

Promoting the responsible growth and prosperity of the car wash industry.



the **WASH-word**

NEWS FROM THE CANADIAN CARWASH ASSOCIATION

President

David Woodcroft WASAGA CAR WASH

Secretary-Treasurer

Saul Barth GAS-UP CAR WASH

Vice-President Carwash Owners/Managers

Vito Cosentino WASH 'N' GO

Vice-President Manufacturers/Distributors/Suppliers

Brad Laurier MACNEIL WASH SYSTEMS LTD.

Immediate Past President

Murray Ewing TRANSCHEM INC.

Western Chapter President

Nancy Schmutz TD INDUSTRIES

CCA HEAD OFFICE

5-2325 Hurontario Street, Suite 194
Mississauga, ON L5A 4K4
Phone: 416.239.0339
Fax: 416.239.1076
office@canadiancarwash.ca
www.canadiancarwash.ca

CCA NEW MEMBERS

Southampton Autowash Port Elgin ON
Royal Detailing Hamilton ON
J&D Gas Bar Inc. Caledonia ON
Looney Twooney Coin Carwash Ltd. Etobicoke ON
Mapleview Car Wash Burlington ON
Niagara Soft Cloth Carwash Welland ON
Elite Construction Calgary AB



INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.

Car Wash Operators Insurance Plan

Exclusive Program Endorsed & Recommended by Canadian Carwash Association.

Tel: 1(800)265-2634
www.erb-erb.com

Long time car wash operators share tips for success

Good maintenance and satisfied customers are most important factors

by Karen Dalton

Eighteen years ago Dave Katz got into the car wash business by accident. Washing cars in his parents' driveway led to an offer to open a one-bay detail car wash at a local Canadian Tire store in Hamilton, Ontario. Today, Dave and wife Roberta operate Royal Detailing, a 10-bay detailing facility with his best friend and manager Daryl Terry, his wife, Nicole, and six other employees.

"We've built a family business with a focus on personal service and hard work," says Katz. "I believe the owner and manager should work alongside their employees, so Daryl and I will pick up cars and pitch in with the detailing if needed. As a 'hands on' owner, Katz can react to customer needs and keep current with the market.

One way he decided to learn more about car wash industry trends was to join the Canadian Carwash Association. "I took a look at the association website and discussed the benefits of the association with other operators and decided it was a great way to get information," said Katz.

"Competition is a real challenge in the detailing business," he adds. For Dave this means constantly keeping up with the

Jones by monitoring prices and services offered in other detailing shops.

"We offer a free pickup and delivery service for our customers, which no one else does," said Katz. He will also go to the customer's location to give him or her a free estimate for the detailing work. His customer base includes contracts with a limousine company, used car lot and a new car dealership, in addition to the per-

"We can't always do miracles for our customers, but we certainly try."

sonal car, van and truck business.

"We can't always do miracles for our customers, but we certainly try. If a customer hasn't cleaned his car in 10 years and the fast food containers reach the dashboard on the passenger's side, you know you have a challenge on your hands to have a satisfied customer."

"The best advertisement and best investment is satisfied customers who tell others."

the **WASH-word**

NEWS FROM THE CANADIAN CARWASH ASSOCIATION

Royal Detailing has plans to expand the detailing business with an after market parts offering. Katz, who has a background in the auto wrecking business, having worked with his father, wants to generate additional revenue particularly in the winter months when detailing slows down. "We're considering adding sales of wheels, rims and tires to supplement the business." Their current location, which they've owned for five years, was formerly an auto wrecker's establishment and already has a tire machine and some tires in stock. Plans also include opening other locations in the region and the possibility of one day moving to northern Ontario for a change of lifestyle.

ALI AND SERDAR KARTAL

For brothers Ali and Serdar Kartal the car wash business has been rewarding. After purchasing Mapleview Carwash in Burlington, Ontario, 15 years ago, they have increased the business 100%. "Our business is service, so if you listen to the customer you'll do all right," according to Ali.

Both started out in the business working as employees at the full-service automatic tunnel car wash. Over the years, they have found that stormy weather is their biggest challenge. "When the weather is good, everything is perfect," says Kartal.

He acknowledges that competition

has increased in the tunnel car wash business with the rapid gas station chain expansion into the market. However, he expresses his attitude this way: "continue to provide good service and you don't need to worry about the big guys."

The key to a successful car wash business is satisfied customers and a good maintenance program. "Regularly maintaining and upgrading the machines is a very important aspect of the business," Kartal said. "We often purchase reconditioned equipment to save on costs rather than buying new.

"The best advertisement and best investment is satisfied customers who tell others." He and Ali use a variety of ways, including discount coupons, to market their car wash to their clientele of residential and commercial customers, who include car dealers, car rental companies and City of Toronto police cars.

"They have six full-time staff who keep the business going strong at the Burlington location, and the Kartal brothers also own and operate a second full-service tunnel car wash, Colonial Carwash, in Scarborough, Ontario. They do have plans to expand their operations by purchasing another car wash location if the price is right.

They joined the association to take advantage of the significant insurance premium discounts offered to members through Carwash Operators Insurance Plan.

TIM WRIGHT

Over the past 20 years, Tim Wright has built a good client base for his Niagara Soft Cloth Carwash in Welland, Ontario. Starting out in the business working with his father-in-law, Wright learned how to operate and maintain a car wash from an experienced owner.

"My advice for anyone thinking about getting into the car wash business is to have a plan before you get started," said Wright. "You have to know what you're doing, especially when it comes to maintenance." Today he owns and operates a full-service car wash with a detail shop, which he built five years ago. He purchased the land and developed the site, now employing eight full-time staff and 12 part-time employees.

"Staffing is my biggest challenge," says Wright, who admits that managing raising operation costs is an additional challenge. Despite losing staff because of the cold weather winter conditions, Wright still has satisfied customers who give him lots of compliments.

His plans for the future include selling his business, which is currently on the market, and retirement within three to four years.

Said Wright, "I value my membership in the association, which provides good information and very good value through the car wash insurance program."

OCTANE