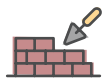




## How Vended Laundries Might Solicit Commercial Laundry Services

Many vended laundries successfully offer commercial laundry pickup and delivery service to a variety of businesses — from small hotels to medical clinics and dry cleaners — for big gains in store revenue and profit. Moving into this sector makes good sense because it utilizes attendants and equipment already in place. Once you've established a quality wash-dry-fold (WDF) service that's consistent and efficient, it's time to move ahead and pursue commercial accounts. Read on for more tips for soliciting commercial laundry services.



### Set the Foundation

First, be sure your laundry performs drop-off WDF service efficiently and consistently. Next, if you don't already have a WDF management and tracking system powering from your website with an online ordering and pickup and delivery feature, get one. This is essential for managing customer orders effectively. It will also capture client contact information, which allows you to market to targeted emails or socials. Lastly, evaluate whether or not your vended washer programming can switch to more sophisticated commercial programming that includes automatic chemical injection, a five-bath exchange cycle and higher water temperatures. You'll need this to remove oils and stains and get colors and whites brighter. Continental ExpressWash Washers, for example, have the capability to switch to commercial programming when used with specific card payment systems, while Continental GS Series Washers with the Genius Control switch to commercial programming no matter the payment system. If you don't have washers that offer commercial programming, it might be time to get a few.



### Define Your Target Markets

Next, determine the geographic radius for your pickup and delivery service, define your target markets and describe how your services solve target market laundry challenges.

A laundry in Huntington Beach, Calif., with a 40-mile delivery radius, partners with dry cleaners. It processes the dry cleaners' WDF work because they lack the equipment to keep up with production demands. Another laundry in Manhattan Beach, Calif., processes a gym's towels and saves them money over outsourcing to a large commercial laundry that previously charged \$6,000 per month. A third laundry, this one in the Midwest, cleans packing blankets for moving companies as a cost savings over using a commercial laundry. Finally, many vended laundries work with hotels and resorts during peak season to handle laundry overflow.

Consider the following markets and determine if they fit into your service model: dry cleaning, hospitality, food and beverage, salon/spa, gyms, vacation rental and medical. Then go after them with gusto!



### Knock on Doors

After preparing in-house to tackle commercial laundry accounts, identify a few possible customers within your delivery area to visit. Drop in, introduce yourself and

find out how their processing laundry and whether they need additional help. If they outsource, ask if they are happy with the service and cost. If they do it in-house, are they experiencing problems with staff, equipment or production? In short, find out how your service might benefit them in terms of cost, productivity, quality control and time saved.



### Get Social

While nothing is better than meeting customers face-to-face, communicating your service in other ways is also important. Get social and improve your laundry's visibility on platforms including Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and Twitter. This will help you build confidence and trust with your clients, create more sales and develop your brand's personality.



### Network

Connect with key business leaders through local groups and organizations, such as your local chamber of commerce, Kiwanis or Lions Club. Gain trust, friendships and build your commercial laundry service at the same time.



### Email Promotions and News

Reach out to current and potential customers with promotions, news and services updates. Your website and social accounts will capture contact information. Use it to communicate and follow-up on services performed. Consider offering a business referral program; nothing is more powerful than word-of-mouth.



### Free Online Directories

Make certain to list your business and services on key online directories, including Google Business, Yelp, Foursquare and Bing Places for Business. Complete online profiles fully to improve your Search Engine Optimization (SEO) performance. Respond to reviews! Use your response as a chance to tout your strengths.



### Advertising

Finally, consider advertising with local radio stations or placing an ad on the exterior or interior of buses that travel fixed routes through your defined delivery area. These ads offer high frequency at a relatively low cost.

*Tod Sorensen is a regional business manager at Girbau North America and vice president of Continental Girbau West, a full-service distributorship serving the Southern California, Arizona and New Mexico markets. He holds more than 20 years of experience in vended laundry development and market analysis. Please contact him with any questions at [tsorensen@gnalaundry.com](mailto:tsorensen@gnalaundry.com) or call 866-950-2449.*