

SPRING 2025

# Clean Canada

CHANGING THE WAY THE WORLD VIEWS CLEANING

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Leading People  
to Your Door**

**Winning the Talent War  
in the Cleaning Industry**

**Cleaning for a Reason™  
Brings Comfort and Clean Homes to  
Cancer Patients**

**ISSA**  
Canada

**Spring is Here... Time to  
Refresh Your Supply Closet!**

**DUSTBANE**  
Give Meaning To Your Cleaning

LEARN MORE ON PAGE 2 »

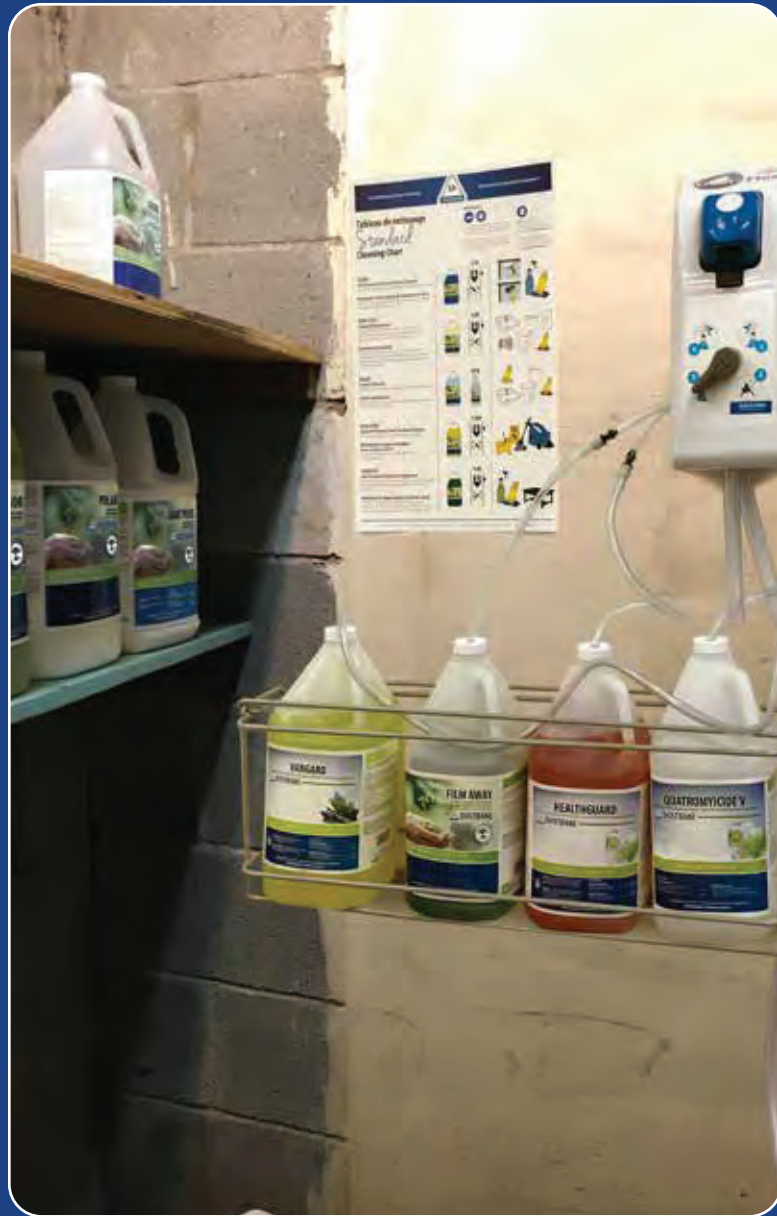


# SPRING IS HERE! TIME TO REFRESH YOUR SUPPLY CLOSET!

BEFORE



AFTER



MADE IN CANADA

**A well-organized space leads to better efficiency  
and easier access to the right cleaning solutions.  
Declutter, restock, and get ready for a fresh start  
this season!**



## Insights in Action: ISSA Canada Distributor Survey Results Drive 2025 Programming

By TOM FOURNIER, Chair,  
ISSA Canada Distributor Council

Last year, the ISSA Canada Distributor Council conducted a comprehensive survey to better understand the needs, priorities, and challenges faced by our distribution community. The responses provided valuable insight that has directly shaped the development of several key initiatives and events rolled out in early 2025.

As part of the survey, we asked participants to identify their top “needs and wants” as well as their three most pressing pain points. While the responses were diverse and enthusiastic, several key themes emerged:

- New Business Generation
- New Revenue Streams
- Business Technologies
- Analytics

- Sales Management

In direct response to this feedback, the Distributor Council initiated a series of targeted learning sessions.

In November 2024, we welcomed Andy Clement, Executive Partner at Gartner, to present *Building a Resilient Salesforce*. This insightful session is available for viewing on the [ISSA Canada Communications YouTube channel](#).

In February 2025, we featured Mike Marks, Founding Partner of Indian River Consulting Group, to address two of the most-requested topics: New Business Generation and Developing Alternate Revenue Streams. Originally planned as a single Power Hour session, the depth and quality of the content prompted us to expand the event into two separate, high-impact sessions.

The first session on New Business

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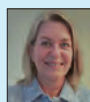
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Enterprise Paper

## ISSA CANADA POWER HOUR SPECIAL



# Winning the Talent War in the Cleaning Industry

ISSA Canada is pleased to announce a two-part Power Hour Special that tackles one of the most urgent challenges facing the cleaning and janitorial industry today – finding skilled labour, effective training, and long-term retention. This timely series which kicked off on April 23 is being led by Brad Ratz, director of Growth Strategy & Customer Experience at H2R Business Solutions, and a leading expert in agile, people-centered strategies that drive operational excellence.

