The man behind the blog

The blogosphere knows him as "cwguy," but now Eric Wilson
is helping others in the online world.

Anyone looking to get an inside view of what it's like to run a carwash should look no further than www.cwguy.com. The website hosts a blog by Eric Wilson, an operator with two self-serve washes in Alabama.

Wilson got into the carwashing business when he got fed up with his desk job as a database administrator and web developer. At the time, his father owned five carwashes, so owning his own seemed like a natural fit.

Wilson started blogging in May 2005 as a way to showcase problems he was having and to hopefully get some advice from other carwash owners. He shares everything that goes on at his washes — including posting pictures of trash that's left behind and openly criticizing malfunctioning equipment. The blog is a hit and continuously gets thousands of visitors per month.

Now Wilson is parlaying his skills into his new company, Car Wash Web Solutions, which is helping other carwashes in expanding their internet presence. He recently sat down with *Professional Carwashing & Detailing* and explained how others can succeed in the blogosphere, as well as the World Wide Web.

Professional Carwashing & Detailing: What made you decide to start your blog?
Eric Wilson: I decided to blog about everyday life as an owner after I purchased the washes because I was having trouble figuring out what was wrong and how to fix problems.

The previous owner, Greg Pack, was nice enough to help me out when I contacted him. Then I thought that other owners may have the same issues so I thought a blog would be a good way to get others to help me out.

Also, I thought other new owners could get advice that they might need. The traffic kept building and building and now I have between 6,000-9,000 visitors per month! I have posted virtually every day since October 2005 and I have over 3,000 posts. I am always amazed with the traffic to my site. It has gone from 11 visitors a month in 2005 to around 9,000 visitors in October 2010.

> "If I were to sum up the blog it would be: The daily life of a carwash owner."

PC&D: Did you know anything about blogging?
EW: I didn't know anything about blogs besides reading other people's blogs when I started out. I had to do research on blogging platforms like anyone that starts from scratch. In fact at one time I had three separate carwash owners blogging on my sister blog "page2" (page2.cwguy.com) which is still open for anyone!

PC&D: What does it take to be a good carwash blogger?
EW: I think you just have to make your content interesting, be honest and have pictures. I always include pictures of what I am working on and then give a little description.

My posts are never very wordy and I try to make them funny because that is the way I am. I include something I work on every day, even the most mundane tasks, and every day I seem to have more content for my blog.

A carwash owner's work is never done! If I were to sum up the blog it would be: "The daily life of a carwash owner."

PC&D: Please tell us about your new business, Car Wash Web Solutions.
EW: I started this company to help owners tackle the problem of creating a website. I have been in the carwash industry for over five years and have over 12 years of web design experience. So I understand what owners want and I know how to implement it in a web form.

I offer two packages for basic carwashes which include lots of necessary features for today's owners. I also offer add-ons to customize a website. There is a monthly hosting fee which includes one hour of changes and updates to your site.

I try to add as much as possible at very competitive rates. I searched around and talked to carwash owners and sites can cost as much as $7,000 and $70 a month.

PC&D: What are some of the mistakes carwash owners make with their websites?
EW: Some of the common problems I see are that they are dated and look like they're from 1980. Sites become stagnant and I believe a "fresh" website will boost traffic and help sales.

They also need to be optimized for sites like Google and submitted to be indexed, which can really help with being noticed in searches.

Most sites have no social media links, which is the way everyone will communicate in the future.

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