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Survey Reveals Equipment Renter Habits, Concerns

A recent survey of professional cleaning equipment users revealed that 42 percent have rented equipment on a regular basis at one time or another.

The July 2010 study (conducted online by AlturaSolutions Communications for Powr-Flite Direct) revealed if, when, and why professional cleaning equipment users rent janitorial equipment such as vacuum cleaners, wet/dry vacs, floor machines, and extractors.

For instance, the machine most frequently rented is carpet extractors, according to the respondents. This was followed very closely by both floor machines and wet/dry vacuums. Few of the respondents indicated that they rent vacuum cleaners.

When asked if they would buy or rent if they had to select a carpet extractor or floor machine right now, 60 percent said they would purchase about a third indicated they would rent.

Other findings of the study included:

- The main reason given for renting cleaning equipment instead of buying was "to handle emergency situations."
- Asked who they most often rent from, a third of the respondents indicated a janitorial distributor, a third indicated a rental company, and the balance indicated that they rent from a big-box or similar retailer.
- The biggest drawback to renting janitorial equipment, according to the study respondents, is the limited selection of machines.

"Many nationwide rental outlets do not carry [janitorial] equipment that meets the needs of the cleaning professional," says Gary Pelphrey, General Manager of Powr-Flite Direct. "They often carry only equipment designed for residential use. To meet the needs of cleaning professionals, we encourage rental companies to expand their product lines."

Finally, asked what concerned them most when renting cleaning equipment, nearly 60 percent of respondents answered that the machine needed to be "easy to use with little training." The second highest concern, 25 percent, was that the machine might not perform as intended.

"These are obviously the same concerns everyone has, whether buying or renting equipment," adds Pelphrey.