

CONNECT

Energize, Innovate, Engage with the West Coast Chamber

July 2016



Feature Business:
Quality Car Wash

From the Publisher

Patrick Avery

Dear West Coast Chamber Members,
Summer is here now and I hope you all have great plans to enjoy it. Make sure to take your copy of *Connect* with you to the lake or cabin. Remember to utilize other West Coast Chamber members' businesses as well as the sponsors of this great publication when the need arises. We are excited to continue to grow and bring you more great articles and information that you can use in your business. Please let us know if you are enjoying our publication.

If you are looking to brand your company, please call me today at 616-414-2208. As an Elite Ambassador, I am very interested in learning about your business, even if you decide not to become a sponsor, so call me today and let me be a resource for you.

Sincerely,
Patrick Avery

Division Manager / Publisher
Best Version Media
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616-414-2208



Patrick Avery



Chelsea Hall



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Have feedback, ideas, or submissions? We are always happy to hear from you! Deadlines for submissions are the 8th of each month. Go to www.bestversionmedia.com and click "Submit Content." You may also email your thoughts, ideas and photos to:

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Letter from Jane Clark

President, Michigan West Coast
Chamber of Commerce



This month at the Chamber, we've been reviewing one of our favorite go-to business books, *DO IT! Marketing*. The author stresses the power of self-knowledge as a key to success in business. This knowledge comes from answering basic questions such as "What am I all about? What do I love to do? Who do I want to be? How do I plan to get there? and Who do I want to be around?" It's finding the essence of your aspirations that enables you to do what you love to do for the people you love... bringing together your best work for your perfect customers.

What have we learned about ourselves at the Chamber? Simply put, it's that what we love to do is to help you. Connecting our members is our number one goal, and we are always looking at ways to make your experience remarkable. The Chamber has partnerships and programs geared toward finding and developing the people and resources you need to grow and succeed. Membership in the Chamber will also help other members, our community, and our legislators get to know your business, and will provide you with contacts, information and training resources to keep your business focus razor sharp. Our best work is working our best for you. Holland was recently named the best small city for starting a business, and we want to keep it that way. Thank you for partnering with us on your business journey!

Best Regards,
Jane Clark



Vision Statement:

Strengthen our community as
the best location to live, learn,
work and play.

Mission Statement:

Enhance our members' success,
advance our economy, and
improve our quality of life.

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Feature Business:

QUALITY CAR WASH

By Chelsea Hall



Quality Car Wash & Tim Horton's on Chicago Drive in Holland

Hollanders have come to equate the signature red 'Q' of Quality Car Wash locations with friendly smiles, quality results and fast service.

History

Quality Car Wash (QCW) is a family-owned business that began over forty years ago. It started in the late 1960s when two Holland brothers, Jun and Sonny Essenburg, were looking for a new adventure. "The first rollover carwash was at 523 West 17th Street in Holland," explained Chief Operation Officer Mandi Brower. "As technology improved in the industry, we added the location at 6th Street and River Avenue that had an actual conveyor."

During the 1970s, 80s and 90s, Jun and his son, Tom Essenburg, grew the business, culminating with building and opening a 180-foot gas station and convenience store car wash. The facility was the first to incorporate the Integrated Flight Deck System, which still grounds Tommy Car Wash designs to this day.

It was while attending a trade show that Tom realized he had an eye for design. "As the number of locations grew, the need for a great supplier and industry innovations became apparent, and was something the family explored," Mandi explained. "When they couldn't find a solution, they decided they would make it themselves, thus starting Tommy Car Wash Systems." This part of the business designs, manufactures and sells car wash equipment and buildings to clients internationally, and was the perfect way to share their industry expertise with a bigger client pool.

Today, QCW maintains seven locations in West Michigan offering a variety of services in Holland, Muskegon, Grandville and Grand Rapids. The newest location, featuring a car wash, gas station, convenience store and Tim Horton's Cafe and Bake Shop with drive through is situated on the corner of Chicago Drive and Waverly Road here in Holland.

