

# Waterless car wash service starts small, plans to grow

BY PATTY TASCARELLA

On June 21, Easy Auto Wash LLC began operations at two Downtown garages, cleaning cars on the spot while the owners worked.

Owner/founder Stacia Christman, a Downtown lawyer, said the weekday service is designed to be convenient.

## Easy Auto Wash LLC

Waterless car cleaning service

**BASED:** Downtown

**OWNER:**

Stacia Christman

**EMPLOYEES:** Five

**WEBSITE:**

easyautowash.com

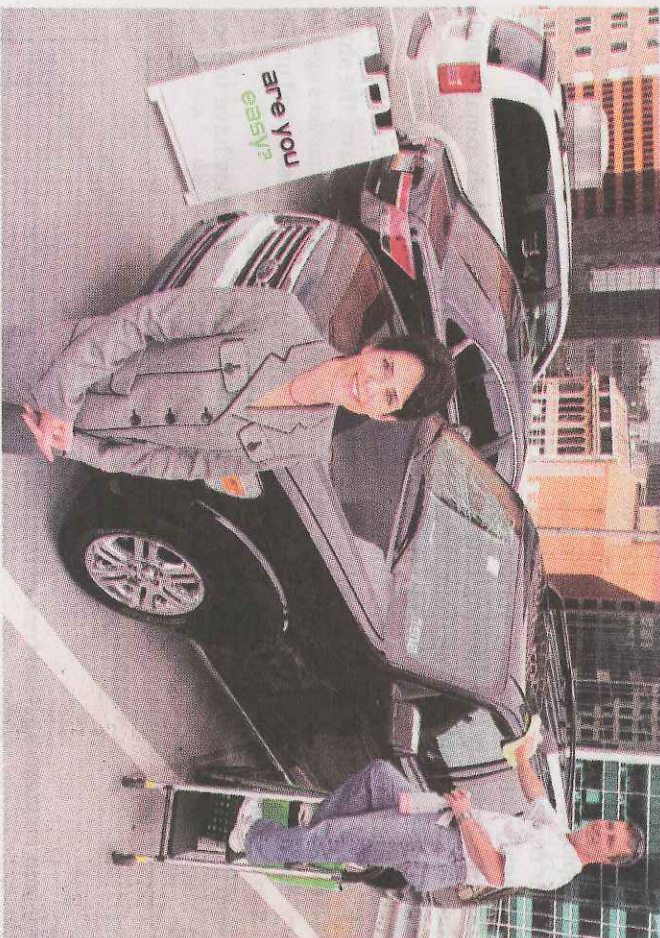
Customers order and pay for the \$18.50 cleaning online. The crew comes to the car and hand washes the exterior without water in its parking space at either the Theater Square or Sixth & Penn garage. During its debut week, which covered four days, Easy Auto Wash's staff of five serviced 50 vehicles, "pretty much in line

with my expectations," Christman said, though the company is capable of cleaning 80 vehicles per day. "We're still getting the word out. I was pleased with the over-the-top positive responses from customers."

Her gameplan is to add sites as dictated by customer demand, and she expects to add at least two more by mid-July.

"My original thought was Downtown because of the volume of potential customers and monthly leaseholders," she said.

"Downtown has roughly 50,000 parking spaces. But I'm also interested in going into the Strip, North Side and, ultimately, places like the airport and shopping malls



JOE WADLOK

**Owner Stacia Christman and general manager Roy New are offering Easy Auto Wash's services in two Downtown parking garages, and hope to add more.**

where there's a high density of parking."

Christman would not disclose financials or projections beyond the fact that she expects Easy Auto Wash to be in the black "very quickly." Start-up costs — mostly equipment and products — were minimal at the basically virtual company.

"We have very low overhead, some computer equipment and cell phones and a website; we don't have a lease, and it's credit-card based," Christman said.

How an environmental lawyer launched a waterless car cleaning service at two Downtown garages on the first day of summer is rooted in Christman's drive home

in gray, slushy January.

"I commute, I work Downtown, and I'm leaving my parking garage in the dark and my car is filthy," she said. "I have no time to deal with it. I look around and everyone else's car is a mess. And I start to think: Is there a way to provide a car wash service in the garage while people are at work?" Christman dove into research, looking at waterless products because these would be more efficient, locating manufacturers and distributors, and doing some home testing. She ended up selecting a combination of manufacturers' products.

As spring neared, she called Merrill

Stabile, president of ALCO Parking, to see if he was interested in offering the service.

"If garages weren't interested, we weren't going to have access to customers," Christman said.

Stabile was amenable. "There was plenty of potential upside and nothing to lose.

"People pay a lot for parking in Pittsburgh, I'll be the first to admit that, so anything we can do to provide a little additional value is good," he said.

ALCO is not an investor in Easy Auto Wash, nor does it pay — or charge — Christman.

Stabile's "ultimate plan" is to make the service available in all of ALCO's 30-plus parking lots and garages.

"We don't have an exclusive; she can offer it to anyone — and she should," Stabile said. "But I would certainly use it as a selling point. I intend to discuss it with the people at Three PNC (Plaza), where we manage the garage, and let them know this would be an ideal service for the tenants in the building."

David Egan, chief marketing officer at Downtown law firm Reed Smith LLP, the largest tenant at Three PNC, said the service would be convenient. He usually washes his car himself on weekends, but might take advantage of it.

"If the car is dirty and already parked there, and it saves you time, sure," he said. Stabile, incidentally, has yet to personally try out Easy Auto Wash.

"It's just me," he said, "But with people like Stacia around, there might be less excuses."

# BUSINESS TIMES

Vol. 30, No. 51

Jul 1 - 7, 2011

\$3.50

## ModCloth eyes Roomful space

Rugby Realty buying Crafton site; online retailer expected to be first big tenant

BY TIM SCHOOLEY

ModCloth may finally have a "Roomful" big enough to meet its ever-expanding growth needs.

The high-flying vintage and indie clothing e-commerce business is close to reaching a deal to become the first big new tenant

at the former Roomful Express distribution facility in Crafton, sources say.

The 570,000-square-foot distribution facility, which has been mostly vacant since the former furniture retailer liquidated last year, is in the process of being sold. New Rochelle, N.Y.-based Rugby Realty Co. Inc.

has the property under agreement, marking the real estate company's first acquisition of an industrial property in the region after years of developing a portfolio of mostly office buildings in and around Downton.

The building is being sold by the court-appointed receiver of the Roomful Express assets to pay

back the retailer's creditors.

Aaron Stauber, president of Rugby, confirmed his company and its partners have a major warehouse property under agreement, but offered no further comments due to confidentiality agreements.

SEE ROOMFUL, PAGE 47

## Neighborhoods rethink community development

New designation under consideration for 8 areas

BY TIM SCHOOLEY

A s executive director of the Bloomfield Development Co., Karla Owens lists a host of needs for her patch of Pitts-



**Not too late to go green**  
LEED retrofits offer challenges, but benefits are many. 14

**Seeking certification**  
Excela aims to certify heart catheterization lab under new accreditation program. 3

**Filing IPO**  
India Ecommerce aims to raise funds by going public. 3



**Get your car washed Downtown**  
Waterless car wash service opens in two parking garages. 7

**Growing concerns**  
As employers remain hesitant to raise salaries, employees become more frustrated. 8

**Raising money**  
Blacklocus closes on \$2.5M funding round. 6

**Starting construction**

Four Irish heritage work on North

