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April 2016

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A RESTROOM REBOOT

On their second time around,
Jeff and Trish Wilson find innovative
ways to serve customers

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Carving a Niche

The Throne Depot keeps pace with
the growing demands of a Revere Beach
sand sculpting festival [Page 28](#)



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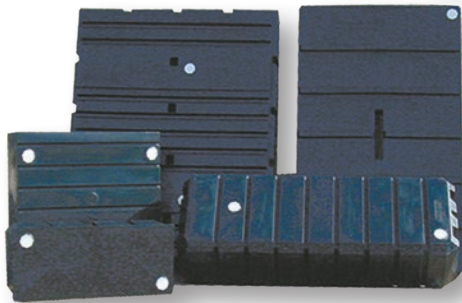
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5 Tips to Winning the Portable Sanitation Game

LIKE THE MONOPOLY TYCOON, YOU NEED TO MAKE SOME BOLD MOVES TO BRING HOME BIGGER REVENUE IN THE COMING YEARS

By Jim Kneiszel

I'm sure you've played the game Monopoly. Throw the dice and move around the board with your toy car, battleship or thimble, buying properties, putting up little red plastic hotels and trying to drive other players to bankruptcy. Yeah, it's a lot of fun for folks who like to play board games to win.

The game demonstrates a basic risk/reward business proposition. You spend your currency (albeit fake yellow and orange bills) with reckless abandon, mortgaging everything to the hilt, and then hope the dice roll your way for a few turns around the table. Keep passing GO, collecting \$200 and you'll probably win eventually.

You can celebrate victory with a happy dance — but you may lose your friends in the process. Sure, some people (present company included) take winning this game a little too seriously. This is why I haven't been able to scare up a match with anyone in my family for years.

The dapper Monopoly tycoon figure — with his walking stick and top hat — came to mind when I received a press release recently promoting the business-building book *Double Double*, written by Cameron Herold, who grew the company 1-800-GOT-JUNK from a \$2 million to \$102 million business over a few years. Just like the Monopoly tycoon, Cameron says there's no place for the timid when trying to build a business.

CREATE A VIVID VISION

"If you're a CEO or entrepreneur and you don't plan on doubling your profit and revenue within the next three years, you may be lacking focus," Herold says. "It's within your grasp to increase your business drastically within a few years, but you need to make several smaller goals in order to do so. It all starts with a vivid vision."

Herold offers a few nuggets of business development advice to get us interested in buying his book. Among his ideas is to trade your office for a day at the ocean, in the forest or even in your hammock in the backyard to escape distractions and think about the future of your business. Get away from the computer; grab a notepad and jot down random ideas to help your business. Brainstorm. Don't dismiss wild ideas that come to mind.

The Monopoly tycoon in me appreciated Herold's confident approach to building exponential growth in a small business. While I imagine he would be a worthy opponent with the "funny money" and a board game, he's obviously succeeded in real life as well. So I took his advice to let my mind wander in search of ideas that would help PROs double the size of their business in the next few years.

FAST FIVE IDEAS

Here are five ideas I came up with to help you buy Boardwalk, win second place in a beauty contest and get out of jail free in 2016 and beyond:

Approach event planners with an aggressive pitch.

Keep making phone calls to these potential customers.

You never know when this constant communication will pay off. But always remember you're selling quality service, not just a cut-rate price.

Market to a new type of client.

Get out and hustle up some business in an area you've ignored in the past. Perhaps you hit the suburban home construction industry hard, but have never thought to approach the big redevelopment players in your downtowns who are transforming old warehouse space into trendy loft apartments. Urban customers, working in tight spaces, have different portable sanitation, temporary office and traffic control needs that you may be in a position to meet. On the event side of the business, maybe you've gone after the county fairs and carnivals, but you've steered clear of the country club or high-end outdoor wedding market because you weren't sure you were up to the challenge of providing VIP-type service. Step out and take some chances looking for new work and you may be rewarded with a bigger bottom line.

Focus on landing a few key events.

Look for a big fish to hook, or a few smaller fish that can add some serious revenue for your company. You've got plenty of summer work to pay the bills, so you may have made only half-hearted attempts to take a lucrative special event client away from your competitors. Are you used to working on lowly Baltic Avenue? Why not shoot for upscale Park Place? If your repeat event business is secure and your customers are happy, lay down the gauntlet to prove your great crew can provide top service for a premier local or regional event. Ratchet up the marketing efforts for niche events such as outdoor theater and music venues that will be a great complement to your loyal customer base. Then approach event planners with an aggressive pitch. Keep making phone calls to these potential customers. You never know when this constant communication will pay off. But always remember you're selling quality service, not just a cut-rate price.

Buy equipment for a new revenue stream.

Monopoly is just a game, but it still provides a valuable reminder about building a business: You have to roll the dice and invest some capital to get ahead. This doesn't mean you risk it all on huge speculation at every turn.

Rather, you must be smart about how you spend money and willing to take measured risks. When you recognize a great opportunity to purchase equipment that will pay off in additional revenue, you can't be afraid to pull the trigger. Many small-business owners are resistant to taking on debt, and a degree of caution serves them well. But if there's a service void in your market, adding a specialty truck or restroom trailer, for instance, may help you fill that void and ensure future business that will more than pay for what seems like a huge financial outlay now. Standing pat in a competitive marketplace is not usually a recipe for long-term success.

Build your professional image.

Find ways to freshen your approach to service so you stand out among PROs in the area. Pay attention to details like replacing outdated uniforms, modernizing your branding and replacing tattered or amateurish vinyl graphics on your trucks. Is your customer service up to today's demanding standards? Listen to how your crew interacts with customers over the phone and on location. Are they pleasant and responsive to everyone, all the time? If you don't already do so, consider offering uniformed attendants to all of your event customers, better on-demand service to keep construction units more consistently clean, and upgrade all standard units with hand-wash sinks or flushers. Every step you take — whether it's improving appearance or enhancing service — should show the customer they are the top priority.

Get employees involved.

Without the entire crew on board, it's doubtful you'll realize the growth you envision for your company. There are a myriad of ways to encourage workers to take play a more pivotal role in business building. You want them

to take ownership in the company, and one way accomplish that is obvious: Give them some ownership. Consider starting a profit-sharing program so employees experience the ups and downs that come along with business ownership. In addition to a good wage, offer employees other incentives to play a role in marketing and selling, such as a commission for bringing in new customers. Start a contest among all employees — from the drivers to the receptionist — for renting more units or upselling customers into better service plans. Remind your staff they are responsible for more than just showing up and doing the work; they must look sharp, focus on customers and share ideas for improving the business. ■

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If you're looking to cut expenses, it may be tempting to drop workers' compensation insurance. In some states it may be required coverage, however; and it is usually the only way to guard against the risk associated with workplace injuries or accidents. Here's everything you need to know about workers' comp insurance.

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Overheard Online

“ Try to keep yourself in a networking frame of mind all the time; any time you meet someone new, view it as a potential opportunity. ”

— 8 Ways to Get Better at Networking
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Fleet Enhancement

Going Back to Gas



Cover star Jeff Wilson has seen many equipment improvements during his years of owning TPI Portable Toilets and Septic Tank Services. But meeting emissions

standards while maintaining high performance in his service trucks has been a challenge. In this exclusive online story he explains the benefits of switching his fleet to gasoline engines.

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5 Ways Local Print Advertising Still Works

IN THESE INTERNET-DOMINATED TIMES, AN ADVERTISEMENT THAT CUSTOMERS CAN RIP OUT AND HOLD IS STILL EFFECTIVE ... IF IT'S THOUGHTFULLY EXECUTED

By Judy Kneiszel

Advertising revenue for newspapers has been on the decline for years, while social media seems to have taken over the world. You've been told that to reach customers you must have a strong Internet presence, including a website, blog, Twitter account and Facebook page. But good old-fashioned print advertising still has a place in a small business' marketing budget. Here are five ways print advertising still works:

1. If it's targeted. Does every single person who picks up *USA Today* need to know about your portable sanitation business? Absolutely not. There may, however, be a specific group of subscribers to your local newspaper who do. For example, my local newspaper distributes a community section free each Wednesday and has different versions of the paper for different geographic zones. Knowing that one of these zones is markedly more rural, with a higher-than-average number of homeowners who have septic systems, a PRO who also offers septic pumping services might find it pays to advertise specifically in that section of the newspaper in that zone.

