

PWNA Vendor Profile



Although Michael Hinderliter grew up around his father Robert's power washer distributorship, Michael was busy running two successful contract cleaning operations of his own. So when he took over his father's distributorship on March 1, 2010, it was not a seamless transition.

"I had only spent about five percent of my time in the distributorship business. There was a huge learning curve for me," Michael explained. "I knew we would make some mistakes, and it took us awhile to find our way."

Changing to PowerWash.com

One of the first things Michael implemented was changing the company's name.

Under his father Robert's leadership, Rahsco Mfg. Co. Inc. DBA Delco Cleaning Systems of Fort Worth, had been known for its many innovations. For one, it was one of the only distributorships early on that focused primarily on the contract cleaner. It was also one of the only early distributorships that sold nationwide.

The advent of the Internet, however, changed all that. Suddenly, the concept of selling outside your local territory stopped being an

industry no-no and became an acceptable marketing model.

By the time Michael took over the business, the Internet was a daily way of life. Keeping up with how the Internet changed business only made sense. So he immediately changed the company's name to PowerWash.com.

"I knew we needed a stronger Internet presence, and the PowerWash.com name was a no brainer," he explained. "It's simple. It tells what we do, and it tells people how to quickly find us."

Changing the company's name was fairly easy. Changing the company's website was much more difficult. "I made repeated changes to the website layout, ever increasing the amount of information we provided online," he explained. He has also since added the Powerwash Community Bulletin Board, where his goal is to keep the focus on education. "That's what's most important."

And PowerWash.com is all about providing education. Michael also created Power Wash University, which regularly offers classes on a variety of pressure washing related topics, including marketing, awning cleaning, kitchen exhaust cleaning, an introduction to power washing and more.

Changing the Company's Focus

Michael says his biggest mistake since taking over was placing too much focus on price. "If you make your prices too low, there's no way you can afford to provide quality service," he said. "Low prices may bring in first-time buyers, but they don't bring repeat business. That's not the direction I wanted to go."

So his business model changed. He looked for high quality products and hired expert



Michael recognizing industry pioneer Larry Hinckley at his retirement.

support staff – including contract cleaners – who understood the equipment inside and out, who were well spoken and who could educate and troubleshoot over the phone. He hired in-house designers to ensure the website was up-to-date, top-of-the-line and running smoothly.

“We really stress customer service,” he said. “We understand the contract cleaning side of the business, and so we are able to empathize, troubleshoot and brainstorm with our customers. We also work with distributors around the country to help them fix your equipment if you have a problem. We can often help you fix the equipment over the phone as well.”

These are things that PowerWash.com can offer over many local distributors who may not be as familiar with contractor needs. Because they are selling nationwide, they are also able to get a better price break from suppliers to help keep costs down as well.

Another cost-saving program PowerWash.com just began is paying the shipping for any power washer that costs \$200 or more.

And additional new changes are on the way.

Involvement with the PWNA

Michael has been around the Power Washers of North America since its inception; his father was the founder. However, historically Michael’s involvement was exclusively as a contract cleaner, and he credits the PWNA as being a great benefit to his contractor businesses.

“For me personally, the biggest benefit of being involved in the PWNA is the open exchange of ideas and being able to share experiences with others who do the same thing that I do. You can’t put a price tag on that.”

While this kind of networking often begins at the annual convention – which will take place October 17 through 19 in Orlando – it certainly doesn’t end there. “I’ve always been amazed by the willingness and desires of the members to reach out and help each other,” he explained. “You don’t necessarily see it online – on the bulletin boards and such – because most PWNA members prefer to avoid the online drama. But the support is certainly there. I’ve found PWNA members to be a group that is more focused on



PowerWash University student receive hands-on and classroom training.

the things that really make a difference when it comes to building a successful business, and in turn, that’s why many are very successful.”

Not an Easy Transition, but a Good One

Running PowerWash.com has been much more challenging than running his two contracting businesses. “You have to keep up with more than 3,000 products so that you can ensure you’re giving customers the best product for their needs. That’s a lot.”

Running PowerWash.com has been a lot of work, but it is finally becoming enjoyable. “It took us awhile to get our footing and find our direction. Today we have a stronger focus on the needs and wants of our customers. We aim to provide positive customer experiences, and ask for and apply our customer feedback. At the end of the day, satisfied customers are what really matters.

To learn more about the company, Powerwash Community or Powerwash University, go to www.PowerWash.com. To learn more about the Power Washers of North America, visit www.PWNA.org.



Michael surprising GM Trey Posey for his birthday