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roll upright vacuums are renowned for their efficiency in keeping our homes spick and span. However, even the most reliable appliances can encounter issues from time to time. In this guide, we'll explore some common problems associated with Bissell upright vacuums and provide you with practical troubleshooting tips to ensure your cleaning routine remains smooth and hassle-free. Based upon our experience and research here are the most common Bissell Upright Vacuum issues with troubleshooting. Bissell Upright Vacuum Not Turning On Bissell Upright Vacuum Not Turning On Bissell Upright Vacuum Not turning on is commonly caused by faulty power supply, damaged cord, or malfunctioning control. Discovering that your trusty Bissell upright vacuum isn't turning on can be a perplexing moment. Don't worry; we're here to guide you through a friendly troubleshooting journey to revive your vacuum and get it back to its efficient cleaning ways. 1. Check the Power Source/Problem: Sometimes, the simplest solutions are the most effective. Ensure that your vacuum is properly connected to a power source. Possible Solution: Check the power cord for any visible damage. If you find any, refrain from using the vacuum until the cord is repaired or replaced. Cfirm that the outlet you're using is functional. Plug another device into the same outlet to test it. 2. Reset the Vacuum/Problem: Electrical issues or a tripped motor protector can cause your Bissell vacuum to shut off unexpectedly. Possible Solution: Locate the reset button on your vacuum, usually near the motor or on the bottom. Press it to reset the vacuum. If your vacuum has a thermal protector, allow it to cool down for at least 30 minutes before attempting to turn it on again. 3. Check the Power Switch/Problem: Regularly inspect the power switch for any signs of wear or damage. Possible Solution: If the switch is faulty, it may need to be replaced. 4. Inspect the Motor/Problem: The motor is the heart of your vacuum. If it's not running, the vacuum won't turn. Possible Solution: Check for any unusual sounds or smells coming from the motor area. If you notice anything unusual, it might be a sign of a problem. 5. Check the Belts/Problem: Belts are responsible for moving debris from the brush roll to the dust container. If they're worn or broken, the vacuum won't clean properly. Possible Solution: Inspect the belts for wear and tear. If they're damaged, replace them. 6. Check the Filters/Problem: Dirty filters can restrict airflow and cause the vacuum to stop working. Possible Solution: Clean or replace the filters regularly. 7. Check the Hose/Problem: A clogged or kinked hose can prevent the vacuum from sucking up debris. Possible Solution: Disconnect the hose and inspect it for any blockages. If you find any, clear them out. 8. Check the Motor Brushes/Problem: Worn-out motor brushes can hinder the vacuum's ability to start. Possible Solution: Consult your user manual to locate the motor brushes. If they appear worn or dead, consider replacing them following the manufacturer's guidelines. Discovering why your Bissell upright vacuum isn't turning on is often a matter of methodical troubleshooting. By following these friendly tips, you'll likely pinpoint the issue and breathe new life into your vacuum. If issues persist, don't hesitate to consult your user manual or reach out to professional appliance technician for assistance. A little patience and persistence can go a long way in reviving your vacuum and keeping your home clean and tidy. Happy cleaning! Bissell Upright Vacuum Loss of Suction Power/Problem: Vacuum loss of suction power is commonly caused by a clog in the suction system, full dustbin or obstructed brush roll. Possible Solution: One of the primary culprits for diminished suction is a clog in the vacuum's system. Here's what you can do: Hose Inspection: Disconnect the hose and visually inspect it for any obstructions. Use a broomstick or a long, thin object to gently remove any lodged debris. Filter Examination: Filters play a crucial role in maintaining suction power. Check for clogs or accumulated dirt in both the pre-motor and post-motor filters. Clean or replace filters according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Clear the Pathways: Examine the brush roll and any other air pathways for clogs. Clear away any debris that might be impeding airflow. An overloaded dustbin can significantly reduce suction efficiency. Make sure to: Regularly empty the dustbin before it reaches its maximum capacity. Clean the dustbin thoroughly to ensure proper airflow. A malfunctioning or obstructed brush roll can contribute to loss of suction. Check for any debris caught in the brush roll. If you find any, remove it. Overloaded Dustbin: An overloaded dustbin can significantly reduce suction efficiency. 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Use the way to find by Bayesian probability 1768-1779: James Cook mapped the boundaries of the Pacific Ocean and discovered many Pacific Islands 1774: Joseph Priestley discovers "dephlogisticated air", oxygen The Chinese Paozongchi Temple of Change, completed in 1771, during the reign of the Qianlong Emperor. 1775: Joseph Priestley's first synthesis of "phlogisticated nitrous air", nitrous oxide, "laughing gas" 1776: First large-scale steam engines installed in France 1776: Circular saw invented by Samuel Miller 1779: Photography was first discovered by Jan Ingenhousz. 