With a rich background in retail, real estate, manufacturing, and construction, Ratz brings a wealth of experience in transforming workplace culture to fuel sustainable business growth. Formerly Head of HR for a major property developer, he has a deep understanding of people strategy, human capital management, and learning and development. As a certified facilitator who travels nationally delivering leadership and sales training, Brad continues to empower teams with practical skills for real-world success. He is currently pursuing ACC and PCC coaching designations through the International Coaching Federation, further reinforcing his commitment to fostering coaching-driven environments where organizations and individuals thrive.

Part one of this series focused on recruitment and retention – critical compo-

nents of any successful workforce strategy. The session dove into how companies in the cleaning industry can overcome the growing challenge of attracting and retaining talent. From designing competitive compensation models to exploring new and innovative sourcing techniques, Brad offered fresh perspectives on building a reliable and motivated workforce. The discussion also addressed how technology can streamline hiring and reduce turnover while strengthening leadership and improving employee satisfaction, all within a fiscally responsible framework. As the industry continues to grapple with labour shortages and high turnover, this session delivered practical, forward-thinking solutions that can be implemented immediately.

Part two of the series will take place on May 21 and will look at onboarding and training – two often overlooked pillars of employee retention and long-term success. Brad will break down what it takes to create an engaging, effective onboarding process that sets the tone for new hires and ensures a smooth transition into the organization. He'll explore how to align training programs with company goals and share best practices for developing inclusive, engaging learning environments. This session will also delve into tools and platforms that make

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# Drive B2B Sales by Leading People to Your Door

## Increasing online lead generation

By ERIK BUNAES

**M**ost business leaders' essential goals are increasing sales and keeping sales pipelines full. In the online world, increasing abundant online visibility and attracting new website visitors is an effective, proven strategy for generating new business-to-business (B2B) leads and sales.

This article will outline strategies and tools for targeting and generating new leads using online sources. These strategies employ sophisticated combinations of useful, engaging content, informative websites, consistent email marketing, interesting social media, and effective digital advertising.

### WHAT IS ONLINE LEAD GENERATION?

Online lead generation (OLG) refers

to the process of attracting and capturing potential customers or leads with engaging content and exclusive offers via online channels. It involves using digital marketing strategies and tactics to identify and engage with individuals who show an interest in a particular product, service, topic, issue, or brand.

Online lead generation is essential for several reasons:

1. **Business growth:** Generating a

steady stream of leads is essential for the development and success of any business. Without a consistent influx of new leads, a company may struggle to expand its customer base and increase sales.

2. **Targeted audience:** OLG allows businesses to target specific demographics, interests, or behaviours. By focusing on the right audience, companies can improve their chances of attracting qualified leads who are more likely to convert into customers.

3. **Cost-effective:** OLG offers a more cost-effective approach than traditional marketing methods. Digital marketing, such as social media, search engine optimization (SEO), content marketing, and email marketing, can provide a higher return on investment (ROI) by

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## Insights in Action: ISSA Canada Distributor Survey Results Drive 2025 Programming

Generation was excellent! Marks wowed our audience with a multitude of incredible insights and suggestions that they could easily act upon. The practical, B2B-focused strategies that were presented resonated with a wide range of stakeholders across the cleaning and hygiene industry – not just distribution. To watch this session, please [click here](#).

The follow-up session was equally as informative and provided some insight into Developing New Revenue Streams. It explored transformational approaches that enable distributors to diversify their offerings while maintaining focus on their core business. The video is available [here](#).

We encourage you to visit the ISSA Canada Communications YouTube channel, subscribe, and share these sessions with your colleagues and professional networks to help us expand access to this valuable content.

On behalf of the Distributor Council, thank you for your continued support and engagement so far in 2025. Your feedback helps us shape meaningful programs that support the growth and success of our industry.

A special thank you goes out to the members of the Distributor Council for their time, insight, and dedication to strengthening both our association and the broader cleaning and hygiene community. 🍁

*In the meantime, if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at [fournier@shadesmills-group.ca](mailto:fournier@shadesmills-group.ca).*

# Drive B2B Sales by Leading People To Your Door

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reaching a larger audience at a lower cost.

4. **Measurable results:** OLG enables businesses to track and measure their marketing efforts more effectively. With the help of analytics tools, companies can monitor the performance of their campaigns, evaluate conversion rates, and make data-driven decisions to optimize lead-generation strategies.

5. **Relationship building:** OLG allows businesses to engage with potential customers early in their buyer's journey. By providing valuable content, personalized experiences, and effective communication, companies can build trust, nurture relationships, and increase the likelihood of converting leads into loyal customers.

6. **Competitive advantage:** Many businesses actively utilize OLG strategies in today's digital landscape. By adopting effective lead generation techniques, companies can gain a competitive edge by reaching targeted potential customers before their competitors do.

Overall, online lead generation is essential because it helps businesses generate a consistent flow of potential customers, improve targeting and cost-effectiveness, measure and optimize marketing efforts, build relationships, and gain a competitive advantage in the digital marketplace.

### OLG USES INBOUND MARKETING

Online lead generation is an element of what is referred to as “inbound marketing.” Inbound marketing is applicable to commercial and industrial cleaning sales due to several crucial factors of interest to property managers/owners, including:

1. Health and safety, including such issues as COVID-19 viruses.
2. Improved indoor air quality (IAQ).
3. Enhanced productivity.
4. Preservation of property.
5. Compliance with health standards, requirements, and regulations, including OSHA.

Due to these critical and evolving elements, property managers/owners may frequently face new and different challenges, and thus search for new and vari-

ous solutions.

