

cleaning specialist

news and information from Prochem Europe for the carpet, fabric and floor care professional

Spring/Summer 2008
Issue 20



**Celebrating
10 years
of Cleaning
Specialist**



also inside: 2008 catalogue,
Prochem introduces new encapsulation product – Procaps



WELCOME

CLEANING Specialist celebrates its 10th birthday this issue. We've marked the occasion with a look back to what we, you (and the rest of the world) were up to in 1998. It's great to see so many of the products launched in our inaugural issue still enjoying continued success today. We've not forgotten to keep you informed on what's new, too. Read about the company that cleans for London's new rich; another that does a bit more than mop the decks of the Med's super yachts in Monaco; Britain's oldest professional cleaner; and the latest on distributors developing new markets in Spain and Poland. For the techies, encapsulation technology takes off big time. Finally, watch out for a major reader survey in the next issue in the build up to new digital developments coming your way soon. Enjoy!

Peter Muir,
Editor **Cleaning Specialist**.

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HAVE YOU GOT NEWS FOR US?

CLEANING Specialist welcomes ideas from you, the reader. Make sure you keep us up to date with developments by calling Peter Muir on **01296 715228** or email **prochem.newsdesk@pmpr.co.uk**



Cleaning Specialist celebrates its 10th birthday this issue. The idea for a magazine designed for cleaning professionals who sold, specified or used Prochem Europe solutions and technology, came about in summer 1997

Celebrating a decade of CS

THE launch issue coincided with news of new products in Prochem's Spot-Pro hand-held extractor, the Fivestar upright portable, Bazooka chewing gum removal system, Blazer truck mount and a remedy for drinks staining in Coffee Stain Remover. They are all still in the catalogue today.

Why launch a magazine when there was already a trade press? Managing director Alan Tilley reflects: "We wanted to communicate our own news direct to our own audience."

"While we were and still are supportive of our excellent trade press, it seemed a good idea to try creating our own little magazine, if only to see what the response was."

The response was overwhelmingly supportive and over ensuing years the magazine has enjoyed continued publication. "Feedback has been positive," says Alan. "Readers enjoy the product applications and tips and of course reading about one another. There is no shortage of businesses wanting to be featured in the news pages."

More detailed reader research will be sought in the autumn/winter issue of **Cleaning Specialist** for future publication. "We really would like to know where readers want to see the magazine going next," says Alan.

"With more of us on broadband, one option is to have a digital version available as well, but this is something we need to make an informed decision on and that's why our readers' opinions will be so highly valued."

1998 was the year...

● US President Bill Clinton was involved in the Monica Lewinsky scandal ● Frank Sinatra died of a heart attack at the age of 82 ● Internet search giant Google was launched ● BBC America launched in the United States ● Rolls-Royce Motors was acquired by the German car manufacturer BMW ● Elton John was knighted by the Queen at Buckingham Palace

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Ten years on and still **blazing**



Lots of business: For Blazer user Jed.

THE first edition of Cleaning Specialist coincided with one of Prochem Europe's most successful truck mount launches – the Blazer.

This compact (only 256 kilos) machine was an ideal truck mount for cleaners making that first step up from portables. It came with its own waste tank ready for installation into a small van, was simple to operate and very economical.

A couple of years later, there was even better news in the Blazer Plus with lower fuel costs and reduced maintenance thanks to an innovative Multi-Stage Heat Capture System. It did away with the need for a water heater by capturing the Blazer Plus's exhaust gas to heat the solution water.

Other features included high limit water temperature shut-down; full waste water tank shut-down; oil pressure shut-down and last-step chemical injection system which reduced corrosion. The Blazer Plus came with carpet wand, pressure, vacuum and inlet water hoses and installation kit with fuel lines and fittings.

Today, the Blazer XL is at the helm with a new sleek, more compact design with removable top and front covers making maintenance and servicing a dream. It weighs nearly 30 kilos less, has a bigger engine and a twin jet wand. Users love it. "Once you've owned a Blazer truck mount you'll never look back," says Jed Horth of Paramount Cleaning Specialists in Torquay, Devon. Jed, who runs this fast-growing business with wife Gerri has owned a Blazer since 2002.

"I started in cleaning with the Blazer and it's been an excellent machine. I trained with Prochem in Chessington and decided to buy

in at the top end with a Blazer," he says.

"There were lots of cleaners in the area but none using truck mounts. It's paid off nicely for us with a straight split of commercial and domestic though offices and leisure have picked up with lots of word-of-mouth business coming in plus the fact my wife is good at selling!"

Matthew Page at Carpet Clean in central Manchester bought his Blazer last August. "It's so much better than a portable. I had a Steempro which is a great machine but some staffing issues prompted me to resolve the growing workload on my own by upgrading to something that could do the work of two," he says. And that in effect is what's happened.

"I am now doing the same work that a two-man team was managing with portables," says Matthew. He has moved from commercial work to residential ("I can do two or three jobs a day and get paid on time!") and uses Fibre & Fabric Rinse and Trafficlean with a pre-spray, getting top results every time.

In Co. Dublin, Ireland, Brendan Barnes of Chem 2 Cleaning has a similar tale to tell. "I bought mine in February after using two Steempro 2000s," he tells us. "I had too much work coming in for the Steempros to handle in the time available," he says. "I still use the portables but they are an accessory to the Blazer."

After six years, Brendan is now thinking about getting another van on the road. He finds homeowners love the Blazer. "They are always impressed when they see it arrive so it's a great advert, too!"

COFFEE CLEAN UP

NOTHING like a good cup of coffee. Pity about the mess round the vending machine.

Ten years back, offering a dedicated solution to coffee stains seemed a good idea and Cleaning Specialist duly reported the launch in its debut issue. Ten years on, it's proven a great one.

B195 Coffee Stain Remover is an absolute winner in the fight to keep the carpet coffee-clear. This specially formulated ready-to-use acidic spotter works on tea, coffee, beer, tannin, water marks and other yellow and brown staining to carpet and fabric.