2. If it's relevant. Local newspapers generally produce special advertising supplements a few times each year. While it may not pay for a PRO to advertise in a local newspaper every day, one who wants to increase special events business may find it helps to place an ad in the special wedding show section each year. A PRO who wants to secure more construction contracts might want to be in the local newspaper's special section promoting an annual home and garden show or previewing the annual showcase of homes, because those special publications are heavily read by local builders. The exact group that PRO wants to target is studying this supplement to make sure the home they have on the tour got good placement and to learn what their competition is doing. Call the ad sales department at your local newspaper (if they don't regularly call you) and find how many special sections or advertising supplements they print each year, what the themes and rates are, when they are published and the deadline for including an ad.

3. If you can measure it. Print advertising is effective because its impact can be measured. Use a print ad in a local newspaper or regional magazine to make an exclusive offer. Include a coupon or a line type saying "mention this ad" and offer a free upgrade, or \$20 off a rental contract or whatever you think would make clipping out the ad worthwhile. If no coupons come back or ads are mentioned, you can assume the ad wasn't worth the expense, but at least you know for sure.

4. If you want to make a name for yourself in the community. Not all advertising is designed to produce immediate sales. Sometimes its purpose is reputation building. Take out an ad congratulating the peewee baseball

If you aren't satisfied with your current advertising reach, print advertising could be the piece you are missing if you've cut it out of your budget in favor of online efforts.

team you sponsored on its great season. Include a picture of the team in front of your truck, wearing uniforms with your name on them, and your business name will be on families' refrigerators all over town, boosting the mileage you get on the money spent sponsoring the team. Print advertising can also be an effective way to draw attention to changes in your company. Take out an ad to thank customers for 20 great years of business in your old location and introduce the new location. It's possible the ad will alert the paper's business reporters to the change and they'll also run a story about the move. But please, don't make purchasing an ad contingent on the paper running a story. Reporters don't like that and it may backfire on you, making them averse to giving your business publicity in the future. Your goal should be to build a good relationship with local media.

5. If you need to reach potential customers who are not tied to the Internet. In rural areas there are still a number of people who are not getting their information from the Internet. ABC News recently reported that 15 percent of American adults have no Internet access whatsoever. And I'd wager including those who technically have access but don't have good, fast, affordable Internet service would at least double that figure. Especially if you operate in a small town or rural area, solely relying on the Internet for marketing may mean you are unable to reach a portion of the population. Keep the generation gap in mind as well. Almost half of those without Internet are 65 or older. But many retired people are heavily involved in — and have leadership positions with — community organizations that host special events and require portable restroom services. Some of those decision-makers may have not embraced social media to the extent that their children and grandchildren have. In fact, some are downright mistrustful of the Internet and may respond better to what they are comfortable with ... print advertising.

TAKE A VARIED APPROACH

Certainly advertising budgets are tight and the low cost of social media marketing is attractive. An effective marketing plan for any business, however, will include a variety of different advertising methods. If you aren't satisfied with your current advertising reach, print advertising could be the piece you are missing if you've cut it out of your budget in favor of online efforts. Just be sure to put some thought behind that ink. ■

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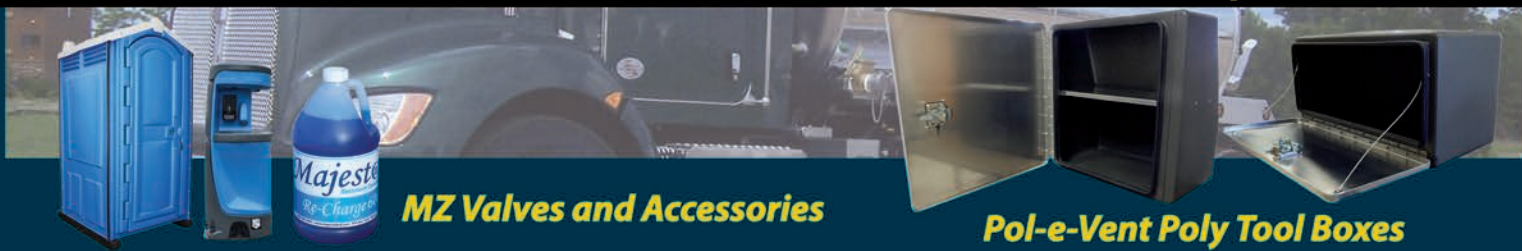
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In his second go-round in the portable sanitation industry, Washington's Jeff Wilson finds innovative ways to provide quality service to all customers

BY KYLE ROGERS

A RESTROOM REBOOT

When Jeff Wilson re-entered the portable sanitation industry in 2004 after a brief hiatus, he embraced the same philosophy he has always brought to entrepreneurial efforts: Customer service is the top priority. And he was excited to discover that improvements within the industry would allow him to provide that service better than he had before.

"Because technology has improved and products have improved, by the time I started the second company, I found I was able to provide a more upscale service," says Wilson, owner with his wife, Trish, of TPI Portable Toilets and Septic Tank Services based in Longview, Washington. "That intrigued me because I always liked dealing with the customers. Customer service is always your priority."

But those industry improvements aren't the only factors that helped Wilson grow his business over the last decade. Outside-the-box thinking played a role in providing the high level of customer service he expects from his company.

"It was really about finding ways that we didn't have to tell the customer no," he says of his approach to the portable sanitation business. "Who wants to say no to a paying customer? That simply wasn't going to fly with us. We wanted to find solutions so we could say yes."

(continued)

TPI Operations Manager Pete Wallin (right) and route driver Kaleb Barnum ride in one of the company's DUKW amphibious vehicles while owner Jeff Wilson (in steering cabin) drives them back to shore after retrieving a Poly-John Fleet portable restroom from a customer on the Columbia River near Longview, Washington. (Photos by Ethan Rocke)

TPI Portable Toilets and Septic Tank Services Longview, Washington

Owners: Jeff and Trish Wilson

Founded: 2004

Employees: 16

Service Area: Southwest Washington, northwest Oregon

Services: Portable sanitation, septic pumping, sewer and drain cleaning

Professional Affiliations: Portable Sanitation Association International

Website: www.tpitoilets.com



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The DUKW out of water and riding on wheels.



Above: Jeff Wilson, right, and Kaleb Barnum off-load a portable restroom from one of the company's DUKW amphibious vehicles on the Columbia River.



Wilson at the controls of a World War II DUKW amphibious vehicle.

UNORTHODOX SOLUTIONS

Wilson's customer service approach is built around meeting challenges. For example, take two of the vehicles that are a part of his fleet (and that you'd be hard-pressed to find in another portable restroom company's inventory): World War II DUKW boats.

The amphibious vehicles, designed to cross both land and water, were once used for transporting troops and supplies from ship to shore. Today, they are Wilson's solution for placing restrooms on rugged, uninhabited islands in the Columbia River to serve private environmental contractors performing restoration work. Coming across that particular solution wasn't difficult for Wilson given his interest in collecting and restoring old military vehicles.

"Some people have their car and truck passions. My passion has always been military vehicles; because of the importance of the history, but also because they're unique, something different," he says.

When presented with the question of how to not only transport restrooms across the river to an island, but also how to properly place them close to where the restoration work is occurring, the DUKW boats immediately came to mind for Wilson.

"I thought to myself, obviously the U.S. military figured this out in World War II in order to support amphibious operations. So I simply went out and acquired our first DUKW and we restored it," he says. "Anyone can get a unit on a tugboat or barge and go out to an island. But what if you needed that restroom way up in the interior of the island? These are uninhabited islands. The DUKWs really solved the problem. We can drive them through the water, up on land, and place the restrooms where they need to go."

Wilson acquired the amphibious vehicles about six years ago and though the demand for them isn't high, he says they've been deployed fairly regularly to assist clients working on the islands.

