

# New Laundry Equipment Key to Rental Company's Soaring Sales



Due in large part to its new Continental laundry equipment, Rentals, Rentals in Knoxville, Tenn., saw a 200 percent increase in business over just two years.

## By Haley Jorgensen

At Rentals, Rentals, an 18-year-old party-rental company in Knoxville, Tenn., a simple change in on-premise laundry equipment spurred a dramatic, 200 percent increase in business over just two years. The company's new washer-extractor and flatwork Ironer eliminated labor-intensive drying and hand ironing—quadrupling production and unleashing a chokehold that had previously stunted sales growth.

"Before, there was no possible way to get all the laundry done," says Rentals, Rentals Manager Cindy Cowan. "Now, if someone wants 20 ivory tablecloths, we can get it done easily. What we can do now in a day, would have taken a week before."

Rentals, Rentals provides tables, chairs, dishes, tents, table linens and skirting for events including weddings, birthdays, anniversaries and sales meetings. The company serves a variety of customers, according to Cowan, including caterers, churches, businesses and individuals. For most events, providing freshly washed and crisply ironed table clothes, napkins and skirting, is a must. But, until recently, employees struggled to keep pace with

mounting soiled linens. Every member of Cowan's staff pitched in to get linens washed, dried and hand ironed, she says. And still, it piled up. Dirty linens cluttered the hallways.

"We did it around the clock," says Cowan of the laundry. "I was even taking it home at night to iron."

## Choosing the Right Laundry Equipment

That's why Cowan turned to Jeff Large of Laundry Systems of Tennessee, a laundry equipment distributorship in Sevierville, Tenn., for help. Large recommended Cowan replace the facility's home-style washer and dryer with a 30-pound capacity Continental Pro-Series Washer-Extractor and 13-inch Continental Heated-Roll Flatwork Ironer. The new equipment not only eliminated labor-intensive hand ironing, according to Large, it eliminated the need for drying linens—saving time and labor.

"They just couldn't get all the ironing

done and were having a lot of trouble with quality," says Large of Rentals, Rentals. Now, thanks to the new Continental equipment, the company has dramatically cut labor, despite a surge in sales. Already, Cowan reports having received a full return on her laundry equipment investment.

"I have one employee who does all the laundry now," she says. "It used to take three or four." Cowan's laundry attendant, who comes in on Mondays, has all of the linens washed, ironed and folded by Wednesday, she says.

The key to Rentals, Rentals' boosted production and labor savings, according to Large, is its highly efficient equipment mix. The Pro-Series Washer-Extractor and Ironer are designed to work in tandem without a dryer. Unlike most ironers, Pro-Series makes it possible to by-pass dryer conditioning—cutting 30 minutes off processing time. The combination of equipment saved Cowan the additional expense of purchasing a new industrial dryer.



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Continental distributor, Jeff Large of Laundry Systems of Tennessee and Cindy Cowan, owner of Rentals, Rentals party rental company stand in front of the company's H2030 Pro-Series Washer.

would have also required a dryer—something her small laundry facility couldn't accommodate.

### Choosing a Washer with High Programmability

Large successfully simplified the task of doing laundry for Cowan and her staff. The high-efficiency equipment is easy to maintain and operate, maintains Cowan, and produces a consistent, high-quality finish. The washer-extractor, which is pre-programmed to inject the right quantities of cleaning chemicals at the appropriate water temperature and cycle, allows for one-touch operation. The heated-roll ironer operates without messy wax and features a strap-tensioning system that applies three times more force than traditional stretch-type ironers. The end result, says Cowan, is a quality finish every time.

### Removing the Sales Chokehold

Since installing the new Continental equipment, Rentals, Rentals has quadrupled laundry production and cut labor—unleashing a longstanding chokehold on sales, according to Cowan. In turn, revenue and profits have skyrocketed. ▀

### Doing More Laundry with Less Labor in Less Time

Now, the company's 20-inch table linens are fed straight from the washer to the ironer, which automatically adjusts temperature and ironing speed based on the type of fabric and moisture content. By using the ironer with the Pro-Series Washer-Extractor, which removes water at speeds of up to 387 G-force, production is further improved. "Now we can iron a load of 10 tablecloths in 45 minutes," says Cowan. Previously, attendants spent 20 minutes hand ironing each one—a waste of time and labor.

and in turn, remove considerably less water during extract. So, if Cowan had gone with the hard-mount washer, she

### Why a Soft-mount Washer Made Sense

Because Rentals, Rentals' small laundry facility offered limited space and a standard 4-inch concrete foundation, Large knew an industrial hard-mount washer wasn't an option. "A hard-mount washer must be bolted to an 8-inch slab," says Large, "where a soft-mount washer, like the Continental Pro-Series, is freestanding." By choosing the soft mount, Cowan avoided costs associated with pouring additional concrete—making for a simplified installation. Plus, according to Large, hard mounts feature significantly lower extract speeds than soft mounts,



Rentals' Rentals' new Pro-Series Flatwork Ironer eliminated the need to purchase a new dryer. Now, the company's 20-inch table linens are fed straight from the washer to the ironer.