Mandi previously worked in accounting, putting her degree in the field to use, and swore she would never work in the family business. When the manufacturing company where she worked closed, Tom (her father) asked her to come on and help with a few special projects. That was over 10 years ago. Today, Mandi oversees all retail operations and loves that no two days are alike. "Challenges make us stronger," she said. "I love the problem-solving aspect of my job. There are solutions for everything when you employ creativity and innovation."

That innovation is part of what has grown QCW from a small family business to the bustling company they are today, employing over 180 team members.

Team

Mandi often refers to QCW as a bus with no engine. "Our team members are what move the bus," Mandi explained. "It's our people that make the difference." She went on to explain that it's a goal of the QCW team to make a positive impact on the lives they come into contact with, no matter who it is.

Additionally, the team members are encouraged to embrace the company culture of "WE OWN IT," an acronym that spells out what QCW stands for:

- W = Wash quality
- E = Exceptional customer service
- O = Outstanding team members
- W = Winning attitudes
- N = Never ending pursuit of excellence
- I = Immediate call to action
- T = Training

Driving home the importance of friendliness and hospitality has paid off for this business, and hasn't gone unnoticed by customers. "We regularly receive positive feedback about team members and wash quality," Mandi said proudly. To reward team members who consistently embody the qualities of QCW, Mandi shared that every year at a fall rally, awards are given. "We hand out awards recognizing years of service, rookie of the year, exceptional customer service, outstanding team member, winning attitude and more," said Mandi. In addition to the rally, "Twice a year we host a company-wide dinner where everyone gathers for great food, fun and a motivational evening," Mandi explained. "We have live speakers and entertainment come in, and leaders within the company present on the culture we have instilled within the team and company." Clearly QCW recognizes the value of investing in their team. "QCW is proud of the team members who work for the company, realizing that great people are the greatest assets and the biggest factor to our continued success," said Mandi.

Locations

Faithful QCW customers may be surprised to learn that the company is so much more than great car washes.

Tommy Car Wash Systems

Designs, patents, sells and markets car wash equipment and buildings all over the world. Helping other owners in their hometowns build a business for a better life.

Quality Car Wash Runs retail operations for all QCW locations. While providing tours and backroom experience and training for other owners from all over the world starting their own car washes.

Tommy's Express

The other brand of retail operations that Tommy Car Wash systems has begun franchising throughout the United States. Grandville is the first franchise for the chain and they currently operate that location.

Tim Horton's In 2013, QCW signed on to be a franchise of Tim Horton's. They currently operate four franchises.

QCW operates seven locations throughout West Michigan:

- 809 South Washington, Holland
- 243 North River, Holland
- 499 E. 8th Street, Holland
- 705 Chicago Drive, Holland
- 1931 E. Sherman Blvd, Muskegon
- 4675 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids
- 2925 44th Street, Grandville

The Muskegon and four Holland locations offer gasoline, a convenience store, vacuums and an express car wash, "with the Grand Rapids location (Tommy's Express Car Wash & Quick Lube) offering a quick lube, express car wash and vacuums," explained Mandi. "The newest Grandville location (opened in March of this year) is an express car wash only."

Quality

"The convenience stores are clean, bright and filled with a variety of products always competitively priced. The express car washes feature the newest technology in car washing, guaranteeing a clean, shiny and dry car every time. We are committed to high standards." —Mandi Brower

"It is all about the people, no matter what business you are in." —Mandi Brower



Tommy's Express in Grandville



Three generations of Quality Car Wash and the president of the International Car Wash Association

Giving Back

To QCW, being a fixture in the community means giving back whenever possible. "We have several events and fundraisers that we do," said Mandi. "Wash with a Mission is an on-site fundraising opportunity where individuals and groups can have a bake sale, pump gas for people, etc." Mandi shared that it's a fun event and a great way to boost community recognition for an organization. "Participants are allotted a few hours on the agreed upon day and during that time the proceeds from the car washes sold, up to 50%, go to the designated group or organization."

