

# **PILE ON THE POUNDS**

Thank you for purchasing the Carpet Cleaning opportunity. I have enclosed ideas for advertising for you to copy...these are actual advertisements I use...they do work for me...feel free to use them.

I have enclosed letters and invoices. These again are just ideas...I use them, but you may want to do your own.

I have supplied the artwork in Microsoft Publisher...but also as jpg files if you do not have the relevant software. It would be simple to copy these in your choice of programme.

The Carpet Cleaning business is very simple. I am not going to ramble on about things that have no relevance to the business. I want you to concentrate on the things that really matter.

Although I had already started a domestic house cleaning business I wanted to start on the right footing with the carpet side of things.

I spent two days at a training school to learn how to carry out the actual work of cleaning carpets and upholstery.

This was in the form of a practical "hands on" using the equipment chemicals and tools, and I was hoping to find out how to get up and running with the methods shown in a real working environment.

The problem for me was that although I knew about cleaning, the carpet cleaning was a bit of a mystery.

To be honest with you, I learned absolutely nothing when it came to the things that really mattered in the business.

So here's what I did for myself.

The first thing I considered before I did anything...was to ask myself whether there was actually a demand for cleaning services.

I knew there was because I was asked to carry out a few jobs whilst working as a domestic cleaner, so the answer to that one was already there.

Of course, being new to the business, I did the usual research. I checked all the telephone directories and looked in my local papers to see who was advertising.

There was quite a few. I telephoned a few Carpet Cleaning companies as a potential customer to find out what they offered. I wanted to know how professional they went about their business. You can get an idea

how professional a company might be by the way they answer the telephone.

The responses, or no responses, were a clue to what I might expect if I were to employ them to carry out some work.

Having decided that there was a demand, I then thought about how I could offer my own Carpet Cleaning services and what I could do to gain a share of the market?

As I write this plan I'm going to write down the main things you need to know. I am not going to pad it out with rubbish. You need do nothing other than learn the main points I list.

So here goes. We are going look at this in order considering the main points and order of setting out your own plan of action.

### YOUR BUSINESS NAME

Your business name is probably the main thing that will get you the original enquiry. I chose Angela's Angels. Let me tell you why. My name is Angela and its Angela people ask for, in fact most often they do ask for me personally.

They like the personal touch. It makes them feel that they can trust me because I use my own name. Now the Angel part is quite important for me.

Angels are godlike. They are sincere mythical creatures or presences, and they feel even more confident as they link honest with Angel...silly but true. So there you have it, Angela's Angels. Now if you think about it, if you can't trust an Angel, who can you trust?

Remember, a name that inspires and a name that is memorable is good for business. This lesson I learned more by luck than judgment. So then, your original enquiry has been gotten by a nice advertisement that shows your nice name. We talk more about advertising later.

You could have for example; Claire's Cleans or Mary's Cleaning Fairy's; or Mandy's Handy Hands; use your imagination here.

### COMMUNICATIONS

Always use your landline number in your promotional literature and advertising. You can also use your mobile as an extra number.

Customers like the old fashioned idea that a "proper" business has an office and someone sat there answering the telephone. Don't ask me why, but it is true.

Here is what I do, and I genuinely believe it works best. I have call divert from or office. This allows any caller to have their

call answered when ringing the landline number.

I can divert to any number I am at and mostly I have it diverted to my mobile. The only downside is you pay for the calls. If you take a quick message you can always ring them back if you are busy working. I have found this system perfect for me.

BT call divert system works by typing \*21\* then the number you wish to divert to then #.

For example \*21\* 01793 888888 #.  
To take divert off #21#.

The trick is to be in contact with your customers at all times.

### SELL YOUR SERVICE OVER THE TELEPHONE

Try to sell your service over the telephone. Try to close the sale every time. Not many people ring back and you do not get lots of bites of the cherry. I always send out a sales letter if I have not closed the appointment on the first call.

What you are looking for is an appointment. You can then explain your services when you visit them. It is very difficult to lose the job when you have been to see them and chatted with them; this is important. Many people will never say thanks for coming out

we are getting more quotes. Most people simply book there and then.

