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## **News Release**

### Carpex/Windex 2008 - Professionalism with a capital 'P'

'Highly professional' was the term used by exhibitors, visitors and sponsors alike to describe this year's largest specialist exhibitions for the UK's carpet and window cleaning trades. Carpex Windex took place this year on 27-28<sup>th</sup> March at a new venue, the Ricoh Arena in Coventry. Attracting more visitors than ever before and hosting the best stands and highest profile seminar programme within their six year history, the shows raised the bar with a passion.

A record breaking 2200 visitors graced the halls however it wasn't just the quantity but the quality of visitors that made the shows extra special. David Wick, sales director of Contico Manufacturing commented: "Numbers are definitely up from 2006. I've noted a higher number of interested buyers and we've received excellent feedback on products." John Sobucinski, general manager of Unger UK echoed his comments: "The quality of visitors at Windex is probably the best ever. They are real professionals, highly focused and clearly not just out for the day. The amount of interest shown in our products at this show has far outweighed that in previous years." Show statistics confirm that 81% of visitors had purchasing responsibility and a combined annual spending power of £304 million.

When asked about their attendance at the shows, the serious motives of visitors were quite apparent. Exhibitions might be a bit of a jolly for some or just a chance to meet up with old friends but for the guys at Carpex Windex it was definitely all about return on

investment. Jon Ottway, a window cleaner said: "I've come here to source new systems and to find the latest gadgets to make my job easier and more profitable."

Visitors were not the only ones to take a professional approach. Exhibitors were praised for an all time high in the presentation of their stands. Andrew Lee, safety officer with Windex sponsor Federation of Window Cleaners said: "Exhibitors have shown a new level of professionalism at Windex this year. The stands look fantastic and I've noticed a real passion for our industry across the board." Awards for 'Best stand' Windex/Carpex were presented to Aquafactors Direct and Vax Commercial respectively.

Stands looked impressive and many companies had clearly come well prepared to use the shows as a launch platform. Amongst new products were the Aridex low moisture upholstery cleaning system from Host Von Schrader and Dry Fusion's Bactoshield OV, MRSA/anti-bacterial protection for carpets. Meanwhile, Facelift Cleaning Systems took pre-orders for its new F1 high modular carbon waterfed pole range to be available in May.

Exhibitors reaped the rewards of their efforts as many took orders and made sales during the show. "We've got a large pile of forward orders and have been offered cash and cheques galore!" said Jackie Bromley, commercial national account manager at Vax Commercial. Alan Matthews of Aquafactors Direct was equally thrilled: "We had an amazing response to the kitted out Ford Ranger which was 'something different'. Again interest was amazing and we believe we have sold four at £33,000 each!"

Another key factor which contributed to the professionalism of the show was the outstanding new venue. The venue which is part of Coventry City's football ground which includes a hotel, restaurants and function rooms proved infinitely popular for its facilities and location. In previous years the majority of visitors came from the south east, this year however, the Midlands venue welcomed 80% of its visitors from other U.K regions with just 20% coming from the South East. Shaun Bradbury, managing director of Dry Fusion UK had noted the new visitor demographic: "We've had fantastic sales with people coming from locations as diverse as Inverness, Dublin and Southampton. I think the new Coventry location has had a lot to do with this." The excellent venue facilities made the event a much more enjoyable experience for everyone. John Sobucinski, general manager, Unger UK agreed: "During my 25 years in the cleaning industry I've never been to a better venue! The Ricoh Arena is a great improvement on both Excel and the NEC."

Buyers came from both industry sectors with the co-location of the two shows being a draw for some. Martin Stainsy of Wipe Clean said: "As someone interested in both window and carpet cleaning this is perfect. It was nice and easy to get here and I prefer the layout this year too. A good show." Specialist areas within each industry were well represented by exhibitors and visitors. While at Windex both traditional window cleaners and waterfed pole users were present, Carplex saw parties interested in low moisture cleaners, traditional hot water extraction and truck mounts. In addition, considerable interest was shown in hard floor cleaning which could indeed pinpoint a future trend for the industry.

Further to the exhibitions, both industries enjoyed free seminar programmes organised by show sponsors the Federation of Window Cleaners and the National Carpet Cleaners Association. The seminars proved extremely popular and covered hot topics

which led to passionate debate amongst delegates. Andrew Lee, safety officer for the Federation of Window Cleaners said: "The seminar programme has been very well attended. The seminar regarding ladder use and work at height regulations was particularly popular. With lots of questions and passionate comments it was quite clear that a genuine passion exists within certain areas of the trade to continue to use traditional window cleaning methods. There is also a notable concern within the industry to access the latest training and technology. The fact that our new waterfed pole and ladders training course is almost fully booked evidences this." Brian Dolby, chairman of the Federation of Window Cleaners continued: "As far as the Federation of Window Cleaners is concerned our main focus for Windex was the seminar programme and this was a big success. In recent times we have tackled health & safety issues and our next challenge is to develop a training course for window cleaners."

Fun was also an important component of the two days. The 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the Fastest Window Cleaner competition coupled smiles with an air of intense concentration. Terry 'Turbo' Burrows – the world's fastest window cleaner tried to beat his own world record and staged two competitions, one for professionals and one for amateurs. Commenting on the competitions Terry Burrows said: "The standard just gets better and better. The new competition for exhibitors was great fun!"

The main competition for professionals was won by Glyn Baily of Hazel Window Cleaners with an impressive time of 13.09 seconds, meanwhile the new exhibitors competition went to Steve Fox of Window Cleaning Warehouse who completed in 16.56 seconds.

The laughter continued well into the evening with a Gala dinner held onsite. The new lady president of the National Carpet Cleaners Association June Frankum particularly

enjoyed herself. Commenting on the evening June Frankum said: "The gala dinner went down a real treat. The meal was splendid and the entertainment had us all in stitches". On a more serious note the evening saw £700 being donated by exhibitors for charities NSPCC and MedEquip4Kids.

So, with another highly successful show under their belt do organizers Quartz Publishing & Exhibitions have ideas to build on this success in 2010? It would appear so. Comments Martin Scott, the show director: "We have already confirmed that the 2010 event will return to Coventry's Ricoh Arena, a decision that has proved extremely popular with all our current exhibitors. We will be adding a hard floor cleaning area to the next event, which has also been well received by the exhibitors and visitors we have surveyed this year. Quartz is now very focused on ensuring the event in 2010 takes another step forward to reflect the specific demands of the carpet, window and hard floor cleaning sectors." Pawlo Woloszyn, chief executive officer of the National Carpet Cleaners Association feels this could be just what is needed. Commenting on the next edition of the shows Pawlo Woloszyn said: "Bookings for 2010 have already started and the new addition of a floor cleaning area at the next show will make this a totally unmissable event!

Dates for 2010 have not yet been announced but will be available in the near future at [www.carpex.co.uk](http://www.carpex.co.uk) and [www.windex.co.uk](http://www.windex.co.uk)

**Ends**

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**For press enquiries please contact:**

**Carpex/Windex Press Office**

**Ceris Burns** - Ceris Burns International t: +44(0)1825 713806 e:[ceris@cbimarketing.com](mailto:ceris@cbimarketing.com)

[www.cbimarketing.com](http://www.cbimarketing.com)