The Alliance

USTBCA
United States Trash Bin Cleaners Alliance

THE INAUGURAL ISSUE · PUBLISHED MONTHLY · NOVEMBER 2026

From a Driveway to an Exit: The Brightening Bins Story

Official newsletter of USTBCA

SUMMIT SPOTLIGHT

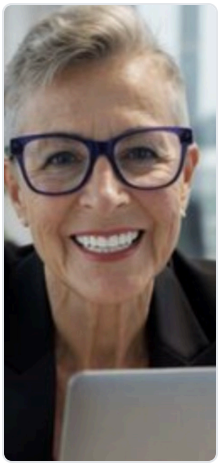
February 5–6, 2027 · South Point Hotel, Casino & Spa · Las Vegas, NV

For Operators. By Operators.

Early pricing through November 30, 2026.

Learn more / Register →

www.BinCleaningSummit.com



Welcome to The Alliance – the Official Newsletter of the USTBCA (ustbca.com)

Hello and welcome to the first issue of our monthly newsletter.

I'm Kay Boyer, Director of Benefits for the United States Trash Bin Cleaners Alliance (USTBCA) and editor of this newsletter. We're glad you're here.

The Alliance was built by operators, for operators. Our purpose is simple: to give trash bin cleaning professionals the tools, knowledge, connections, and support they need to build stronger, more profitable businesses. We focus on raising standards, sharing what actually works in the field, and creating a community where people can learn from each other instead of figuring everything out alone.

This newsletter is one of the ways we're doing that. Each month we'll share operator stories, practical advice, industry updates, and resources designed to help you run a better business. You'll find real experiences from people in the industry, answers to common challenges, and news that matters to the people who clean bins for a living.

Whether you're just starting out or already running multiple trucks, our goal is the same: help you grow with more clarity, better support, and a stronger network around you.

We're glad to have you as part of The Alliance. Let's get to it.

Kay Boyer, Director of Benefits, USTBCA · Editor, The Alliance

BINSPIRATIONS

Building Something for Operators, by Operators

Corbin Tubbs, Bin Hero (Houston / Katy, TX)



Corbin and Christy Tubbs, Bin Hero

Corbin Tubbs spent more than 20 years as a petroleum engineer. When he was laid off during COVID, he found himself cleaning his own bins one afternoon with a hose and soap and thought, "I'd gladly pay someone to come do this every few months." He researched the idea, talked to Brannon at The Trash Can Cleaners (now Viking Uplift), and told his wife he was going to start a trash bin cleaning business. Her first words, he remembers, were "You're going to be a trashman."

Continued on page 3

STORIES

From a Driveway to an Exit: The Brightening Bins Story



Rachel and Jimmy Leach, founders of Brightening Bins

In 2019, Jimmy Leach was pressure-washing his driveway when a simple observation changed everything. After cleaning the family's trash and recycling bins, he and his wife Rachel looked at the results and asked a question many in this industry have asked: *What if this was a business?*

Continued on page 2

MEMBERSHIP

Visit **USTBCA.com** to activate your FREE membership today! Or email **membership@ustbca.com** for more information.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE Ask Genie · Two ways to think about advertising · Bin Masters

Brightening Bins - Continued From Page 1

STORIES

That moment sparked Brightening Bins. Rachel researched existing operators, reached out to John at Sparkling Bins for guidance, and the couple sought advice from a contact already in the waste industry. The counsel was clear: focus on residential customers rather than dumpsters. They took the advice and launched just before the world shut down.

What if this was a business?

Early Days and the First Truck



Jimmy and Rachel Leach with a Brightening Bins truck

The timing was far from ideal. The Leaches were raising young children, Jimmy was still working a full-time job, and skeptical neighbors watched as the couple tried to get their first cleaning truck off a tractor-trailer. Yet those early constraints forced focus. Jimmy became the company's first driver and turned individual cleaning stops into additional appointments simply by talking to homeowners in person. During the pandemic, designation as essential workers kept the trucks running while demand surged as more people stayed home.

