

CASE STUDY

Whiz



Put sparkle in  
your office!



## THE OPPORTUNITY

# Leading with innovation

“The teaching part of the Whiz operation is the simplest feature of any equipment I have used in my 35 years of business, allowing us to program and reprogram routes at will.”

- Jeff Tingley, CEO, Sparkle Services

On March 24, 1985, Jeff Tingley and Kim Gzerch purchased a used vacuum cleaner with a personal credit card and gathered clean tube socks in lieu of dusting rags. It was with that vacuum cleaner and those clean tube socks, a typewriter, carbon paper, stamps, and a paper ledger, that Sparkle Services was born.

Today, Sparkle Services has more than 30 employees who service over 60 customers at 40 buildings regularly. Located in Connecticut, Sparkle Services is a commercial cleaning services company dedicated to premium service for their high-end clientele's properties. It is committed to being on the leading edge of serving its customers with the best products and processes. Sparkle has been recognized as an innovator and early adopter of emerging technology throughout its 35-year company history.



## THE CHALLENGE

# Rising labor costs

Sparkle faced three key challenges to maintaining their commitment to premium cleaning services. First, labor costs were rising to a projected 30% increase over the next three years, affecting their business model. Second, labor productivity was decreasing with ineffective spot cleaning and the strain of repetitive vacuuming. Third, the COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented issues of worker health and safety that Sparkle wanted to proactively address.

Sparkle experienced all three of these challenges in the context of an increase in cleaning demands from all customers at the same time. This further increased the strain on supplying labor for the newly in-demand sanitization role.

40% ROI

## THE SOLUTION

# Whiz, a delightful cobot!

As an industry innovator, Sparkle looked at automation to augment their workforce. After looking at several options that either didn't scale or were too complex, they discovered Whiz, the award-winning autonomous vacuum sweeper, at ISSA.

Sparkle partnered with SoftBank Robotics America (SBRA), a global leader in service automation. Together, they deployed Whiz to help their 30-person team delegate repetitive vacuuming and focus on more skilled work.

"The teaching part of the Whiz operation is the simplest feature of any equipment I have used in my 35 years of business, allowing us to program and reprogram routes at will," Jeff Tingley, the CEO said. "The team welcomed Whiz - everyone who witnessed Whiz is fascinated by its cleaning ability, accuracy of job tasks, and simple things, like its use of blinkers before it makes a turn."

Using Whiz's unique "teach and repeat" model, they rapidly optimized Whiz's routes and timeframes to streamline their continuous cleaning process. Whiz's safety blinkers, two HEPA filters, built-in communication, and other features contributed to the staff considering Whiz a helpful assistant at properties ranging from 30,000 to 700,000 square feet. Sparkle also found Whiz's subscription pricing model (compared to a traditional capital expenditure for equipment model) to be a key differentiator in helping them manage their operating expenses.



## THE RESULTS

# Automation delivered measurable value

Since deployment, Sparkle found that Whiz freed up seven hours per day. That free time was immediately allocated to focus on detail-oriented cleaning needs. In one case, they regained three hours per day and saved \$300/month -- a measurable improvement to their bottom line. Team productivity increased as repetitive vacuuming was offloaded to Whiz.

Clients such as PraxAir, Eppendorf, Eli Lilly Pharmaceutical, and Southern Auto were able to receive data-driven reports providing proof of clean. Sparkle could not only be confident that Whiz had vacuumed the area, but could verify the cleanliness with their customer. Labor shortage and pandemic-driven safety issues were mitigated because Whiz isn't at risk of catching COVID-19.

An unexpected benefit was that Whiz was perceived as a "delightful" addition to Sparkle's premium quality services. Seeing Whiz in action triggered new conversations between clients in their buildings and the Sparkle cleaning teams.

In addition to creating fresh dialogue, social conversations, and rapport between clients and cleaning staff, Sparkle's workers felt more recognized and appreciated.



7  
hours a day saved  
per 2 units

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### **The Challenge:**

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### **Why It's a Challenge:**

Sparkle experienced all three of these challenges in the context of an increase in cleaning demands from all customers at the same time. This further increased the strain on supplying labor for the newly in-demand sanitization role.

### **Whiz As a Solution:**

Whiz helped Sparkle Services delegate repetitive vacuuming tasks. Using Whiz's unique "teach and repeat" model, they optimized Whiz's routes and timeframes to streamline cleaning processes. Sparkle also found Whiz's subscription model a key differentiator in helping manage their operating expenses.

### **The Benefits of Automation:**

Clients were able to receive data-driven reports providing "proof of clean". Labor shortage and pandemic-driven safety issues were mitigated because Whiz isn't at risk of catching COVID-19.

“Our approach is to be at the forefront of industry innovation while delivering exceptional customer experience”,

“We found the award-winning Whiz at ISSA. Not only has it added efficiency, cost savings and quality to our services at Eli Lilly Pharmaceutical and others it has become a delightful member of our team!”

**Jeff Tingley, CEO, Sparkle Services**