1781: William Herschel announces discovery of Uranus 1784: Bifocals invented by Benjamin Franklin 1784: Argand lamp invented by Aimé Argand[52] 1785: Power loom invented by Edmund Cartwright 1785: Automatic floor mill invented by Oliver Evans 1786: Threshing machine invented by Andrew Meikle 1787: Jacques Charles discovers Charles's law 1789: Antoine Lavoisier discovers the law of conservation of mass, the basis for chemistry, and begins modern chemistry 1789: Edward Jenner publishes a treatise about smallpox vaccination 1798: The Lithographic printing process invented by Alois Senefelder[33] 1799: Rosetta Stone discovered by Napoleon's troops Main articles: 18th century in literature and 18th century in philosophy 1703: The Love Suicides at Sonezaki by Chikamatsu first performed 1704-1717: One Thousand and One Nights translated into French by Antoine Galland. The work becomes immensely popular throughout Europe. 1704: A Tale of a Tub by Jonathan Swift first published 1712: The Rape of the Lock by Alexander Pope (publication of first version) 1719: Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe 1725: The New Science by Giambattista Vico 1726: Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift 1728: The Dunciad by Alexander Pope (publication of first version) 1744: A Little Pretty Pocket-Book becomes one of the swift books marketed for children 1748: Chushingura (The Treasury of Loyal Retainers), popular Japanese puppet play, composed 1748: Clarissa; or, The History of a Young Lady by Samuel Richardson 1749: The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling by Henry Fielding 1751: Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard by Thomas Gray published 1751-1785: The French Encyclopédie 1755: A Dictionary of the English Language by Samuel Johnson 1758: Arithmetika Horvatzka by Mihajl Šilohod Bošić 1759: Candide by Voltaire 1759: The Theory of Moral Sentiments by Adam Smith 1759-1767: Tristram Shandy by Laurence Sterne 1762: Emile; or, On Education by Jean-Jacques Rousseau 1762: The Social Contract, Or Principles of Political Right by Jean-Jacques Rousseau 1774: The Sorrows of Young Werther by Goethe first published 1776: Ugetsu Monogatari (Tales of Moonlight and Rain) by Ueda Akinari 1776: The Wealth of Nations, foundation of the modern theory of economy, was published by Adam Smith 1776-1789: The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire was published by Edward Gibbon 1779: Amazing Grace published by John Newton 1779-1782: Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets by Samuel Johnson 1781: Critique of Pure Reason by Immanuel Kant (publication of first edition) 1781: The Robbers by Friedrich Schiller first published 1782: Les Liaisons dangereuses by Pierre Choderlos de Laclos 1786: Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect by Robert Burns 1787-1788: The Federalist Papers by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay 1788: Critique of Practical Reason by Immanuel Kant 1789: Songs of Innocence by William Blake 1789: The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano by Olaudah Equiano 1790: Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow by Alexander Radishchev 1790: Reflections on the Revolution in France by Edmund Burke 1791: Rights of Man by Thomas Paine 1792: A Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft 1794: Songs of Experience by William Blake 1798: Lyrical Ballads by William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge 1798: An Essay on the Principle of Population published by Thomas Malthus (mid-18th century). The Dream of the Red Chamber (authorship attributed to Cao Xueqin), one of the most famous Chinese novels 1711: Rinaldo, Handel's first opera for the London stage, premiered 1721: Brandenburg Concertos by J.S. Bach 1723: The Four Seasons, violin concertos by Antonio Vivaldi, composed 1724: St John Passion by J.S. Bach 1727: St Matthew Passion composed by J.S. Bach 1727: Zadok the Priest is composed by Handel for the coronation of George II of Great Britain. It has been performed at every subsequent British coronation. 1733: Hippolyte et Aricie, first opera by Jean-Philippe Rameau 1741: Goldberg Variations for harpsichord published by Bach 1742: Messiah, oratorio by Handel premiered in Dublin 1749: Mass in B minor by J.S. Bach assembled in current form 1751: The Art of Fugue by J.S. Bach 1762: Orfeo ed Euridice, first "reform opera" by Gluck, performed in Vienna 1768: The Marriage of Figaro, opera by Mozart 1787: Don Giovanni, opera by Mozart 1788: Jupiter Symphony (Symphony No. 41) composed by Mozart 1791: The Magic Flute, opera by Mozart 1791-1795: London symphonies by Haydn 1798: The Pathétique, piano sonata by Beethoven 1798: The Creation, oratorio by Haydn first performed ^ Volkov, Sergey, Concise History of Imperial Russia. ^ Rowe, William T. Chiune Last Empire. ^ Anderson, M. S. (1979). Historians and Eighteenth-Century Europe, 1715-1789. Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0-19-823248-5. OCLC 185538307. ^ Ribeiro, Aileen (2002). Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe 1715-1789 (revised ed.). Yale University Press. ISBN 978-0-300-09151-9. OCLC 186413657. ^ Baines, Paul (2004). The Long 18th Century. London: Arnold. ISBN 978-0-340-81372-0. ^ Marshall, P. J., ed. (2001). 