Growth arrived faster than expected. In their first summer they sometimes received 40 to 50 orders in a single day. Rachel managed the early chaos on a desk calendar before moving the business to digital systems. They deliberately delayed the second truck until they had secured 600 subscription customers, a disciplined approach that kept operations from outrunning cash flow and systems.

Scaling Realities

Hiring proved harder than equipment or marketing. Neither founder had previously managed employees, so they learned on the job. Looking back, the Leaches note they would have invested earlier in structured training and disciplined equipment-maintenance protocols. Those gaps cost time and money once volume increased.

By year three the business was successful but consuming. The couple handled financials, hiring, order management, and truck maintenance while raising five children. They recognized the company needed a different ownership structure and additional capital to reach its next stage. That realization led to the decision to sell.

Advice from the Founders

Rachel and Jimmy shared four practical takeaways for anyone starting or growing a bin-cleaning business:

Be willing to say yes. Early on, taking every reasonable opportunity helped them capture market share before competitors fully arrived.

Be a little bit crazy. Full commitment and personal energy matter more than a perfect plan.

Use skepticism as fuel. Doubters from the neighborhood and elsewhere became motivation rather than obstacles.

Pair hard work with smart decisions. Strategy helps, but consistent effort and visible ownership of the work are what customers and employees respond to.

Their story is a reminder that many of the strongest operators in this industry started with a single truck, a clear residential focus, and the willingness to do the unglamorous work themselves. Brightening Bins is one more example of a founder-led company that created real value for customers and, ultimately, a successful exit for the family that built it.



Bin Masters – The Fortunate One

A Harvard professor who studied happy people for 40 years laid out 8 things that decide the quality of your life. It made us think of trash bin cleaners. No, really it did. Here's why.

1. The distance between your house and your job. Most bin cleaners store their equipment at their home or nearby! You get back your time from a commute.

2. What you feed your mind all day. This is where The Alliance is here to help! In our Arsenal library, available at USTBCA.com, there are tons of recommended books and audio books to feed your mind. You are what you think about.

How fortunate we are!

3. Your sleep! Most bin cleaners we know work so hard during the day that sleep is not the problem.

4. Who you spend the most time with. You become the average of the five people nearest you in your life. Choose those who uplift you.

5. How much you move your body. There again, never a problem for bin cleaners!

6. Your money stress. It was never about being rich. It's about being in control. Own your future!

7. Sunlight and time outdoors. Again, never a problem for bin cleaners!

8. Serving others. Bin Cleaners love serving others. Removing every speck from the bottom of trash bin is way more about service to others, than the $20 to $30 bucks paid to do the job!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

BINSPIRATIONS

Building Something for Operators, by Operators — continued

Corbin Tubbs, Bin Hero (Houston / Katy, TX)

Bin Hero's first cleaning was on October 11, 2021. This past October they celebrated five years. "Things haven't been easy," Corbin says, "but we've found ways to make it work."

Along the way he noticed something else. Industry gatherings had come and gone, most of them organized by manufacturers. "They've done a tremendous amount for the industry," he says, "but I think people want to hear from other operators… not just manufacturers." Earlier this year, after a personal trip fell through, the idea for a different kind of event clicked. Eight weeks later, the **Bin Cleaning Summit was born**.

You're going to be a trashman.

Corbin is clear about the intent: "For Operators. By Operators." Speakers will be operators who have lived the problems people want to hear about. Vendors will be there, but only those who bring real value to the people running the businesses.

For Operators. By Operators.

"To me the biggest difference is networking," he says. "There's something about talking to other operators face to face, the ones going through the same things you're going through, that just brings a business relationship to a whole other level."

His read on the industry is straightforward. A lot of equipment is for sale right now because some people expected it to be a quick buck. "Any business takes time," he notes. In his own Houston market he estimates current operators are still serving well under 1% of households. He compares bin cleaning to pest control, lawn care, and pool service—industries that took years to become normal household services. "Those that can find a way to survive in the beginning should thrive… and that's what we're trying to give people the tools for."