Mission of the Month is a fundraiser that utilizes donation boxes placed at each QCW location. "Each month, the Quality team members choose a charity to donate all the money to," said Mandi.

QCW also has a Helping Hands program, where groups are allowed to sell Quality car washes and keep up to 40% of the sales. Said Mandi, "We also donate to many auctions and events throughout the community."

"Quality is proud to partner with such an amazing Chamber. The effort that goes into promoting, encouraging and embracing local business is endless. We have had several of our team members attend seminars that helped to grow and train them to become great leaders." —Mandi Brower

For this family-owned business, the formula for success is simple: quality products, quality service and quality people.

For store locations and hours, visit www.qualitywash.com.



A Game Changer for Small Businesses

Leverage your fixed assets to provide the cash you need for expansion, development and growth!

Access to affordable capital is the most important factor in assuring the financial health of a small business, allowing them to grow and succeed.

Through the new Lakeshore 504 refinance program, small businesses are able to leverage their fixed assets to get the cash they need with a below-market 20-year fixed-rate loan.

The 504 loan allows borrowers to refinance up to 90% of the current appraised value of their property. Small businesses can take advantage of lower rates, fixed for 20 years, to lighten their monthly debt payments, improve cash flow and stabilize operations. The program allows for refinancing commercial real estate debt as well as other business debt and expenses.

Lakeshore 504 is a program of the West Coast Chamber. For more information on refinancing your debt, please contact Doug Kuiper at 616-392-8099 or doug@westcoastchamber.org.

Use your proceeds for:

- (Unpaid) business credit card debt
- Expenses that will be incurred by business within 18 months of application
- Maintenance
- Improvements that do not increase a building's footprint
- Equipment
- Paying down a line of credit
- Utility bills
- Insurance
- Wages and salaries
- Inventory
- Rent

Current 504 Rates

4.23% – 20 Year

4.20% – 10 Year

To be eligible for the 504 refinancing program, a business must have been in operation for at least two years and the debt to be refinanced must be for owner-occupied real estate.

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The Professional Non-exempt Workforce

By Amy Kraal



Changes to Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) were released in May with a December 1, 2016 compliance deadline.

These regulations spur decisions on wages, overtime costs, policy, time-keeping practices, and perceived employee demotion to hourly status. While the new laws may not impact every organization at the same magnitude, this is an opportunity for companies to review pay practices.

Many companies attempt to make a job exempt by adding extra duties, although companies simply cannot choose for a job to be exempt.

These items do not make a job exempt:

- College degree required
- A direct report
- Advanced knowledge application
- Discretion with customers/vendors

HR Generalist, Office Manager, Helpdesk Technician, Executive Assistant, Maintenance Technician, Customer Service Lead are positions that rarely meet exemption test.

The FLSA has guidelines that provide exemption testing rules to pass for a position to be exempt from overtime pay requirements. The duties tests remain unchanged with the new law.

The notable change is updated thresholds of pay, requiring employees to be paid a minimum of \$47,476 and pass the duties test for overtime exemption. The new definition for highly compensated employee exemption is now \$134,004. The widespread publicity of the new exemption wage minimums may increase the risk of wage and hour claims filed by employees.

Steps to take:

1. Update/create accurate job descriptions.
2. Establish a *professional non-exempt* classification in your handbook.

3. Have positions professionally evaluated for exemption status and keep a copy of completed tests on file.
4. If position meets exemption standards and current pay is below minimum threshold, consider the amount of overtime typically worked verses cost to increase salary.
5. If a position does not meet exemption standards, the position should be changed to non-exempt status.
6. Help employees understand recent law changes and how it impacts their employment.