IT'S STILL SPOT ON

TEN years ago sales of the Spot Pro compact hand-held extraction unit took off fast, offering plenty of pressure to wet and rinse and a powerful vacuum to extract stains and spills on carpet or upholstery fabrics. Low profile for extra stability, it features a wheels-free design and easy-grip handle for increased portability. Small and light enough to carry with one hand, it opens quickly for easy filling and emptying.

The Spot Pro incorporates a vacuum float shut-off and integral cord wrap. More recently the machine was revised to increase its sturdiness and now features a see-through waste tank so users can see its fluid levels.

"It is effective, looks good and is easy to use and serves as a good sales tool when customers see how efficiently you handle their day-to-day cleaning problems," says Prochem's Paul Robinson.

Easy to use: Prochem's Spot Pro tackles stains and spills.





'Nett'-ing a good deal: The smart Inter-Nett fleet ready to hit the decks.

In for the 'Long' haul

THE world's most densely populated country and second smallest independent nation, Monaco is also one of the most expensive places on Earth.

Located on the Mediterranean coast between France and Italy, it boasts Europe's most expensive real estate. The principality is regarded as a tax haven, and the majority of its inhabitants are millionaires from other countries.

"An 80-metre long yacht is not unusual in these parts," says Leeds-born Adrian Long. "The problem on this stretch of coast is the lack of ports with berths for vessels of this size."

Antibes

Adrian is moving to Monaco shortly. But don't imagine he's waving a big cigar about. Adrian is a professional cleaner and he knows all about super yachts because he cleans them. He came to Antibes, just over the border on France's Cote d'Azur coast in 1982, with qualifications in building, but no work available back home.

After 18 months working for an industrial cleaning company in the port, he opted out of cleaning bilges and into the plush cabins and staterooms having spotted a gap in the market.

"No one was looking after the upholstery and carpets," he says. "Owners were spending fortunes on them but there was no specialist service provision for them."

Adrian's company Inter-Nett (as in 'interior' and 'nettoyage' French for cleaning) is a family business with his wife and son both on the payroll. It has a staff of 12 with eight Prochem Europe truck mounts operating from the quayside and five Steempro portables to look after yachts at anchor. "These are usually at anchor because they are too big to get into the marinas so we go out on tenders and stay on board for a week to clean carpets, upholstery and hard surfaces," he says.

The company uses only Prochem chemicals: "They are just great, as are the machines. I wouldn't change. We have just had a new Legend XL truck mount installed by Prochem."

Adrian trained at Chessington and believes fervently in the process. "We don't let a cleaner loose on a yacht carpet until he's completed two years' training with us," he says. "Some of these floor coverings cost around seven hundred pounds a square metre and the latest trend is for silk!"

Set up office

Two years ago, Adrian opened an office in Monaco. "We had been driving in up to four times a week to clean but the authorities didn't like it so we set up an office there," says Adrian. After running two companies in Monaco and in Antibes, Adrian is closing down his French operation and moving

Inter-Nett to the principality. Unusually, the company is moving because it has been asked to by the Monaco authorities.

"The opportunity doesn't come up often," says Adrian. "Monaco protects its businesses but no one does what we do, so in the end they suggested we come over."



Brand loyalty: Inter-Nett use only Prochem.

At the end of the year, ambitious Adrian also expects to have set up in St Martin's, an island in the Caribbean. The busy port there is also home to Adrian's yachting customers when the summer seasons finish in the Mediterranean. "It's an opportunity to keep our teams busy all year round and keep much valued customers happy."

In the development of an extraordinary career in cleaning, Adrian was always in it for the 'Long' haul – and it's paid off!



WEBWATCH

WWW.INTERNETTMONACO.COM

Abercorn rides the rouble

TONY Fairley could be practising his Russian soon. Not every professional cleaner would expect to have to, but then not every cleaner has Tony's job.

He and the four-man, two-van team at Abercorn Carpet Specialists have been cleaning some of the most expensive homes in London for over 25 years.

Abercorn was listed as one of the Top Ten cleaning specialists in London in London's *Evening Standard* – one of only three to attain five stars.

Recessions come and go but the demand for top-quality cleaning for the best fabrics money can buy remains unabated. And now, the Russians have arrived.

Bought by Russians

According to agents Knight Frank, a fifth of all London properties that sold for more than £6m in the 12 months to July were bought by Russians.

"These customers have the money to buy the best and they are fair but demanding," Tony says. "When we go to a job, we take as long as is necessary – certainly until the customer is happy. We have had only 18 recalls since 1978 and we are now numbering the grandchildren of our original customers on our database."

Antique rugs

Abercorn specialises in cleaning the very best carpets, Oriental and antique rugs and upholstery. Over 70 per cent of its new business comes by recommendation. Cleaning in this sector is a very exacting science and not for the faint-hearted, cautions Tony, who had just returned from a Russian customer's home when we called him.

He recounts: "We've been cleaning Louis XIV upholstery with gold leaf frames and gold silk fabrics. Get water anywhere near that gold leaf and you have a problem. One chair alone is worth £22,000. We had to clean a large number of them!"

Carpet of up to £35,000 per room is not uncommon in London's most chic districts. Edgware-based Abercorn

clean homes across London ("not so many south of the river," Tony admits) and out into the Home Counties as far as Aylesbury. The company's primary catchment area is St John's Wood – famous for boasting some of the most sumptuous real estate in the UK.

10-bedroom mansion

These are not jobs you hurry – typically Abercorn would be on site for two days for a four-bedroom house and up to a week in a 10-bedroom mansion.



Seems May-fair to me: Russian clients make for a booming business.

From the start, the company has been using Prochem machinery (he is using Polaris extractors at the moment) and chemicals, notably Prespray Gold, Trafficlean, Dry Blend, Fibresafe Gold, Solvall Spotter and other spot and stain removers.

Tony was also trained by Prochem – "you can't beat the products nor the training expertise fielded by Prochem," he says. "It's top quality and that's what our customers expect of us."

Tony increasingly finds he is being recommended to the Russians moving into London. "They are great people," he says. "They love England and fit in very quickly – and they certainly don't miss the Russian weather!"

