

IS YOUR ATTENDANT EARNING HER KEEP?

Every laundry owner should notate their sales breakdown by week according to washer revenue, dryer revenue, wash dry fold, drop off dry cleaning and vending.

This record keeping method yields much useful information - including whether your full time attendant is worth the salary you are paying her.

In profitable coin laundries, the attendants generate income by taking in the drop off dry cleaning orders, and processing the wash dry fold orders. Your net on these services (what you take in minus your supplies and the dry cleaner's cost) should cover the attendant's salary, plus make a profit for you, the owner.

Compare your average weekly net on your services to your attendant's weekly pay. If it has been awhile since you've gone through this exercise, you may be surprised to find that your employees make more than they generate in increased revenue! If you find that this is the case, there are several possible solutions:

Eliminate Services. Perhaps the demographics in your area have changed so that most of your customers are now self-service. In some cases you can make a higher net by doing away with services, along with the attendants, and operating an "all coin" store. Eliminating services also eliminates much of your supply costs, some of your utility costs and the dry cleaner's cost. Remember, a part time janitor is much less costly than a full time attendant.

Convert to Partially Attended. Maintain your services while cutting labor expenses by keeping your laundry attended only until 6 or 7pm. This will give drop customers enough time to pick up the orders they dropped off that morning. Enclose your counter area so that your coin-op can be operated as self-service only during nighttime hours. This method is extremely effective in trimming labor costs. If handled effectively most laundries will not lose any drop off customers, even if they are partially attended.

Add Commercial Accounts. If you feel that it is best for your laundry to be attended full time, the key to making money is to keep your

attendants busy! Do this by finding local commercial accounts (restaurants, spas, small motels, nursing homes, beauty salons, etc.) to supplement the normal drop off business. Since you already have the location, equipment and labor in place, this move can result in a high profit margin. You only need to pay for your supplies, plus additional utility costs. (Note: For more information on commercial accounts, see related article [Commercial Accounts: The Best Kept Secret](#))

Give the Wash Dry Fold Away. Consider keeping your best attendant on as an independent contractor. With this arrangement, your drop off customers still have access to this service. Your attendant would be self-employed, using your machines to run her own drop off business. She would supply her own soaps and supplies, and use her own money to start your machines, and of course any money from this drop off business would be hers to keep. The advantage to you is your coin revenue will increase due to the independent contractor's added money in your machines. Additionally, it is close to having a "free attendant" watching over the store as she did before, but with no labor costs.

Making decisions about labor, hours of operation and services is easier if you learn to focus on your net profit **after** paying for the services. This is the most effective way to pin down whether or not offering services and a fully attended store is still a profitable idea for your particular laundry.

If you do decide that changes are in order, keep your customers informed of any changes that affect them. Post professionally lettered signs throughout the laundry, and mention the changes to customers when they pick up orders, get change, etc.