'Professional Non-Exempt' is not the same as 'Hourly'

- Let employees know that their positions have been reviewed in light of the recent FLSA changes, and that they are eligible for overtime for hours worked over 40 in a work week.
- Check your employee handbook to make sure you pay overtime only for actual hours worked, not inclusive of holiday, sick or vacation pay.
- Update written policy and communicate with employees regarding reporting overtime.
- Have employees sign an acknowledgement that they understand their obligation to report time.
- Pay all reported work hours over 40 at time and a half.
- From a payroll practice, you can still default to pay 40 hours per week.
- Allow them to manage their time to maintain a full work week.

Watch your overtime hours, if non-exempt employees consistently work overtime, you should reassess your staffing plan and work responsibilities.

Companies will be pushed towards more strategic staffing plans identifying ways to reduce overall labor costs. HR Solutions Group of West Michigan can assist with evaluating the exemption status of positions as well as the implementation of HR software that will make tracking time and payroll expenses easier to manage.

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Celebrating Ambassadors: Our Champions in the Business Community



Committee members of the West Coast Chamber turn ideas into action. Working with the Chamber’s professional staff, our volunteers help facilitate the programs and services that enhance the success of our members and the greater business community.

Chamber committees are made up of members who volunteer their time and efforts to make our organization stronger. Committee participation is a great way to network, share ideas, and build lasting professional relationships.

The Ambassador Committee engages members through a variety of programs including events and personal contacts. Ambassadors work with the Chamber staff to enhance member value and retention through planned activities that benefit our diverse members and community. Each May we take time out to officially thank our Ambassadors and recognize those who go above and beyond.

Our Ambassador of the Year, based on overall points, is Kim Vandermolen, Lakeshore Family Chiropractic.

This year’s SPIRIT Award recipients include:

- Patrick Avery, Best Version Media
- Tricia Cranmer, Hope College
- Tammie Milligan, MED-1 Holland
- Aris Knitter, Century 21
- Craig Oosterhouse, Mercantile Bank

Special thanks to our Committee Leaders! These folks really help breathe the life into our committee by meeting additionally and working as a group to plan out the overall committee direction including the monthly meetings in general.

- Chair: Aris Knitter, Century 21
- Co-Chair: Alex Calder, Rua Associates
- Logistics: Darlene De Witt, Consumers Credit Union
- Membership: Craig Oosterhouse, Mercantile Bank
- Social: Ashley Kimble, Holland BPW



Patrick Avery, Best Version Media



Aris Knitter, Century 21



Tammie Milligan, MED-1 Holland



Craig Oosterhouse, Mercantile Bank



Kim Vandermolen, Lakeshore Family Chiropractic

July Calendar of Events

Tuesday, July 12

Early Bird Coffee

@Baert Baron Mansion Bed and Breakfast, 120 South Church Street, Zeeland

Do you miss Early Bird Breakfast during the summer months? Join us for coffee (we're buying!) and networking before heading into the office - we guarantee it will be a great start to your day!

Time: 7:30-8:30am

Cost: Free

and beverages, golfer awards, continental breakfast (morning golfers) and an evening hors d'oeuvres buffet with a cash bar. Sign up as an individual or a foursome, and select either a 7:30am or 1pm shotgun.

Time: 7:30am-6:30pm

Cost: \$115 per member (AM shotgun) / \$125 per member (PM shotgun) / \$175 per Non-Member (AM or PM shotgun)

Wednesday, July 13

Golf Outing

@Macatawa Legends Golf & Country Club

This will be THE golf outing of the summer and one you will not want to miss! Enjoy hole events and prizes, networking lunch, a hospitality tent with snacks

SAVE THE DATE!
Friday, September 16
Annual Meeting
Laketown Golf and Conference Center

For a full listing of events, visit www.westcoastchamber.org/events.

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Share your talents to help high-tech start-ups grow.