RETIREMENT REBELLION

DON'T let age get in the way of enjoying life. That's the philosophy of Britain's oldest professional cleaner.

Gordon Newey not only celebrates his 80th birthday this May. He will be taking out on the road, as he does every morning, what is probably Britain's oldest truck mount.

Gordon operates a Model 75 truck mount, which he bought new from Prochem 30 years ago! This sprightly figure is a relatively late entrant to a career in carpet cleaning. "I was in the electronics business until my late forties when a neighbour brought me a carpet cleaning machine that had gone wrong. I fixed it and started to take an interest in the cleaning business," he explains.

Gordon's Sutton Coldfield company, Clean-A-Carpet Services, now operates two truck mounts – the 75 and a more recent Prochem Cub. "I use the 75 while my son-in-law operates the other machine. They both run well," he tells us. "I tend to take my machine on the simpler domestic carpet jobs now. I am not labouring intensively every day."

The clock broke on the 75 around 20 years ago so Gordon is a little hazy as to how many hours the machine has run. In the end, he puts it at around 150,000 hours – and he is still getting between 500 and 600 psi out of it, he says proudly.

"We don't have to advertise," says Gordon. "Truck mounts tend to draw a crowd anyway and we always go out in uniform – in fact we were in bow ties in the seventies with our pictures on the van!" He is unconcerned about the competition. "Lots of small businesses are selling half price cleaning!"

The company has always used Prochem chemicals. "Heatwave is going down very well at the moment and we use all the spotters," says Gordon. Any plans to retire? "No – I enjoy the business. I meet a wide variety of people living in mansions to bedsits. It's always interesting."

Newey never felt newer: The tuxedo twins with the trusty 30-year-old truck mount.



Prochem introduces new encapsulation

A NEW addition product to its interim cleaning line-up in S745 Procaps measures the substantial strides made by Prochem Europe R&D in the increasingly high-profile world of encapsulation chemistry.

You see a lot of ads in the media for products with “encapsulation” chemistry lately. The technology seems to be the latest hot topic.

Most of the products advertising encapsulation technology right now, such as Prochem’s new Procaps are interim cleaning products, but there are applications for encapsulation in many other areas of cleaning.

Freshens carpets

Encapsulation cleaning products do not take the place of extraction cleaning, but are very useful to freshen carpet appearance between scheduled deep-cleans or for areas that are never closed to traffic, like airports and hospitals.

Procaps is an encapsulation cleaner which utilises not just one, but three encapsulation ingredients, each with an attraction to a certain soil type.

Each ingredient attaches to the soils, then attach to one another to form the encapsulating molecule that then dries with the soil inside of it. The result is more soil removed and easier vacuum removal of dried encapsulate.

Cleaner for longer

For users of interim products who want a cleaner looking carpet longer, Procaps, already approved by Collins and Aikman carpet mills, is the answer.

Procaps is applied with a sprayer, as you might apply a pre-spray, but it is not extracted. It’s simply brushed or raked to allow the surfactants to emulsify surface soils and allowed to dry.

For large areas, Prochem’s Fiberdri machine can be utilised to mechanically brush the Procaps solution. The product dries to a dry, brittle crystalline solid, and the emulsified surface soil is



Encapsulation cleaning: Taking giant strides.

“encapsulated” in this crystalline material.

The encapsulated soil is removed at the next vacuuming. The advantage is a quick turnaround time, since the area only needs to be closed to traffic for about 20 minutes while Procaps dries.

Forty years ago, when the carpet cleaning industry was in its infancy, carpet was cleaned with soap-based shampoos. They improved the carpet’s appearance, but what they put down, they left behind, along with the soil.

So the carpet really wasn’t any cleaner. The soil was less visible, since it was spread out evenly and forced deeper. Plus, now there was soap in the carpet as well as the soil. This soap residue was sticky when it dried and attracted soil, causing the carpet to re-soil faster each time it was cleaned.

The carpet cleaning industry has been trying to live down this start ever since. The solution to this residue problem has two parts. The first part was to leave less residue behind.

When extraction cleaning was

introduced, it reduced the amount of residue by as much as 90 per cent, since the water and detergent was extracted from the carpet along with the soil.

Changing characteristics

The second part of solving the residue problem was changing the characteristics of what small amount of residue was left, so that it did not attract soil.

The most important change to cleaning products was the introduction of surfactant-based cleaning products to replace soaps. Soaps are made from natural oils, animal fat or plant oils – they dry sticky, and the carpets attracted soil faster than when they were new.

Surfactants can be engineered from their base chemicals to have whatever attributes are best for the task. Over the last thirty years, surfactant suppliers have created detergents that are less and less likely to attract soil, and they are continuing to find new innovations in surfactant and polymer technology.

Scheduled vacuuming

Product residues have changed over the years from having sticky, gummy residue that never entirely dried up, to waxy and dry powdery residue that can be vacuumed up with the next scheduled vacuuming.

One of the most recent developments in the surfactant and detergent industry is the addition of “embrittling agents” to the surfactants. Products that include embrittling agents leave a residue that is brittle, dry and crystalline.

Prochem’s new Procaps

This advancement led to the introduction of the current crop of “Encapsulation Cleaning” products such as Prochem’s new Procaps (see opposite).

However, you will also see embrittling and encapsulation technology used in Prochem cleaning agents such as “bonnet” cleaners, spotters, extraction detergents and rinses.

Prochem at Carpex 08

VISITORS to this March's UK carpet and upholstery cleaning and restoration show, Carpex 2008, can catch up on the latest developments in professional cleaning systems from one of the country's most prominent developers and suppliers.

While showcasing its comprehensive programme of machines and chemicals, Prochem Europe is focusing this year on its new **Procaps** solution (pictured right).

This soil-encapsulating spray cleaner, for interim carpet maintenance with cylindrical brush machine, leaves carpets clean and dry in 20 minutes and gives enhanced soil resistance.

With the most extensive range available in the UK, truck mount cleaning is a standard feature of Prochem

Europe's shows and company personnel will be on hand to field visitor enquiries, both on this fast-growing sector, as well as training (Prochem Europe is the UK's commercial provider of training to professional cleaners).