"Some companies will drop a unit off anywhere, but we don't think that way. Every job must try to be profitable."

JEFF WILSON

"A DUKW can haul up to six units," Wilson says. "Although the business isn't steady, it seems that the last two years the DUKWs have put in countless hours delivering and servicing restrooms on the river for private contractors."

He has also utilized other military vehicles he's restored in his business. For public events like mud runs that are often held in more remote locations without good road access, TPI Portables will make use of triple-axle all-wheel-drive, medium-duty 6 x 6 military trucks. Wilson has added a slide-in tank on occasion to use the trucks for cleaning, but they're primarily put into action for delivering units.

"If we have to go out in severe conditions like mud, deep sand and what-not to place units, we'll use the large 6 x 6 trucks," Wilson says. "The military

BACK IN BUSINESS

Wilson launched his first portable sanitation operation in 1987 alongside an environmental cleaning company. By 1999, the company had grown to a point where Wilson decided to sell off the portable restroom division. Five years later, with a noncompete clause expired and the environmental cleaning company also sold, he was ready to get back into the portable sanitation game.

"I started with just myself and 12 toilets," Wilson recalls. "Now I have over 2,000 units and about 16 trucks and 16 employees throughout Oregon and Washington."

With an inventory of mostly PolyJohn's Fleet Series, as well as some units from Satellite Industries and PolyPortables, restroom rentals make up about 50 percent of the business — the balance is septic and drain-cleaning work. Servicing those restrooms is a fleet of Ford, Dodge, International and Freightliner trucks. The trucks are mostly built out in-house with vacuum tanks ranging in size from 400 to 1,250 gallons from Progress, KeeVac, Brenner and FlowMark, and pumps from Masport and Conde (Westmoor Ltd.). One truck was bought from TankTec and built out by FlowMark.

Transport trailers from Featherlite and Wells Cargo are used for pickup and delivery. Among the deodorants used are the Safe-T-Fresh line from Satellite and products from J & J Chemical. Hand wash sinks are made by Satellite and PolyJohn. The company also owns MSA brand portable eye wash stations, and office and restroom trailers manufactured by Ameri-Can Engineering.

TPI Portables covers southwest Washington and northwest Oregon, maintaining several storage yards and two office locations.

(continued)

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trucks have really given me complete coverage. Land or water, I have the means to get a toilet there.

“In this business you have a chance to be really good and be proud of your business, or you can choose to just go with the flow,” he continues. “We’re interested in giving customers their money’s worth and then some. It’s very simple to us. We treat our customers exactly how we would want to be treated. Quality in our business is everything.”

PUTTING THE CUSTOMER FIRST

Wilson admits his company isn’t always the least expensive option for customers. But he believes a heavy focus on price can sometimes be a detriment to the customer.

“In our competitive industry, sometimes people seem to worry too much about the competition instead of the customer,” he says. “Many companies will spend a lot of time focusing on just the cost, but in the total business, what you do is build long-term relationships. You have to study your short-term costs versus what you’re trying to do in the long term in order to keep a customer. When the customer spends money with you, you have to think, what if it was my money? What am I getting for it?”



At TPI, what customers get is a variety of color choices. “We have aqua to silver to teal, and then of course our famous hot pink,” Wilson says. The pink units total about 50, with other color combinations making up a more sizeable chunk of the 2,000-plus restroom inventory. Aqua is the most popular color choice among TPI Portables customers, Wilson says.

“The waste is the same, but people are different,” he says. “So we’ve created a menu where people can pick and choose some of their colors. Not everyone has the same desires. Instead of the market being stuffy and everybody only has gray and brown units, we decided we wanted to mix it up a bit and provide more diversification to whomever wants to retain our services.”

The TPI crew includes, from left, Shae Schoonover, Becky LaFrance, Josh Sparks, Mike Tworzydlo, Jeff Wilson, Trish Wilson, Frank Shipley, Pete Wallin, Kaleb Barnum, Joe Milian, Larry Higby and Dave Epperson. The trucks in the background carry Brenner tanks and Masport pumps.

Community involvement at home and abroad

For most of his life, Jeff Wilson has called Longview, Washington, home, and he says he’s dedicated to helping the local community. His company, TPI Portable Toilets and Septic Tank Services, regularly makes contributions to various organizations, either a monetary gift or through donated services.

“It’s called good corporate citizenship,” Wilson says. “The community that makes our company successful and profitable is the same community to which I have to show appreciation for giving me that chance to be successful and profitable.”

Wilson’s loyalty to Longview isn’t changing any time soon, but over the years another locale has become important to him and his wife, Trish. In fact, the couple is currently in the process of establishing a second portable sanitation business there.

“It’s early on, but we’ve started the voluminous paperwork process,” Wilson says of the new business to be launched in the Asian country of Cambodia. “My wife and I have fallen in love with Cambodia. That’s our favorite country to travel to and we try to go every year, and enjoy the wonderful weather when it’s winter (in the Pacific Northwest).”

But some Southeast Asian countries like Cambodia are lacking in sufficient sanitation facilities and Wilson says that’s where he believes he can be of help. His plan is to set up a business that revolves around pit vault toilets and portable restrooms.

“There are a lot of simplistic improvements that can have a great impact on the health and welfare of societies in Southeast Asia,” Wilson says. “I have an expertise. I’m actually good at something when it comes to human waste and improving people’s lives because of the business I’m in. And when I travel to impoverished countries, I see that they quite frankly need that sort of assistance and expertise. I need to share it and apply it to make that part of the world better.”

And each unit comes equipped with hand sanitizer and extra rolls of toilet paper — two simple items that can go a long way toward appeasing customers, Wilson says.

“Hand sanitizer is mandatory in our units. That is something we would never consider an option. We’re shocked that some in the industry still consider that an additional item.”

As for the extra rolls of tissue, that is Wilson’s answer to a chronic portable restroom issue. “Probably the No. 1 problem, besides odor complaints, will be people running out of tissue,” Wilson says. “That is unacceptable. So in every unit we own, we add additional rolls. All our units go out with four or five rolls

minimum. That pretty much eliminated the problem.”

TPI Portables accomplishes this by mounting an additional roll dispenser to every unit added to the restroom inventory. The extra dispensers are purchased from either the restroom manufacturer or TOICO Industries.

TOW-AND-GO

One of the most popular restroom rental options since Wilson restarted his business has been the tow-and-go trailer. Again, they represent one of his solutions to a problem: How do you accommodate the last-minute customer?

The answer: a restroom mounted to a trailer that customers can pick up themselves, 24/7. TPI Portables has a fleet of 26 trailers, available in configurations of up to eight restrooms, some with sinks. All the DIY customer needs is a trailer hitch with a 2-inch ball to come and pick up one or several units. TPI Portables fabricates the tow-and-go trailers in-house.



Owners Jeff and Trish Wilson at the TPI company headquarters, with a Ford truck purchased from TankTec carrying a FlowMark tank and Masport pump.

The tow-and-go option has also allowed TPI Portables to cost-effectively serve customers outside the company's core service area. Wilson says he doesn't want to have to quote a high price to a customer just because a restroom placement isn't along one of the company's established routes. Nor does he want to raise rates across the board to cover such an expense. Yet he has to be mindful of the company's bottom line.

"Some companies will drop a unit off anywhere, but we don't think that way. Every job must try to be profitable," he says. "But sometimes people want restrooms where we simply don't have any established routes. So we're able to offer them this self-service tow-and-go so they can service that area themselves. They're also one of the most affordable ways to get a toilet from our company. They come at a cheaper price because I don't have the labor and truck time included in the cost."

Making it a 24-hour service was the final part of the solution.

"That eliminated the ability for a customer to miss the opportunity," Wilson says. "There's no excuse now for a customer not to get a restroom. This took care of all last-minute issues."

KEEP ON DELIVERING

No matter what solution Wilson devises for a problem, whether it's creating a fleet of self-service trailers or utilizing World War II DUKW boats, you can bet that it's done with the customer in mind.