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Harper Encyclopedia of the Modern World, A Concise Reference Volume from 1760 to the Present (1970) edited by Milward, Alan S., and S. B. Saul, eds. The development of the economies of continental Europe, 1850-1914 (1977) online The Wallace Collection, London, houses one of the finest collections of 18th-century decorative arts from France, England and Italy, including paintings, furniture, porcelain and gold boxes. Media related to 18th century at Wikimedia Commons Retrieved from " 4 The following pages link to 18th century External tools (link count transclusion count sorted list) - See help page for transcluding these entries Showing 50 items. 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Use a brush or a damp cloth to remove any remaining dirt or grime from the brush roll. If the belt is worn out, purchase a replacement belt from a reputable supplier or your vacuum's manufacturer. Frustrated with your Bissell vacuum cleaner's lackluster performance? A common culprit is a spinning brush roll that's suddenly stopped working. This can leave you feeling like you're pushing a brick across the floor, leaving behind a trail of dust and debris. But don't despair! This blog post will guide you through the common reasons why your Bissell vacuum's brush roll isn't spinning and provide step-by-step solutions to get your vacuum back in tip-top shape. Identifying the Cause: Why Your Bissell Vacuum Brush Roll Isn't Spinning Before you dive into troubleshooting, it's essential to identify the root cause of the problem. Here are some common reasons why your Bissell vacuum's brush roll might be refusing to spin: Clogged Brush Roll: Hair, string, and other debris can easily get tangled around the brush roll, preventing it from spinning freely. Belt Issues: The belt that powers the brush roll can wear out, break, or become loose, hindering its ability to spin. Motor Problems: A faulty motor can be the culprit, preventing the brush roll from receiving the necessary power to spin. Switch Malfunction: The power switch responsible for activating the brush roll might be damaged or malfunctioning. Loose or Broken Connections: Connections between the motor, belt, and brush roll can become loose or broken, interrupting the power flow. Troubleshooting Steps: Getting Your Bissell Vacuum Back on Track Now that you understand the potential culprits, let's get your Bissell vacuum spinning again. Follow these steps to troubleshoot and fix the problem: 1. Check for Obstructions and Clean the Brush Roll Unplug the vacuum: Safety first! Always unplug your vacuum before performing any maintenance. Inspect the brush roll: Carefully examine the brush roll for any visible obstructions like hair, string, or debris. Remove obstructions: Use your fingers, a pair of pliers, or a small tool to carefully remove any tangled debris. Clean the brush roll: Use a brush or a damp cloth to remove any remaining dirt or grime from the brush roll. 2. Inspect and Replace the Belt Locate the belt: The belt is typically located near the brush roll and motor. Consult your vacuum's user manual for specific instructions. Inspect the belt: Check for signs of wear, cracks, or breakage. If the belt is damaged, it needs to be replaced. Replace the belt: Purchase a replacement belt from a reputable supplier or your vacuum's manufacturer. Follow the instructions in your user manual for replacing the belt. 3. Check the Motor and Electrical Connections Test the motor: If the brush roll still isn't spinning, the motor might be faulty. Use a multimeter to test the motor's continuity. If the motor is not receiving power, it needs to be replaced. Inspect the connections: Check the connections between the motor, belt, and brush roll for any loose or broken wires. Secure any loose connections or replace broken wires. 4. Examine the Power Switch Test the switch: Use a multimeter to check the power switch for continuity. If the switch is not working, you'll need to replace it. Clean the switch: If the switch is dirty, clean it with a contact cleaner. This can sometimes resolve intermittent problems. 5. Seek Professional Help If you've tried all the above troubleshooting steps and your Bissell vacuum's brush roll still isn't spinning, it's time to call in the professionals. A qualified technician can diagnose the issue and perform any necessary repairs. Regular maintenance is crucial to prevent your Bissell vacuum from experiencing problems in the future. Here are some key maintenance tips: Clean the brush roll regularly: Remove hair, string, and debris from the brush roll after each use. Check the belt periodically: Inspect the belt for signs of wear and tear. Replace it if necessary. Empty the dustbin frequently: A full dustbin can put extra strain on the motor and belt. Store your vacuum properly: Keep your vacuum in a clean, dry environment when not in use. While a non-spinning brush roll is a common issue, there are other problems you might encounter with your Bissell vacuum. Here are some additional troubleshooting tips: Vacuum not turning on: Check the power cord, outlet, and fuse. If the vacuum still won't turn on, the motor may be faulty. Vacuum losing suction: Check the dustbin for blockage. Clean or replace the filters. The vacuum hose may also be clogged. Vacuum