Prochem Europe is showing on Stand B10 at Carpex 2008 at the Ricoh Centre, Coventry, March 27-28, 2008.

● **Find further information on the show at www.carpex.co.uk**



Amsterdam in May



IF CLEANING is your business, Amsterdam is the city to visit in 2008, when the 22nd edition of ISSA InterClean takes place from May 6-9.

Be there and take the opportunity to meet over 25,000 professionals from 120 countries attending the cleaning sector's largest networking event. Exhibitors from 31 countries are showing their latest solutions. Prochem Europe is exhibiting at the show in Hall 5, Stand 115 with some new launches in chemicals and technology for 2008 to reveal, as well as consolidate, some of the company's best-selling lines.

"It promises to be another important show for Prochem as we continue to develop our European business further," says national sales manager Paul Robinson. Paul will be on hand throughout, together with other members of the Prochem Europe team.

New products on show include **S745 Procaps**, **B148 Fabric Prespray**, **E551 Truck Mount Descaler** and **TM2401 Scotchgard™ Carpet Protector** (read more on these below and on page eight in this issue).



WEBWATCH

WWW.AMSTERDAM.ISSAINTERCLEAN.COM

New **2008** catalogue out now

A REVISION of corporate identity, to help make sourcing the most comprehensive range of cleaning solutions on the market even quicker and easier, incorporates new sales literature from Prochem Europe.

The company's 2008 catalogue measures real commitment to making life easier for the customer with cleaner, clearer layout and more detailed product descriptions. While this year's round up of chemicals, portables, truck mounts and accessories has more pages than before, the catalogue's smaller page size makes for easier storage (it's a good fit in a van's door stow).

All the new products are featured, including **TM2401 Scotchgard™ Carpet Protector**, 3M's new protector concentrate, which is now **exclusively**

available from Prochem Europe distributors throughout the UK. Scotchgard™ Carpet Protector is an all-new technology product with enhanced performance characteristics. The concentrated product is diluted with four parts of water and then sprayed on to new or freshly extraction-cleaned carpet to significantly improve the soil and stain repellency of the carpet.

● **Copies are available now by emailing sales@prochem.co.uk or by calling 020 8974 1515.**



Procaps **boost** to maintenance spray range

PROCHEM HAS expanded its maintenance spray range with the launch in 2008 of **S745 Procaps**.

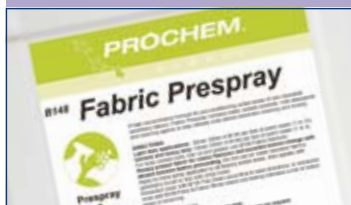
This spray cleaner for interim carpet maintenance with cylindrical brush machines such as the **Prochem Fiberdri TM4** is a soil encapsulating clear liquid formula with tropical lemon fragrance that leaves carpets clean and dry in 20-30 minutes. Low moisture, low residue, Procaps gives enhanced soil

resistance and its superior formulation lifts and encapsulates soil, spots and stains. Safe on wool, wool mix and stain-resistant carpets (subject to testing), it benefits from a rinse-free solution that dries quickly to a dry crystalline finish, which can be vacuumed away.

● **Further details on this new solution at www.prochem.co.uk or in our new catalogue, out now.**

PRESPRAY RELAUNCHED

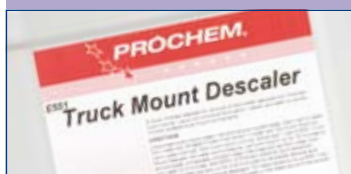
NEW for 2008 from Prochem Europe, **B148 Fabric Prespray** is a re-launch of an economical pre-spray with buffered mild alkaline formula that helps release soil from wet cleanable fabric upholstery.



A clear liquid with lemon fragrance, it is applied by hand sprayer to heavily soiled areas, which can then be extraction cleaned.

NO HARD TIMES

HERE'S a useful solution for all you truck mount technology owners. Prochem has introduced a new liquid inhibited descaler for removal of hard water deposits from the company's extensive range of truck mount cleaning machines.



A clear, odourless solution, **E551 Truck Mount Descaler** (above) benefits from a non-corrosive formulation making it easier and safer to handle. Maintaining and protecting machine components from hard water scale build-up has just got a lot easier.

● **Further details on these new solutions can be found at: www.prochem.co.uk and in our new 2008 catalogue.**

Paul Reynolds casts an eye back over 10 years of inn

Prochem chemio

SO here we are in 2008, a decade since the launch of Cleaning Specialist. How have things changed here at Prochem over the last 10 years?

Well, the decade has certainly witnessed our ongoing development and improvement of both new and existing products.

Since 1998 the following have all become part of the Prochem range: Aqua-Seal Fabric Protector, Citra-Boost, Fine Fabric Detergent, Filter-Out, Heat Wave, Leather Cleaner, Leather Conditioner, Microsan®, Power Burst, Powerclean, Prespray Gold, Procaps, Pure Clean, Rust Remover, Stone Seal, Truck Mount Descaler and Ultraprep TLC... phew!

We have also increased the number of Woollsafe Approved products in our range to six which are: Fibre & Fabric Rinse, Fibresafe Gold, Fine Fabric Detergent, Liquid Woollsafe, Neutral Pro-Spotter and Prespray Gold.

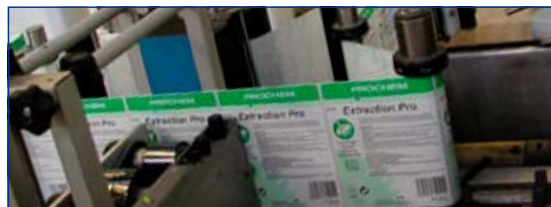
In line with our Environmental Policy, products (where necessary) have been reformulated and ingredients substituted, to ensure that they are both safer for the user and the environment. By manufacturing our own products and working closely with our raw material suppliers we have ensured that only

surfactants which are sufficiently biodegradable are used in our cleaning products.

