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CANADIAN CARWASH ASSOCIATION



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INDUSTRY FORUM

CCA ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

Do your carwash customers know where the waste water from your carwash goes? For those continuing to wash their vehicles at home, where do they think the waste water flowing down the storm drains goes? You might be surprised at the answers - and the opportunities they present.

As a means of providing a benchmark to measure the success of ongoing Canadian Carwash Association initiatives, the CCA Environmental Committee commissioned a survey with Leger Marketing to gauge the awareness level of Canadians regarding carwashing. The results of the survey will be part of the "Going Green" session at CARWACS 2011 and suggest that we as an industry have a great opportunity to grow our volumes and revenues by educating consumers.



The CCA is developing a public awareness campaign that will benefit all members and will be launched in the spring of 2011. When consumers learn that professional carwash operators invest in waste water treatment and send their waste water to treatment plants (and not to a local river!) business can only get better.

The commitment of the CCA toward these initiatives was further enhanced in December of this year when we formed an alliance with the International Carwash Association and its WaterSavers™ program (www.icawatersavers.org). This alliance will give CCA members access to a full range of marketing and advertising resources. More information on the program will be available at the CCA booth at CARWACS as well.

Raising public awareness about the environmental benefits of professional carwashing is a priority for the CCA; the results of which could be of significant benefit to our members. The focus of these benefits is on water quality and consumption and how a carwash that is professionally operated is the best choice.

The goal is to define our industry as the obvious choice for vehicle washing from an environmental point of view. By educating consumers and operators alike, and by establishing minimum criteria to be a "water saver", we hope to have a meaningful program in place that not only benefits our members but also stands up to the scrutiny of the environmental movement.

THE WASH VOLUME REPORT – CCA’S UNDERRATED ASSET

Four times a year the Canadian Carwash Association (CCA) publishes the results of the Wash Volume Report (WVR). It is the single most reliable source of marketing data for the Canadian carwash industry when it comes to evaluating marketing, earning performance and potential.

Approximately 1,000 sites from across the country participate in the WVR, providing wash volume data to Kent Marketing Services Ltd. For some background, Kent Marketing’s primary area of expertise is in gathering national gas volume information; which the oil companies subscribe to. In 2005, Kent Marketing was approached by CCA to undertake a similar service for the carwash industry, and in January 2006 the WVR program began.

The WVR is divided into 14 regional areas and participants receive detailed information from the region or regions they report in, as well as the national data. The CCA only reports on top line national or amalgamated regional data; individual regional data is not released. All responses are confidential and names are not used in the reporting, nor released by the CCA office.

There is now five years of carwash trend data available. The value of which is evident by the fact that the CCA has been approached by a large association considering modeling on it for measuring the American market. But why should Canadian operators care?

If you’re the kind of operator who just sits back and waits for traffic to arrive, doesn’t do any marketing and generally run your carwash business as a hobby, well this service isn’t for you. Now if you’re in a competitive position and want to track how well your marketing is doing, know how others around you are performing, the WVR is vital. How vital? Staying in business vital.

Without data to use as a benchmark and for comparative purposes, operators are making decisions in a vacuum. With that said, the next hurdle is joining the process and producing the data needed by CCA’s independent research firm.

If you are a CCA member, there’s no extra cost and joining the WVR program is an email or phone call away. Collecting the data, well that’s not an excuse either; in fact, it is a very simple process. That data is easy to collect as most equipment used in the carwash-

ing industry reports the number of cycles, number of times a bay is accessed and what options have been selected.

Four times a year participants complete an electronic spreadsheet for Kent Marketing. It is simple and confidential. Generally, a single site will only need to complete one or two columns. For each type of service you offer, we just need the number of cycles (individual washes) and the total revenue per month.

If you are a coin operator with one or more bays, you just take your monthly gross carwash related sales revenue and divided by \$7 to come up with a comparative number of cycles. If you own an automatic, the number of cycles is one of the pieces of information your high priced equipment should generate, and certainly monthly sales should be a no brainer to get. If it takes more than 10 to 15 minutes to fill the form out, we’d be surprised.

To sum up, the WVR provides vital business information to carwash operators; supplies data; takes little of an operator’s time; comes free with your CCA membership and is confidential. So now, why aren’t you participating? For more information visit www.canadiancarwash.ca.

WHAT DOES THE CANADIAN CARWASH ASSOCIATION DO?

What the Canadian Carwash Association (CCA) does for the industry is not an easy question to answer. In part, the CCA is here to represent the interests of carwash owners and operators. This involves:

- Discussions with various levels of government and other special interest groups,
- Providing tangible member benefits,
- Providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and best practices,
- Providing opportunities for social interaction for our industry,
- Developing educational programs to assist operators, and
- Providing a place for members, the media and public to call for carwash information.

In order to accomplish these tasks, the CCA is organized into a number of committees that have specific responsibilities. To help inform our members about the activities of the committees, the CCA has created new pages for the website (www.canadiancarwash.ca) to address their mandates, composition and deliverables.

One of the things the CCA has not done well is communicate what it is we do. This is changing and part of that change is the new monthly electronic newsletter that started last January. If you haven’t see it, email us at office@canadiancarwash.ca to make sure you are on the list. We’ve also posted the communications on the website under newsletters for you to view at any time.

Many of the intangible benefits require that members be involved. Saul Barth, the 2010 CCA Ted Snyders Award recipient, said in his acceptance speech last September that the most important thing he got from his involvement from the CCA was access to like-minded colleagues he could ask questions of and interact with. He developed many friends in the industry whom he could turn to if there was a problem or question at his carwash operation. This only happened, as he said, because he got involved.

The CCA can and should do more for you, but we can only do so if you too are involved. Review our committee pages on the website and see if there’s a place you would want to assist.