Where do people go to get information about complex topics such as health and safety issues, indoor air quality, and new standards/regulations? The process of researching and seeing useful information often starts online at Google.

This tells us that we should be online. But how does this benefit our business? Here is where we begin with a marketing strategy called inbound marketing.

### BUT WHAT IS INBOUND MARKETING?

Gabriella Hunt explained it well in her recent article on *Constant Contact* entitled “From Strangers to Buyers: The Power

**Figure One.**



of Inbound Marketing.” She wrote, “Inbound marketing aims to attract customers by providing valuable and relevant content or experiences. It’s a form of demand generation designed to draw prospects in, unlike traditional (or outbound marketing), which outwardly pushes a brand, product, or service.”

This article focuses on understanding online lead generation using essential inbound marketing principles.

### KNOW YOUR CUSTOMERS

First, the business that knows its customers best will win more business over the longer term. With a keen understanding of clients’ exposures and needs, commercial and industrial cleaning professionals can educate and steer clients to the most appropriate strategies, practices, and products.

While the environment in which our

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**FIGURE TWO. October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024**

Keyword	Currency	Avg. Monthly Searches	Three Month Change	YoY Change	Competition
commercial cleaning	USD	50,000	0%	0%	Low
building cleaning	USD	500	0%	0%	Low
business cleaning	USD	500	- 90%	0%	Low
business cleaning companies	USD	500	0%	0%	Medium
building cleaning companies	USD	50	0%	0%	Low
cleaning company near me	USD	50,000	0%	0%	Medium
cleaning company	USD	50,000	0%	0%	Medium
janitorial services	USD	50,000	0%	0%	Low
commercial cleaning services	USD	50,000	0%	0%	Low
carpet cleaning companies	USD	50,000	0%	0%	Medium
office cleaning services	USD	50,000	0%	0%	Low
commercial cleaning services near me	USD	50,000	0%	900%	Low
office cleaning	USD	50,000	900%	900%	Low
office cleaning services near me	USD	5,000	0%	0%	Low
commercial kitchen cleaning services	USD	5,000	0%	0%	Low
small carpet cleaner	USD	5,000	0%	0%	High
commercial carpet cleaner	USD	50,000	0%	900%	High
carpet cleaning companies near me	USD	5,000	0%	0%	Medium
commercial cleaning companies near me	USD	50,000	0%	900%	Low
commercial cleaners near me	USD	50,000	0%	900%	Low
commercial cleaning companies	USD	5,000	0%	0%	Low
commercial kitchen cleaning	USD	5,000	0%	0%	Low
office cleaners near me	USD	5,000	0%	0%	Low
cleaning agency near me	USD	500	900%	900%	Medium
office cleaning companies near me	USD	5,000	0%	0%	Low

« continued from page 6

customers operate is constantly evolving, a significant need for cleaning assistance and guidance exists. This produces an ideal environment for inbound marketing and online lead generation.

### TARGET A SPECIFIC AUDIENCE WITH RELEVANT, USEFUL CONTENT

Before we explain some specific elements of OLG, let's quickly revisit the trusty sales funnel. The well-known sales funnel helps us envision the process our customers travel when going through the buying process. It includes the four steps of awareness, interest, decision, and action/sale. (See *Figure One*).

For this article, we'll focus on brand new customers, those at the very beginning of the buying process (or top of the funnel), the "Awareness" stage. We often refer to this group as "People we don't know."

An essential element of the "Awareness" stage is that customers are not yet looking for a specific brand, company, or even product. They have a question, is-

sue, or problem and go online to see what they can find. This is precisely when we want to "get found."

For instance, let's focus on a scenario in which we are seeking local property managers and owners as potential customers.

Using this example, numerous strategies and different tools can successfully generate this type of lead for us.

First, let's briefly review some actual search data from Google, which shows search data from the last 12 months. (See *Figure Two*).

The Table in *Figure Two* shows that from Oct. 1., 2023, to Sep. 30, 2024, there were:

1. 50,000 searches per month for "commercial cleaning"
2. 50,000 searches per month for "commercial cleaning services."
3. 50,000 searches per month for "office cleaning services."
4. 50,000 searches per month for "commercial cleaning services near me."
5. 50,000 searches per month for "commercial cleaners near me."

If you look at the year over year (YoY) change column, you will see no change from last year to this year. However, a 900 per cent increase occurred in monthly search volume for the previous two. This is a significant finding, and we can exploit this growth in search volume before our competition discovers this change in search habits.

The competition level for these words is Low, which is appealing from a marketing perspective. This means we should be able to rank well in search engine results pages (SERPs) for these specific keywords in a brief period.

### ATTRACTING LEADS

Now that we have a target (local commercial property managers and property owners), we can create content and a messaging to draw interest and attention.

Here are three common ways to attract new customers online (in marketing speak, "people we don't know"):

1. Search engines, e.g. Google.
2. Digital advertising.

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## Winning the Talent War in the Cleaning Industry

onboarding more efficient, as well as how to build a culture of continuous learning that supports growth and development at every level.

Together, these two sessions form a powerful resource for any organization looking to future-proof its workforce. With Brad's unique insight and hands-on experience, attendees can expect to walk away with actionable strategies, renewed clarity, and a stronger foundation for workforce success.

Don't miss this essential series – reserve your seat today and gain the tools you need to win the talent war in the cleaning industry.

If you missed part one, you can [watch it now](#) on the ISSA Canada YouTube Channel.

Registration for part two is now open - [REGISTER TODAY!](#) 🍁



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**“Ain’t No Mountain High Enough”**  
Strive to be the G.O.A.T.

