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YOUR HOTEL MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE

STEADY AS SHE GOES

SMOOTH SAILING AHEAD FOR **NEW BRUNSWICK**



**FRANCHISE
REPORT AND
DIRECTORY 2017**
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+ GREEN LAUNDRY • IN-ROOM ENTERTAINMENT • SECURITY • TOWELS & LINENS

By Ronda Payne

CLEANLY SATISFYING GUESTS

Dirty laundry. It's right up there with garbage and recycling when it comes to hotel by-products; but the industry is a guest-driven one and the need for more energy efficient and environmentally-friendly methods have continued to rank on the list of consumer demands.

Hoteliers looking to adopt or improve green laundry practices aren't alone. With the integration of ozone less than a decade ago, technological advancements in machines and chemical developments, it's time to reap the rewards from an appreciative guest-base and a potentially improved bottom line.

Patrick Robertson, regional manager with Tingue Canada noticed that the move to green laundry practices began in about 2008.

The Move Towards Green

"Fuel costs were crazy, electricity kept going up and people were realizing that the changes needed to cut these costs also often translated to saving energy, saving water and the overall greening of the hotel," he says. "We've found that hotels that pay attention to green issues usually operate at a lower cost structure than other properties, they run more efficiently and their guests tend to support and appreciate the commitment."

THE GREEN LAUNDRY REVOLUTION MAY BE DRIVEN BY GUEST DEMANDS FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND BETTER ENVIRONMENTAL CHOICES, BUT FINANCIAL BENEFITS CAN BE THE REWARD.

Rick Murphy, sales manager, Whirlpool Corporation Commercial Laundry, concurs it's more than a guest-satisfaction issue at play in the laundry room.

"Conserving natural resources is not only good for the environment, but is also good for business," he says. "Energy and water savings will continue to remain as both a trend and major purchasing driver in the hospitality industry. As hotel



Gary Graham,
manager - program
operations, Green
Key Global

owners and operators continue to become more and more knowledgeable about conserving water and energy, they have a better understanding of how the products and services they use impact the environment."

According to Gary Graham, manager – program operations of Green Key Global, green laundry practices are "a phenomenal way to decrease a hotel's footprint while seeing an almost immediate ROI."

But green can be interpreted in different ways as Malcolm Caldwell, vice-president sales with Harco Co. explains.

"The green definitions could include; lowering water consumption; lowering energy input for water heating, lowering dryer times to reduce gas consumption, lowering detergent use," he explains. "I think the difficulty is that there are many parties involved in the laundry processing and each has their own definition from their standpoint."



No Longer Just a Buzz Word

Going green was merely a buzz-term a few years back and while more and more properties are making the move to be greener, Mike Archibald, business development manager at Efficiency Nova Scotia doesn't see it as yet being mainstream.

"It's an area where hotel and other business owners are realizing there is potential for significant energy, water and operation cost savings," he says. "And sometimes, it pays to think outside the box and look at a building's laundry space as a whole, not just the washing and drying equipment."

In application, going greener comes down to the willingness of hoteliers to engage in the practices and expense required to be green. Bill Brooks, North American sales manager with UniMac explains that while most hotels think of adopting green laundry practices, implementation gets shelved due to a lack of resources.

"Often, making the leap to a truly green operation requires investment in new equipment," he says. "Which isn't a priority."



UniMac knows that it is important for hoteliers to meet with a qualified distributor with experience in hospitality who can advise where inefficiencies exist in the current operation.

(Middle) Bill Brooks,
North American sales manager, UniMac

Fortunately, it is a priority for hoteliers who position their green laundry program as a property benefit.

The Hampton Inn by Hilton Brampton/Toronto is one such example. With numerous in-room, customer facing communications about the program, guests are made aware that they control much of how the hotel delivers on their green laundry program according to General Manager, Stephen Borneo.

"There are signs in the room that indicate as such," he says. "Not too many people ask about [the program because of the marketing materials]."

While guests choosing to re-use towels and bed linens is one thing, the housekeeping staff plays their part as well. One of their tasks is to capture stains in the room before they make it to the laundry area. The team pre-treats the stains and segregates the linens.

"It's a little step, but it helps with rewashing," notes Borneo.

Going Green

The initial step of greening a hotel laundry, according to Brooks, is to meet with a qualified distributor with experience in hospitality.

