

OWASSO EXPRESS LAUNDRY CENTER — CLEAN, SAFE, EASY AND FAST



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“We are first and foremost in the people business,” said Martin Mullican, owner of Owasso Express Laundry Center (Owasso ELC), in Owasso, Okla. “Our local community loves who we are and what we do.” The 4,500-square-foot laundry, which opened in March 2016, is all about pampering clients with “five-star service and the very best in wash/dry/fold.”

Equipped with high-speed Continental equipment, sanitizing ozone, and a highly trained team focused on top-notch service and results, the card-operated Owasso ELC is “Clean, Safe, Easy and Fast.”

In less than a year, Owasso ELC is exceeding financial expectations thanks to its unique amenities, store efficiency and quality wash/dry/fold emphasis.

Examination of the Vended Laundry Industry

Mullican, who retired from the Department of Defense, spent two years researching everything laundry prior to investing in the real estate and store development. He and his wife, Lynn, visited more than 100 vended stores across 12 states; engaged in conversations with other successful Express Laundry Center owners; joined the Coin Laundry Association (CLA); attended Clean 2015, in Atlanta; and carefully selected his equipment distributor, J.H. Stuckey Distributing Inc., in Omaha, Neb.

“We did a lot of research into market need and the unique nature of the laundry business model,” said Mullican. “The business is also a good fit for our family personality, investment-risk tolerance and long-term business goals.”

He credits industry mentors, including Rob Maes, Dan Sofranko and John Stuckey, for Owasso ELC’s quick success. Sofranko owns Perfect Wash Express Laundry Center in Huntington Beach, Calif.; Maes runs two Express Laundry Centers in Houston; and Stuckey, in addition to serving as Mullican’s Continental distributor, owns and operates a trio of Express Laundry Centers in Omaha. The vended laundry gurus offered advice on equipment and services geared to the Owasso market.

Harnessing the Express Laundry Center Framework

Following a demographic study and competitive analysis, Stuckey recommended that Mullican develop an Express Laundry Center, similar to his own, with a robust full-service wash/dry/fold offering. The



Owasso ELC offers customers a 60-minute self-service wash/dry/fold.

Express Laundry Center brand, developed by Continental Girbau Inc., is a complete store solution touting high-speed Continental laundry equipment, a 60-minute self-service wash/dry/fold, branded services, low utility costs, marketing, training and operational support.

“John was absolutely key and gets the lion’s share of the credit for our success,” said Mullican. “The Express Laundry Center program — when linked to a quality distributor — is much like having well-developed corporate franchise support, without the corporate franchise fees, inflexibility or ‘can’t adapt’ contract,” he added. “With Continental’s Express Laundry Center program as the framework for our business plan, financing was much, much easier to obtain. My bank made that statement several times.” The store’s increased revenue potential due to extended service offerings put the numbers in line for optimum financing.

Quality Wash/Dry/Fold Service Gleans Results

Just nine months in, full-service wash/dry/fold makes up a hefty 16 percent of total store revenue. “Because demographic studies weren’t as solid as we had wanted,” said Stuckey, “we developed the store to emphasize drop-off laundry production. Marty’s commitment to hiring and training excellent team members, who deliver a consistent top-quality product, sets the laundry apart.” Since Owasso ELC opened, full-service wash/dry/fold has grown a percent or two each month. Sales keep climbing . . .

“We didn’t think it would catch on as quickly or as significantly, but we really do a good job,” said Mullican. “My wife, Lynn, organizes and supervises our wash/dry/fold practice. The process we follow is documented and consistent; attendants are trained to ensure quality is consistent regardless of who is doing



2500 State Road 44 • Oshkosh, WI 54904
920-231-8222 • Fax 920-231-4666
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the work; and we've adjusted our chemistry to achieve the freshest smell and cleanest outcome, at the lowest production cost."

All items are carefully washed and sanitized according to customer specifications, precisely folded, separated by size or type, and shrink wrapped. Owasso ELC also provides laundry pick-up and delivery for residential and commercial accounts, including a local daycare, mortuary and hotel. A 24-hour turnaround appeals to customers.