**June 11-13, 2025**  
Oakwood Resort, 70671 Bluewater Hwy.,  
Grand Bend, ON

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### 3. Social media content.

If our content and messaging are on target, we can illuminate a need/issue related to the office environment to the point where a property manager/owner decides they must do something about it. What step do we want this manager/owner to take next? Perhaps click the link on search engine results, advertisements, or social posts?

### WHERE DOES THE LINK GO?

Does the link take the reader to a blog post, article, landing page, or website? Wherever the link takes the visitor, there should be a logical, well-defined path leading the visitor through a process of learning about the issue (potential liability) and offering clear next steps for some type of “special offer.”

In this situation, an “offer” can be anything of value to the customer. It's not necessarily a “deal.” Access to a video, article, checklist, or other resource is available. This “offer” must be valuable enough that the customer will trade their contact information for access.

The use of video at this stage is beneficial. Abundant research shows the benefits of using video during this “conversion” process. Plus, there should be a contact form to collect contact information and request (or better yet schedule online) a call or ask questions. This is part of what should be an ongoing, continuous process of building your company's email list.

This “special offer” process should be designed to take the visitor through an online process to collect contact information, schedule a call, and connect to someone to facilitate a solution (perhaps a review of existing cleaning contracts or a visit to the premises to review needs).

### GENERATING AND CAPTURING LEADS

Once you have attracted the attention of a potential customer, how do you take things to the next step? Here is where we need the customer to take the first step. This means we need to make the path to conversion as straightforward as possible and capture contact information wherever possible. This is where email mar-

keting, especially automated email series, comes into play and works beautifully.

Did you know that 77 per cent of the ROI of email marketing comes from targeted, automated emails?

### TRACKING AND MEASURING PERFORMANCE

By using the performance data available, we can accurately track and measure the performance of any online campaign. Using powerful tools such as Google Analytics, Google Search Console, and data from emails, ads, social media, and videos, we can see exactly how our campaign assets are working and what our audience is responding to.

We can also use this data to see where we can make improvements to content and creative assets, adjust to our target audience, and identify which avenues are most effective at reaching the best potential customers.

### IMPROVING CAMPAIGN PERFORMANCE

We have created a proprietary model to illustrate the process we use to create, manage, and improve campaigns over time for our clients. Here are the skeletal steps of that process:

1. **Website:** The website is the central hub of communications and information.

2. **Optimization:** Website optimization encompasses having the right and best information readily available and getting found by the right people at the right time.

3. **Communications:** Customers have alternatives, and competition is present. This environment demands excellent, helpful communication in different forms and channels. This includes websites, social media, email, and video, along with many forms of digital advertising.

4. **Promotional Campaigns:** You may offer the best product, but if your customers don't try it or know about it, success may be elusive. Promotional campaigns capture new customers and engage (and educate) existing customers (for renewal and cross-selling opportunities).

5. **Analysis:** Digital marketing leverages user data, detailed measurement, and

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# Finding Talent, Onboarding, and Retention

SHANNON HALL, Dustbane Products Ltd.

**I**n today's competitive market, finding the right talent isn't just challenging, it's essential to a company's success, particularly in sales. Modern job seekers expect more from their employers than ever before. They're looking for organizations where values align, career paths are clear, flexibility is encouraged, training and development are prioritized, roles are diverse, and compensation is competitive. While employees have always desired these attributes, they've now become prerequisites for attracting top talent.

For larger organizations with dedicated Talent Acquisition, Human Resources, People and Culture, and Talent Development teams, meeting these expectations may be more straightforward. However, for small- to mid-sized companies, achieving these objectives can be a daunting task. Does your organization have the tools and resources it needs to thrive in this environment? If not, how can you find them, and where should you start?

## WHERE TO FIND GREAT SALES TALENT

**Tap into College and University Resources:** Many post-secondary institutions offer free job boards accessible to recent graduates and alumni. These platforms can connect you with enthusiastic candidates eager to begin their careers.

**Leverage Your Network:** Regularly engaging with your professional network can uncover talent that might be open to new opportunities. Attend networking

events and industry meet-ups to expand your connections and build relationships with potential candidates.

**Build a Talent Bench:** Turnover is inevitable. By maintaining an active pipeline of potential hires, you'll be better prepared when the need arises.

## EFFECTIVE ONBOARDING: SETTING THE STAGE FOR SUCCESS

Once you've secured new talent, onboarding becomes a critical step. A solid onboarding process helps hires feel connected, confident, and aligned with your company's vision. Here's how:

**1. Share Your Company's Vision and Values:** Ensure new team members understand your organization's mission and how their role contributes to it. This clarity builds a sense of purpose from the outset.

**2. Create Peer-to-Peer Connections:** Establish a peer network for new

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## Drive B2B Sales by Leading People To Your Door

analysis. With detailed metrics and powerful tools, we can learn much about what works and what doesn't with our website visitors.

After the analysis work in step five, we return to step one (website), and begin this process again to improve the website, optimization, communications, and promotional campaigns. Critically, this is a repetitive, ongoing process that will lead to better results and more accurate customer targeting over time.

### KEEP CUSTOMERS' NEEDS IN FOCUS

Due to the complexity of health, operating, and regulatory risks facing property managers/owners, our customers will continue to seek information and knowledge to help make the best possible property management decisions. These are significant decisions, and smart customers seek advice and guidance. The internet is a valuable source of information. If cleaning (and other property maintenance) professionals keep their customers' needs clearly in focus, they will find eager buyers for their products and services. 🍁

— Erik Bunaes is president of Endorphin® Digital Marketing, a professional speaker/trainer for Constant Contact, and an adjunct professor of marketing at the College of Saint Rose in Albany, NY. In his role with Constant Contact, he has taught 350+ classes since 2012 on a range of digital marketing topics. For 20 years, Endorphin® Digital has created marketing and lead generation strategies along with building websites, providing search engine optimization, and other digital marketing services. Connect with Bunaes at [www.linkedin.com/in/erikbunaes](http://www.linkedin.com/in/erikbunaes). Visit the website at [www.endorphindigital.com](http://www.endorphindigital.com).