making strange noises: This could indicate a loose belt, worn-out bearings, or a faulty motor. Time to Shine: Your Bissell Vacuum is Back in Action By following these troubleshooting steps and implementing regular maintenance practices, you can ensure your Bissell vacuum remains a reliable cleaning companion for years to come. Remember, a well-maintained vacuum not only delivers superior cleaning performance but also extends its lifespan, saving you money and headaches in the long run. Q: Why is my Bissell vacuum brush roll spinning slowly? A: A slow-spinning brush roll can be caused by a worn-out belt, a clogged brush roll, or a motor that's losing its power. Check the belt, clean the brush roll, and test the motor to determine the cause. Q: Can I use a different type of belt for my Bissell vacuum? A: It's best to use the belt specifically designed for your Bissell vacuum model. Using a different type of belt can damage the vacuum or cause it to malfunction. Q: How often should I replace the belt on my Bissell vacuum? A: The lifespan of a belt varies depending on usage, but it's generally recommended to replace it every 6-12 months. Inspect the belt regularly for signs of wear and tear. Q: How do I know if my Bissell vacuum motor is faulty? A: A faulty motor will often make unusual noises, such as a grinding or humming sound. You can use a multimeter to test the motor's continuity to confirm if it's faulty. Q: What should I do if my Bissell vacuum is still not working after troubleshooting? A: If you've tried all the troubleshooting steps and your Bissell vacuum is still not working, it's best to contact a qualified repair technician for professional assistance. Home | Videos | Brush Not Turning | How to Videos | Cleanview® Rewind Vacuum Video Transcript: When encountering the problem of your vacuum not turning, make sure to follow these simple instructions. Remove the access plate located on the bottom of your machine covering the brush roll and check the brush and belt for damage. If brush will not turn by hand, or belt is broken, replace the damaged part by ordering online at BISSELL.com. Clean off any debris on the brush. Did this resolve your issue? If issue persists after troubleshooting > Contact Us for more assistance Including your model number in your email assists our agents in helping you faster. Not sure where to look? On machines it's on a white label like this. It's usually on the lower back or bottom of the machine (for Lift-Off® models, remove the Lift-Off pad to call labels) or behind the cleaning links. On cleaning formulas the model number is actually called an item number. Look for it on the back of the bottle or can, near the bottom. The brush roll or belt responsible for driving the brush roll may be damaged or worn out. Use a damp cloth or a vacuum cleaner with a crevice tool to clean the area thoroughly. Vacuum cleaners are indispensable household appliances that play a pivotal role in maintaining a clean and healthy living environment. However, encountering issues with your vacuum cleaner can be frustrating, especially when it involves the essential spinning brush. This blog post will delve into the common reasons why your Bissell vacuum brush may not be spinning and provide comprehensive solutions to restore its functionality. Reasons Why Your Bissell Vacuum Brush Is Not Spinning 1. Obstruction in the Brush Roll One of the most prevalent causes of a non-spinning brush roll is an obstruction. Hair, strings, pet fur, and other debris can accumulate around the brush roll, preventing it from rotating smoothly. 2. Damaged Brush Roll or Belt The brush roll or belt responsible for driving the brush roll may be damaged or worn out. This can occur due to prolonged use or improper handling. 3. Faulty Motor The motor that powers the brush roll may have malfunctioned. This can be caused by electrical issues, overheating, or other internal problems. 4. Loose or Disconnected Wires Wires connecting the brush roll to the motor or other components may have become loose or disconnected. This can disrupt the power supply and prevent the brush roll from spinning. 5. Clogged Filter A clogged filter can restrict airflow, which can in turn affect the brush roll's ability to spin. Ensure that the filter is clean and replaced regularly. 6. Overheating If your vacuum cleaner has been running for an extended period, it may have overheated. This can cause the brush roll to stop spinning as a protective measure. 7. Debris in the Brush Roll Housing Debris can accumulate in the brush roll housing, hindering the brush roll's movement. This can be caused by infrequent cleaning or vacuuming environments with excessive dirt or pet hair. Troubleshooting and Solutions 1. Clear Obstructions Disconnect the vacuum cleaner and remove any visible debris from the brush roll and its housing. Use scissors to carefully cut away any entangled hair or strings. 2. Replace the Brush Roll or Belt If the brush roll or belt is damaged, it needs to be replaced. Refer to your vacuum cleaner's user manual for instructions on how to do this. 3. Repair or Replace the Motor If the motor is faulty, it may require repair or replacement. This is a more complex task that may need to be performed by a qualified technician. 4. Reconnect Loose Wires Check all wires connecting the brush roll to the motor and other components. If any wires are loose or disconnected, reconnect them securely. 