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- Marketing
- Finance/Accounting
- Human resources
- Legal/I.P.
- Business plan development

Sign up by July 14 for early contributor recognition at the 5x5 event

Be the reason a start-up achieves the next level

Visit HollandSmartZone.com to apply and for details



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Expert Sponsor: Triangulation Branding

By Rob Stam, Navigate



Rob Stam



15 years ago I had a job that required spending several days a month traveling around the country. GPS systems in rental cars were new and I always paid the extra eight dollars to add one. Countless times however, I found myself lost while the GPS could only connect to two satellites. Perhaps you can relate.

GPS systems work because of a process called triangulation. By accurately measuring the distance from a single point to three different known locations, one can accurately locate the position of that initial single point. When your car loses contact with one of those three satellites, you become lost.

Triangulation can also be applied to branding. There are three different connection points you have with the market place. When you effectively connect using all three, you can successfully navigate your business towards your target customers and not get “lost” in the sea of competition. The three satellites of branding are your visual brand, social brand, and physical brand.

Visual Branding entails anything people see that represents your business. This can be your logo, signs, ads, videos—anything. Visual branding has the greatest market reach as you can deploy in it innumerable

places. Additionally, visual branding communicates who you are as an organization the fastest. People can look at your business card and gain insight into your services, your values, and even your caliber of excellence before they blink. While visual branding is based on one-way communication from you to your target audience, your **Social Branding** is built around conversation. It’s been said for years that “The best advertising is word of mouth advertising.” This statement will never stop being true, so it’s important that you fully appreciate the power of social branding, especially in our highly connected society. With the multitude of social media outlets available today, you now have the ability to be more strategic with your social branding efforts while also being able to measure their effectiveness. But it’s important to remember that the nature of social branding is conversational, so you must be engaged and not just use it as a platform to sell your features and benefits by posting ads. Beyond social marketing, don’t neglect the tried and true methods of social branding. Make sure you stay active in your community and emphasize customer service so the word of mouth comments remain positive. Social branding is all about relationships—whether in real life or in the virtual world.

Physical Branding is perhaps the most ignored piece of corporate branding strategies. This is the manner in which people engage directly with your company and products. It can occur in your office, retail store, trade-show booth, through a personal interaction with your staff, or with your physical product. Developing a strong physical brand will involve everything from interior design to product packaging to personnel

training. Great physical brands create loyalty, which motivates people to engage in social branding on your behalf. Make sure when people physically encounter your business, the experience clearly resembles your other branding efforts.

Rob Stam is the president of Zeeland-based Navigate, and the author of Almost Our Time (2010), and Trajectory (2016). Reach him at www.robstam.com.





The Chamber Congratulates the Most Recent West Coast Leadership Graduates!



Cindy Pocock at her surprise party

This spring marked the end of another session of the West Coast Leadership program, culminating with a day of graduation events to honor the graduates. Since 1988, Chamber programs have been preparing members to assume leadership roles in our community. The West Coast Leadership members participate in educational sessions, tours and candid conversations with community leaders. Daily topics include law enforcement, education, social services, the environment, economic development and the arts.

Graduation day included a luncheon at Boatwerks Restaurant, kayaking, a trip to the top of the Windmill Island Windmill, and finishing off with a casual reception at New Holland Brewery.

The grand finale also included a surprise party for longtime Leadership Director, Cindy Pocock, who will be retiring this summer after 25 years with the Chamber. Thank you, Cindy, for many years of leading Leadership!



Who Makes a strong West Coast Leadership Candidate?

Applicants to the program are reviewed and interviewed by a committee. The Selection Committee is looking for applicants who:

- Show a concern for and commitment to our community
- Think strategically about new community partnerships and alliances
- Are willing to commit the time required to the Leadership program
- Have demonstrated leadership characteristics in an area of their life
- If employed, have the endorsement of their employers who would not object to their
- Take time from work and understand the program's commitment
- Are willing, following the program year, to invest time, resources and talents into strengthening our community

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Lifelong Learning Requires Lifelong Support

On August 2nd, voters in The City of Holland, Holland Township, Park Township, and Laketown Township will have the chance to ensure the continuation of a premier establishment in the community specializing in early literacy resources and lifelong learning. In the founding of the Herrick District Library, voters approved library funding through the last library millage levy in 1996 and that millage is set to expire in 2016.