SOURCE: CMM Online

## Finding Talent, Onboarding, and Retention

hires. Feeling supported by colleagues can accelerate their assimilation and foster a sense of belonging.

**3. Develop a Structured Onboarding Plan:** Outline clear objectives, timelines, and milestones for the onboarding process. This roadmap keeps expectations transparent and ensures progress is measurable.

**4. Extend Onboarding Beyond Day One:** Onboarding should be a continuous process, extending over several months. Regular check-ins and training opportunities help team members stay engaged, informed, and empowered.

### UTILIZE INDUSTRY AND VENDOR RESOURCES

Take advantage of resources available through industry associations such as ISSA, the Hygieia Network, the Canadian Professional Sales Association, as well as your vendor partners. Many vendors offer programs that go beyond product knowledge, providing training on industry insights, solution selling, and customer needs. These tools not only elevate your team's skill set but also deepen their connection to the industry.

### IDENTIFYING STRENGTHS AND ENCOURAGING GROWTH

During onboarding, take time to uncover your new hires' strengths, goals, and developmental interests. Can you assign micro-tasks or projects that allow them to apply and refine these skills? For instance, you might challenge them to develop a prospecting strategy, analyse and enhance an existing program, or attend local industry events such as a Hygieia Meet & Greet or a BOMA gathering. Celebrate these successes and milestones.

These opportunities not only build confidence but also help employees see a clear path for growth within your organization.

### RETAINING TALENT: BUILDING LONG-TERM ENGAGEMENT

Retention begins with recognition. Show your team members they are valued through consistent, meaningful gestures. Here are some strategies:

**1. Express Appreciation:** Simple, a specific thank-you can make a significant impact. Tailor your recognition to indi-



vidual preferences some employees thrive on public acknowledgement, while others prefer private appreciation.

**2. Foster Continuous Learning:** Create an environment where learning is encouraged and enjoyable. Offering opportunities for growth shows employees you're invested in their future. Use Kahoot's or quizzes to make it fun and make it stick.

**3. Understand Motivations:** Take the time to learn what drives each team member. By aligning work experiences with their values and aspirations, you'll strengthen their connection to the organization. Use a motivation sheet with your team to help gain insights and understanding to intrinsic and extrinsic motivators.

**4. Build a Sense of Purpose:** Help employees see how their contributions support broader company goals. When team members feel like they're part of something larger than themselves, job satisfaction increases.

By fostering a culture of recognition, development, and inclusion, you'll not only attract top talent but also create an environment where employees can thrive, ensuring long-term success for both your team and your organization.

If you're interested in expanding your network, Dustbane regularly hosts its DB101 at the company's headquarters in Ottawa, ON. If you are interested in attending such a session, contact Shannon Hall at the contact information provided below. 🍁

— Shannon Hall is the Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Dustbane Products. She can be reached at [shall@dustbane.ca](mailto:shall@dustbane.ca).





# Breaking Barriers

**M**en have dominated the facility solutions industry for decades, but that landscape is changing. More women are stepping into leadership roles, driving innovation, and reshaping the future of the field. During a recent Master Class: “Advancing Careers and Leadership in Facility Solutions,” hosted by the ISSA Hygieia Network, an ISSA Charities™ program, five accomplished women shared their journeys, the obstacles they’ve overcome, and the lessons they’ve learned.

Moderated by Rachel Patt, strategic manager at Hospeco, the panel featured:

- **April Diaz**, vice president of Human Resources at BradyPLUS.
- **Mandy Copeland**, director of Research and Development at GOJO.
- **Laura Arbore**, corporate account manager of Heritage Bag, part of No-volex.
- **Kiki Katz**, chief commercial officer at Aramsco.

Their discussion was more than just professional advice – it was a testament to the resilience, strategy, and sheer determination required to thrive in a male-dominated industry.

## FINDING A PATH IN AN UNEXPECTED INDUSTRY

None of these women started their careers expecting to work in facility solutions. Opportunity, ambition, and an openness to the unexpected shaped their paths.

Laura Arbore admitted that she had never planned for this industry, but looking back, she couldn’t imagine being elsewhere. “Relationships have driven my journey,” she stated. “It’s what I love most about this industry – the people.” Her advice? Stay curious, ask questions, and be willing to learn. “No one has all the answers,” she added. “You just have to keep asking the right questions.”

April Diaz’s journey began in a far less glamorous way. Fresh out of college, she was looking for a management role, but as a 23-year-old woman, she struggled to find a company willing to take a chance on her. When a friend told her about a building service contractor opening, she took it – scrubbing toilets and waxing floors on a military base. It was grueling work, but she learned the industry from the ground up. “I worked my way into HR,” she said, “but that drive, that determination – it never left me.”

