs. When approaching potential clients, take the time to understand their pain points and offer a customized proposal. For example:

- Conduct a free on-site assessment to identify areas where your services can improve efficiency or cleanliness for them.
- Create flexible service packages that align with their budget and priorities.

Stay consistent with follow-ups: Persistence pays off in sales. Many potential clients won't commit immediately, but consistent follow-ups can keep your business top-of-mind. Here's how to follow up effectively:

- Use email marketing to share interesting, helpful content, such as tips for maintaining cleanliness or updates on your services.
- Follow up after initial meetings with a thank you note and a summary of how you can meet their needs.
- Periodically check in with past prospects who didn't initially sign on to see if their needs have changed and you can help.

Use social media wisely: Social media platforms are free to use and offer immense potential for reaching new clients. To make the most of social media:

- Post-before-and-after photos of cleaning projects to showcase your skills and results.
- Share client success stories or case studies as a reference for new prospects.
- Increase user-generated content, and engage with your audience by responding

to comments and questions promptly. Encourage your audience to share your content.

COMMUNICATING VALUE TO PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS

When communicating value to prospective clients, it's crucial to highlight how regular cleaning and maintenance programs can significantly enhance their operations. Emphasize that such programs ensure a pristine and safe environment, which can lead to increased productivity and employee satisfaction. Explain that proactive maintenance can extend the lifespan of their assets, reduce unexpected downtime, and ultimately save costs by preventing expensive repairs.

Tailor your conversation to address specific client needs, demonstrating a deep understanding of their industry challenges, and how a customized cleaning and maintenance program can provide effective solutions. Use real-life examples and case studies to illustrate tangible benefits, building trust and credibility. Highlight how such programs elevate brand image, strengthen health and safety standards, and create inviting spaces that appear to clients, partners, and employees, improving overall business performance.

Selling commercial cleaning and maintenance services doesn't have to break the bank. The key is consistency, professionalism, and understanding your clients' needs. With these actionable tips, you'll be well-positioned for an outstanding 2025.

— *Alex Caravaggio is the Master Franchise Owner of Anago of Southern Ohio and Anago of Colorado, part of the Anago Cleaning Systems brand supporting over 1800 franchises across Canada and the United States.*

SOURCE: FC&M Magazine



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

In today's competitive market, companies in the cleaning and facility services industry must continuously strive to differentiate themselves and demonstrate their commitment to operational excellence. One of the most effective ways to achieve this is by becoming certified under the ISSA **Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS)**. This globally recognized certification provides a comprehensive framework for best practices in cleaning operations, offering significant benefits to companies, their clients, and stakeholders.

CIMS certification requires companies to adopt industry best practices in management, service delivery, and customer satisfaction. This structured approach streamlines operations by promoting effective resource allocation, reducing redundancies, and ensuring consistent service quality. By following CIMS guidelines, businesses can achieve higher efficiency, which often leads to cost savings and increased profitability.

Achieving CIMS certification signals to facility owners and managers that a company is committed to maintaining the highest standards in the industry. This certification is a mark of excellence, indicating that the company has undergone rigorous third-party evaluations to verify its adherence to quality management principles. For potential clients, this assurance can be a deciding factor when selecting a service provider, giving certified companies a competitive edge.

One of the core elements of the CIMS framework is a strong focus on customer engagement and satisfaction. Certified companies are required to implement processes that gather client feedback and address concerns effectively. By fostering a customer-centric culture, businesses can enhance client relationships, leading to long-term contracts and repeat business.

CIMS certification ensures that companies remain compliant with legal and regulatory requirements pertaining to health, safety, and environmental practices. Adherence to these standards helps mitigate risks associated with non-compliance.

Furthermore, it demonstrates a company's commitment to sustainability and responsible business practices, which are increasingly important to clients and stakeholders.

A company certified under the CIMS framework often fosters a positive work environment characterized by clear policies, effective communication, and structured training programs. Employees are more likely to feel valued and empowered when working for an organization that prioritizes operational excellence and professional development. This can lead to higher job satisfaction, reduced turnover, and a more engaged workforce.