Self-Service Clients Complete Laundry Fast

Business hums on the self-service side, as well. Customers enjoy big machines, card operation, ozone sanitation and oversized parking spaces. Other amenities include a 70-inch flat-screen television, free high-speed WIFI, automatic front doors, vending machines, and counters complete with charging stations. "The store is hyper-lit with LED lighting that's 20 percent brighter than the norm — popping whites and colors," said Mullican. "The store is hospital clean, fully attended and fast."

With laundry carts in tow, attendants greet customers in the parking lot; help them load their laundry into the carts; assist with the Card Concepts Inc. (CCI) LaundryCard system; and offer to load and operate equipment.

"The market was underserved in Owasso and the older laundries near us are unattended," said Mullican. "Now customers don't have to drive to Tulsa to find 75-pound capacity washers in a clean, safe, modern laundry." Moreover, every laundry load washed at Owasso ELC is ozone sanitized — providing customers with an extra benefit offered nowhere else in, or near, Owasso.

Low Utilities Contribute to Higher Profit Potential

Designed for energy efficiency, Owasso ELC utility costs take up a measly 11 percent of revenue. Several factors contribute to a

smaller carbon footprint, including the store's high-speed Continental washers, LED lighting and ArtiClean Ozone System.

Freestanding Continental ExpressWash Washers contribute to lower water, natural gas and electricity costs. Engineered to use less water, they generate extract speeds up to 400 G-force for more moisture removal during extract, when compared with lower-speed models. This cuts resulting dry time by up to 40 percent, which decreases natural gas consumption and dryer wear-and-tear. In the end, the high-speed washers allow customers to complete laundry in less than 60 minutes — improving customer turnover.

"The in-and-out-in-an-hour thing is real," said Mullican. "Customers like that speed."

Sanitizing Ozone Sets Laundry Apart

Working in concert with each washer is an ArtiClean Ozone Laundry System. "In killing bacteria, ozone gas is 1,000 times more effective than chlorine bleach," said Mullican. No other area vended laundry offers Owasso ELC's sanitation promise. "Our customers don't have to worry about who used the machines before them. The ozone is injected into all cold-water rinses so laundry is sanitized and deodorized every time," he said.

Continental Equipment Mix & ProfitPlus® Control

Plus, there are plenty of washers and dryers from which to choose ... Owasso ELC's equipment mix features a lineup of ExpressWash Washers, including six 60s, 12 40s and 19 20s. Four Continental 75-pound capacity PowerLoad Washers take on bulky,

family sized loads. These are complemented by Continental ExpressDry Dryers, including two reversing, single-pocket 75s, 12 dual-pocket 30s and 12 dual-pocket 45s.

"Each ExpressWash Washer features the ProfitPlus Control, which brings more washing options and cycle features to customers," said Stuckey. The control offers three primary cycle



Pictured, from left, are Owasso ELC manager Janet Swetson and owners Lynn and Martin Mullican.

options: HOT, for whites; WARM for colorfast and permanent press items; and COLD for colors. It also offers optional premium cycles. Thus, the customer can add a SUPERWASH, EXTRA WASH, EXTRA RINSE and/or DELICATE CYCLE.

Each "extra" adds to total vend price. "We upsell the extras 70-80 percent of the time because of the ProfitPlus," said Mullican. "When we help people load machines, we suggest extra rinses for washing items that retain more water, like towels, comforters and jeans. We tell them an extra rinse ensures all the soap is flushed out." SUPERWASH, which uses the hottest water and most agitation, is recommended for cleaning very soiled laundry. In the end, ProfitPlus "extras" contribute an additional \$2,000 to monthly store revenue, according to Mullican.

Card System Delivers Store Management and More

Finally, the LaundryCard system offers customers simple equipment operation and payment, while allowing Mullican remote store management.

"Financially, we're exceeding our revenue expectations," said Mullican. "We hit our break-even point just after five months and continue to grow revenue month-by-month."

To learn more about Owasso ELC or J.H. Stuckey Distributing, visit www.owassolaundry.com or www.stuckeydistributing.com, respectively.

Discover more about Continental laundry products at www.cgilaundry.com or by calling 800-256-1073.



The Continental 75-pound Powerload Washers are customer favorites.