Mandy Copeland’s story took a different route. With a background in analytical chemistry, she found herself on the third shift at GOJO, testing batches of hand sanitizer and soap. It wasn’t glamorous, but she quickly realized what she was doing was important. Healthcare workers used these products 50 to 100 times a shift – she wanted to improve them. Her work eventually led her into research and development, where she now creates products that keep frontline workers safe. But to get there, she had to step beyond

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## VOLUNTEER SERVICE DAY

# Cleaning for a Reason Brings Comfort and Clean Homes to Cancer Patients

On Thursday, March 27, Cleaning for a Reason, an ISSA Charities™ signature program, brought its mission to life in Mississauga, ON, with a powerful Volunteer Day event. Held during International Cleaning Week (March 23–29, 2025), this special initiative provided complimentary home cleaning services to three cancer patients in the Mississauga area—offering not just cleanliness, but care, comfort, and hope. Simultaneously, a sister event unfolded in Rosemont, IL, in partnership with ISSA in the United States, marking a cross-border effort to support cancer patients during their health journeys.

International Cleaning Week, hosted annually by ISSA—the worldwide cleaning industry association—entered its fifth consecutive year in 2025. The weeklong celebration empowers cleaning professionals with innovative resources while spotlighting the industry's essential contributions. The Volunteer Service Day stood out as a shining example of the meaningful impact cleaning professionals can have beyond the workplace.

This special day saw 12 volunteers from ISSA Canada and its member organizations—including BGIS, Bunzl Canada, Dustbane Products Ltd., Stewandy Cleaners, TruValue Cleaning Services and United Cleaning Services—come together to make a difference. Supported by professional crew chiefs from **Facility Plus** and **The Cleaning Authority of Etobicoke-Mississauga**, the volunteers delivered high-quality home cleanings for local cancer patients, helping to relieve stress and bring peace of mind during a difficult time.

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her technical skills and into something less familiar: active listening. “The best solutions don’t come from sitting in a meeting room,” she explained. “They come from getting out there, talking to the people who use our products, and understanding their needs.”

Kiki Katz, now chief commercial officer, also hadn’t set out for this industry. What drew her in was the tangible impact of the work. “I love being in an environment where what I do adds real value,” she said. “This industry makes the world function.” Her career has been a series of leaps – embracing change, adapting to new roles, and seeing each challenge as an opportunity for growth.

## BREAKING THROUGH IN A MALE-DOMINATED INDUSTRY

One theme echoed throughout the conversation: the challenge of being a woman in an industry where men have historically made the decisions.

Arbore has spent years walking into conference rooms as the only woman. At first, it was intimidating, but she learned a simple truth – confidence is everything. “It’s not about being the only woman in the room,” she commented. “It’s about standing out for the right reasons – being prepared, knowing your stuff, and speaking with confidence.”

Katz agreed, adding that authenticity is a woman’s greatest strength. “You don’t need to act like a man to succeed,” she insisted. “Women bring something unique – our ability to connect, to think strategically, to foster relationships. That’s what moves companies forward.”

Beyond confidence, the panelists stressed the importance of mentorship and sponsorship. “Relationships matter,” said Diaz. “Having someone – man or woman – who advocates for you, who opens doors when you’re not in the room, that’s how careers are built.”

## WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Balancing career ambitions with personal life is challenging, particularly in leadership roles. The panelists were honest about work-life balance struggles, especially in a demanding industry like facility solutions.

Katz has made it a priority to set clear

# Breaking Barriers

boundaries, something she had to learn the hard way. “I tell my team, from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m., I’m with my daughter. I’ll be available after that, but those hours are for my family.” Even her CEO respects that time, waiting to call her until she’s back online. “You have to lead by example,” she stated. “If I don’t set boundaries, how can I expect my team to?”

Diaz, a mother of three young children, follows a similar approach. “I try not to work between 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. so I can be present for my family,” she explained. “But it’s a goal, not a rule. Some days, you have to make sacrifices. And that’s okay.” The key, she explained, is flexibility – knowing that work-life balance isn’t about perfection, it’s about priorities.

## MENTORSHIP: LIFT AS YOU CLIMB

The most important takeaway from the discussion was the power of mentorship. Women, the panelists agreed, must support each other, advocate for one another, and create pathways for future leaders.

Copeland has seen firsthand how a strong mentor can change a career trajectory. “I’ve been lucky to have people who lifted me up,” she said. “Mentors aren’t just people who guide you – they help you see what you’re capable of before you even realize it yourself.”

Diaz argued that people shouldn’t leave mentorship to chance. She suggested companies need to make mentorship a structured part of leadership development. Too often, these relationships happen informally, leaving talented but less-connected women without the guidance they need.

Hygieia’s mentoring program bridges that gap by providing structured opportunities for women to connect with mentors inside and outside their organizations. It’s one way the industry is actively working to elevate more women into leadership roles.

## THE FUTURE OF WOMEN IN FACILITY SOLUTIONS

As the discussion came to a close, the panelists reflected on how far women have come in the industry – and where they are headed next.

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# IAQ Washing

## The Clean Air Claims That Could Be Clouding the Truth

By ALLEN RATHEY

**I**ndoor air quality-washing refers to the practice of making misleading or exaggerated claims about the quality of indoor air or the effectiveness of products and services designed to improve indoor air quality (IAQ). Similar into greenwashing, IAQ washing aims to create a false sense of environmental responsibility or health benefits.

So, how can IAQ washing affect your cleaning business or organization, and what can you do about it? How can you avoid misleading IAQ claims and choose the right equipment, methods, and “IAQ story” to differentiate your services?

Avoiding IAQ washing is important to both health and business, as every day we inhale 3400 gallons or 25 pounds of air in 22,000 breaths, making indoor air a key path of potential exposure to pollutants compared to water and food, consumed daily at four- to eight-pounds and three- to six-pounds respectively. IAQ also impacts productivity. Lawrence Berkeley

National Laboratory (LBNL) estimated the United States’ annual return on investment (ROI) from better IAQ at \$20 billion to \$200 billion (USD) in enhanced worker performance; and that returns from IAQ improvements may exceed costs by 900 to 1400 per cent, largely through reducing triggers for asthma and other respiratory ills.