"It's about pleasing the customers," he says. "If you please the customer, they're going to have no problem pleasing you through full payment for your services." ■

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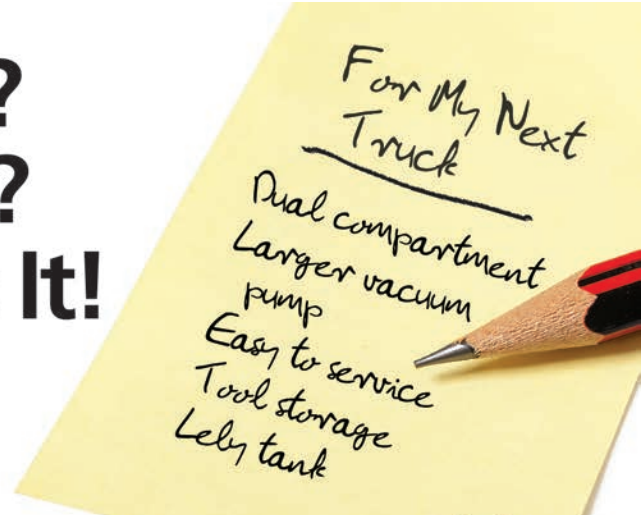
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Tips to Restore a Mirror Finish

YOU WANT YOUR SERVICE VEHICLES TO LOOK GREAT, EVEN AFTER SEVERAL YEARS ON THE ROAD. HERE'S HOW TO BRING BACK THAT SHOWROOM SHINE TO CHROME ACCESSORIES.

By Peter Kenter

There's nothing quite so impressive to customers as a service vehicle flashing an array of polished chrome, stainless steel and aluminum. However, chrome is a two-edged sword — there's nothing so humbling as pulling up to a job site with shiny parts covered in mud, rust, dust and grease. Portable sanitation contractors can do their part to ensure that chrome continues to shine, while professional detailers offer tips to maintain metallic luster.

Restroom contractors typically want to include flashes of chrome on the vehicles that promote their brand, such as vacuum trucks, flatbed delivery trucks and pickups. They often choose polished wheels, stainless steel and aluminum toolboxes, exhaust stacks, visors and other accessories to lend a professional look to their rigs.

"You want to have the chrome on your service trucks that customers see first," says Penny Dunlap, co-owner of Dunlap Septic & Excavation Service of Medford, Oregon.

Brian Wakefield, owner of B & J Wakefield Services Inc. in Waxahachie, Texas, says he agrees. "We want the chrome on our pumper trucks to shine brightly, because the appearance of these vehicles is a big factor for customers," he notes.

Each of the materials that make up the chrome family requires care and maintenance to ensure longevity and consistent shine. Weighing in on professional chrome cleaning is Cory Jones, who has operated truck-detailing business Air Vision of West Valley City, Utah, for the past 30 years.



CHROME

While the term popularly includes any kind of shiny metal, it specifically refers to a thin layer of chromium, electroplated onto a surface made of steel, aluminum, nickel or plastic.

Chrome falls into two categories:

- Hard chrome, industrial chrome or engineered chrome, which offers a thicker chromium coating, reduced friction and resistance to abrasion and oxidation.

"You can use a light steel wool to remove that rust, but each time you go that route, you'll wear the chrome down further, and the chances of rust coming back bigger increases."

Cory Jones

- Decorative chrome, which is thinner, but possesses the same toughness. It's the chrome used on visible parts of trucks, such as pipes, trim and bumpers.

"Chrome is the hardest of a truck's shiny surfaces, so when it's new, it's pretty difficult to mess up — but that doesn't make it resistant to abuse," says Jones. "One of the big mistakes people make is to use harsh or abra-

sive cleaners. They'll go at it with Ajax or other abrasives that will shorten the life of the chrome."

Chrome's biggest enemies are acids, which stain the material, and heat, which can permanently discolor it.

"If drivers have their motors turned all the way up, their straight stacks will turn purple, yellow and bronze," says Jones. "Once the surface is burned, its appearance is toast. The discoloration doesn't take away from the smooth surface and we can still shine it up, but it will never look the same again."

Jones uses a rubbing compound and cloth on chrome, then waxes the surface to protect it from dirt and moisture.

However, successive use and cleaning will slowly wear



Above: An Air Vision technician cleans an aluminum tank using a high-speed grinder and the side of a canvas wheel.



Left: Polishing an aluminum surface, such as this wheel, is also known as “cutting” because an outer layer of the metal is stripped away in the process.

down the surface of the chrome until the material underneath is exposed. Even a pinhole on chrome-surfaced steel will bring rust to the surface.

“You can use a light steel wool to remove that rust, but each time you go that route, you’ll wear the chrome down further, and the chances of rust coming back bigger increases,” says Jones. “Wax will protect the surface, but eventually you will have to replace that part or rechrome it.”

STAINLESS STEEL

While steel rusts under the influence of air and moisture, stainless steel doesn’t. That’s because it contains a minimum of 10.5 percent chromium by mass. The reason: Stainless steel forms a film of chromium oxide that prevents further oxidation.

Stainless steel is high-speed factory-polished to provide its shine. However, the metal isn’t invulnerable, as it can stain under the influence of excess salt. Keeping surfaces free of road salt is probably the best way for equipment owners to ensure the integrity of the metal.

“Stainless steel is way softer than chrome, but because these parts are solid stainless through and through, it’s harder to mess up than chrome,” says Jones. “However, because the material is softer, it’s much easier to scratch deeply. Equipment owners can clean up any tough stains with window cleaner and (00 grade steel wool).”

At the shop, Jones gets stainless steel to shine by using a high-speed buffer fitted with a wool pad.

ALUMINUM

“Aluminum is durable and doesn’t rust, but it’s porous and that means it latches onto stains from road salts, dirt and hard water,” says Jones.

Air Vision typically uses a hydrochloric acid solution to clean impurities from the surface of aluminum. However, while acid cleans aluminum, it also makes it duller.

“Polishing will restore its shine, although some people mistake polishing for much lighter buffing,” he says. “Polishing is also known as cutting, because you are actually ripping off the outer layer of aluminum.”

Jones cleans aluminum using a high-speed grinder and the side — not front — of a canvas wheel. He uses jewelers compound to provide abrasion, ranging from red (the finest), through white, green and brown (the most abrasive), depending on the condition of the surface.

“You need torque and horsepower at 8,000 to 10,000 rpm because you have to put a lot of pressure on the wheel while you’re cutting,” he says. “Using paste, it’s important to be thorough and to remove all of the paste before you’re done, because paste left on the surface will turn black.”

LARGE SURFACES

“Whether chrome, aluminum or stainless, the hardest part of doing a good job is to remain consistent,” says Jones. “I liken it to painting — if you stop painting, you get a dry line that will be visible in the final job. You have to keep the wet line active and blend the lines together for a consistent surface shine.”

Thankfully, tanks have natural breaks, such as vertical weld lines that provide a convenient starting and stopping point for polishing.

“We like to start at the top of the tank sections, then move back and forth as we gradually move underneath the tank,” says Jones. “That keeps the shine consistent.” ■