Resource efficiency measures, incorporated into our manufacturing processes, have meant that less waste is produced and more is recycled. In the last 10 years, Prochem has continued to invest in the latest chemical manufacturing machinery and equipment.

This included a new in-line filler, capper and labeller (pictured below) for the manufacture of our five-litre products, a new larger powder blender and bucket labeller, and new wrapping and packing machinery.

The company is now able to manufacture high-quality products more efficiently and in larger volumes than before, allowing us to continue to meet growing customer demand. In turn, the increasing demand for products led to the purchase of new storage racking and a reorganisation of our manufacturing site to



Prochem Europe distributes latest **Scotchgard™** carpet protector

3M'S NEW Scotchgard™ Carpet Protector Concentrate, TM2401, is now exclusively available from Prochem Europe distributors throughout the UK.

A liquid, diluted with water to form a protective treatment on carpet fibres, the protector can be applied to most types of carpeting with equal success on new or freshly cleaned carpet that is dry or damp. It provides a barrier to resist soil and make spot-cleaning of most stains easy with conventional techniques.

Scotchgard™ Carpet Protector is an all-new technology product with enhanced performance characteristics. The concentrated product is diluted with 4 parts of water and then



sprayed on to new or freshly extraction cleaned carpet to significantly improve the soil and stain repellency of the carpet.

Scotchgard™ Carpet Protector is packaged in new-style 3.78 litre containers in an outer case of 4 x 3.78 litres and each product container is supplied with a comprehensive user application guide.

The product is competitively priced and each 3.78L container will provide enough protector to cover approximately 1000 sq ft (93 sq m) of carpet.

novation in Cleaning Specialist...

als – then and now

ensure sufficient stock of all products can be maintained.

Prochem's investment has not been limited to machinery and equipment. Ongoing training and looking after the welfare of staff ensures that the company continues to provide the products and service that customers expect.

During the last decade we've all seen the introduction of major changes to legislation governing our industry, including a whole series of new abbreviations becoming part of our vocabulary; REACH, BPD, GHS, WEEE and ROHS, are just a few examples.

By always staying aware of the latest legislative developments, we have worked hard to ensure that our products meet all necessary requirements.

And as Europe has expanded, the world has become a smaller place.

Prochem has seen increased growth in European sales with its chemicals now used in more European countries than ever before. You can read about these companies and their markets in Cleaning Specialist.

The future promises to be just as busy, with the Environment, REACH and Global Harmonisation, all set to be influences.

What happened in 1998

Cleaning Specialist launched ● The U.S President Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky scandal hits the news ● Prochem Coffee Stain Remover available for the first time ● Portable music for most people meant listening to music on personal CD players or a 'cassette walkman' ● The website search engine 'Google' is launched ● 'Come Dancing' axed from the BBC ● Britney Spears began her pop career with 'Baby one more time' ● The future of the Spice Girls looks in doubt as 'Ginger Spice' Geri Halliwell leaves the group ● Viagra goes on sale in the USA ● 'Angel of the North' sculpture by Anthony Gormley is completed ● Microsan® is launched for disinfection of carpets in the health care sector ● The Ford Focus car range is launched and voted European Car of the Year.

...and in 2008?

Cleaning Specialist celebrates its 10th Anniversary ● Gordon Brown, Iraq and Afghanistan, Climate Change, and of course 'The Beckhams', are all sure to continue to make front page news ● Oxibrite now available in a One Kilo pack size ● iPods, mobile phones and other MP3 players are all now commonplace ● New Prochem product Procaps now available ● 'Strictly Come Dancing' is now a primetime TV show ● New Formula Superclean is now available ● The Spice Girls reformed and completed a World Tour in 2007



Building up: The new storage racking system.

Cast your eyes over our brand-new website

LATEST design revisions to Prochem Europe's website – **www.prochem.co.uk** – focus on ease and speed of user access to chemical product sales and safety data.

All chemicals listed now incorporate pack shots for easier solution identification as well as direct links from specification summaries to product data sheets in easy-to-download pdf files.

Authorised Distributor details are also now available at the Distributor page. Each county, region or international page shows details of distributors in your area with email and website addresses for direct contact. In some cases, online ordering is also available.

The Prochem website shares a birth date with Cleaning Specialist. "Prochem was an early advocate of the internet and ten years back had already secured a proficient offer online, with full product data, news and images available to users," says MD Alan Tilley.

Not surprisingly, more customers are using the website as an information source than ever before.

CONCRETE PROSPECTS

PROCHEM distributor TGB has closed its Harrow HQ and relocated its entire operation to its subsidiary offices in Milton Keynes.

MK – as it is known locally – offers far more than its legendary concrete cows.

“The city has been identified as one of four major growth areas in the South East of England,” says chairman and founder Tom Borland. “The move makes sense all round.”

A key factor driving TGB’s expansion is the business growth experienced in the east Midlands. A family business, TGB now operates a staff of 10 from a brand-new 10,000 sq ft warehouse and offices on the outskirts of the city.



Standstill: Milton Keynes’ famous stone-faced residents.

The company is run by MD Colin Borland (Tom’s son) while Kate Marney is financial director. Both have a sales background within the hygiene and cleaning supplies industry of some 25 years. Formerly a cleaning contractor, TGB understands the needs of cleaners and end-users. The company has always sourced the best quality products, with emphasis on product reliability and value for money. “Prochem have always represented that special quality and we have stocked their products from the start,” says Tom.



Costa cleaners hope for **Prochem**

THOUGHT ABOUT relocating your business to Spain? Go on – you know you have. It’s pouring outside, right?

Actually, it was tipping down in Estepona too, when we called Alexander Punt, who at only 22 years old, heads Fiber ProTector Spain, which is also Prochem Europe’s latest Spanish distributor as well as being a cleaning company.

Launched in Norway in 1995, Fiber ProTector supplies and applies textile surface treatments to combat stains such as chocolate, red wine, coffee, blood and foods in leisure environments from cinemas to hotels. A recent contract was for all carpet and upholstery on the newly built “The World” cruise ship, before it left Oslo on its maiden voyage.