### HEPA HYPE AND VACUUM CLEANERS

As an example of IAQ washing, some commercial vacuum cleaners are now labeled as “HEPA,” but having high-efficiency particulate absorbing (HEPA) filter media attached to the vacuum’s ex-

haust is not the same as achieving HEPA-level filtration.

HEPA filters are only as effective as the amount of air passing through them at a volume and speed that enables removing particles at the 99.97 per cent of 0.3 microns dust capture rate (a human hair is about 70 microns in diameter). Unfortunately, some HEPA-equipped units do not achieve HEPA-level performance or proper cleaning due to the media being undersized for the application, getting clogged due to a poor pre-filter system, and/or because dust is escaping from other areas such as vacuum-body seals or at the interface between the floor and vacuum.

The Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) provides useful guidelines for buying vacuum cleaners based on soil removal, indoor air quality, and carpet wear or “appearance retention,” and many of the vacuums receiving CRI’s Seal of Approval are non-HEPA models. Why is


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## Cleaning for a Reason Brings Comfort and Clean Homes to Cancer Patients

The event was more than a day of service—it was a demonstration of compassion and community. Since its launch in 2006, Cleaning for a Reason has provided free home cleanings to 1,682 cancer patients in Canada, donating services valued at over \$596,454. With 270 Canadian cleaning companies having participated in the program to date—and 55 actively serving patients year-round—the mission continues to grow, aiming to bring the gift of a clean, healthy home to even more families across the country.

Facility Plus, a long-standing partner of Cleaning for a Reason since 2013, has supported 114 cancer patients and donated cleanings valued at \$26,375. The company was instrumental in support of the event providing volunteers with lunch, and providing the cancer patients with a \$100 gift card and the cleaning products and equipment utilized in the homes.

The Cleaning Authority of Etobicoke-Mississauga, part of a 52-location franchise network, also played a leading role in the day. Through a Corporate Franchise Partnership, The Cleaning Authority has increased its commitment to the cause.

Volunteer Day showcased the power of corporate responsibility in action. ISSA Canada, Facility Plus, The Cleaning Authority of Etobicoke-Mississauga, and participating member firms showed what's possible when industry leaders come together with purpose. Their collective efforts created a lasting impact, reminding us all that even the simplest act—like cleaning a home—can offer profound support and dignity to those who need it most. *See Photo Highlights and Video content from this special day.* 

this important?

CRI does chamber testing of vacuum cleaners, during which the air in a chamber or closed room is measured to detect dust emissions from all parts of a running vacuum rather than just the exhaust.

Bottom line: It is the overall system that makes an effective vacuum cleaner, not just having a HEPA filter attached to the exhaust stream.

### PARTICLES VS. GASES – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Airborne particles include dust, pollen, mould, smoke, bacteria, and viruses, while gases include carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, radon, formaldehyde, or volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Depending on the type, size, distribution, exposure level of pollutants, and occupants' vulnerability, both can have harmful impacts on the respiratory, nervous, immune, cardiovascular, and other systems.

### AIR MONITORING – DIAGNOSIS BEFORE TREATMENT

You can't easily turn your customer's facility into a controlled test chamber for particle and / or gaseous emissions. But you can do the next best thing and install an active air quality monitor.

An active air quality monitor can measure indoor air quality over time and in real time from various sources and continuously through different events (cleaning, walking across floors or carpet, with the HVAC operating and not operating, etc.) in a single space, such as an office, hospital room, or classroom.

While a handheld particle counter can pinpoint a source of particles, such as exhaust from a vacuum or air purifier, it is often better to monitor room air quality over time and in real time, as this best represents the health and cleanliness of the space in use.

Active air monitoring technology makes this possible, and some wall-mounted units can now detect particles as small as 0.1 microns – particulate that is deeply inhalable and may even carry viruses – exceeding HEPA criteria and perhaps meeting ultra-low particulate air (ULPA) standards (99.999 per cent effective at 0.1 microns).

Some air monitors can detect gases such as carbon dioxide – serving as a proxy for indoor air quality in spaces such

## IAQ Washing

as classrooms – and VOCs, and enable trend analysis by uploading data to the cloud showing IAQ patterns that relate to dusting, vacuuming, disinfecting, room traffic, HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) operation, time of day, foot traffic, and more. Advanced sensor technologies are capable of detecting airborne pathogens or germs.

Applying a medical analogy, sound diagnosis precedes effective patient treatment, making air quality monitors diagnostic tools for the cleaning “patient” or the customers' indoor space.

### AIRBORNE PATHOGENS – PREVENTING INFECTIONS

Airborne pathogens may cause infections in humans when carried by respiratory droplets, aerosols, and dust particles that may linger in the air for hours or days, depending on environmental conditions. They may settle on surfaces to remain infectious. Examples are COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019), MERS (Middle East respiratory syndrome), and SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome). According to the “Airborne Precautions” guidelines from the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), updated in March 2023, pathogens that may spread via airborne transmission include: Adenovirus, Aspergillosis, *Bordetella pertussis*, Chickenpox, *Enteroviruses*, Influenza, Legionellosis, Measles, Mumps, Rhinovirus, Rotavirus, Smallpox, *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, and Tuberculosis.

### THE 99.9 PER CENT FALLACY

It is also common to see potentially misleading airborne pathogen kill claims in wording such as: “kills 99.9 per cent of the germs that cause [name of disease]” implying that the product makes the indoor space healthier – which is misleading since an infectious dose will vary from person to person per the formula that Risk = Hazard x Exposure + Vulnerability. In other words, some people have better immune systems than others, so the risk of an infectious dose due to a given exposure will vary from person to person.