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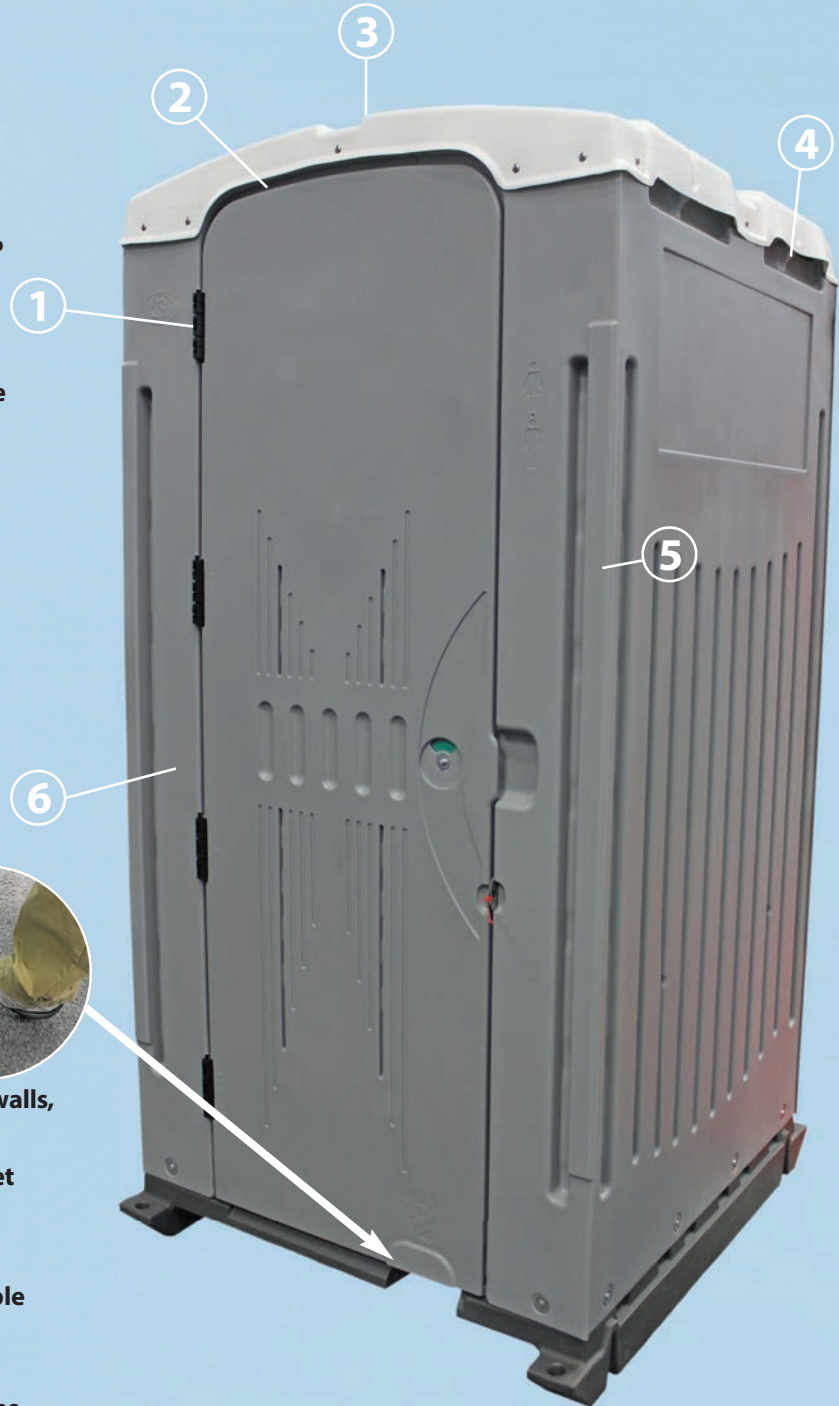
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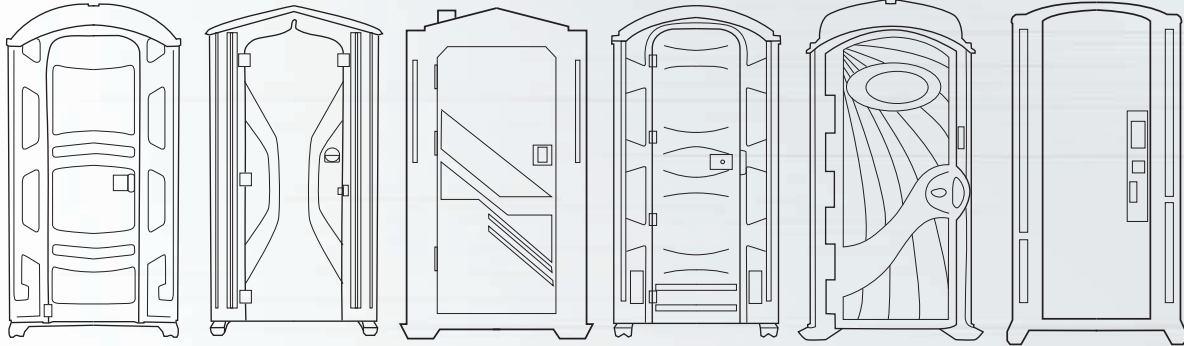


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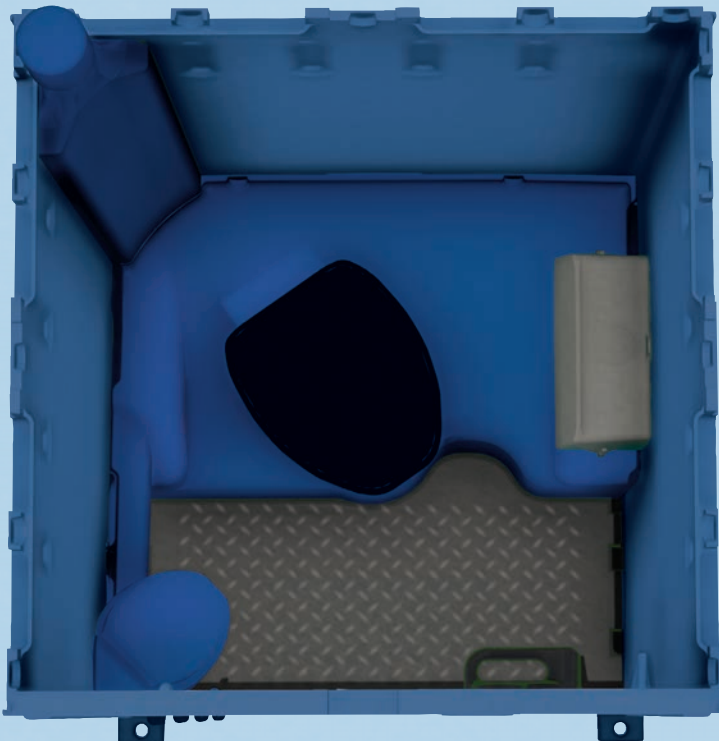
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Door Opening Width	24.69 inches	62.71 centimeters
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How Do I Remove Stubborn Sludge From the Vacuum Tank?

WITHOUT A MANWAY FOR ACCESS, THIS PRO FINDS TOUGH GOING WHEN REMOVING THICK RESIDUES AFTER A WINTER SERVICE RUN

Question: I have two older trucks with smallish, heavy steel tanks (380 and 460 gallons) and no manways. During the summer the only issue we had draining them was diapers, rags, wet wipes and other non-biodegradable items. But now that it's gotten cold (30s and 40s F), all the black water drains first, then some of the waste, leaving the remaining half- to quarter-tank like thick pea soup. It won't drain, even if we put lots of freshwater into the tank.

We have slightly altered our deodorant chemical-to-water ratio for the restroom holding tank charge, but not that much. And, in fact, due to the lower waste left in the toilets this time of year, the ratio of waste to water pumped out at each service is about the same. The total gallons is less now. During the summer, we averaged about 10 gallons per unit serviced. Now it's about 7.5 to 8 gallons, using 5 ounces of chemical in the summer, now 3 ounces in winter.

I know many newer truck tanks can pressurize during dump operation, but I don't have that option. Please, share suggestions or recommendations. Maybe 1 gallon of muriatic/hydrochloric acid (swimming pool acid) before the drive to the dump facility?

Answers:

Try running the vacuum at the plant while dumping. Run the pump, open the dump valve and that will mix up in the tank.



Cut a hole in the top of the tank and install an access so you can hose it out. A 6-inch pipe with a cam-lock lid is usually sufficient.



I certainly wouldn't recommend adding any kind of acid or caustics to the tank. Your dump facility will be very unhappy with you and you may get fined, kicked out or both!

USING A REEL WITH A 2-INCH VACUUM HOSE

Question: Has anybody tried a hose reel for portable restroom-style 2-inch vacuum hose?

