

Insider Info

Vended Laundry Solutions
with Tod Sorensen



Growing Your Full-Service Laundry Business

The question isn't whether you should grow the full-service side of your business, it's why wouldn't you? Harnessing the right technology and equipment, you can enter new commercial and residential markets; process more laundry than ever before; and fully utilize attendants and idle machines. Full-service laundry income, which can make up between 15 and 40 percent of total store revenue, can add significantly to your bottom line. Read on for suggestions on ways to improve and grow your store's full-service laundry business.



A Consistent Product

Creating a consistent high-quality service and product presentation is essential for a successful full-service laundry business. Ensure items are consistently cleaned, sorted by item type and professionally packaged.



Point-of-Sale System (POS)

A POS not only allows customers to schedule and pay for wash-dry-fold services online, or via their phones, it simplifies management and tracks payments, laundry processing, scheduling and deliveries. Look for one that includes a website for your business – making online orders and tracking a snap. A good website is an absolute must for marketing and managing full-service offerings.



Washers with a Hybrid Control

There are new washer controls on the market that allow attendants to switch a machine from a self-service vended control to a full-service commercial control, according to a store's needs. When processing commercial account or wash-dry-fold laundry for customers, the control can convert to much more sophisticated programmability using automatic chemical injection that allows laundries to process hospitality, vacation rental and food and beverage linens. If you are developing a new laundry or are replacing equipment and want to grow the full-service side of your business, invest in washers with a hybrid control. They'll open doors to new business.



A Big Washer

Install a 90- or 130-pound capacity washer in your laundry so you can process big loads and bulky items. Big machines are not only good for the self-service side of your business, they are important for processing large commercial and wash-dry-fold orders.



Automatic Chemical Injection

Not all washers offer automatic chemical injection, but that feature is critical if you process commercial laundry for spas, catering companies, hotels, B&Bs or vacation rentals. Commercial chemical injection helps ensure oils, foods and stains are effectively removed from linens. Be sure if you're investing in new washers that they have this capability.



Sanitized Laundry

Many laundry owners have seen a dramatic increase in business from adding ozone sanitization. It works with a washer's automatic chemical injection capability to introduce ozone gas into the wash cycle. This ozone naturally eliminates nearly all viruses, molds and bacteria from laundry. Sanitization is a differentiator if you offer wash-dry-fold or commercial services. Stand out from your competitors with sanitization.



Install a Flatwork Ironer

Consider installing a flatwork ironer to open doors to new commercial accounts you otherwise couldn't serve. By installing a flatwork ironer, vended laundry owners and new laundry investors can go beyond the industry standard; harness bigger accounts that require high-quality linen finishing; and significantly bolster profits. To install one, you'll need a 200-square-foot space and two operators. The ironer will allow you to quickly iron table and bed linens for spas, vacation rentals, small hotels, catering companies, B&Bs, restaurants, and more.



Pickup & Delivery Service

Maximize customer convenience by offering pickup and delivery services to both commercial and residential customers. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many vended laundries began residential pickup and delivery. While the self-service side of business dwindled, the full-service side with pickup and delivery thrived. By offering pickup and delivery, you're expanding your geographic reach and making it super easy for customers and businesses to work with you. Even if you aren't going to offer pickup and delivery right away, make sure your POS includes a component that helps you route pickup and delivery vehicles. You'll be glad you did ...



More Space

As your business grows, you might find you need more space for equipment and laundry processing and ironing. Congratulations! Be sure to get your laundry equipment distributor involved early on to help you with site selection, laundry design and layout, equipment mix, automation and more.



Tod Sorensen is a regional business manager at Girbau North America and vice president of Continental Girbau West, a full-service distributorship serving the Southern California vended, on-premise and industrial laundry markets. He holds more than 20 years of experience in vended laundry development and market analysis. Please contact him with any questions at tsorensen@gnalaundry.com or call 866-950-2449.