5. Clean the Filter Remove and clean the filter according to the manufacturer's instructions. Ensure that the filter is completely dry before reinstalling it. 6. Allow the Vacuum Cleaner to Cool Down If your vacuum cleaner has overheated, unplug it and allow it to cool down for at least 30 minutes before using it again. 7. Clean the Brush Roll Housing Remove any debris that has accumulated in the brush roll housing. Use a damp cloth or a vacuum cleaner with a crevice tool to clean the area thoroughly. Prevention Tips Regularly clean the brush roll, filter, and brush roll housing to prevent debris buildup. Avoid vacuuming large or sharp objects that can damage the brush roll. Do not overload the vacuum cleaner with too much dirt or debris. Allow the vacuum cleaner to cool down after extended use. If you encounter any issues with your vacuum cleaner, refer to the user manual or contact Bissell customer support for assistance. Wrapping Up Maintaining a clean and well-functioning Bissell vacuum cleaner is essential for a tidy home. By understanding the reasons why your Bissell vacuum brush may not be spinning and following the troubleshooting solutions provided, you can restore its functionality and ensure optimal cleaning performance. Remember to follow the prevention tips outlined above to keep your vacuum cleaner in top condition. What You Need to Know 1. Why is my Bissell vacuum cleaner making a loud noise when the brush roll is spinning? A loud noise could indicate a damaged brush roll, belt, or motor. Inspect these components for any signs of wear or damage. 2. How often should I clean the Bissell vacuum brush roll? Regular cleaning of the brush roll is recommended to prevent debris buildup. Aim to clean it at least once a week or more frequently if you vacuum high-traffic areas. 3. Can I use my Bissell vacuum cleaner without the brush roll spinning? While it is possible to use your vacuum cleaner without the brush roll spinning, it will not be as effective in removing dirt and debris from carpets. The guy who started Next Media LTD began his career working at a factory for \$10/month but eventually went on to create a chain of clothing stores bringing in over \$23 million in revenue per year, creating multiple magazines and newspaper circulating in two countries with over a half million subscriptions. Absolutely amazing. He started by selling motorcycle handgrips out of the trunk of his car to raising \$230 million when his sunglasses business went IPO 20 years later. Read about Oakley, the company named after the founder's dog, that changed the sunglasses industry forever. This company is a marketing cooperative owned by nearly 1,000 separate farmers. Ocean Spray Cranberries was founded by a lawyer in Boston who had a side business of selling cranberry sauce. He recognized his competitors would make better allies and brilliantly banded together hundreds of cranberry farmers to collectively market their crops under one brand in 1930. Oranjo Glo is a family owned soap and polish business that first introduced it's product to the public at the Arizona State Fair in 1986. 13 years later they had \$86 million in revenue. This is an incredible story about a homemade product developed out of a garage that took the world by storm. Outdoor Systems is an Arizona based billboard company. Read how the "growth through acquisition" strategy helped grow the company from running 80 billboards in 1980 to 250,000 billboards in less than 20 years. From corks to three wheeled trucks to pistonless rotary engines in automobiles. Read about how Mazda broke ground in 1920, miraculously survived after 400 workers were killed by the atomic bomb, and went on to partner with Ford to make great cars that are enjoyed all over the world. Read about one of the oldest companies around - Merck. Yes, the pharmaceutical company with over \$30 billion in annual sales, has a history that reaches back 344 years even though they were officially incorporated in 1927. This company story should be taught in Marketing 101 classes across the country. Read about how Mossimo became an overnight success in California after the founder dropped out of college, borrowed \$100,000 from his father, and created a lifestyle company from scratch. Address: 2345 Walker, N.W. Grand Rapids, Michigan 49544 U.S.A. Telephone: (616) 453-4451 Fax: (616) 453-2081 Private Company Incorporated: 1983 Employees: 2,500 Sales: \$450 million (1999 est.) NAIC: 333319 Other Commercial & Service Industry Machinery Manufacturing. 335212 Household Vacuum Cleaner Manufacturing. 