The cruise and leisure market is good business for Fiber ProTector. Estepona has a marina of its own but the big bucks are only 10 km down the road in Marbella.

“Around fifty per cent of our contractor customers are operating in the yacht cleaning business,” says Alexander. “We sell them Prochem machines and chemicals.

“We run a cleaning business of our own but we are not so much competitors as lead generators for our own customers. Business is by word-of-mouth and if we can’t manage a job, we pass it on to someone we know can be trusted to do the job.”

This bullish approach has won Alexander his spurs in a highly competitive market. Alexander moved to Spain in 2005 from his home in Belgium. Alexander’s Norwegian girlfriend’s mother works for Fiber ProTector at its HQ in Norway and effected an interview for him with the company’s MD. The boss saw potential in the young man and gave him an exclusive territory in Spain to sell the Fiber ProTector concept.

Alexander spent a year on a steep learning curve. “I knew nothing about surface treatments or cleaning,” he admits. He immersed himself in the subject and researched the province’s cleaning sector.

“Marbella is a very tough market, very competitive, but you learn fast and I signed twenty Prochem clients’ accounts in my first

year,” he says. He also fast found demand for reliable cleaning services and to help ends meet serviced these direct. “A lot of people living here have Oriental carpets, which they were taking to the dry cleaners and then waiting weeks for their return. So I started in dry cleaning and sold Fiber ProTector in the process.”

With domestic business settled his focus is on the bigger contracts, notably hotel and leisure. Again, this is tough as the chains are based in Madrid or Barcelona. This focused Alexander on network building and establishing a reliable core of customers. Now he is looking across the country and a main component in his strategy is asserting the Prochem Europe brand.

“Prochem makes great products and the service is excellent with only a two-day wait for parts to get here,” he says. “I am looking at establishing sales in other parts of the country and setting up a truck mount installation and service bay at our premises.”

Fifty per cent of Alexander’s new business is British controlled, mostly men of 40–50 years old, with sufficient awareness of Prochem to go to the company’s web site and track down Alexander – a ‘friendly face’ in their new home.

He puts together cleaning packages (spot removers, pre-sprays and detergents with standard issue in Steempro extractors) for customers and advises on training and finance for start-ups. “The most important thing for newcomers to do is speak Spanish,” he counsels. “The Spanish like dealing with the Spanish understandably, so foreigners will only win business off them by demonstrating knowledge of Spanish customs and obviously having the language is the first step.”

The work is clearly there in Estepona, which next year is expected to host the first community for Premier League football members and players. Teams such as Aston Villa, Bolton Wanderers, Newcastle United, West Ham United and Glasgow Celtic have approved the project.



Sales rally in Poland

THERE is plenty of 'drive' at one of Poland's most get-up-and-go cleaning distributors. Profchem's rally team has finished the country's PZM Cup 2007 in 14th place in the general classification, 4th place in the N group (serial cars) and 3rd place in the N-2 class out of over 100 competitors.

It's an achievement that has contributed to attaining a much-prized first place in the club classification for the Prochem Europe distributor's Krakow hometown. Profchem was established in January 2004 with an offer of 18 Prochem solutions. The brand was little known in Poland but, thanks to the company's hard work, has become an established player in the market.

Struggle

"It was a struggle to start with," admits the company's Agnieszka Walczak. "But gradually, the range became recognised and by 2005 the number of products offered increased to over thirty which brought us the Achievement Club Solution for Carpet Award and a Prochem Europe Distributor Award for Exceptional Sales.

The following year saw steady

improvements in brand consolidation and in 2007 Profchem introduced a number of new chemical products as well as portable extraction machines, all of which were warmly received by customers.

Competitors

Participation at 2007's InterClean in Warsaw also revealed how Profchem's competitors had started to notice Prochem's incursions into the market. Profchem customers are mainly service and commercial companies and hotels.

"Prochem is considered unrivalled by them thanks to a mix of competitive price and high efficiency," says Agnieszka. This year Profchem is planning to focus its promotion on **S745 Procaps**, **C409 Pure Clean** and **D500 Microsan®**.

"I think these products have great potential in our market," says Agnieszka. She will be over in Chessington this year to attend training sessions with the Prochem distributors as well as some end-users.



WEBWATCH
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Cracking Krakow: Prochem is now an established brand in Poland.

Q&A – PETER HARGREAVES TACKLES YOUR CLEANING PROBLEMS

Q: When I am cleaning carpet with a wool pile fibre, I usually prespray with Prespray Gold and then rinse extract with Fibre & Fabric Rinse. I get good results. But sometimes I feel I could obtain even better ones but am not sure what else I can use safely on wool?

A: There's a simple answer. Subject to a satisfactory dye bleed test, try **S781 Liquid Woolsafe**. It has a lot more detergent in it than Fibre & Fabric Rinse and carries the Woolsafe

Approval label. It can be used not only on wool but on stain-resistant nylon carpets. Don't forget to still pre-spray with **B107 Prespray Gold**.

Q: I know I have to carry liquid pre-sprays in my van but when it comes to

extraction detergents I find it more convenient to use Crystal Green or Double Clean. Which of these powders is best to use on wool carpets?

A: Neither! I assume you want to stay with powder for extraction use and so suggest (subject to the usual dye bleed test) using **S780 Fibresafe Gold**.

Q: I am a Woolsafe-approved cleaner and want to use a spotting agent that has Woolsafe approval, have you anything that fits the bill?

A: **B122 Neutral Pro-Spotter** is approved by Woolsafe and effective on beverage and food spills. It can be used on carpets and upholstery and is a great way of adding value to your sale: offer it to your customers as a DIY spot remover (but remind them it's for water-based soils only).

Q: Apart from B109 Fibre & Fabric

Rinse, do you have any other extraction detergent that's Woolsafe approved and effective on upholstery?

A: **B106 Fine Fabric Detergent** is a new extraction detergent that meets this criteria. The dilution rate is good at 1 to 66 and the formulation incorporates micro-encapsulation and anti-soil properties. You can also use this solution on wet cleanable rugs. If the dye bleed test shows, a neutralising rinse should be used, just lightly spray on **B109** after you have completed the extraction clean with Fine Fabric Detergent.



