

# The ESSEX FREE PRESS BUSINESS

## Laundry Ex-perts come to Essex

By FREE PRESS STAFF

Entrepreneur R.J. Russell has big plans for the town of Essex.

Along with his wife Valerie, Russell purchased the site of the former Laundry Express on Gordon Ave., and the couple has converted it into "a dry cleaning service without the expense."

Laundry Ex-perts opened early last month. They service commercial and industrial businesses, and are open for public use.

R.J. has been in the cleaning business since an early age. His father ran his own service in Collingwood, Ont.

When R.J. and Valerie moved to Gesto late last year, they thought an urban centre like Essex would be the ideal spot to open their own cleaning service.

They take everything from comforters to throw-down cotton rugs to uniforms, offering an air dry service, stain removal and professional washing and

First off, he says he plans to be involved with the Essex Business Improvement Area.

"I believe the town is in a state of growth," R.J. said.

ing outside of town and as soon as someone comes in and nabs the spots in downtown, we'll have bigger businesses on the outside of town and then smaller ones can come in. That's growth."

R.J. considers himself a man of action. He said he'd like to partner up with other local businesses and form a collective.

"To come up with plans and sit down to discuss what's important and what we can do with some time and funds," he explained.

For Valerie, who has a background in customer service, local residents and business owners have been warm and wel-

coming. "I love it in Essex," she said. "People seem very helpful."

For your laundry needs, call 519-776-9117.



Valerie and R.J. Russell have recently bought the site of the former Laundry Express and converted it into Laundry Ex-perts, a dry cleaning service without the expense.

folding. As a new business owner in town, R.J. has more than a few ideas about how to stimulate the local economy.

"There are a lot of empty storefronts right now and a lot of people see that as negative, but I see it as a positive. It's opportunity. The bigger businesses are mov-

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## Ontario's new tax collection agreement

The Ontario Government and the Government of Canada recently signed a new tax collection agreement. Under the agreement, the federal government will collect and administer Ontario's corporate income and capital taxes.

"The Canada Revenue Agency is set to administer Ontario's tax collection agreement, as it currently does for seven other provinces and the three territories," says Chartered Accountant Maureen F. Lafortune,

Associate Partner, KPMG LLP in Sudbury.

"Beginning in 2008, businesses will make combined tax payments and file a single corporate tax return in 2009 for years ending after December 31, 2008."

The new regime promises to reduce administrative overlap, duplication and compliance costs.

For further information about taxes, contact a Chartered Accountant.

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sage created specifically for your business.

- Invest in a dial-by-number directory, so customers can leave a private message in the voicemail of the person they want to do business with.

- Ensure the caller can leave a message on voicemail. If your business has a menu of options a caller must go through, listen to it carefully and make sure it is reasonable.

- Establish a separate line for your business, especially if you operate out of your home.

- Don't use a speakerphone unless absolutely necessary. The only time you should use a speakerphone is when you need more than one person to be

in on the conversation at your end.

- If your business is going to be closed for a holiday, update your recorded message to say so and state when your business will reopen.

- Provide additional information such as directions to your location or parking options.

The telephone is a powerful business communication tool, so make sure employees understand how important a phone call is and how each caller should be treated.

*Small Business 101 is an information service provided by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. It is not intended to replace legal and/or accounting advice.*

## Small Business 101

### Telephone techniques

How you answer the phone says a great deal about your business, and a phone call is often the first point of contact a customer has with your business. Whether the callers get voice mail, an employee or the owner, ensure they get courteous service that will win business, not lose it.

CFIB offers the following tips:

- Establish standards. Your business name should be clearly stated. How are callers being transferred; how long can they expect to be on hold; when is the call going to be returned and how is the call ended.
- Answer all incoming calls

before the third ring.

- When answering the phone, smile.
- If a customer does not want to be placed on hold, ensure whoever answers the call takes a detailed message, including time and date of the call, verify the phone number and name and try to get a short statement about

the caller's intent if possible. Then make sure the message gets to the intended recipient.

- Always answer your calls within one business day.
- Never use slang or company jargon.
- Call your business at different times of the day. Make sure your message sounds inviting.
- Consider getting a professional promotional mes-

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**Tuesday, February 20, 2007**  
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**Essex Community Centre**  
Room #6 - Training  
25 Gosfield Town Line W.  
(next to public library)

**For more information, call 519-969-3262**