



# Bring in the Bounty: Spring Cleaning Exposed

by Rick Meehan

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Okay, so you've got some steady clientele and your cleaning business is on a roll. That's great, wonderful, and superb! But, are you milking those clients for all they are worth? Git it whilst the git'ins good – as long as it is mutually beneficial. That's my motto. Well? They don't call it "spring cleaning" for nothing! Now is the time to ask for extra work from those steady accounts, not to lay back and soak up the sunshine while your competitor garners your business.

For those of you who mainly contract for outside cleaning, get some inside jobs. Likewise, you domestic folks need to pull some extra profits from outside scrub-ups. This is called "adding on." Like, duh. The fact is, add-on services are the most overlooked profit centers for any type of business. You've already done the tough part by garnering customers from a fickle marketplace, so why haven't you continued to sell them on new stuff that you can do? Every season offers a different set of opportunities for adding on new cleaning jobs, but springtime beats them all!

Learning to ask for more business from existing customers is perhaps the most important aspect of keeping them. A contracting firm's public representative, whether it's the owner or a hired salesperson, is responsible for bringing in the bounty. So why is it that asking for more business is so difficult? It's not really, just overlooked. In the hustle and bustle of daily servicing, we forget that customers have to be engaged or else they get bored with us. To prevent a good customer from looking elsewhere for excitement, it is our representative's job to keep them busy – by stimulating them with new

opportunities for cleanliness – especially in the spring/early summer.

Spring weather is good in several ways: the outside temperature is comfortable, the inside climate is looking outward at the return of greenery; people get the urge to make things happen; excitement fills the air. Remember how it was sitting in that classroom on a brilliant spring day, watching the rustling of the new leaves filled with chirping birds, feeling the sunshine through the window, while trying to concentrate on the latest algebra problem in a stuffy classroom with a stuffy teacher? (My



wife is a teacher, so she won't let me get away with this one.) Antsy! And, this is how your customers feel right now!

Take advantage of Spring Fever by offering up some extras to keep your customers focused on what you do for them; otherwise, your competitor might just sneak a foot in the door by offering to do these things in your stead. Don't forget that as add-on services, this means add-on charges too. Price and bill these things separately. Here's a short list of ideas:

- Window washing, both inside and out
- Concrete and sidewalk cleaning
- Extract winter mud from the carpets and entry mats
- Shine up the floors after a long winter's abuse
- Polish old brass door knobs
- Scrub ceramic tile and stone to remove wet weather grime
- Pressure clean the outside of the building
- Detail interior walls, especially around ductwork and doors
- Wash the outbuildings
- Minor to major landscaping projects
- Clients hate to deal with many different contractors
- If you don't handle yard maintenance, consider subcontracting
- Sweep the garage
- Box possessions for clients that may be moving
- Minor to major painting projects
- See above reasoning and partnering

- Minor building repair projects
- See above reasoning and partnering

A really wise thing to do would be to create a spring add-on flyer listing your extra services. Don't put prices on these handouts, though. Always create a special contract for special services, priced by the job.

Extra work during the spring is available right now, so once your list is complete, put it in the hands of your regulars pronto. When it comes to labor for the new work, pay overtime or hire more people. After all, spring only comes once a year. Besides, if your company can handle all of the spring cleaning needs of your clients, there is less of a chance that one of your competitors will be able to plunk a foot in your door. Of course, it is always best to stick with what you know. That's why I'm a proponent of continual education. If I don't know how to do it, I learn. Think of self-education as self-preservation.

Speaking of preservation, if your competitor isn't offering spring cleaning add-ons, you've been handed the Golden Opportunity to inch your foot in their door. As U.S. Attorney General Erik Holder once said, "You never want a serious crisis go to waste." That's exactly what it is when a competitor misses out on your Spring Cleaning Extravaganza – a crisis for them – so git it whilst the git'ins good!



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