Any business takes time

The biggest thing he sees holding operators back is simple and expensive: not budgeting correctly. Equipment breaks, fuel costs add up, and "don't plan to make any money for a while."

Corbin is building the event he wished had existed when he started. For operators who want to learn from people who are actually running the businesses, that's the invitation.

BIN CLEANING SUMMIT 2027

SUMMIT AT A GLANCE

The Summit is set for February 5–6, 2027 at the South Point Hotel, Casino & Spa in Las Vegas.

Friday is check-in and a networking reception.

Saturday brings presentations, roundtables, and Q&A on the topics operators actually asked for: marketing and customer acquisition, scaling, equipment maintenance, customer retention, and commercial work.

Registration is open at **bincleaningsummit.com**. The first company employee is $249 and each additional is $149. Early registration (about 10% off) runs through the end of November—$225 for the first employee and $125 for each additional.

BIN CLEANING SUMMIT 2027

BIN CLEANING SUMMIT GIVEAWAY

USTBCA
United States Trash Bin Cleaners Alliance

USTBCA will select one member a month, up to the conference, and sponsor their entry fees — this includes up to two people. November's winner will be announced in the December newsletter.

Membership is free! Visit **USTBCA.com** to activate your free membership, or email **membership@ustbca.com**.

Your industry questions. Ask Genie!

Why Is It So Hard to Finance Used Bin Cleaning Equipment?

> ***Dear Genie,***
>
> *Why is it so hard to finance used bin cleaning equipment?*

Genie says:

Ask almost any operator who's tried to buy a used truck or skid and you'll hear the same story: the equipment is available, the price looks right, and then the financing falls apart.

The main reason is simple. Most lenders don't understand this equipment, and what they don't understand, they don't like to finance.

Used bin cleaning trucks and systems sit in a narrow niche. There isn't a deep secondary market or a long list of recent comparable sales, so it's hard for a lender to feel confident about residual value. If they ever have to repossess the unit, they're not sure how quickly (or at what price) they can sell it. New equipment is easier for them. It comes with a manufacturer warranty, clearer pricing, and stronger resale data. Used equipment does not.

The equipment itself also works against the buyer. Many of these units are specialized or heavily modified. A lender underwriting a standard box truck or trailer has plenty of data. A lender looking at a purpose-built bin cleaning truck with custom wash systems, tanks, and PTO equipment has very little. That uncertainty usually shows up as a higher rate, a larger down payment, a shorter term, or an outright decline.

Finally, many buyers in this industry are newer operators or small LLCs. Even when the equipment is solid, the business's credit history, cash flow, or collateral may not yet meet traditional lending standards. The combination of specialized used equipment and a smaller operator is a tough one for most banks and conventional lenders.

That's why so many deals for used equipment end up being cash, seller financing, or higher-cost specialty lenders. It isn't that the equipment is bad. It's that the people who normally provide the money don't know how to value it or exit it if something goes wrong.

Operators who plan ahead, keep clean books, and work with lenders who already understand the industry tend to have a much easier time. Everyone else usually discovers how narrow the financing options really are.

Have a question for Genie?
Submit your question today! Email: **askgenie@ustbca.com**

COMING NEXT MONTH!

Bin Master Mailbag



BINSPIRATIONS



How a 22-year-old built their dream business!

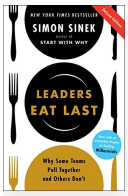
STORIES

The story of a startup bin cleaner — his struggles and what he's doing now

Kay's Corner

Review of *Good to Great* by Jim Collins

Kay's Corner



This month's recommendation

Leaders Eat Last by Simon Sinek

In the Marine Corps, officers eat last. The people they lead eat first. Simon Sinek took that simple practice and turned it into one of the clearest books on leadership written in the last decade.

