

FBG Service Corporation Measures Success with ProTeam®

"If you can measure it and track it, you can change it for the better."

That's Guy Robarge's philosophy. As the Director of Process Improvement at FGB Service Corporation, it's literally his job to measure success.

Founded in Omaha, Nebraska in 1960, FBG's territory now extends throughout the Midwest and beyond.

"We have district offices in Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, and Colorado. We also have a Managed Services Division with over 300 subcontractors across 48 states and Puerto Rico."

With over 1200 employees, FBG is also one of the top employee-owned janitorial companies in the country. Because our Cleaning Specialists have a stake in FBG, they are especially motivated to work toward the company's success.

It's no wonder that metrics are so important to FBG. In fact, FBG offers its clients a proprietary information management tool, which enables them to work together to optimize efficiency.

"We look at increasing production and reducing costs," says Robarge. "We look at the equipment that we buy and how it influences our labor costs. What's the long-term savings that we can pass on to the customer?"

For FBG, the results are in — and an important part of the solution is ProTeam® backpack vacuums.

THE RIGHT SIZE

"As vacuum cleaners evolved and technology got better, the sizes of the vacuums got bigger," observes Robarge. "For years, vacuums increased capacity, but didn't address the comfort of the individual that uses it."

But as Robarge has discovered, comfort equals productivity, not to mention employee satisfaction. These are among the reasons FBG chose to include the Super Coach Pro® backpack vacuums in their fleet.

"We use both the 10- and 6-quart vacuums, but, unless it's a construction site, the smaller 6-quart is usually big enough to do a great job," says Robarge. "Whenever I'm in a position to recommend a vacuum to a District Manager, I tell them that if you don't need the big one, don't buy it. The smaller unit will be more comfortable for the person that's going to use it, and it's just as powerful."

THE RIGHT FIT

In addition to the vacuums' lightweight design, the ProTeam FlexFit® articulating harness is the key to comfort.

"It's nice to see that ProTeam invested in the redesign of the harness. It makes the user experience much nicer," Robarge observes. "If you know how to wear it, it's not any different than wearing a backpack when you're hiking. Weight becomes a non-issue when we show our people how to adjust the backpack harness properly."

THE CORDLESS ADVANTAGE

More recently, FBG began to add the cordless GoFree Flex Pro® to their fleet of backpack vacuums. As usual, the decision was made after careful analysis.

"I personally did a study comparing a corded backpack with a battery backpack," says Robarge. "The results were remarkable. With the battery backpack, we were able to clean a space in about a third of the time."

Robarge's comparison also revealed another benefit of cordless vacuums.

"Over time, you inevitably get nicks in your cord, and then it becomes non-usable and an OSHA violation. As a large company, we might buy hundreds of vacuum cords every year."

FBG's employee-owners also sing the praises of going cordless.



"I have never found an employee who tried the cordless backpack and wanted to give it up.

It's like cutting the umbilical cord for your children. They want to be free and spread their wings."



THE GOOD KIND OF PROBLEM

Having solved the problem of maximizing efficiency, Robarge's ProTeam vacuums have given Robarge another kind of puzzle to solve: what to do with the savings.

"Do I capture the savings by reducing the amount of time spent in that building? Do I streamline the labor force through attrition? Do I invest that savings back into the building? Or do I pass that savings down to the customer?"

It's a good kind of problem to have.

"Since every client is different, we've employed all those strategies," says Robarge. "It's a win-win situation for FBG, our customers, and our employees."