

Assignment: 350 words on the following topics

Carpet Cleaning: How and when to hire a pro

We're not perfect, and oftentimes, our carpets can show it. Pets, wine, and dinner can all show up on carpets and make them seem older and dingier. But how do you know when to hire a professional and when you can cut costs and take care of it yourself?

The general recommendation for carpet upkeep is to vacuum weekly and do a more thorough cleaning at least once every 12-18 months.

To clean stains of simple food, marker, dirt, and the like, it is important to get at the stain as soon as it happens. First, blot the area to get rid of as much of the stain as you can. Then, in another area of the carpet, test the detergent you are going to use to make sure it doesn't stain or bleach the carpet unnaturally. Scrape at the spot and keep stanching it, preferably with a tool like a meat tenderizer. Don't use chemicals unless the stains are of a radical chemical composition, such as an extreme acid or base.

The site <http://home.howstuffworks.com/carpet-cleaning-tips2.htm> has a great list of how to take care of a variety of stains.

But if you have stains of mixtures of things like blood, mud, urine, or alcohol, and cleaning it yourself doesn't work, you now need to deep clean. Deep cleaning needs to happen in several cases: when the carpet is matted and feels sticky, and when its color has faded. The only way you should take care of this problem yourself is if you have an ample amount of time and energy. Otherwise, call the professionals. In hiring a professional, make sure to be careful of companies that contact you and select one that has professional certifications.

First, screen them by asking questions such as "Do you use Seal of Approval cleaning solutions and equipment?" and "How long have you been in business?" Then, get an in-home inspection and estimate. If you decide to choose the company, make sure you get your money's worth by showing them specific spots you need to be cleaned and wait for the carpet to dry completely before moving the furniture back into place.

Website Stats - overview/review of different website stats programs/companies

Whether you're running a small blog or a large on-line business, you probably want to know who your visitors are, but also get a great deal. There is a range of companies, suited for different users, that allow you to view your statistics.

Statcounter.com is a website that offers a free edition, which comes with a limit of how many users you can log at a time (100). There is also a variety of paid subscription choices which range from \$9 a month for 1,500 users to \$49 a month for 100,000 users. Even the free edition is handy in that it breaks down the statistics in a number of ways, including graphs of daily page loads, recent visitor activity, visit lengths, country and state of origin, browser, and unique pageloads for each visitor. It goes much more in depth, and the counter that can be added to your website can be made invisible, even in the free edition.

Google Analytics (google.com/analytics) is also free to site owners and, while it does track site visitors, it is more oriented towards tracking visit revenue, especially if your website contains AdSense. It has features such as Geotargeting, which shows where visitors are coming from, a trend and date slider that allow you to zoom in on daily or monthly visit trends, and can be used regardless of the size of your website.

Vendio (vendio.com) combines sales analytics with visitor counting in the number of services it offers, both free and paid. Its free counters offer more than 100 styles that can be used either for E-Bay auctions or regular webpages with the option to upgrade to pro, which included hourly hit reports and daily hit reports. Other services offered by the site include image hosting, the ability to build a store, and other algorithms pertinent to small online store owners.

No matter what service you use, it is important not to get too caught up in the minute-by-minute breakdown of site visitors and to make sure to look at the long-term picture.

Wireless chargers

If you have trouble untangling your phone charger, camera cord, and iPod, wireless chargers may be your best friend. This new technology, developed originally in Europe, is making its way to America by 2008. Although there have been some snags in the development process, two major players in the market, Powercast and Wipower Inc, are set to unleash the potential of wireless power.

Wireless charging can be done through a process called electromagnetic induction, which creates a magnetic field that runs outside of the charging pad as opposed to inside. This creates a magnetic force that is external on the charger and easy to catch using a receiver coil on the device that needs to be charged.

The device would also have a regulator attached, which is a switch that does not let batteries overcharge. The regulator could be moved from device to device, resulting in only one wireless charger needed for all of your electronics with batteries.

So far, this technology is in its first run in Europe, and is expected to be available in the United States by the end of 2007. The main developer is **Powercast** (www.powercastco.com). The devices they are testing for wireless charging capability include computer peripherals, flashlights, remote controls, toys, MP3 players, and wireless headsets. They are currently not providing any products for high-level charging devices such as televisions or computers.

Powercast takes advantage of electromagnetic induction and radio frequency to broadcast “radio signals” from a transmitter, which is plugged into a wall, to the device that is coupled with a transmitter.

Another company taking the lead is **Wipower Inc**, (www.wipowerinc.com), which uses “plates,” or charging platforms, to wirelessly charge devices. The user would put the device on such a plate, sans wires, and it would acquire charge from the plate itself.

The technology will be available in the latter half of 2008, according to spokespeople, and will be available for an estimated \$15 to \$20. Wipower’s concept, like Powercast’s, involves attaching receivers to each item that needs to be charged.

Make money online with podcasts (advertisers, websites, affiliates, etc)

It's easy to make your voice heard on the Internet these days via podcast. All you need is an audio platform on which to create your podcast, a way to convert the audio into MP3 format, and to create an RSS feed for it. But did you know there are also different ways to make money, just by speaking your mind? The majority of these involve gaining larger audience, so make sure to build your social networking as you continue your program by listening and commenting on other user's podcasts as well.

- **Sponsorship:** Have a company sponsor your podcast. This entails you inserting a 15-20 second spot into your program, similar to radio ads. This can be done through websites such as **radiotail.com** or **podtrac.com**, which facilitate negotiations between podcasters and marketers.
- **Text advertising:** Podcasters usually create transcripts of each podcast and package those into an RSS feed as well. Advertisements can be added to each feed, usually relating to what the podcast itself is about. Two websites that specialize in this sort of advertising are **pheedo.com** and **Google's Adsense**. This is especially pertinent if you plan on making the website associated with your podcasts highly visible.
- **Publicize other venues:** Some popular podcasts charge to publicize upcoming events related to their field. If you talk about dogs, maybe there are upcoming dog shows or special breed events that you could talk about during any given week.

To make your website more visible and accessible, collaborate with other broadcasters. A great way to become better known is to be featured on the iTunes Podcast page (<http://www.apple.com/itunes/store/podcasts.html>), which showcases the most popular podcasts online, as well as tips for podcast enthusiasts that are just starting out.

- **Take donations:** If other methods seem too aggressive, or you are just beginning, you could always start by taking suggested donations from people who benefit from your podcast on a regular basis. A common way to do this is to set up a PayPal (paypal.com) account and let listeners contribute without using a credit card.