### TRANSPORT

It is obvious that you will need to get from job to job. Start off using your own car; with a few tools in the boot. This is perfectly acceptable, and your customers mostly will not be troubled by this.

There is something to be said for a purpose designed van and racking system like the one I use but it is possible to work without the expensive van and racking initially.

The best way is to operate cheaply from the beginning and if that is a low cost car then there is no problem.

### INSURANCE

Make sure you have public liability insurance. You should never risk "all" your assets. If you have an accident whilst working in a customer's property you are liable. This is common sense, so do not skimp on this. A typical cost for a sole trader is around £150.00 per year. If you do decide to employ others you will need an additional employer's liability also. Do your homework here; shop around.

### ACCOUNTANT/BOOK KEEPER

You are obliged to keep good records and store them for at least six years. When you start trading you must inform the Inland Revenue and customs and excise within 3 months of starting. Always keep records and proof of purchases for expenses and income. You will need to be very accurate on this.

### WORK CLOTHING & IMAGE

I have found that wearing good overalls with a logo and your company name creates a more professional image. Customers tend to be impressed when a little effort is made on smartness.

Always carry over shoe carpet protectors. These will save any accidents when walking into homes on wet days. You should use your own judgment on this but I have always used high quality decorator's covers to protect customer's carpets. A little effort here works wonders for your image.

### VAN GRAPHICS

I have driven both. Sign written van and plain. There are two schools of thought here. I personally do not have my van sign written even though it does promote your business and you will find that you get a few more enquires.

The "only" reason I don't is because vans with tools or equipment in are targeted by thieves. It is now practically impossible to purchase in insurance so you need to weigh up the benefit of the additional free advertising and work that might come from it, and the loss of an entire tool kit. Also consider the damage and repairs that might be required to the van.

That's it, the only reason. You decide whether it is worth the risk for you.

### SMALL CLEANING JOBS

The main income stream for you I would suggest is small cleaning jobs. Those jobs will teach you how, and also give you the confidence in tackling larger work.

You can clean the odd carpet here and there or small rugs to start with, building up to large properties and small commercial. It is always wise to start small and grow.

Make a point of putting 24hour service in your advertisements. You will be amazed at how much the telephone actually rings. There will always be an emergency now and again where you can charge a premium. Spilled wine and tea stains are a good source of income.

Try to be diverse here as you want the telephone ringing often. Lots of enquiries are exactly what you want. You need lots of

enquiries so that you may pick and choose your work. This may sound harsh but you don't want all the jobs; you want the profitable ones.

### QUALITY

Always use top quality cleaning equipment. Cheaper chemicals are ok, but try to use ECO friendly products where possible.



This machine is a Rug Doctor Wide Track. It really is a very simple and powerful machine.

The real beauty is that it has the vac motor vibrating brush and all chemicals self contained. The weight of the cleaning

chemicals bearing down on the carpet makes a good suction force.

A machine like this would typically cost around £1000. I have been using mine for over 3 years now and it has earned its keep.

The cleaning chemicals that you can use are either liquid based where you mix with hot water or powder based. The liquid ones tend to be a little more expensive, but in my opinion are better.



This machine is an Extracta Exel model. It is one of the most powerful Carpet Cleaning machines you can buy for domestic and commercial use.

Here's a little bit about the company. This company has a fabulous range of cleaning machines and can supply all your chemical needs. You can contact them here.

[www.extracta.co.uk](http://www.extracta.co.uk)

Extracta products was formed as a company in 1979 by Brian Aldred and John Haggarth to manufacture a superior range of industrial carpet and upholstery cleaning machines.

Extracta manufacture a comprehensive range of commercial cleaning equipment for carpet cleaning and upholstery cleaning for all equipments and in all situations in the commercial cleaning, home cleaning and industrial cleaning sectors.

Today Extracta carpet and upholstery cleaning systems are used worldwide and are highly regarded in the carpet and upholstery cleaning business having been tried and trusted for nearly 30 years by the carpet and upholstery cleaning professionals.