"As a laundry manager, you have to first have an idea of your general costs and where inefficiencies exist in your current operation,"



Harco Co. notes that hoteliers can reduce energy consumption by investing in new energy-efficient products.



(Left-Right) Roger Parker (GTA), Rob Carter (Southwest Ontario), John Enright (Eastern & Northern Ontario) & Malcolm Caldwell, vice-president sales, Harco Co.

he says. "A well-qualified distributor will be able to perform a laundry cost analysis."

It begins with a conversation, notes Mike Pilolli, vice-president of operations and commercial laundry with Coinmatic Canada, which may be because of an increase in an energy bill or another expense that leads to a sustainable long-term laundry solution.

This laundry operation analysis and discussion seems to be the agreed upon starting point for hoteliers. Ed Ziegler, Eastern regional sale manager with Continental Girbau notes that Continental distributors are experts in laundry efficiency, design and production.

"Your distributor will provide free analysis to help your hotel conserve water, natural gas, chemicals, electricity and labour," he says.

Murphy adds that while investing in new energy-efficient products can be costly, it can reduce energy consumption, which he

explains is "a benefit that keeps on giving."

"New equipment can also help to increase throughput and labour productivity," he adds. "Which can take 'going green' to the next step."

The majority of laundry improvements revolve around reducing water and/or energy consumption. Robertson has seen the

move to reclaimed water as one solution.

"It takes less electricity to raise the warm water to a usable temperature than starting with cold water," he says. "It also reduces the total amount of waste water generated, so it saves on both counts."

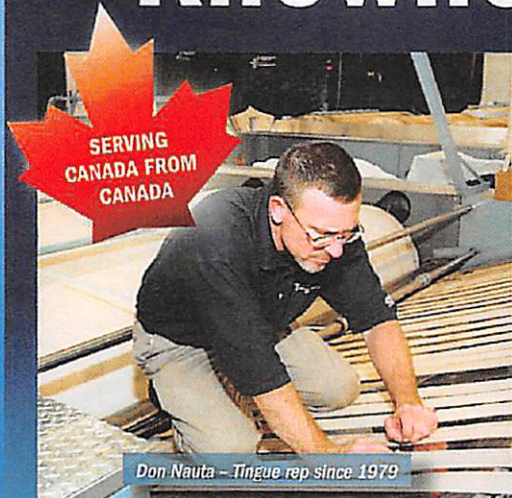
Another solution to creating a greener environment offered by Archibald includes



Whirlpool Corporation Commercial Laundry notes that knowing what machines are right for a property can create maximum efficiency.

Rick Murphy, sales manager, Whirlpool Corporation Commercial Laundry

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reviewing space cooling in laundry facilities.

"We encourage operators to change the lighting in these areas to LEDs and utilize heat pump water heaters where feasible as a solution to removing some of the head load and replace any electric resistance heating or inefficient window air conditioning units to an energy-efficient mini-split heat pump," he says. "These simple upgrades not only increase comfort for employees working in the laundry space, but reduce energy costs."

The Use of Ozone

One of the greatest advancements in hotel laundries was the introduction of ozone in the late 2000s.

"Over the years [ozone has] evolved to a much more economical piece of equipment that can adapt to what we can see in hospitality," Pilolli says.

Ozone allows hotels to reduce the amount of chemicals, but this savings can be offset by rising utility costs, so ROI can be hard to prove in some cases. Pilolli advises putting a keen eye on consumption is the key to saving money.

"We actually proved that ozone has the same effect in cold water to disinfect and deodorize as hot water and bleach," he says of ozone's effectiveness.

Plus Coinamatic's ozone program is recognized and qualified in certain provinces for an energy reduction rebate.

Ozone is injected directly into the washing machine from a small (approximately two feet by two feet) box. It's safe, has no smell, purely disinfects and can be incorporated into any laundry system.

Yet few properties are taking advantage of ozone. Pilolli states there are about 400 Coinamatic ozone systems installed in Canada. Other companies boost that number, but it's still a fraction of what it could be. Public demands may move that needle and force hoteliers to consider ozone.

Laundry Initiatives

Beyond ozone, hoteliers must consider the entire laundry operation. This means reviewing what a greener laundry operation will save over the long term and what revenue is gained from attracting guests through more environmentally sound practices.