325612 Polish & Other Sanitation Good Manufacturing Since 1876, BISSELL has been a world leader in manufacturing and marketing a broad line of quality home and floor care products--sweepers, deep cleaning machines, vacuums, and cleaning formulas--which appeal to consumers of all ages, incomes, and lifestyles. Today, these products are welcomed in homes across America, Canada, throughout Europe, and in emerging international markets. The fiber of how we do business begins with our Mission: "Quality is defined by our customers, whose complete satisfaction is our goal. Through a Company-wide initiative of continuous improvement, by managing against specific data, and by showing respect for our Associates, we will produce the highest quality products and provide the best service." Company History: BISSELL Inc. is the number four manufacturer of floor care products, trailing Hoover, Eureka, and Royal. The company is best known for its line of mechanical carpet cleaners, which predate electrical vacuums by 50 years and continue to defy obsolescence; carpet sweepers helped build BISSELL into a diversified homecare company. In the 1980s and 1990s the company built up an impressive and wide-ranging line of deep cleaners. In addition to carpet sweepers and deep cleaning machines, BISSELL Homecare manufactures vacuums, electrical appliances, cleaning agents, and personal care products. The BISSELL Graphics division designs, manufactures, and markets a wide range of specialty tags, labels, clinical research/study forms, and other printed products. Finally, the BISSELL Healthcare division markets patient-assist, rehabilitation, and orthopedic treatment products. Building a Better Carpet Sweeper in the Late 1800s The BISSELL carpet sweeper was developed in 1876 by Melville R. Bissell, who operated a crockery store with his wife, Anna, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Bissells received most of their fragile glass and china shipments in crates packed with sawdust, which often spilled onto the floors in their shop. In sweeping up the wood shavings, Bissell kicked up dust that got into his rugs, prompting him to invent in a carpet sweeper. These devices, which had been available since 1858, used floor wheels to drive rotating brushes that swept dirt out of the pile in rugs. Although not perfect, they were infinitely more effective than brooms. Bissell purchased a model called the "Welcome," but he noted several deficiencies in the design and endeavored to develop a better model. The BISSELL design also used floor wheels to drive a brush, but on an improved reduction gear. The bristles bent slightly as they brushed through the carpet. When they rotated off the floor, they sprung whatever debris was in their path up into a compartment. The dirt could be emptied by simply opening the top of the box and shaking it over a garbage can. Soon, many of the shop's patrons were asking where they could buy this carpet sweeper, which they had seen work so effectively on sawdust, and Bissell began to wonder if his carpet sweeper was a marketable product. Anna Bissell had no doubt about the product. She eloquently noted that because Americans were clean in mind and body, the carpet sweeper would serve the cause of responsible living while reducing the strain and drudgery of housekeeping. Melville Bissell could not deny his wife's logic, or the many customers asking about the sweeper. Beginning to see the device as nothing less than a revolution in housekeeping, Bissell cleared a space on the second floor of their crockery store for an assembly shop, where he supervised a small staff of workers. His wife collected brushes from cottage industry homemakers who were enlisted to assemble them. The Bissells conducted their own sales visits, choosing to distribute their product through housewares retailers rather than through door-to-door salesmen. It took several months, but Anna Bissell succeeded in getting skeptical shopkeepers to purchase and display the carpet sweeper. The device performed well in in-store demonstrations, and word of mouth quickly established a strong demand for the product. Soon the Bissells were turning out 30 carpet sweepers a day and shipping them to retailers throughout Michigan, the Midwest, and the Eastern states. The Bissells stumbled onto an effective new sales tool when a young Bissell bookkeeper named Claude Hopkins suggested a change in the sweeper's sales brochure. He argued that schematic diagrams and other mechanical details were of less interest to the consumer than the fashion aspects of the product. Hopkins's brochure focused on the "golden maples" oilnut walnut and rich mahogany" used to make the BISSELL sweeper. The company's directors feared that Hopkins's approach undersold the technological superiority of the product: every aspect of the sweeper was patented, and the company vigorously sued those who infringed on its design. But they could not deny the fact that Hopkins drastically boosted sales of the carpet sweeper. Inspired, Hopkins drew up a pamphlet promoting a limited edition of the device made from vermilion, a rare and exotic wood transported out of the jungles of India on the backs of elephants and floated to port on rafts. The stunt produced more sales in six weeks than the company had been able to muster in a year. Hopkins, who developed the strategy of promoting the carpet sweeper as a Christmas gift, later joined a Chicago advertising agency, where he built a career as one of the first masters of his art. Melville and Anna Bissell incorporated their company in 1883 and built a new factory for making carpet sweepers. They also bought out two competitors, the Michigan Carpet Sweeper Company and the Grand Rapids Carpet Sweeper Company, but only to raid them of their managerial talent. Soon after the new five-story BISSELL plant was completed, it was leveled in a fire. Melville Bissell mortgaged his entire personal fortune, including his home and his stable of horses, to finance a reconstruction. Shortly after production resumed, it was discovered that the factory's entire output was defective. To protect the brand name, Bissell