



# Evolving an Existing Laundry to Serve the Vacation Rental Industry

By Haley Jorgensen



Vended  
Laundry Profile

Shortly after purchasing an existing laundry near Palm Springs, Calif., Keith and Jacqueline Reed made smart equipment tweaks to better serve the booming vacation rental market. “Our goal was to take our very nice laundry and increase its revenue and profit for a more viable business,” said Keith Reed.

## When Opportunity Knocks

When purchased in 2018, the 4,500-square-foot Sparklean Laundry was predominately self-service with an equipment mix of hard-mount Continental Girbau (Continental) washers, complementing dryers and an ESD Cyberwash payment and management system. “There were a lot of Air B&Bs in the area and we noticed cleaning firms coming in to do self-service laundry,” said Reed. “It turns out there was a big demand for the high-end processing and ironing of bed and table linens. We wanted to tap into that commercial market and maximize our fluff-and-fold business. That’s when I started looking into ironers.”

**“From 2019-2020 our fluff-and-fold revenue increased 125 percent; from 2020-2021 it grew another 80 percent. It doesn’t even seem possible, but the ironer has been a gold mine for us.”**

— Keith Reed, Owner Sparklean Laundry



Owners Keith & Jacqueline Reed installed a new heated-roll Continental Express Ironer to help out with the demand for high-end processing and ironing of bed and table linens.



Left: Sparklean made smart equipment tweaks to better serve the booming vacation rental market. Right: The laundry installed a heated-roll Continental Express Ironer and two 80-pound capacity Continental ExpressWash® washers with automatic chemical injection.

### Investing in a Heated-Roll Ironer

As a result of his research, Reed contacted Jason McAninch of Continental Girbau West (CG West), a full-service laundry equipment distributorship in Santa Fe Springs, Calif. “I met with Jason and we clicked right away,” said Reed.

In order to wash and iron large-dimension items, including king sheets and duvets, McAninch recommended and installed a heated-roll Continental Express Ironer and two 80-pound capacity Continental ExpressWash® Washers with automatic chemical injection. To make room in the laundry, Reed captured space by eliminating a second bathroom, removing two stack dryers and relocating a wall.

At the end of the day, the ironer was installed in the middle of the laundry surrounded by floor-to-ceiling glass. “Our customers love watching it in action,” said Reed. The new soft-mount washers sit right outside the ironer room for easy access.

### Processing Full-Service Laundry

Reed installed freestanding soft- instead of hard-mount washers because they maximize laundry productivity using less energy and don’t require bolt-down. “We already had four 80-pound capacity hard-mount washers at the front of our store for customers to use,” said Reed. “The newer soft-mount washers spin at a much higher rate so they remove more moisture from laundry.” In turn, according to Reed, it takes less time to dry loads and speeds up the ironing process. This improves production and conserves natural gas.

To make operation simple, detergents and softeners are automatically injected into every wash cycle according to the washer program selected. Operators simply load, enter a program number and press start.

So, while self-service customers utilize the laundry for personal use, attendants multitask to process commercial and fluff-and-fold laundry. Attendants carefully track orders, keeping client laundry separated. While towels and blankets are quickly washed and dried, ironed goods, like bed and table linens, bypass the dryer and move directly from washer to ironer.

The Continental Express heated-roll ironer works with one or two operators. It automatically dries, irons and partially folds items, including tablecloths up to 12 feet in diameter, king sheets, king duvets, pillowcases and napkins. “The ironer does 75 percent of the work for us,” said Reed. “After ironing, it performs the lengthwise fold and we do the final two or three folds.”

Once complete, laundry is quickly delivered back to customers.

### Sales Catapult

Jump forward two years and business has surged, in large part thanks to the Continental ironer. “We bought the laundry in 2018 and installed the ironer in December of 2019,” said Reed.

It has single-handedly opened the doors to new business, so that today, Sparklean processes 8,000 pounds of commercial and residential fluff-and-fold per week. “We recently added a third shift because our business is really expanding,” said Reed. “I just got an account for another 1,500 pounds per day.”

Meanwhile, the self-service side of business keeps cruising. The result? A laundry that offers the best of two worlds and benefits from both. On the self-service side, which contributes 60 percent to total revenue, customers enjoy modern equipment and a clean, bright and cool environment. On the full-service side, which contributes 40 percent to total revenue, hospitality, vacation rental and residential customers appreciate a high-quality product delivered quickly to their door.

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To find out more about Sparklean, visit [sparkleanlaundryindio.com](http://sparkleanlaundryindio.com). Discover more about Continental washers, dryers and ironers at [continentalgirbau.com](http://continentalgirbau.com) or call 800-256-1073.