Answer:

A friend of mine has one and I have asked him. He doesn't like it because when he's sucking air, the hose bounces and starts to unravel itself in the reel. Then when he goes to roll it up, it won't fit into the spool. Has to unravel the whole thing and put it on tight. I passed on this for my new truck. ■

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The Throne Depot crew includes, back row from left, Vinni Santiago, Andy Sarcione, Tom Silva, Michael Cormier and Steve Brodeur. In the front row, from left, are Dan Gomes, Matt Gomes and Ramon Santiago. (Photos by Ed Collier)



Carving a Niche

The Throne Depot works hard to keep pace with the demands of a growing Revere Beach sand sculpting festival **BY BETTY DAGEFORDE**

THE TEAM

Steve Brodeur and Michael Cormier are partner-owners of The Throne Depot in Woburn, Massachusetts, just a few miles from downtown Boston. Cormier handles the back office and financial functions, Brodeur manages the drivers and dispatching. The team includes a salesperson, a collections person, a yard man and six technicians (10 in the summers). They operate out of a warehouse/office that houses their vehicles and another warehouse where they store 100 deluxe units to keep them dry and clean.

Owners and drivers alike were on site at the sand sculpting event. “When we do a big event like that, it’s all hands on,” Cormier says.

COMPANY HISTORY

In 2005, Brodeur was working as a salesperson for a dot-com company and Cormier owned a Hino truck dealership. Cormier had considered becoming a distributor for his friend, Don Emerson, founder of FMI Truck Sales & Service, in Portland, Oregon, but eventually realized he wouldn’t be able to sell enough trucks since there weren’t many portable restroom companies in his area. “But when I saw that there weren’t that many people doing it I thought maybe we should get into doing this business,” Cormier says.

After getting his friend Brodeur involved, they bought a 2006 Hino from FMI with a 500-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater steel Workmate tank and Masport pump, and 26 portable restrooms from PolyJohn Enterprises.

Today the company has 1,000 units and about 70 percent of their work is for construction. They rely heavily on routing and invoicing software from Clear Computing to help them serve their customers in a 50-mile radius of Woburn.

THE JOB: Revere Beach International Sand Sculpting Festival
LOCATION: Revere, Massachusetts
THE PRO: The Throne Depot

(continued)

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MAKING CONNECTIONS

From 2011 through 2013 Throne Depot won the bid for the sand sculpting event, then lost to a competitor in 2014. For 2015, Brodeur says the bid was close, but he thinks they may have won out because they had more familiarity with the festival.

THE MAIN EVENT

Boston's Revere Beach was the site for the 12th annual Revere Beach International Sand Sculpting Festival July 24-26, 2015. The crowd of 750,000 was treated to live music, fireworks, amusement rides and gourmet food trucks. But the main attraction was the massive display of art created by 20 sand sculptors from around the world. Working with 12 tons of sand in an 18-foot by 18-foot area, contestants worked about 30 hours over a four-day period to create their masterpieces, competing for \$15,000 in prize money.

BY THE NUMBERS

To supplement on-site restroom facilities, the company brought in 48 PolyPortables Axxis and four PolyJohn

Right: The Throne Depot set up units at the Revere Beach International Sand Sculpting Festival in Massachusetts on July 24.

“When we do a big event like that, it’s all hands on. ... We’ll do whatever we have to to make sure the customer’s happy.”

MICHAEL CORMIER



Comfort XL wheelchair-accessible units. Half were gray-sided, the others purple, all with orange doors, the company's signature color. "We wanted to be different with our colors because the industry was always teal, especially up here in the Northeast," Brodeur explains.

Units were placed in two banks, one at each end of the half-mile stretch of beach. Three units were set up in the center, spaced about 200 feet apart, for use by the sculptors. Combination padlocks prevented access by the public.

The three sculptor-designated units were dropped off on Monday for competitors who began sculpting on Wednesday. The rest were brought in on Friday with a caravan of the company's vacuum trucks, as well as a 2014 Chevy Silverado and 2015 Dodge pulling two 10-unit hauling trailers from Liquid Waste Industries. The process was reversed at 6 a.m. Monday.

KEEPIN' IT CLEAN

The company has six vacuum trucks from FMI, all with Masport pumps. In addition to their 2006 Hino, they have two Hino 268s (2008 and 2013) with 1,300-gallon waste/300-freshwater steel tanks from Progress Tank, a 2011 Isuzu NPR with an 800-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater steel Workmate tank, a 2016 Hino 155 with a 300-gallon waste/125-gallon freshwater aluminum Workmate slide-in tank, and a 2015 Hino 268 with an 800-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater steel Workmate tank.

(continued)



Above: Steve Brodeur, left, and Michael Cormier of The Throne Depot are photographed at the Revere Beach International Sand Sculpting Festival. The Hino service truck from FMI Truck Sales & Service carries a Progress tank and Masport pump.

Left: Andy Sarcione, left, and Tom Silva move restrooms into place.



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Above: Andy Sarcione, left, and Vinni Santiago unload restrooms from a Liquid Waste Industries transport trailer at the Revere Beach International Sand Sculpting Festival.

Right: Technician Ramon Santiago preps a restroom for service at the sand sculpting festival.

Units were serviced Saturday and Sunday at 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. using the 2013 and 2015 service trucks. The company used Walex Products deodorant (cinnamon-spice premix and disks). Waste was taken to the local treatment plant.

To help deal with the crowds, two drivers were assigned to each vehicle. For

“After vacuuming out 10 of them they asked that we only add water and replace the toilet paper in the others. There were just too many people, too much going on that they felt it was unsafe to continue down the bank.”

STEVE BRODEUR

the afternoon service they were escorted by police to help them maneuver through the crowds. Despite the escort, they were unable to complete their servicing at one end of the beach on Saturday afternoon. “After vacuuming out 10 of them they asked that we only add water and replace the toilet paper in the others,” Brodeur says. “There were just too many people, too much going on that they felt it was unsafe to continue down the bank.”

CHANGES FOR 2016

The servicing problems at the festival were unforeseen and out of their control – there were 150,000 more people than the previous year – but they know it reflects badly on them. “It’s not good for them or us because we want our toilets to look good and not be overflowing,” Cormier says. They talked with event organizers about 2016 and it was decided units would be taken off the main drag and placed on two side streets to ensure they’re accessible for cleaning.

Attendance at this free event has grown enormously over the last few years due to increasing media coverage. “Four years ago, we had six units there, now we have almost 10 times that,” Brodeur says. Next year will no doubt be even bigger, but the company will be ready. “We’ll do whatever we have to to make sure the customer’s happy,” Cormier says. ■