ordered the recall of every defective model, at a cost of more than \$35,000. International Expansion in the Late 19th Century The BISSELL name had become so well established by 1889, and had such a strong reputation for quality, that few competitors dared to challenge it. But tragedy struck that year when Melville contracted pneumonia and died at the age of 45. When Anna Bissell took control of the company, she became one of the first female executives in the United States. After taking over for her husband, Anna decided to buy BISSELL into an international brand. The company already had agencies in 20 foreign countries, but its penetration was light. Even though Europeans were more meticulous housekeepers, they had fewer carpet sweepers than Americans. BISSELL salesmen in England held public demonstrations of the product, gently proving that the carpet sweeper could clean even the most delicate rugs. The big break came when Queen Victoria allowed the BISSELL sweeper to be used in her palace. Following the royal example, thousands of English homemakers ordered their own sweepers. Soon the practice of carpet sweeping became known generically as "Bisselling." First Competition from Vacuum Cleaners in the 1920s Anna Bissell remained head of the company into the 1920s, when a new threat to the business emerged. Household electrification swept aside gas lights, hand cranks, and foot pedals and paved the way for hundreds of new appliances, including the vacuum cleaner. BISSELL, however, remained confident that the public would not overcome its fear of the strange new power source for many years. She recognized electric vacuum cleaners as unforgiving monstrosities that were capable of shredding flir carpets and expensive Oriental rugs. Many models shorted out through misuse, causing terrifying flashes and even fires. BISSELL's greatest asset at this point was the carpet sweeper's well-established position in the retail network. By contrast, vacuum cleaners were sold by door-to-door salesmen, who had reputations as boisterous, imposing cheats. As better models were developed, vacuum cleaners were accepted in more homes. In addition, vacuum manufacturers gradually eased their way into retail channels, where they made the BISSELL carpet sweeper look ancient by comparison. To avoid losing its place in the market, BISSELL introduced its own electric vacuum cleaner, with motorized brushes and a fan blade for sucking up dust. BISSELL vacuum cleaners, like others on the market, were loud and clumsy and kicked up dust. Convinced that a market remained for the carpet sweeper, BISSELL continued to make improvements to its product line. Earlier innovations included better bearings and a handle that adjusted the sweeping pressure on the brushes. With a design that debuted in 1928, the cleaner automatically adjusted the height of the brushes to different surfaces. Melville Bissell, Jr., took control of the company from his mother by this time. During the Great Depression, few people had money to spend on an expensive electric vacuum, so they opted for the BISSELL carpet sweeper. As demand for vacuums weakened, causing many manufacturers to go out of business, BISSELL decided to discontinue building electric models. Bissell believed that the carpet sweeper had a unique place in the home. Where electric vacuums could be used for heavy duty cleaning, the carpet sweeper would be favored for quick touch-ups, in the same way a broom might be used to sweep up a small mess. To reinforce a peaceful coexistence between the two devices, BISSELL emphasized the ease and convenience of using the carpet sweeper instead of a vacuum cleaner for small jobs around the home, and for cleaning the patio, the pool area, and the cottage. There was a place in every home for the lightweight, inexpensive, and portable carpet sweeper. World War II naturally curtailed production of consumer products. At BISSELL, the raw materials for making a carpet sweeper, including rubber, aluminum, and wood, were diverted for military production. As a manufacturing organization, BISSELL was melded into the military procurement system and given the task of building a variety of light industrial implements. After the war, with newfound prosperity and a rapidly increasing standard of living, vacuums became a fixture in every home. In England, the practice of carpet cleaning became known as "Hoovering." The company reestablished its European franchise by building--or in some cases rebuilding--factories and distribution facilities in Britain, France, Germany, Ireland, and Switzerland. To these were added sites in Canada and Australia, making Bissell a truly international name. Diversification Under Melville Bissell III: 1953-71 Melville Bissell III, a nephew of Melville Jr., took over leadership of the company in 1953. Unlike his uncle, this Melville Bissell was determined that the Bissell name should stand for more than just mechanical carpet sweepers. He saw the company's market as "floor care" and, later, complete home care. Bissell was aware that the carpet sweeper was effective only for topical dirt. Conventional vacuum cleaners, which BISSELL had continued to avoid, could only brush up dirt in the top quarter-inch of a carpet. A more thorough cleaning, down to the nap of a carpet, would require wet shampooing. He ordered the development of a new product called