"Bed linen is changed every third day for someone staying multiple nights," Borneo says of part of the program at the property he manages. "Signs can be put on the bed if [guests] want it changed. Guests pretty much have control of the process. The signs in the room [also indicate to leave towels] to hang to dry [to re-use]."

Some of these basics are obvious according to Caldwell, especially given the cost of linens.

"The cost of hotel linens has increased due to the demand from travellers for high thread counts," he says. "Linen life can be extended by 25 to 30 per cent if over-drying is reduced."

There is a reason practices like hanging towels to re-use continue in the industry — they work. Caldwell notes the simple step of having guests re-use towels is easy to implement and makes a significant improvement.



Mike Archibald,
*business development
manager, Efficiency
Nova Scotia*

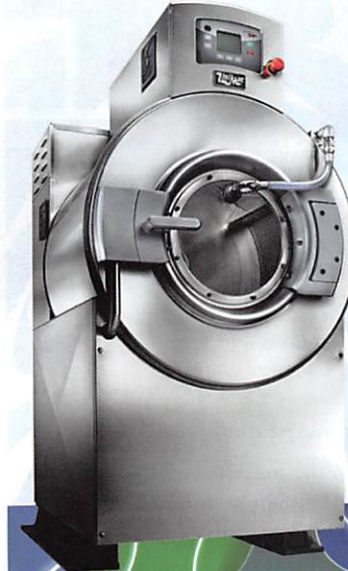
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the most efficient way possible," he says. "New washers will only perform as well as they are programmed and what cycles are selected. If the operator and the detergent company select the light [wash program on the machine] and the wash results are satisfactory the time is reduced and water use may drop by 30 per cent."

Brooks notes a foundational element of greening any hotel laundry is adding super-high G-force (350 to 400 G-force) washer-extractors.

"This simple upgrade in equipment reduces drying time and gas usage by removing more water from loads than low G-force (100 G-force) units," he says.

Coinamatic Canada's newest products include Opti-Drive, which allows additional moisture control settings that allows hoteliers to better manage the life cycle of their linens etc.

Mike Pilolli, vice-president of operations and commercial laundry, Coinamatic Canada



Technology has driven the efficiency in machines according to Murphy who sees the integration of high-extraction units as more commonplace.

"Consider the possibility that your next equipment purchase could greatly affect your monthly cash flow in terms of utility, labour and supply costs," Caldwell says. "There are times where the difference in the cost of acquisition can be far outweighed by the benefits in cost of operation."

High-extraction washers were built into the Brampton-based Hampton Inn by Hilton when it was constructed in 2012. The tumbler/dryers also include residual moisture controls to prevent over-drying and prolong the life of linens.

"We do cold water... our laundry program is a cold water program," Borneo adds. "We started that over two years ago."

Washers need to be soft-mounted (a practice which began more than 10 years ago) in order to support the G-force of high-extraction units. Energy Star ratings are also important. It's about knowing what machines are right for the property, something Murphy notes can create maximum efficiency.

"Knowing how many hours the equipment will operate daily — in reference to the number of hotel rooms, types of linens laundered, etc. — can help determine where larger or smaller equipment will ensure a smoother, more efficient laundry operation," he says. "This step is often called the 'right-sizing' of laundry equipment and partnering with a reliable and reputable distributor can make this task easy."

Pilolli notes the newest Coinamatic products can include Opti-Dry which allows additional moisture control settings that allows our customers to better manage the life cycle of their lines. "You can leave [linens] with 10 per cent residual moisture content so you're not over-drying them," he says. "It's a longer linen life." Longer lasting linens equals huge savings over time and better quality means customer satisfaction.

Ultimately, high-extraction washers boost productivity, reduce labour and cut water and energy use. Archibald adds that small changes can create significant positive results. He recommends converting any smaller laundry equipment items to Energy Star washers and heat pump dryers. Murphy adds that there are many Energy Star-certified products like the Maytag commercial Laundry Front-Load washer.

Equipment Advancements

When it comes to machinery, the biggest recent advancements have been in the high-extraction washers and tumbler/dryers with residual moisture controls. Caldwell states if laundry equipment is more than 10 years old, it's time to consider new units.

"New equipment will always increase efficiency but [hoteliers] need to hold the detergent companies accountable to program in



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