Also, claims are often based on controlled conditions and may cherry-pick certain organisms while ignoring other important ones.

Lastly, while adding germ-killing chemi-

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cals to the air may be the lesser of two evils, it is important to consider and balance the health impacts on workers and customers who may be inhaling these chemicals.

### TELLING YOUR IAQ STORY

“Understanding scientific principles will help you be a more effective advocate for the quality of the air in your [or your customer’s] indoor environment,” noted author Jeff May in the book, *“My Office is Killing Me.”*

Telling your IAQ story may involve sharing with customers how your operation applies the latest scientific information to provide the best, healthiest service possible, perhaps customizing service offerings and tailoring the IAQ story for each customer.

For example, many people are sensitive to chemicals. A 2010 study, “A National Population Study of the Prevalence of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity,” by Stanley M. Caress and Anne C. Steinemann, found that 11.2 per cent of Americans reported sensitivity to common chemical products, 31.1 per cent of those had adverse reactions to fragranced products, and 17.6 per cent had breathing difficulties and other health problems when exposed to air fresheners.

The article titled *“International Prevalence of Chemical Sensitivity, Co-prevalences with Asthma and Autism, and Effects from Fragranced Consumer Products”* was published in February 2019 in the journal *Air Quality, Atmosphere & Health*. This study, led by Anne Steinemann, investigated the prevalence of chemical sensitivity in four countries: the United States, Australia, Sweden and the United Kingdom. This study found that:

- Nine per cent – more than 61 million people – reported chemical sensitivity.
- One per cent of those people reported health effects from fragrances.
- Six per cent of those persons lost workdays or a job the previous year due to exposure to fragrances at work.

As part of your marketing message, you could say: “Since cleaning chemicals add another potential source of contamination and health impairment to indoor spaces, we carefully manage and minimize the use of strong chemicals, especially given the prevalence of chemical

sensitivity and the direct and indirect impact on costs.”

Also, your IAQ story may include sharing public health information from sources and information on the latest trends affecting customers. For example, you could mention:

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) notes three science-backed ways to improve IAQ: source control (stopping pollutants at the source), ventilation (introducing fresh air, exhausting stale air), and purification of the air (using filtration systems).

- ASHRAE Standard 62-1981 includes an Indoor Air Quality Procedure (IAQP) that permits in-room air purifiers to complement facility ventilation requirements. This reduces the rigid requirement for air changes (e.g., five air changes per hour) and lowers related HVAC and energy costs. ASHRAE’s emphasis on the importance of localized, proximity cleaning of indoor air by extension points to the preventative impacts of proper dusting, well-filtered vacuuming, and less-chemically intensive cleaning indoors.

- Lastly, provide testimonials and references from satisfied customers. One of the best ways to tell your IAQ story is to let your customers do it. Ask those who have experienced the benefits of your green cleaning and IAQ-related services to provide testimonials and references that you can use online, in brochures, or on social media. You can also ask them for reviews on online platforms where prospects can find you and learn more about your IAQ story.

The Indoor Health Council™ is available to assist cleaning service providers in developing and telling their IAQ story in a way that helps all parties while improving the health of people in indoor spaces and the economic success of businesses. Please contact [allen@indoorhealthcouncil.org](mailto:allen@indoorhealthcouncil.org) for more information. 🌿

– Allen P. Rathey, director of the Indoor Health Council (IHC), is an educator specializing in healthy facilities. He has assembled an advisory group of scientists, PhDs, and facility and public health experts who share his passion for helping people everywhere create and maintain safe and healthy indoor environments.

SOURCE: ISSA Articles

## IAQ Washing

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

**MAY 14: ISSA Hygieia Network How to Navigate Tough Conversations** webinar – 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. (Eastern). [LEARN MORE](#)

**MAY 21: ISSA Canada Power Hour**, focusing on “Winning the Talent War” Part Two – Noon to 1:00 p.m. (Eastern). [LEARN MORE](#)

**JUNE 10: ISSA CIMS Certification Expert (C.C.E.) Workshop**, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (Eastern). [LEARN MORE](#)

**JUNE 10-11: Business Growth Strategies: The Premier Event for BSCs**, ISSA Headquarters, Rosemont, IL, 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Central). [LEARN MORE](#)

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

**AUGUST 20: ISSA Hygieia Network Strategies for Leading Diverse Teams** webinar – 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. (Eastern). [LEARN MORE](#)

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## Breaking Barriers

“When I go to ISSA shows now, I don’t see just a sea of men anymore,” exclaimed Patt. “Women are here. We’re making an impact. And that’s only going to grow.”

Copeland agreed. “We’re not just filling seats,” she said. “We’re leading. We’re innovating. We’re changing the game.”

And that, perhaps, is the real story of women in facility solutions – not just breaking barriers but rewriting the rules entirely.

The Hygieia Network offers resources, mentorship programs, and professional development opportunities for those looking to advance in the industry. Learn more at [hygieianetwork.org](http://hygieianetwork.org). 🌿

SOURCE: ISSA Online

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**DATE:**  
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**TIME:**  
Check-in: 9–10 a.m.  
Conference:  
10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.



**LOCATION:**  
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**Halton Women's Place**  
*Healthy Relationships • Healthy Communities*

As part of a **Special Service Project** during the ISSA Hygieia Networking & Leadership Conference, delegates are encouraged to **bring a new pair of women's or children's pajamas** to be donated to Halton Women's Place, supporting women and children seeking refuge and care. [LEARN MORE](#)

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