Weaving a spell in the **West Country**

Woven or tufted? What's the difference and does it matter? Richard Lawrence of one of the best-known woven-carpet brands, Axminster, explains all

THERE are two ways in which carpet is manufactured – woven or tufted. With woven carpet, the front and back are woven simultaneously.

It is a labour-intensive process, and slower than tufting, hence woven carpets are more expensive. They are, however, the better quality with better dimensional stability.

In turn, we have two types of Woven carpet – Axminster which are patterned and Wilton which tend to be plain but can

be made with up to five colours. Axminster, Brintons and Ulster are particularly well known for their woven carpets.

Axminster, located in the West Country town of the same name, is unusual in being a type of carpet and a brand name.

Axminster carpets are generally made from wool-rich blends. Wool is the classic carpet fibre. It is soft, does not flatten easily, keeps its appearance well, is easy to dye, and is fire resistant. Axminster is also unusual in being an 'end-to-end' carpet maker in that it makes its own yarn.

At the Axminster Spinning Mill, wool fleeces are mechanically stretched out or 'opened' to a more uniform mass, before blending together to provide the most suitable mix of wool for carpet weaving. They then enter a six-stage washing process to remove dirt, grease and other impurities.

The wool is dried and any dust extracted before being blown into large storage bins where it is allowed to relax

in order to regain its original structure. It is then lightly lubricated, baled and left to condition before the next process – carding.

This precisely monitored operation uses a series of progressively finer-spiked rollers to comb out the wool fibres into a fine, uniform web. Carried along an array of narrow conveyor belts, the layer of wool is divided into narrow strips, or 'slubbings'. It is these strips, which are rolled into fragile strands before being loaded on to the spinning frame.

Strength and density

The fragile slubbings are then spun at more than 5000 rpm into a single-ply yarn. By twisting the strands together as two or more ply, additional strength and density is acquired by the yarn, affecting the eventual weight and quality of the finished carpet.

The yarn is wound into hanks before a final washing to enhance the dyeing technique. Colourfast dyes are used to produce delicate and subtle shades and colours.

The composition of the dye, its temperature and the immersion time of the hanks are closely monitored.

A computerised system ensures precise matching to the colour required. The hanks are rotated in a hydro-extraction unit to remove excess moisture. They then pass through an electronically controlled steam-drying process to ensure uniformity of moisture content.

Once dried, the hanks are allowed to cool and condition naturally before being wound on to more manageable 'cones' and packaged for despatch to the weaving looms at Axminster. Several thousand kilos of yarn make this journey every working day.

At the Axminster factory and head office, a new carpet design is developed on a computer. Pattern and colour ideas can be visualised and changed to the requirements of the customer or designer. Axminster designs are influenced by market demands and fashion trends, with



Creating patterns: A new carpet design is developed on the computer.



optional bespoke designs for specific client needs.

The more modern looms are directly linked to the design computer and select tuft colours electronically. This configuration provides the perfect solution for weaving one-off bespoke designs.

Bobbins

The incoming cones of yarn are subjected to further inspection, including colour comparison against a calibrated standard. The yarn is then rewound on to smaller bobbins, which are in turn placed into a feed array for the loom called a 'creel'. Up to 9000 bobbins in a creel can feed a single loom.

Part of the base of the carpet is the Jute 'weft', grown and spun in Bangladesh. The weft is passed between alternate parallel cotton yarns or 'warps'. The yarn is fed into carriers controlled by the jacquard. A colour is selected by the jacquard, which causes the corresponding yarn to be offered up by the carrier to the gripper.

The grippers then draw the pre-selected lengths of yarn

which are cut by a series of knives. The resulting tufts are positioned between the warps by the grippers, and retained by each pass of the weft.

In this way, a woven lattice of tightly packed cords and wool tufts build up to form a carpet, at the rate of three to five yards per hour, under the expert supervision of the weaver.



Looming ahead: An operator inspects the weave.

It then moves on to the first of several rigorous inspections.

Highly trained inspectors view, and where necessary, highlight

brushed to remove any foreign matter, and squared for alignment and symmetry. After further steaming to burst open the lush wool pile, a coating of vinyl is applied to the back of the carpet to assist tuft retention and ease cutting and fitting.

Further brushing is followed by a second and final tip-shearing operation to ensure a smooth, level finish. A meticulous final examination, carried out by our most senior inspectors, then follows on a specially illuminated, tilting table, to ensure perfection.

Founded in 1755, Axminster Carpets is one of the world's largest manufacturers of Axminster, Wilton and tufted carpets. Its products can be found in homes, hotels, trains, ships and planes the world over.

The quality of the carpet is determined by the number of tufts per square inch, the count or weight of the yarn, and the length of pile.

Gently steamed

The newly woven carpet is lightly brushed, then gently steamed before tip shearing removes any high points in the pile to give a smooth, level finish.

any imperfections in the woven pile. Quality statistics are input at this and other stages in the process. Any minor faults are then corrected by hand in a way which replicates the weaving process, before moving on to large passing tables for further inspection or correction if required.

The carpet is



WEBWATCH

WWW.AXMINSTER-CARPETS.CO.UK

Training to gain

For novices and old
hands alike, there
is everything to be
gained from training,
says Phil Jones

DATES FOR TRAINING IN MANCHESTER

BASED in the north west and finding Surrey a bit of a slog for a training day? Make a date with the Prochem training team for a day in Manchester instead.

Dates in June or October are available this year and courses in both carpet (C1) and upholstery (U1) cleaning are designed to appeal to newcomers to the industry as well as established cleaners.

Courses take place at the Britannia Country House Hotel and can be pre-booked on tel. 020 8974 1515 or download the booking form on www.prochem.co.uk/training.htm. You can also redeem free training vouchers on these courses.

A 15 per cent discount applies if more than one course is booked and paid for at the same time or if more than one person from the same company attends a course.

Says Prochem national sales manager Paul Robinson: "If you have never taken a training course before this is your chance to change your whole attitude to cleaning.