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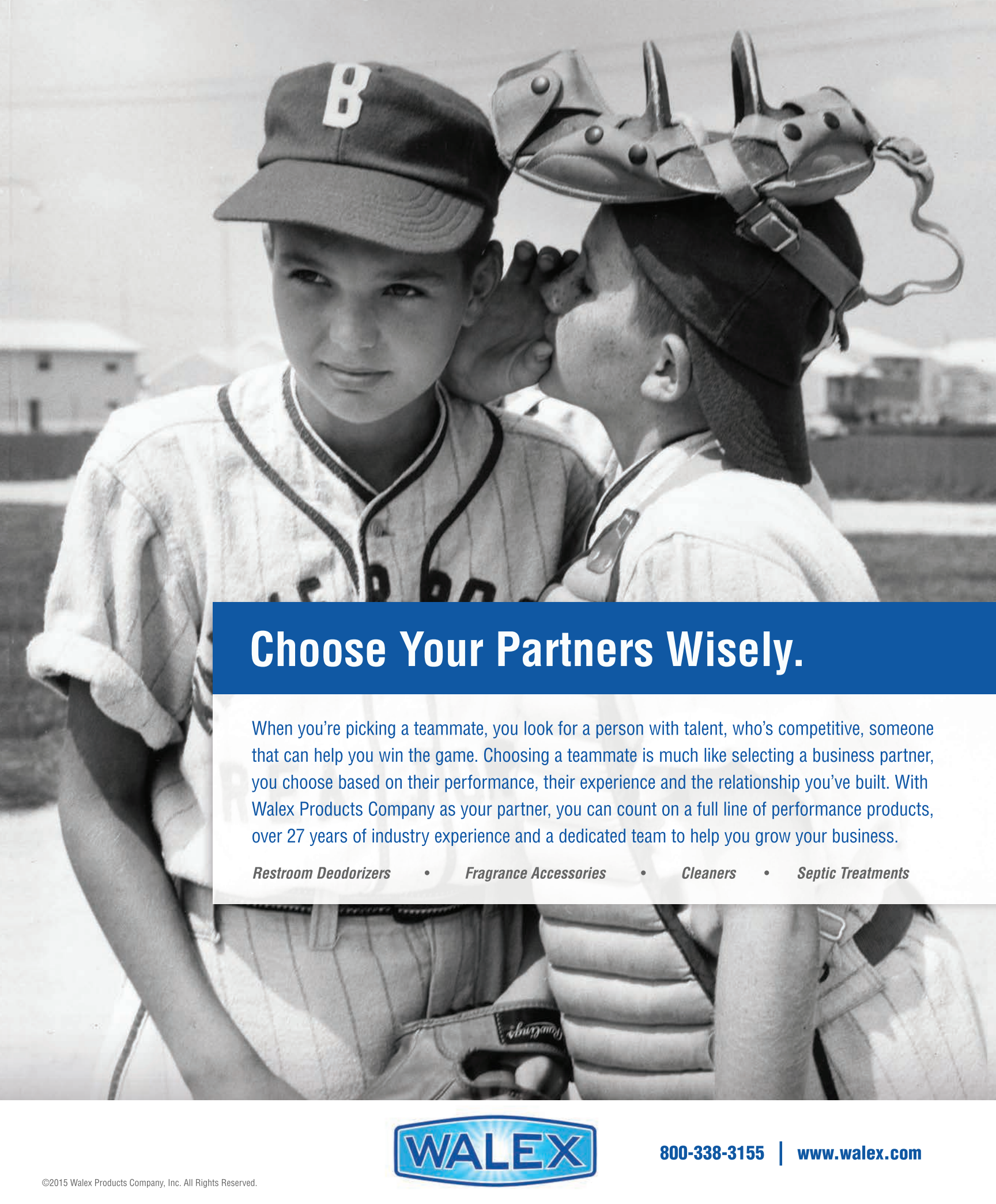
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Karleen Kos is executive director of the Portable Sanitation Association International. She may be reached at karleenk@psai.org or 952/854-8300.



Work With Event Planners to Ensure Adequate Service This Summer

By Karleen Kos

Someone once opined, “The only reason we ask other people about their weekends is so we can tell them about our own.”

There’s a lot of truth to that idea. People love to talk, and they share enthusiastically about their leisure activities. We’ve all heard lengthy tales of kids’ ball games. Then there’s the holiday marathon someone ran, the steamy Fourth of July picnic, the evening at the county fair and the perfect wedding weekend.

Wouldn’t it be great if one of the things the storyteller was recounting concerned the terrific portable restroom experience they had?

Within the portable sanitation industry, we often lament that our service is the last thing on the minds of event planners. Our experience tells us good planning, enough equipment and an optimal service schedule means a better outcome for everyone. So we need to get the planners on board and guide them to making decisions based on the outcomes they want, not just the price they want to pay.

The key is educating planners about guest expectations, behaviors and the mathematics of planning.

- Fact: Attendees expect clean, plentiful restrooms.
- Fact: Nature calls in predictable ways, resulting in predictable use patterns and predictable volumes of waste.
- Fact: A PRO can help planners see this for themselves, making them more willing to choose event resources that are optimal.

This is good news for everyone because:

- Fact: When the services meet guest expectations, they are likely to stay longer, spend more money and say nicer things about the event as a whole.
- Fact: When the service isn’t planned well, guests notice and talk in most uncomplimentary ways.

Of course, the worst of it is that guests don’t often differentiate between the event planner and the name of the company on the portable restroom. This hurts everyone — especially the reputation of the portable restroom operator and the industry as a whole.

To assist PROs and change the dynamics of the discussions with planners, the Portable Sanitation Association International has introduced a new publication called *The PSAI Guide to Portable Restroom Excellence*. This booklet is designed to help PROs talk with planners about the considerations that are important in preparing for an event. It puts the math in front of the customer. Coming from a neutral third party like PSAI, the data and planning ideas included in the document make it much easier to get planners on board with the equipment and servicing schedule they should consider to optimize their event. It is available now at www.psal.org or by calling 952/854-8300.

Gushing about a great porta-potty? You may think that’s a bit of a pipe dream. But hey, we all know that our service is talked about when it was notable for the wrong reasons. The PSAI is committed to working with industry members to change the conversation. Let’s get people talking about how portable sanitation provides better work sites, better weekends and a better world. Now that’s a tale I could listen to! ■

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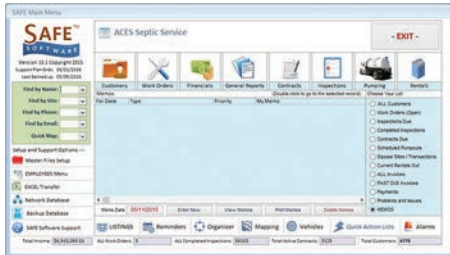
Office Technology and Software, Business Management

By Craig Mandli

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Version 15 of SAFE Software allows users to store customer information and system details, schedule service, print documents and process financials with a few clicks. Setting up reminders and keeping track of day-to-day operations is a simple and efficient process. The program can be installed on multiple computers and networked so multiple users can enter data simultaneously. The computer-based platform is simple to use yet secure and diverse enough to handle workload complexities, according to the company. **800/604-7351; www.thesafeprogram.com.**



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Service Station from Clear Computing allows service companies to improve efficiency by going paperless and avoid phone and texting interruptions between office and drivers on Apple and Android devices. Drivers get electronic delivery of routes for service stops and work orders, along with tools and information needed to complete and update the status of each job. Notes about site-related issues can be added and emailed to the office when service status is updated. Voice directions from current location to each stop support route changes. It includes maps, update forms for key operational fields (including quantity, units serviced, and start/end times), and customer email notification of service completion. Updates flow immediately back to the office with driver locations and completion date and time. It can generate reports for profit and loss by stop. **888/332-5327; www.clearcomputing.com.**

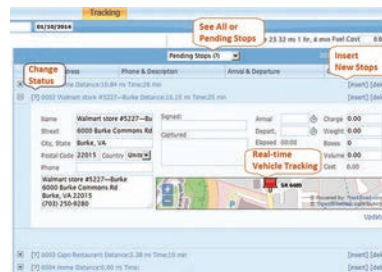


WESTROM SOFTWARE THE SERVICE PROGRAM

The Service Program from Westrom Software integrates with QuickBooks and is compatible with mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. It includes delivery date, time and quantity of each order; the type of product (portable restroom, sink, holding tank, restroom trailer); where to set up on the premises; pickup date and time; removal and disposal of waste; and also tracks cleaning, delivery and pickup routes. The user can generate billing that includes date ranges, pickups, drop-offs, damage waivers and



fuel surcharges. It can be used to prorate units and returns, bill on any billing cycle in the front or back end, track product issues by serial number, and bill by day, week or month. Units appear on maps with a latitude and longitude if there is no physical address. **866/480-1879; www.westromsoftware.com.**



RITAM TECHNOLOGIES SUMMIT

Summit software from Ritam Technologies offers printed route sheets, or allows drivers to go high-tech by scanning units serviced (customer proof of service, driver efficiency audit) and smartphone route management. Advanced

mapping technologies optimize route efficiencies, considering target scheduled times and drivers' working hours. Options include voice navigation and digital signatures on site. Sites serviced drop instantly from the pending dispatch log. Office personnel dynamically track drivers on street-level maps as they progress through their routes. There is no separate hardware, as drivers only need smartphones. **800/662-8471; www.ritam.com.**