The core idea is straightforward: the job of a leader is to create a circle of safety so the people on the team can focus on the work instead of protecting themselves from each other. When people feel trusted and looked after, they cooperate, take smart risks, and stick around when things get hard. When they don't, energy gets wasted on politics, turnover, and self-protection.

For owners in this industry, that hits close to home. Most of us started by doing the work ourselves. As soon as we add drivers, office help, or partners, the job changes. The trucks and routes still matter, but the real leverage comes from how the people around you feel about showing up. Sinek makes the case that putting your team's needs ahead of short-term comfort isn't soft—it's how you build something that lasts.

If you've ever wondered why some operators keep good people and others can't, or why culture feels like it matters more once you get past one truck, this book is worth the time. It's practical without being complicated, and it gives language for something a lot of owners already sense but haven't fully put into practice.

Highly recommended.

I'd love to hear from you. What's a book that has made a real difference in how you lead or run your business? Reply and tell me your favorite. If one book gets 20 or more votes, I'll feature it in next month's Kay's Corner.

Send your book recommendations to kay@ustbca.com



The Scoop & the Hopper *is where we dig into the news, updates, and conversations happening across the bin cleaning industry — the stuff operators are talking about, the trends that matter, and the occasional messy reality of the business.*

Two ways to think about advertising

When it comes to spending money to grow a bin cleaning business, operators usually land in one of two camps.

CAPTURE DEMAND VS. CREATE DEMAND

Capture demand

The first group puts most of their budget into Google. The logic is straightforward: people who search for "trash bin cleaning near me" already know the service exists and are ready to buy. The traffic is intent-based, the cost per customer is usually lower, and you can see results quickly. For a lot of operators, especially those in markets where awareness is already decent, this feels like the most efficient path.

Create demand

The second group spends more on education. *Rolling billboards*, Facebook and Instagram ads, direct mail, local sponsorships, or even door hangers. Their view is that most homeowners still don't realize a service like this exists, or they don't think about it until they see it. These operators are willing to pay more upfront to create demand instead of only capturing the demand that's already there. They believe the long-term payoff is a bigger market and less reliance on the small percentage of people who are already searching.

Both approaches can work.

Both approaches can work. Google tends to be cheaper and faster when the search volume is there. Education-focused marketing is slower and usually more expensive per customer at first, but it can grow the overall pie and reduce competition for the same set of ready-to-buy leads.

A lot of operators end up doing a mix once they have some cash flow. The question is less about which one is "right" and more about what stage your market is in and how much you're willing to invest to expand it.

Where do you put most of your advertising dollars right now—capturing existing demand or creating new demand? Reply and let us know.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Bin Masters

Got a question? Ask a Master. Bin Masters is a volunteer network of experienced bin cleaning pros who give their time to help fellow operators grow. Tell us what you're working on — getting started, pricing, equipment, or a specialty niche — and we'll match you with the Master best suited to help. Always free. Operators giving back to build the industry together.

Send your question to binmasters@ustbca.com



Calling all Bin Masters!

It's time to give back. If you consider yourself a Bin Master and have lots of experience to share and a desire to give back to the industry to help others, email us at binmasters@ustbca.com and give us a brief history of your experience. We ask our Bin Masters to be willing to donate up to 30 minutes of their time for a phone call to others needing help.

"We can have anything in life we want, as long as we help enough others get what they want."

— Zig Ziglar

MEMBERSHIP

Visit **USTBCA.com** to activate your free membership today, or email **membership@ustbca.com**. Membership is free, and each month USTBCA will select one member and sponsor their Summit entry fees — including up to two people.

CALL FOR THE WALL

We know that people in our industry love their brands and how they look on their equipment. Share that! Send your logo or a photo of your equipment. We'd love to give you a shout-out and put it on our Bin Wall of Fame! Send to **hello@ustbca.com**.

USTBCA © 2026 United States Trash Bin Cleaning Alliance · ustbca.com