"The knowledge and confidence the training programme gives you will help you to become a true professional and take your business forward in leaps and bounds."

● **Course dates for Manchester are 24th June (C1), 25th June (U1); 14th October (C1) and 15th October (U1).**



WHETHER you are a single carpet cleaner or a manager of a large cleaning contractor, staying competitive is the key to growing your business.

Staff training, motivation and keeping people aware of new industry techniques is crucial to gain the upper hand over your competition. Training and inward investment in staff has a cost, but the good news is, that any time or money spent on training benefits employer and employee. It contributes dramatically to keeping and promoting that valued staff member as well as impacting on company productivity.

Why do organisations such as the Armed Forces, Police and Fire Service implement rigorous training procedures? The answer is simple. They want to get the best out of their staff. Yet, in talking to cleaning operatives spanning a variety of environments, I have met folk who have not attended any form of training and as a result, carry out cleaning techniques that are either overly time-consuming or even aid the re-soiling of the carpets.

It's a worry. Many cleaning operatives do not understand the benefits and dangers associated with basics such as the pH scale. That is a vital piece of knowledge to any cleaner. Using this knowledge correctly can make the cleaning process and a final result, far beyond their wildest dreams!

Many commercial cleaners are well aware of the low moisture,

bonnet-cleaning methods available on the market. However, they still continue to use an incorrect or an inefficient product for cleaning and then jump up and down because they have not achieved the desired result or, even worse, caused a major problem. If it were not for training courses, where would cleaners learn about new techniques or cleaning methods?

Mixture rates

In the commercial cleaning environment, many companies are wasting both time and money in poor or improperly trained staff. On many occasions, staff are "glugging" cleaning solutions, rather than measuring them and at excessive mixture rates, or are scooping undissolved powdered detergents straight into machine tanks and causing water pumps to block and fail.

It gets worse. I have seen operators using household washing powder or even hard floor polish stripper in the extraction machine! This ignorance and waste of money should not be accepted and can be so easily rectified with even the most basic of training techniques. I often get told, "I don't need to go on a training course. I've been doing this for years!"

But even if the course is free, you need the time to attend, time to collate the information gained and time to practise those new skills.

It will produce a 'payback'. Training has its own return on investment for newcomers and old hands alike. Training can

help hone existing skills. Many cleaning operatives out there may have been trained ‘on the job’ by colleagues. But unless that ‘trainer’ has been trained correctly and recently, then, much like a game of Chinese Whispers, the instruction being given, could well be compromised or just a passing on of existing bad habits.

Training breeds confidence. Many operatives, who have only been comfortable cleaning carpets within domestic environments, once completing a training course, have gone on to successfully build their business by adding commercial cleaning to their inventory.

“ On your first driving lesson, did you go straight on to the M25? ”

Many, many more start with the carpet course, go away into the domestic market and get asked by Mrs Smith or Mrs Jones, if they will clean the three-piece suite once they’ve finished the carpet. They then turn up a month or two later to add an upholstery cleaning course to their skills.

Obviously, choosing the right training course is vital. On nearly every one-day carpet cleaning course we run, someone embarrassedly sidles up to me, normally by lunchtime and whispers: “It’s a lot to take in on one day, isn’t it? I know it was recommended that I do the two-day course, but I thought I’d be alright and I didn’t want to pay for the extra day.”

A novice to carpet cleaning will benefit from attending the correct course, designed with the new starter in mind.

You have to start at the beginning when learning something new. On your first driving lesson, did you go straight out on to the M25?

TRAINING COURSE DATES 2008 (CHESSINGTON)

CODE	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
C2	29/30	-	11/12	-	-	10/11	-	-	23/24	-	25/26	-
C1	8	5	4	22	20	17	15	-	9	7	4	9
U1	9	-	5	-	21	-	16	-	10	-	5	-
HF1	23	-	-	30	-	-	9	-	17	-	12	-

BOOKING REQUEST

MR ☐ MRS ☐ MS ☐

FORENAME

SURNAME

JOB TITLE

COMPANY NAME

ADDRESS

POST CODE

TELEPHONE

FAX

EMAIL

If you have attended Prochem training courses previously, please tick the relevant box:
☐ C2 ☐ C1 ☐ U1 ☐ HF1
Special dietary needs or food allergies (please state below):

Where did you hear about Prochem?
☐ CLEANING AND HYGIENE TODAY ☐ ADVERTISEMENT
☐ CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE ☐ EXISTING CUSTOMER
☐ RECOMMENDATION ☐ MAILSHOT
☐ DISTRIBUTOR/SUPPLIER ☐ OTHER

PLEASE STATE NAME OF DISTRIBUTOR/SUPPLIER

COURSE CODE (please tick)	C2 <input type="checkbox"/>	C1 <input type="checkbox"/>	U1 <input type="checkbox"/>	HF1 <input type="checkbox"/>
COURSE DATE REQUIRED	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
COURSE FEE	£190	£95	£95	£95

All prices shown excluding VAT @ 17.5%
There is a 15% discount if a delegate books two or more courses, or if two delegates from the same company book one or more courses.
All courses must be paid for at the time of booking.
A charge of £20 will be applied to cancellations made less than seven days prior to the date of the course, to cover the cost of incurred catering charges.

Cheque
Enclosed is a cheque for course fee of £ plus 17.5% VAT
totalling £ made payable to Prochem Europe Ltd

Credit/Debit Card Please debit my
VISA ☐ DELTA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ SWITCH ☐

AMOUNT

CARD NO.

EXPIRY DATE SECURITY CODE

NAME ON CARD

CARD HOLDER'S ADDRESS

SIGNATURE

By post Complete and return this registration form together with payment to Prochem Europe Ltd, Oakcroft Road, Chessington, Surrey KT9 1RH.
By phone Call 020 8974 1515 to make your booking and payment.
By fax Complete and send this registration form to 020 8974 1511 (use this method only when paying by credit/debit card).
Travel A map will be enclosed with your Confirmation of Reservation letter

We'd like to keep you up to date with information on products, services and promotions. If you do not want to receive this information, please tick here ☐



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