CIMS certification includes a green building component, known as CIMS-Green Building (CIMS-GB), which focuses on sustainable cleaning practices. By becoming CIMS-GB certified, companies can help their clients achieve green building certifications, such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). This not only supports environmental stewardship but also positions the company as a leader in sustainability.

In an industry where differentiation is crucial, CIMS certification sets a company apart from its competitors. Certified businesses can leverage their status to win bids and attract high-value clients who prioritize quality and compliance. Additionally, many organizations, including government agencies and large corporations, now require CIMS certification as a prerequisite for service contracts.

Becoming CIMS certified offers a wide range of benefits for companies in the cleaning and facility services sector. From enhancing operational efficiency and building credibility to improving customer satisfaction and supporting sustainability efforts, CIMS certification provides a comprehensive framework for achieving business excellence. Companies that pursue this certification demonstrate their dedication to quality, innovation, and continuous improvement—key factors in thriving in a competitive and ever-evolving market.

For more information, please visit the ISSA Canada website.

March 11, 13, 18 & 20: Cleaning Management Institute (CMI) Virtual Train-the-Trainer certification workshop – Noon to 4 p.m. (Eastern). Registrants must attend all sessions to receive the certification. [LEARN MORE](#)

March 19: ISSA Hygieia Network Webinar, Networking & Building Relationships, 2 to 3 p.m. (Eastern). [LEARN MORE](#)

March 23-29: International Cleaning Week. How will you celebrate this week of cleaning industry recognition? [LEARN MORE](#)

April 7 & 8: Healthcare Surfaces Summit, ISSA Headquarters, Rosemont, IL. [LEARN MORE](#)

April 8: The Certified Workloading Specialist (CWS) virtual certification workshop – 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Eastern). [LEARN MORE](#)

May 8: ISSA Hygieia Networking & Leadership Conference, Toronto, ON – 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. [LEARN MORE](#)

May 14: ISSA Hygieia Network How to Navigate Tough Conversations webinar – 2 to 3 p.m. (Eastern). [LEARN MORE](#)

June 10 & 11: Business Growth Strategies, ISSA Headquarters, Rosemont, IL, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. [LEARN MORE](#)

June 11-13: Canadian Healthcare Housekeepers 12th Annual Conference, Oakwood Resort, 70671 Bluewater Hwy., Grand Bend, ON. [LEARN MORE](#)

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International Cleaning Week

newsletter templates to help organizations maximize their International Cleaning Week participation.

This year's International Cleaning Week Supporting sponsors that stand alongside ISSA in celebrating the industry include Tork, an Essity Brand, and BradyPLUS.

For more information about International Cleaning Week and to download the partnership toolkit (available in [English](#) and [French](#)), please visit www.issa-canada.com.

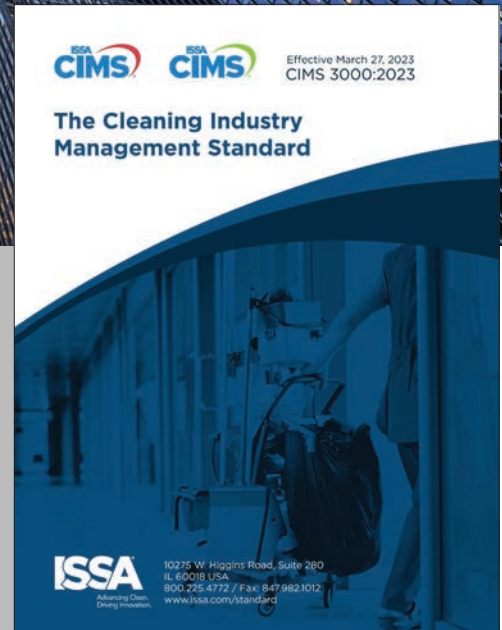
Occupant Safety Concerns? We've Got You Covered.



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

Choose CIMS 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

"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.