

# Insider Info

Vended Laundry Solutions  
with Joel Jorgensen



## Why Equipment Flexibility is Key Now and into the Future

Machine flexibility is critical to how your laundry functions now and into the future. Today, we're facing a pandemic that's taken lives and shut down the world's economy. We never expected to have to shelter in place because of a virus. But, laundry owners with flexible equipment are at an advantage. They have the ability to alter machine locations, programming and vending. Some even have the adaptability to add critical features to meet CDC laundering guidelines and/or provide disinfection.

So what do you look for when it comes to machine flexibility? The ability to interface with third-party systems, on-board washer programming that's easily modified and installation flexibility.

### Third-Party Interface Flexibility

This is the most important capability of machine flexibility because it allows you adaptability to adjust machine performance to work with payment systems, chemical injection, ozone delivery systems and auxiliary electric or steam heat kits. After all, no one knows what the future holds, or what process requirements your customers and local health authority might require in order for you to remain "essential and open."

Payment systems provide the ability to program washer cycles and alter vend prices; run specials and time-of-day or day-of-week promotions; view number of turns and revenue; offer loyalty programs; and communicate with and complement point of sale systems and customer interfaces. A high-level communication interface between the machine and the payment solution is a must!

Machines must be able to work in concert with chemicals, pump systems, ozone or UV disinfection systems, especially given the world's current COVID-19 pandemic. All three, if automatically injected into the wash cycle, can disinfect laundry. Beware: Only certain washers can be used with ozone and some commercial chemistry due to seals, gaskets and rubber fittings not up to the duty of withstanding their aggressive nature.

Choose a washer that's adaptable to work with an auxiliary electric heat kit. That auxiliary kit can heat the water to very high temperatures for sustained periods without upgrading your hot water system. If you plan to meet Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines, washers must be programmable by temperature to hit and hold 160° F. Most vend washers do not have this capability out-of-the-box, and even fewer have the flexibility of upgrades to meet this target water temperature if it ever becomes a requirement.

An independently controlled third water inlet valve is also a nice washer feature, or optional add-on. This allows different additives to be introduced into the wash wheel through independent introduction of water, with a diluted substance, during a specific part of the cycle. This includes deionized water and/or ozone injection delivered through a cold water line.

### Equipment Programming Flexibility

Choose machines that offer flexible programming for cycles, maintenance and customer extras. This helps ensure your laundry is prepared for unforeseen adaptations down the road.

Programming flexibility allows the owner to alter wash variables within each cycle, including water levels, temperatures, number of baths and rinses, extract speeds, etc. This can be done on the machine or remotely. It also provides handy maintenance and flush options and the ability to alter vend prices and run specials. Be aware that it's possible that water temperature guidelines could be established for vended laundries in the near future. Be certain you have the ability to increase water temperature if needed. Once the requirement is established, parameters are established by the store owner and the simple, customer-forward display gives the consumer easy to follow choices.

Choose a machine with a control offering multiple customer options in addition to the standard Cold, Warm, Hot and SuperWash cycles. Continental controls, for example, allow customers to add an Extra Wash, Extra Rinse, Extra Spin and define a special SuperWash cycle. More options are appealing to customers. And, if needed, the "Extra Rinse" could be reprogrammed by the owner to include an ozone disinfection rinse.

Consider whether the manufacturer of the equipment you plan to purchase offers programmable control upgrade kits or not. Technology changes so quickly. Be sure you can upgrade or update your control/microprocessor a few years down the line, if needed.

## Installation Flexibility

Look for a soft-mount, freestanding washer for ease of relocation, high-speed extract and no special floor preparation. Unlike hard-mount washers which must be bolted to a reinforced concrete foundation using compact fill under the concrete, soft-mount machines are easily positioned into place without bolts, and thus, simple to relocate. This allows you to move high volume, front-of-store machines to the back of the store, and vice versa. This flexibility is great for reconfiguring stores to accommodate new machines or capacities. This limits down time

thanks to no special floor preparation. Plus, initial installation costs are much lower.

Soft-mount washers offer higher extract speeds (up to 405 G-force) than hard-mount washers (up to 200 G-force). Soft-mount washers, as a result, remove more moisture from each load, which shortens dry time and resulting natural gas consumption and energy while increasing customer turnover and store capacity during peak periods. So if natural gas prices spike in the future, you'll be prepared to weather the storm better than the competition down the street.



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