And this is about the machine.

The Exel is the ultimate choice for the serious professional. The performance, looks and features of the Exel makes this by far the most popular machine in the Extracta range. Designed for all types of work from the average domestic job to the dirtiest hotel, restaurant or department store

carpets - the Exel can tackle them all fast and efficiently!

Twin Lamb heavy duty vacs can be used together or independently giving the operator maximum versatility. Extra vacuum means drier carpets. Teams up well with any of the 3 Scrubba models and can be used with up to 35m hoses.

The Exel is the only machine which provides sufficient power to be teamed with the Super 20 Scrubba tool attachment - the ultimate cleaning combination giving maximum power and performance.

- *Twin three stage Lamb. Ametek heavy duty vacuum motors.*
- *Impressive and professional design and appearance.*
- *Waste level safety cut out and filter.*
- *Easy prime pump. Lids to both supply and waste tank.*
- *View-thru section - waste water recovery can be seen with amazement.*
- *Comprehensive control console allowing the operator to monitor the performance of water pump and vacuum and exact water temperature.*
- *Hour counter monitor gives running time.*
- *Scrubba tool connector outlet.*
- *Controllable heater dial.*
- *Generous water capacity.*
- *Twin power leads.*
- *Supplied with 12" wide carpet cleaning tool and 7.5 metres hoses.*
- *Large 8" diameter wheels and fold down handle to aid step climbing.*
- *Available in a variety of colours and choice of co-ordinating stickers to suit, at no extra cost on this model.*
- *12 month warranty on components.*
- *3 years warranty on glass fibre body.*

## PRICING & COSTINGS

Pricing your work is much simpler than you think when it comes to carpet cleaning. Of course it might sound difficult at first, but you need to know a few tricks too.

Most of the large cleaning companies have set prices where the customer enquires and the receptionist reels off a few standard prices that they have always charged.

This is fine for companies that do not need the bread and butter work like you do because they rely on very large contracts which are regular; they also like insurance work.

The insurance work is good for them because they are already in with many insurance companies and they pretty much charge what they like.

The great thing here is that you can also charge what you like. And that means to start with you can do jobs really low priced to build up your reputation and customer base.

Now the thing here is this.

It is perfectly possible to carry out a full average sized three bedroom house clean in two hours. This is without pushing yourself too much.

All you need to consider is this:

What is the wear and tear on machine?

What materials do I need to use?

How far have I got to travel?

How long will it take?

A local job within 10 miles radius of your home would be priced at around £145.00. If you needed to travel a greater distance price it accordingly. You could maybe add £20 for the extra time and fuel.

Two hours work at £145 is not too bad really is it? On top of that you can add extras. These might include scotch guard of the carpets etc:

Here are a few prices that I have charged.

1 bed Flat £75.00  
2 bed Flat £85.00  
3 Bed House £145.00  
4 Bed House £200

Single carpets £35.00  
Rugs £30.00  
Wool Rugs £40.00

### STRIVE FOR PERFECTION

Strive for perfection in everything you do.  
Always try to communicate at all levels.  
Well to do people like polite and helpful

responses. You are their servant in some ways, but you need to think of it differently sometimes too.

I do work for a Lord and Lady BXXXXXXXXXXXXX. These customers insist that I do not park my car outside their stately home even though there is enough room for 50 cars.

I have to use the back entrance, it's the old school way, but I'd touch my cap if I had to.

That would be no problem to me; they pay me a fortune to clean their carpets, so what's the bother.

### EMPLOYING OTHERS

Employ people if you wish. That is your decision. I employ one person to help me. She is a friend. You can pay somebody approximately £80.00 per week without getting involved in tax and national insurance.

There are so many people out there willing to work for you that you can take your pick. Please do all the security checks however, and insist upon references.

The best way is to employ only part time workers. This way you will never get involved in Tax and National Insurance.

You will eventually need an accountant and he or she will be best to advise you here.

