

# An easy add-on service

This one is right under your feet.

By Robert Kravitz



Robert Kravitz is a former building service contractor now providing communications services for organizations in the professional building and cleaning industries. He may be reached at [info@alturasolutions.com](mailto:info@alturasolutions.com)

For most commercial carpet cleaners, there are two ways to grow their businesses.

Either they obtain more customers, or they offer more services.

For instance, in recent years, more and more carpet cleaning technicians have added hard surface cleaning to their service arsenal.

This is likely why some manufacturers of carpet cleaning equipment have added “dual-surface” machines, which can be used for both carpet and hard surface cleaning.

In facilities such as hotels and restaurants, which usually have large amounts of both carpeted and hard floors, being able to clean both types of surfaces opens up a number of business opportunities that can prove lucrative.

## Diversify into mats

In addition to hard surface cleaning, some carpet cleaning companies are now offering a new service — mat rental and cleaning.

With these programs, the mats are either cleaned using portable or truckmounted hot-water extractors at the location, or they are picked up and replaced with clean mats.

The dirty mats are then cleaned off-site.

The carpet cleaner develops a route, cleaning mats placed outside as well as inside a facility on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis.

This service may come as a surprise to some carpet cleaners who believe mats are only rented from linen or similar services, which generally maintain a similar set schedule to remove soiled mats and replace them with clean ones.

Carpet cleaners can do one or both services: They can simply contract their services to clean existing mats, or they can purchase and rent mats to their clients, maintaining them on a regular basis.

## The need is there

According to Chris Tricozzi, vice president of sales and marketing for Crown Mats and Matting, there are two key reasons the need for this service has evolved in the past few years.

One is that many end customers have now transferred to green cleaning and realize a high-performance matting system is an essential component.

Often, these higher-quality matting systems are not available on a rental basis.

Additionally, Tricozzi says that many facilities now want their mats to be personalized, proudly displaying a company’s name, telephone number, address and logo.

Although this may be possible with some rental matting services, they frequently use a jet-print sys-



**KEYWORD** mats

For more information on this topic, visit [www.cleanfax.com](http://www.cleanfax.com).

**SUPPLIER SEARCH** mats

For more information on related products, visit [www.cleanfax.com](http://www.cleanfax.com), select Supplier Search from the main navigation bar.

“The carpet cleaner develops a route, cleaning mats places outside as well as inside a facility on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis.”

tem to print company names, messages, and logos, which do not always provide as impressive an image as tufted or inlay custom mats.

**Choose your mat wisely**

Some manufacturers use a tufted system, which takes a logo, image or graphic and creates the desired result that is part of the mat’s construction.

The inlay system is also used, with the logo, image or graphic cut from various colored carpet and then pieced together and bonded to the mat’s backing.

Both the tufted and inlay process are designed to last the lifetime of the mat.

Regardless of the mat’s construction, choose one that is best for your client.

**Finding customers**

According to Richard Sanchez, a building service contractor and carpet cleaning company owner in Santa Rosa, CA, selling a mat rental and cleaning service is made considerably easier if the facility is currently a regular commercial client.

Sanchez says it is usually just a matter of educating the client that purchasing approximately 15 feet of high-performance matting — outdoor scraper mats, wiper/scrapers for inside doors and vestibules, and wiper mats placed inside the facility — will help keep their facilities cleaner and healthier.

Because these mats usually must be purchased from a distributor and cannot be rented, as referenced earlier, keeping them not only clean but performing effectively becomes a maintenance requirement.

A schedule is set and an additional fee is added to the normal cleaning charges.

However, Sanchez says he has been able to use the same technique for facilities where he is not the current cleaning contractor.

In these situations, he is often brought in or contracted to clean the carpet in a facility on a one-time basis or periodic schedule.

Advising the client that the carpet, as well as all floor surfaces, can stay cleaner with a more effective matting system, he offers to clean the mats on a set schedule.

Caesar Ricci, owner of Caesar’s Carpet Care in central Massachusetts, has also developed a large and lucrative mat cleaning service.

Ricci started the service after cleaning the carpet at a local restaurant, and, like Sanchez, suggested to the owners that the facility would stay cleaner and healthier if the mats were cleaned regularly.

“We soon discovered we could get paid very well for about five minutes of work,” he said. “That’s when I realized that there was a market and a business opportunity in cleaning mats.”

Today, Ricci’s company cleans mats at customer locations or picks them up and provides clean mats on a regular schedule, similar to a linen service.

He also finds most of his customers prefer higher-quality mats with company names and logos imprinted, as discussed earlier.

**What to charge**

Charges for all types of cleaning vary considerably throughout the country, and this definitely applies to an add-on service such as mat rental/cleaning.

Additionally, there can be many variables that influence the amount charged. Among them are:

- If, like Sanchez, the cleaning contractor is already providing the general cleaning for the facility nightly or weekly, the charges may be less.
- Frequency of cleaning can affect the charge. When the mats are cleaned frequently, the charge is usually less on a per-cleaning basis.



- Distance to the location can impact the charge.
- Charges may be based on the amount of time per visit to perform the service.

- The size and number of mats to be cleaned may also affect charges; for example, if charging on a square-foot basis, the more mats and the larger the mats requiring cleaning, the higher the charge per visit.

**It adds up**

Sanchez says one pricing system that can be effective is to have a base price of approximately \$50 to \$60 per month for weekly service.

However, if a large number of mats are involved or the matting systems are large, the charges could be higher and possibly based on a charge per square foot of matting cleaned.

Ricci charges on a “per-visit” basis with prices ranging from \$8 to \$24 per visit.

He also offers his clients a “freebie;” the fourth cleaning each month is “on the house.”

**Effective mat cleaning**

Another variable that can impact how much is charged to clean mats is soil accumulation.

Tricozzi says matting systems can become heavily soiled after a number of days of use.

Surface dust and dirt is often removed just by vacuuming, which should be performed regularly by the facility’s cleaning professionals.

*(Concluded on next page)*

*(Continued from prior page)*

But, just as with carpet, some soils become embedded deep within the carpet fibers, are not removed with vacuuming, and must be cleaned with thorough hot-water extraction.

Additionally, the soil may not be as noticeable on a mat.

“Some carpet cleaning companies are now offering a new service — mat rental and cleaning.”

This may be due to the darker colors often used for mats.

And, many high-performance mats are bi-level. With these mats, the upper level wipes and scrapes dirt and moisture from footwear, leaving it to fall to the lower level of the mat, where it remains until the mat is cleaned.



This hides the soils and also helps trap them so that contaminants cannot be “walked” into a facility.

Although it may not be as lucrative as hard-surface cleaning, upholstery cleaning, or other types of add-on services you may offer, the option to add mat-cleaning

and rental services offers clients something that is a bit less tangible.

Most facilities like to work with as few vendors as possible.

Offering a wide variety of services can help make you one of their few selected vendors.

[CM](#)

Circle ?