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PITTSBURGH LAUNDROMAT GROWS WITH DEMANDS

Since it opened in 2000, customers from as far as Hollywood have had their clothes washed and folded at The Laundry Factory. Situated in Shadyside, an affluent Pittsburgh neighborhood surrounded by hospitals, colleges and Universities, other clientele include the renter community of students and young professionals, as well as the city's entertainment venues.

When owner Jerry Montesano replaced his old Wascomat® and Whirlpool® machines with Huebsch® in 2011, business instantly boomed while maintenance issues and utility costs plunged. When an adjacent storefront became available at the end of 2013, Montesano took advantage of the opportunity to more comfortably serve customers, increase wash and fold volume and accept additional commercial accounts. He expanded his store from 4,000 to 6,000 square feet, and says it was a no-brainer to install more of the Huebsch machines customers love. Since the addition, Montesano has been able to grow his customer base and increase efficiency, even when faced with rising utility rates.

[Learn more about The Laundry Factory's 2011 upgrade to Huebsch here.](#)

A long time coming

"We could have used the new space two years ago," says Montesano. "We were busy before, but not like it is now."

After the initial Huebsch replacement in 2011, he says business improved almost overnight. Customers loved the multiple options afforded by Galaxy™ controls, the stainless steel aesthetics and the high-capacity washer-extractors and tumble dryers. The new machines, including two 80-pound washer-extractors, also immediately boosted Montesano's bottom line. Within just a month, he saw savings of \$715 on his water bill (equivalent to approximately 86,000 gallons of water at that time).

When a restaurant vacated the space next door last September, Montesano worked with his authorized Huebsch distributor, Sonny Rogalla of Pittsburgh Laundry Systems, on a design that would allow for as many machines as possible.



After four months of renovations, Pittsburgh Laundry Systems helped install 20 new washer-extractors equipped with Galaxy 600 controls, including one 100- and two 80-pound machines, bringing The Laundry Factory's high-capacity offering to five.

"They get more spins than any other machines. Customers like that they can put everything in at once at a reasonable price," says Montesano. "We're going to add another 100-pound washer soon."

Additionally, three stacked 30-pound, seven stacked 45-pound, and two 75-pound tumble dryers get customers out the door fast. While they wait, customers can lounge on plush furniture and watch television on flat-screens.

"We also painted and redesigned the lighting concept," he says. "We opened up another wall and put in two hallways. It was important that the new space flowed seamlessly into the existing one."

Wash. Fold. Repeat.

With additional equipment, The Laundry Factory's wash and fold service has increased its throughput. Previously, staff processed approximately 6,000 pounds of laundry a week. That volume is now up to 9,000 pounds, and two additional shifts have been added. The store, whose clients include Heinz Field, PNC Park and Stage AE, even managed 10,000 pounds per week during filming of the latest Batman movie.

"People know we can get it done quickly. Our strongest marketing is word-of-mouth." Additionally, the simple presence of Huebsch equipment has helped him market his laundry within the environmentally-conscious Shadyside community, adds Montesano.

"We can confidently say the laundromat is eco-friendly, which is very important to our customers."

Montesano says they are known around town as an eco-friendly and green energy business, a title due largely to the single-phase power inverter on Huebsch machines. His previous brands, which included Maytag®, Wascomat® and Whirlpool®, used a three-phase power inverter. Although he has added larger-capacity machines, overall water usage has also decreased dramatically since he replaced old equipment.

Water saved is a penny earned

Even with rising utility rates throughout Pittsburgh—his home water bill increased



by \$35 per month last fall, for example—Montesano says he’s still saving on utilities thanks to state-of-the art Huebsch equipment.

“Of course my utility bill has increased now with more machines, but even after adding 2,000 more square feet we’re still saving,” he says. “It really helps to have efficient equipment in place.”

According to the American Water Works Association, water rates have as much as tripled over the last 12 years, and these rate increases are expected to continue. Montesano has circumvented the extra dollars he must spend on water—and boosted his bottom line—by slightly adjusting prices, utilizing machines’ cycle modifiers and time-of-day pricing features, and with the increased wash and fold business he is now able to accommodate.

Cream of the crop

Already thriving before the expansion, Montesano has increased business by providing customers with more of what they loved previously—now in a larger environment.

“The new equipment was always going to be Huebsch,” he says. “It really is the cream of the crop compared to everything else. It runs forever.”

Perhaps more important is that his toughest critics—from movie stars to college students—are satisfied, too.

Whether you are replacing an old brand or adding more of a good thing, Huebsch can be your guide – from start to finish – for investing in laundry. To find a knowledgeable laundry expert in your area who is ready, willing and able to help maximize your return on investment, visit the Huebsch [distributor locator](#) or call 1.800.553.5120.