### INSURANCE

You will need Public Liability Insurance. Never consider working anywhere without it. If you employ anybody to help you, make sure you have employer's liability also.

You are responsible for their well being; this is the law. So it's very important. Shop around for prices; they vary depending on the area you live.

Insurance is a selling point too. When you suggest prices to your customers explain that your price includes insurance.

They will be thrown by this. They will ask about it and you simply say that many carpet cleaners especially the cheap ones do not have any.

Explain that if they have an accident whilst working in your home the householder is liable for damages.

This is a fact so use it to your advantage.

### REPUTATION

Your reputation will grow with you. Always do a good job. You will find that people will book you, cancel you, re-book you,

change their mind; they will amaze you at times and often you will be baffled why someone would book you then cancel five minutes later. This is common.

Never worry about things like that. It is human nature; people do not always respond how you think they should. You will soon learn that people can be very unpredictable.

### PROMOTING YOUR BUSINESS

How do you get enquiries? This can be done in a number of ways. You could create fliers or put cards in shop windows, or advertising boards or the like.

I personally did none of those things. I decided that the best place would be the good old Yellow Pages. I inserted an advertisement in the Yellow Pages and the Thomson Local directories.

You are then in with all the other serious players. It worked out right for me, but the directory comes out once a year and you need to hit the deadline.

I would have advertised in the local press if I could not have gotten organized with the directories. You will be able to decide what's best for you.

You are only looking for an enquiry to start with; the rest is down to your selling

skills. Use all tricks here that you can. Always try to sell on quality not price, but you do have that flexibility to do both.

The selling game is a whole new subject, and one which you can be good at with a little practice. People on the whole like to deal with people they like and it is this that will get you more work than you could imagine.

### ADVERTISING

#### WORD AND MOUTH

Word and mouth is undoubtedly a very good way of getting business. This works well if you do a good job and people are very happy with your work.

The problem is, most often it is not enough to sustain a good flow of leads. You will benefit from this method, but you need to look a little further ahead.

#### SIGN WRITING ON VEHICLES

I have already covered this in a previous section but you will need to decide whether it is worth the risk. Carpet Cleaning vans notoriously are easy pickings for thieves. If you let the thieves know what is inside you might regret it.

I do not have my van sign written.

## FLIERS & BUSINESS CARDS

Fliers and business cards can and do produce a little work, although again, not enough.

Leaving business cards or a flier after you have completed the job is always a good thing. Remember though that you probably did not get the original job by using that method.

Your customers are always very unpredictable and often will forget very quickly once you have done a job, and amazingly will lose the business card in a short space of time.

You will always get the odd few that will religiously use your services no matter what. This is not the normal situation however.

## NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING

This is a very good method of obtaining work. Inserting regular advertisements in your local evening news paper or free sheet is a very productive way of getting calls for your services. I used this method for a couple of years and it worked very well.

The advantage of this method is that it promotes you in your own area. People tend to like to use local trades. It makes sense really.

The main disadvantage of weekly or daily news papers is that it can be very expensive.

A 5cm by 2 columns can be as much as £80.00 for one single nightly insertion. This cost for many is far too much to invest. It might be useful to start with to get you off the ground and get your name about but by far the preferred method is directory advertising.

### INTERNET & WEB SITES

These methods do work. Many people do now use computers for their searching for services and products. I could ramble for hours about this alone, but the truth is I have found this method to be only moderately successful.

The considerations for me were quite simple when I decided not to invest money into it.

Many people today prefer to look through a directory. There still are millions of people who do not have the skills to use a computer competently and old people especially struggle.

### DIRECTORY ADVERTISING - YELLOW PAGES - THOMSON LOCAL

This in my opinion is the way to go. I have advertised within these directories for over twenty four years.

They work and they are proven. You can also link your web site to directory advertising through a link if you require it. The trick here is to make your advertising stand out.

I am not going to rattle on about this form of advertising because this is my preferred method. I use it for most of my business needs.

Take a look at some of my advertising copy. These are all my own work. I design and use them for my business every week; directory advertising is for the year.