The West Coast Chamber Board of Directors and Public Policy Committee recommends a YES vote! By voting YES on this proposal, our community can guarantee long-term, sustainable funding for both campuses of the Herrick District Library and their crucial improvements needed. 85% of library revenue comes from the annual millage.

Revenue to fund and renovate the buildings will come from the restoration of the initial 1.5-mill tax rate which was implemented at the opening of the HDL by voters in 1996. The current tax rate has been reduced over the years to the current rate of 1.2389 mills however, should this proposal be passed the tax rate will be restored to 1.5 mills for a period of 14 years. This will ensure all funding for expenses and renovation will not be diminished, creating a situation similar to the current predicament. Estimates show homeowners with a home value of \$150,000 would pay about \$112 a year; a slight increase of \$19.58 over what is currently paid.

The remaining 15% of library revenue sources come from federal grants, Friends of Herrick District Library, library fines and fees, the state of Michigan, and revenue from penal fines. However,

should the millage renewal not pass, the library will only be able to stay open for a few months until expenses outweigh revenue forcing closure.

Additionally, the millage renewal will allow for the long awaited return of Sunday service hours which were cut in 2009 due to the economic downturn, as well as other building updates at both the main branch and the North Branch.

The early literacy resources and lifelong learning provided at the HDL are not luxuries. Eliminating such a vast amount of the library's revenue would mean the library's closure within a year. The current and future education of individuals in our community depends on the passing of this tax renewal. The West Coast Chamber recommends a YES vote!

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5 Minutes to Better Personal Branding

By Margaret Smith



Your personal brand is more than your company logo or the colors you choose for your website. Your personal brand is you. How you act, what you say, and how you treat others all contribute to your personal brand. It's what you showcase to the world and, consequently, how others see you.

It takes time to build a solid, positive reputation, but you can get started today by taking 5 minutes to consider the following:

Your brand should be consistent.

If you want to be known as the reliable, go-to person for any project, then be reliable! If you want to be known as the employee who makes an effort to include others, then focus on being inclusive. Don't try to be something you're not, but do capitalize on your assets and be consistent with your behaviors. Remember: the office pool can be quite small. If you act one way with one group of people and act completely different with others, that

behavior will be noticed ... and that's frankly not the kind of attention you want.

Review your daily activities.

Do your day-to-day activities support your personal brand? Maybe your goal is to rise to a leadership position. Think about your typical daily to-do list and ask yourself if your activities are contributing to the bigger picture. If not, how can you go about changing them? What resources can you tap into? If you're not spending at least a little time every day on your passions or goals, it's time to reevaluate your daily work.

Stay rooted.

Yes, personal brands evolve. You might change your career goals or you might switch positions. That doesn't mean your personal brand should be completely scrapped. Stay true to who you are and never lose sight of that. Consider saying an affirmation to yourself every morning like, "I am a positive, optimistic person who always gets things done on time" or "I enjoy working with customers and go out of my way to make them happy."

The best way to start working on honing your personal brand is to have a plan. Do not approach it haphazardly and let others decide how they see you. You decide how you'd like to be seen. You have the power to build a strong, respected personal brand, brick by brick.

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If you want to make a valuable investment in your business and in the community, the West Coast Chamber is the place to start. As a member, your business enjoys a competitive advantage with leadership and learning opportunities, connections to business and government leaders, and pro-business and pro-community initiatives. Your Chamber works to create a climate of growth and success in which all West Coast businesses can prosper. Invest in the West Coast Chamber and see how we can help your business! For additional information on the chamber visit their website at www.westcoastchamber.org”

— Justin Troyer, commercial marketing representative, SERVPRO of Holland/ W. Ottawa County

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