

Whiz Case Study

How Office Pride Made the Decision to Bring on Whiz

Overview

Mathew Davis is the Director of Operations at Office Pride Commercial Cleaning (OPCC) in Pensacola Florida, where he and his three business partners run a franchise of Office Pride. Their key account includes a campus of 10 buildings that span 2.2 million square feet, 80% of which is cleanable carpet surface.

Office Pride currently oversees 200 employees that clean the campus regularly over three shifts. Twenty of those staff members work with 8 Whiz units, autonomous vacuum sweepers made by ICE Cobotics and SoftBank Robotics, brought on in May 2020 by Mat and his team.

Choosing to bring on Whiz was not an easy choice for Mat, who was adamantly opposed to bringing on automation. "I was really opposed to even considering the machines, I thought I don't want to do it, we're going to have lay people off and I don't want to deal with that, it's probably going to be a gigantic pain, I don't want to deal with that either."

Mat had been receiving information about Whiz from his CEO and an ICE Cobotics Account Manager and eventually decided to say yes to a demo. Finally, "I was like, you know, let's do this, we'll do the trial, we'll get this over with and I'll never have to deal with it again, you know? Why didn't I think of this sooner?" he says laughing.

After going through the demo, Mat and his team decided to bring Whiz on and test it out.

"Once we got them out, programmed and rolling, I want to say it was the first week or week and a half, I started getting calls from our client, people were taking selfies, posting pictures on social media, people were excited about it."

Due to the response from employees on campus Mat became more interested in seeing what Whiz was capable of and he and his team put Whiz to the test.



"We Chose Whiz, because of the [increased] production, it speaks for itself, you can't take that away, it's huge."

– Mathew Davis, Director of Operations at Office Pride

The Challenge

Ten buildings and 2.2 million square feet of space is a lot to clean. During a normal year, there are typically around 10 thousand people on campus, Monday—Friday. Due to Covid-19, campus has been quieter with closer to 1500 people on campus each day.

Typical challenges are keeping such a significant amount of space clean. Having less people on campus didn't decrease that challenge as the focus shifted to additional sanitizing and disinfecting.

"Current challenges are everyone's health and safety during this time and trying to maintain that level of cleanliness that they expect from us."

Mat goes on to add: "from a safety standpoint, [with] having the robots, we're able to still maintain the level of cleanliness and in most cases increase it without having to have someone here, which is a very big piece of mind for them [his client]."

The ongoing challenge for Mat and his team is the vast amount of cleanable flooring space that needs to be vacuumed regularly; Mat estimates about 80% of the campus has cleanable carpet space.

Even with a full team of cleaners, it was a struggle to get the floors cleaned each week. "We were struggling to achieve that before everyone left and definitely when Covid happened. Having the robots has allowed us to shift."

After adding Whiz, the team has been able to shift their focus to cleaning under the desks more frequently, letting Whiz handle the hallways and common areas.

"It's really allowed us to elevate the level or the product we are able to give our client because we didn't eliminate any jobs by bringing this [Whiz] on, we were creative and shifted our actual people to focus on the areas we were not getting to every night."



The Solution

Mat and his team brought on 8 Whiz units and use one as a back-up for when other units need any maintenance or service repairs. Mat and his team have been able to benefit from this due to the cloud-based storage and fleet management software through which Whiz operates.



Cloud-Based Storage

In terms of machine repairs, Mat goes on to point out “the Cloud...was a huge-huge benefit for us... we’re programming 3-5 routes per floor and there’s 3-6 floors per building. So, when a machine goes down, if we didn’t have access to that [cloud storage], it could take us a day or two days to reprogram the machines to get [them] up to speed and now we’ve had all that down time.”

He goes on to point out that the ease of emailing the RIN number to a service technician so that home codes can be switched between machines has made the process much simpler and faster.

The last time they had to send a unit out for service he says, “I think we were down like 3 hours and that was it, and we were right back going to where we needed to be.”



Reporting

“As far as reports go, I love the reports. For me it’s a critical component of this whole process and program.”



Fleet Management Software

“I’m not able to be everywhere to make sure the machines are running like they’re supposed to and so that allows me to go back and verify that A) are we doing what we’re supposed to be doing, first and foremost, and B) are we having any issues with the machines because it lists not just square footage, run times, routes run, but also assist times.”



Goals

“We’ve got a goal: we want to get to 1 million sq. feet in a week; so far, they’ve made it to 857,000 sq feet...”

The Results

Production and Peace of Mind

There are two main reasons Mat would recommend Whiz to other Facilities or Building Managers:

First: Production

Before adding Whiz, Mat’s team was trying to get all the larger floors and entire main floor area cleaned once a week. They had it broken into sections so that over the course of a week one section was done each night. That way they could vacuum under every desk and the common spaces every night.

Since adding Whiz, they are now able to do that every 2-3 days, plus all the hallways, walkways, and common areas are done by the Whiz units twice a day.

So, before the robots, “we were trying to get, on the larger floors, the entire main floor area done once a week. We had

broken it into one section per night so that over the course of 5 days we’d be able to get up under every desk and to vacuum the common spaces every night.”

“We’re running all that stuff during the day and at night, so it’s been a significant increase in the amount of time we were able to divert away from things that can now be done by the robot.”
Second: Peace of Mind

Peace of Mind for Clients

“You’re able to get work done without having to have someone there.” People are worried right now and being able to stay on top of the work without adding extra bodies to the staff has made a difference.

Mat went on to share a few more things that have stood out to him since adding the Whiz units to his team:

Customer Service

"The customer service part has exceeded our expectations. Trey and I meet once a week and if I ever need something within in that time, he's always available; Jake and the other guys are always available. I will say, I've never experienced that from a vendor to that degree."

"In the beginning, Trey was checking in daily, and on our weekly calls it was him and guys from the warehouse or workshop and Athena, and he made sure everyone knew we were a priority and we've felt that way the whole time from working with everybody. It's exceeded our expectations."

Sense of Community

Not only has Mat and his team seen increased production and efficiency by bringing Whiz on to the team, but his cleaning team has benefited too.

"...I didn't expect this when we started it, I thought a lot of people would be hesitant and worry that the robot would take their jobs...and for the record I was that guy, but, they have really bought into it for the most part."

The team was initially excited by the neatness factor of bringing on innovation, but once they were trained and running the equipment regularly, they really started to understand it and take pride in working with the units.

Due to the size of the campus, Mat has his cleaning staff broken into teams based on each building, he says, "It's almost turned into a competition because we go over the routes and square footage."

He adds, "We have a target number of routes we want to do every week. When we compare it's like: Well, this building hit their target and you're [team is] 5 below, so what's going on?"

He points out that the teams are in competition with each other to see who can come closest to their goals, and on top of that, the client has enjoyed seeing the units running and the higher level of cleanliness.

From this has stemmed a level of comradery and community that went missing when majority of people started working from home due to COVID-19. Mat points out that his client's employee's as well as his own team really enjoyed seeing one another and being part of a community. "There was some shell shock that happens and this kind of helped with a little bit of that."

