

CONVERSATIONS IN COMMERCE

# Larry Rosenthal, Unique Upholstery, Carpet & Rug Cleaning, Inc.

Larry Rosenthal is the owner of Unique Upholstery, Carpet & Rug Cleaning, Inc., the premiere carpet, upholstery, oriental rugs, tile and grout, marble and stone cleaning company on the north shore. They're noted for their courteous and caring specialists and their professional results. They can be contacted at 847-459-1600, or see the Unique website at [uniquecarpetcleaning.com](http://uniquecarpetcleaning.com).

**WH!** Outside of your current field, what other occupations have you pursued, and why did you switch?

**LR:** The nutrition and health field. I switched because I wanted to be in a service industry instead of a brick and mortar store. Being able to go to the client's home instead of them coming to me is a great advantage. You usually can only draw most of your business from a small geographical area, but in the service industry, you can go wherever you desire.

**WH!** Name one person you'd consider a role model, and how did he or she inspire you?

**LR:** Tony Robbins has been extremely inspirational in my belief system. He taught me that you can achieve whatever you want in life by helping others get what they want. He also advises that you give your clients much more than they expect, and I do, always.

**WH!** What life or work experience taught you a valuable lesson?

**LR:** Learning from other employers what *not* to do in business. I extracted the good concepts and ideas and implemented them in my own business, and discarded the ones proven never to work.

**WH!** The one business tool (Blackberry, Wall

Street Journal, LinkedIn, etc.) I can't live without is:

**LR:** An online scheduling system.

**WH!** How did you get your start in this business?

**LR:** I worked for another company and learned the trade.

**WH!** Tell us about one person or company who has been instrumental in the success of your business.

**LR:** Tony Robbins, in a marketing tape I listened to 20 years ago, said to be innovative and creative in your marketing. Many companies in all industries are not innovating or trying creative marketing.

**WH!** What's your favorite part of your business?

**LR:** Marketing. I love being able to find out what makes customers purchase a product or service. What is the benefit that I can offer clients that makes their phones ring. In short, what it takes to make people take action.

**WH!** Given unlimited resources, what would you change about your business/industry?

**LR:** Educating the public on the necessary frequency of carpet and upholstery cleaning. Health is the main reason. With all the information out there on indoor air pollution, people don't realize how much debris gets embedded in the bottom of the carpet fibers. You can take one pound of dirt and work it into one square foot of pile carpet and have it completely invisible to the eye from above. Your carpet is like a filter, and it needs to be cleaned regularly to avoid certain health issues. Most carpet cleaners leave residue or

chemicals in the carpet after their so-called cleaning. The public is not aware of this until it begins to re-soil very quickly and/or begins to have an odor. When carpets are cleaned properly, they should look outstanding and stay that way for a long time. Also, since I specialize in the removal of pet issues, the waste matter coming out of an animal is just that: waste. It carries a tremendous amount of bacteria and continues to grow and smell until it is properly decontaminated.

**WH!** What exciting things are on the horizon for your business, and where do you hope it will be in 5 years? 15 years? 30 years?

**LR:** The advancement of green cleaning products and products that will be able to remove most anything will eventually be invented, making it a lot easier for those in my profession.

**WH!** What's the biggest obstacle your business has had to overcome?

**LR:** Obtaining new clients. We have been very fortunate over the years because of our outstanding work and follow up. We've had great success in keeping many of our clients, but I'm always looking for new ways to motivate them to try us once to see the tremendous difference we make. Most people do not know the different methods of cleaning, but it's important to know what you're going to get so you can make the right decision, not just price comparison. I'm working on a program that will eliminate the customer's risk in having us professionally clean their carpet and upholstery. I believe people are tired of poor quality and phony promises. I know I am as a consumer myself. I'll be announcing the program soon.

**WH!** How long did it take to get your business model right? And what were the



Rosenthal predicts "Mobile everything" will soon impact the way we do business. challenges?

**LR:** The challenge was understanding the true needs and wants of my clientele. Not only do they demand the highest quality of my work, they also want friendly, caring, careful, and trustworthy specialists in their home.

**WH!** What's the next technological innovation that will change the way we all do business?

**LR:** Mobile everything.

**WH!** What non-work related items do you have on your desk or wall?

**LR:** Old rock and roll albums.

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## Special Needs, Special Times

Now that October is here, my son Joey and I are anxiously looking forward to enjoying all the activities the cooler weather has to offer – both indoors and out. I'd like to start off this month's article by introducing you to a worthy non-profit organization for children with special needs.

**Helping From Heaven** hosts multiple fun and free events throughout the year, but it's also committed to receiving donations of used therapy equipment and donating them to families in need through its Lexi's Closet program. Lexi's Closet is a mission after my own heart. Like the company JoRide that I founded in honor of my son, Lexi's Closet is a heartfelt tribute to the founder's daughter Lexi Kazian, who was born with cerebral palsy and passed away at the tender age of two.

To keep that vision and Lexi's spirit alive, Helping From Heaven holds its annual Swingin' Safari Gala on Oct. 14 at the Chicago Hilton, Northbrook. The festivities get underway at 6:30pm, with an emphasis on the first three letters in fundraiser: FUN! In addition to its therapy equipment initiatives, Helping From Heaven contributes funds to parks and playgrounds designed to make sure kids of all abilities can enjoy themselves. As such, you can be sure your attendance at the

Swingin' Safari will be both time and money well spent. [Helpingfromheaven.org](http://Helpingfromheaven.org).

For those individuals with special needs who are a little bit older, the **Center for Enriched Learning** rocks this October. Teens and young adults can take part in a full schedule of themed after-school activities and travel to various schools throughout the region with the after school club Satellite Programs. The organization also hosts a variety of one-day special events on weekends. Horseback riding, a visit to Kroll's Farm, watercolor and acrylic painting demonstrations, and a hip-hop dance are all on tap this autumn. [Centerforenrichedliving.org](http://Centerforenrichedliving.org).

Finally, **Clinical Connections** in Bannockburn invites you to a "Getting to Know the Center" session Oct. 18 at 7pm. Clinical Connections designs a well-integrated, coordinated, and balanced program that addresses all the needs of children. [Clinicalconnections.info](http://Clinicalconnections.info).

If you'd like to see your organization's activities and services featured, please e-mail your calendar of events and information to [steven@joride.com](mailto:steven@joride.com).

Contributed by Steven Cohen



Visit the new baby goats at Kroll's Farm with the Center for Enriched Learning this fall.