Cost wise it works out much less than news paper advertising. A typical yellow pages advertisement would cost around £600 - £700, depending on the area you live in and coverage.



Here is an advert that I designed for yellow pages in 2006. This worked very well for me. White on a yellow background does work very well. The cost of this was approximately £550.00

**Angela's Angels**  
**Phone Angela "Now"**  
**Carpet & Rug Cleaners**

Domestic  
Commercial  
100% Safe  
Rapid Quick Drying  
Expert Stain Removal  
Rug Specialists  
Best Prices in Swindon

**SWINDON**  
**01793 874240**  
(Angela's Angels) 11, Chevalier Close, Swindon.

This is an advertisement I used in the Thomson local in 2005. Again this advertisement was produced in Microsoft Publisher by me and it performed very well. This cost approximately £700.00

**A&M CLEANING**  
 Family Run - Established 25Yrs  
**Carpet & Rug Cleaners**

Domestic  
 Carpet & Rugs  
 100% Safe  
 Rapid Quick Drying  
 Expert Stain Removal  
 Rug Specialists  
 Best Prices in Swindon



**SWINDON**  
**01793 874240**  
 11, CHEVALIER CLOSE, SWINDON, SN5 5TS

This is an advertisement I used in the Thomson local in 2006. Again this advertisement was produced in Microsoft Publisher by me and it performed very well. This cost approximately £750.00 Trying to keep adverts fresh is an ideal way of getting noticed.

**Angela's Angels**  
**Carpet & Rug Cleaners**



Best Prices  
 in Town

Domestic & Commercial  
 100% Safe & Odour Free  
 Rapid Quick Dry System  
 Expert Stain Removal  
 All Areas & Fully Insured

**SWINDON**  
**01793 874240**  
 11, Chevalier Close, Swindon, SN5 5TS

Here is a little trick with a Yellow Pages advertisement I used in 2004. I used grey scale to create a striking looking advertisement to save money. Yellow pages charge 30% more roughly for adding one colour so I tried this. It worked very well.

**Angela's Angels**  
**Carpet & Rug Cleaners**

Best Prices  
in Town

Domestic & Commercial  
100% Safe & Odour Free  
Rapid Quick Dry System  
Expert Stain Removal

**SWINDON**  
**01793 874240**  
11, Chevalier Close, Swindon, SN5 5TS

Above here is a little advertisement I used in the Yellow Pages. This one is slightly different again.

I hope this gives you some ideas on advertizing. Promotion of your business is the main thing to learn. You will find that as time goes on you will become better at it.

Mostly it is a case of trial and error, but you may copy much of what I have produced.

## INVOICING & PAPERWORK

I don't like paperwork, so I do as little of it as possible.

I currently use Microsoft Excel for all my recorded transactions. The reason for this is that I really do not like the software that somebody else has designed.

Basically, all you need are columns where the totals can be added. The software is very easy and anybody with a bit of common sense could use once they are shown.

If that is a problem to you, then use a 16 or 18 column accounts book and update every day. If you enter in daily it is very easy to keep on top of.

## CASH ON COMPLETION

I always insist on payment on completion. It is not always possible, but as a rule that is what I do.

It is surprising how many people forget to send payment or for whatever reason. Some simply do not wish to pay after the event, especially after emergency work.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**DISCLAIMER**

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There you have it, my guide to Carpet Cleaning. There is much essential information you will need. All the points mentioned are vital for success. Do not reveal these details to others, and remember to stay away from negative types.

Those people have no intention of doing something positive, they will only drag you down to their level, they actually fear that you may do something and make a go of it. I know this to be true, it happened to me.

There are perhaps other things you can do to make your business better, I am still learning and there are many challenges out there, but you will find things that will work for you.

I hope this is something you will take up;  
it's a great business to be in.

If you need any more information please do  
not hesitate to contact me on the contact  
details I have provided.

[angelaangelsinfo@aol.com](mailto:angelaangelsinfo@aol.com).

GOOD LUCK

**Angela**