

# Touchless washing reduces costs

Improved brush technology means less wasted resources

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Jack Jackson, president of Awash Systems.

One of the most common bus washing questions today is, "Do my brushes scratch paint?" We have been washing vehicles for over 23 years and brush technology has progressively improved. At Awash Systems we are washing some of the most expensive paint and advertising wraps in the market on buses, trucks and trains with no issues. The technology of the proper brush with the proper chemical will far outperform any other method and will be the least expensive for any ROI.

Listing the various brushes, materials and mechanics would not only be overwhelming, but also depend on the desired outcome, throughput and budget. Let me share an experience:

I visited a large urban transportation facility that spent over \$1 million on an automatic, drive through wash system. This was only a three year old facility and their issue was the vehicles (trains) were not getting cleaned to their expectation. The chemical company was working diligently with the customer to come up with every scenario including adding in more wash arches to increase the ability to wash in the limited space allowed by the building. Of course, more chemicals add more costs and sometimes can actually do damage to the vehicle or paint and, in this case, the rivets.

When we did the inspection, it was determined that it would be impossible to add any more chemicals to do the job, but it did come to light that the brushes were the most inexpensive on the market. The individual brush strands were round and hollow. In comparison, it would be like cleaning a car with a bunch of cocktail size straws whipping against your vehicle.

A round brush is not going to hold any chemical or water on it to ensure lubricity and abrasion at the same time. Today's brushes can perform abrasion and lubricity to ensure there are no issues with scratching, yet there is some scrubbing. The best method to clean is a little soap and a good scrubbing. That holds true with today's technology in cruciform polyethylene or polypropylene brushes.

Once we added in some of the proper brushing technology, the problem was solved. The chemicals were being applied and scrubbed to ensure the proper dwell time and all the nooks and crannies were cleaned as well.

There are numerous videos available on line to discuss today's brush technology and the myths of touchless versus soft touch washing. Available now are cloth, lambskin, foam, polyethylene and polypropylene brushes to mention a few. Each has their advantages and disadvantages. ☐

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