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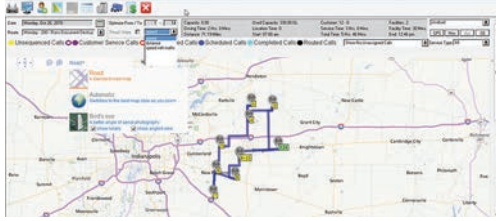
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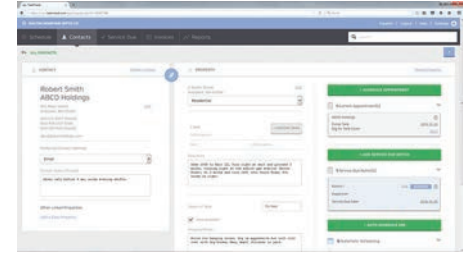
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RouteOptix now integrates with Microsoft Bing Maps, enabling maps to show either Road View (roads/geography), Bird's Eye View (aerial images) or Automatic (best map style when zoomed). Optimization is either by "Speed" or "Speed with Traffic." Real-time updates are available without having to wait for new mapping to be released. Visual mapping is available in many areas. Customer Information displays a map of each job site location, Route Advisor determines the best route to place a new customer by displaying nearby customers/days they are routed, and Service Densities reveals a visual picture relating to customers/services/routes on a map to assist with building sales density. **866/926-7849; www.routeoptix.com.**



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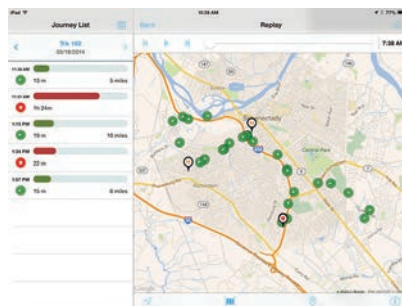


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FLEETMATICS REVEAL

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workforce productivity. **704/716-7646; www.fleetmatics.com.**

CASE STUDY

Software helps company keep track of service

PROBLEM: A1 Rentals, with locations in Idaho Falls and Rexburg, Idaho, provides portable restrooms as part of its general rental business. When customers questioned whether or not units have been serviced, A1 needed software that could verify the job was completed. They sought a solution to manage general rental equipment and handle the complexities of portable restrooms, specifically with features that include service and dispatch routing as well as reoccurring billing.

SOLUTION: Point-of-Rental Expert Software

provided a complete rental management system for advanced rental operations. It not only handles general rental transactions with reoccurring billing and dispatch routing, but also provides a service module that integrates with TSO Mobile. Using a GPS unit within every service truck, it collects and reports data, allowing A1 Rentals to track each service route. Providing a geo time stamp with latitudinal/longitudinal coordinates, it specifies how long the truck is at a stop as well as when the pump turns on and off.

RESULT: Now when customers call, A1 staff can check the service contract to see when the driver was at the location and if the job was marked as complete. "Everything is in one software, so we don't have to bounce back and forth between programs," says Wes Thompson, owner of A1 Rentals. **800/944-7368; www.pointofrental.com.**





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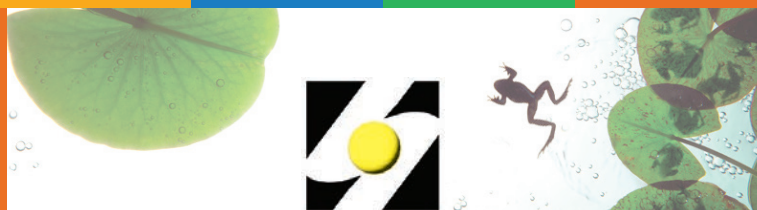


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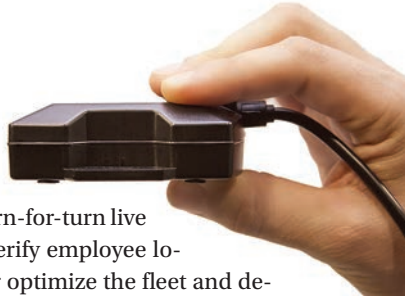
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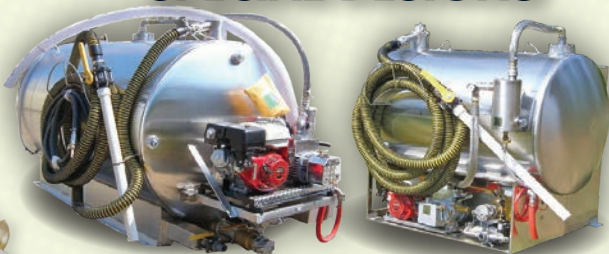


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INDUSTRY NEWS

Walex welcomes new regional account manager

Walex has hired Trevor Mullins as the company's newest regional account manager. He previously served as an account executive for a Fortune 500 company.



Trevor Mullins

Manitou welcomes Fernbridge Tractor & Equipment Co. to dealer network

Fernbridge Tractor & Equipment Co., located in Fortuna, California, has joined the Manitou dealer network and will serve Humboldt, Del-Norte and Trinity counties for rough-terrain vertical-masted forklifts, semi-industrial vertical-masted forklifts and agricultural telescopic handlers.



Armstrong Equipment partners with Greenleaf

Armstrong Equipment formed a partnership with Greenleaf Inc. that includes Greenleaf's exclusive line of GatorLock cam-lever hose couplings. ■

PRODUCT NEWS

Magline propulsion assist and lift system option



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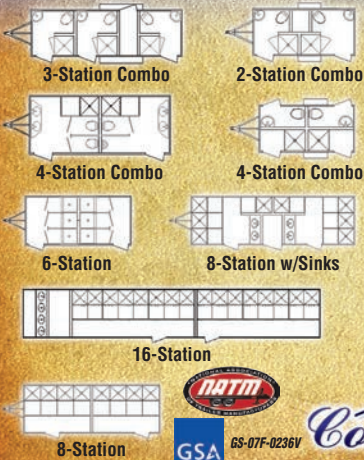


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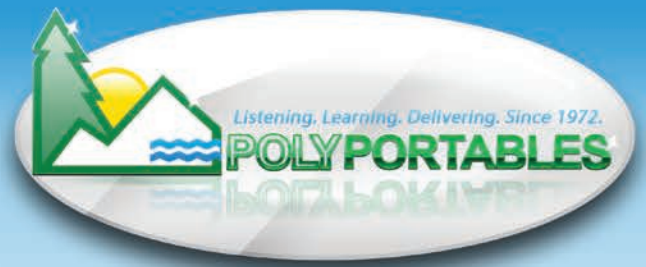
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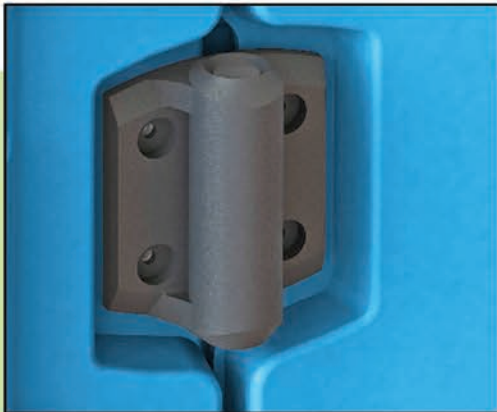
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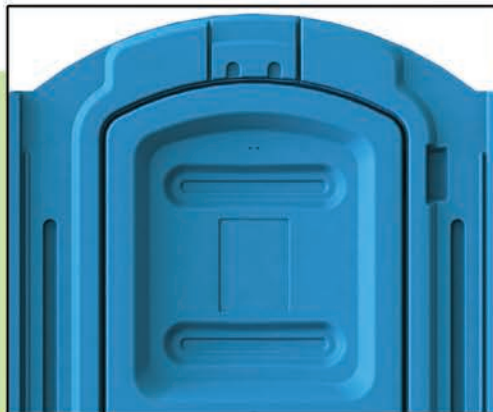


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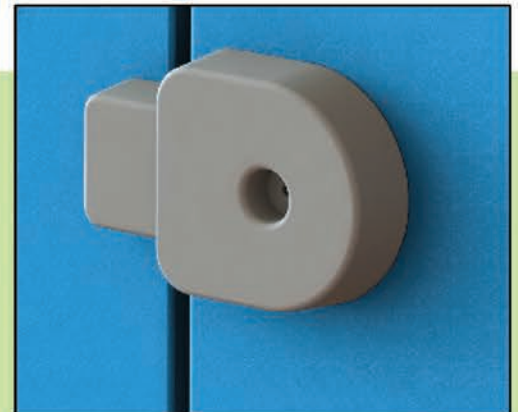
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