the Shampooaster, a nonelectric device that used only water and detergent. The Shampooaster was manufactured from 1957 to 1967 and during those years was promoted ahead of BISSELL's carpet sweeper. The company's revenue grew fivefold over this period, but only because of a burst in demand for the carpet sweeper. Sales of the Shampooaster floundered because few homes were large or consistently dirty enough to warrant shampooing. The device was discontinued, and the company turned back to its traditional carpet sweeper line. In addition, in 1960 BISSELL had introduced the "stick vac," a lightweight vacuum that could be handled like a broom. The BISSELL stick vac competed with similar models built by vacuum cleaner manufacturers Regina and General Electric. BISSELL also acquired the Ohio-based Wood Shovel and Tool Company in 1965. The firm manufactured more than 300 different garden implements, but after only three years all but the company's snow shovel line was spun off. In 1970 BISSELL purchased a Swiss electric shaver company. But when European currencies were allowed to float in 1973, manufacturing costs skyrocketed. BISSELL sold all of the company's assets, but kept an electric motor technology that was developed into a headlight wiper motor for BISSELL's French subsidiary RIAM S.A. In 1971 BISSELL entered the printing industry by taking over the Michigan Tag Company, which was renamed BISSELL Printed Products. A second firm, Imperial Business Forms, was acquired by BISSELL, and was followed by two more firms, Atlas Tag & Label and Marion Manufacturing, all of which were later part of BISSELL Graphics. Refocused on Floor Care Under John M. Bissell in the 1970s John M. Bissell, a cousin to Melville III, assumed leadership of the company in 1971. Unlike Melville, he believed that the company should not risk losing the business it knew first: floor care. In his mind, the center of that business was the carpet sweeper. Based on that business, BISSELL focused its acquisitions on new ways to protect and grow its floor care business. BISSELL purchased the Penn Champ Company, a manufacturer of aerosol cleaners and fabric shampoo, in 1974. Hoping to provide retailers with an entire family of BISSELL floor care products, the company developed another taken line of vacuum cleaners and in 1980 reintroduced the carpet shampoo concept, but as a simple household wet extraction device called The Carpet Machine. In 1981 BISSELL rolled out a second wet carpet cleaner called "It's Magic." The product contained no pump (the part most likely to fail on such devices), but drew its water pressure from a sink faucet. Although the wet carpet cleaner filled out the BISSELL line, it performed below expectations and was phased out of production. Resuming its diversification in 1976, BISSELL purchased Venturi, Inc., a manufacturer of plant foods and other organic products. In 1978 BISSELL purchased the Atlantic Precision Works, a manufacturer of kitchen warming trays, and relocated the factory from New York to Grand Rapids. BISSELL later added two other companies to the operation, Slip-X Safety Treads, a bathroom mat maker, and the E&B Company, which made flag poles and clothesline supports. Eventually BISSELL sold off all of these operations. BISSELL acquired the Fred Sammons Company of Chicago in 1982. Involved in the manufacture of self-help aids for the disabled community, Sammons sold primarily to institutional markets until a new Enrichments line was established for individuals. To support sales of these products, BISSELL created a small network of retail stores under the same name, which it placed in shopping malls. By the early 1990s, Sammons products were sold primarily via direct-mail catalogs. Expanded Deep Cleaning Offerings in the 1980s BISSELL's diversification was necessary, not because of weakness in the floor care segment, but because the floor care market had stagnated. John Bissell told the Grand Rapids Press, "If we're going to achieve the growth rate we want, we'll have to do it through acquisitions." BISSELL acquired Chicago-based Maxi Vac, Inc., a maker of wet/dry vacuum cleaners, in 1982, boosting its manufacturing and research capabilities in the deep cleaning market. In 1985 BISSELL introduced a three-in-one vacuum cleaner, intended for use on stairs and on the second level of homes, where a heavy vacuum cleaner would be less practical and more cumbersome. In 1992 the company rolled out a new carpet shampoo device called the BISSELL Promax (later renamed Powerlifter because of copyright battle with Hoover). This was followed a year later by another product with more attachments and capabilities, called the BISSELL Big Green Clean Machine. The BISSELL Big Green Clean Machine was promoted through the much-maligned but effective medium of the "infomercial." Although the ad harkened back to the sweeper demonstrations of the 1880s, BISSELL risked damaging its good name in such an ad. Nevertheless, the infomercial gave the BISSELL Big Green Clean Machine a more successful launch than other mediums might have. In fact, a smaller version of the device, the BISSELL Little Green Clean Machine, was introduced the same way in October 1993. Acquisition of the Singer Line in 1996 In 1994 Mark Bissell replaced his father, John, in the positions of president and chief operating officer, with John Bissell remaining chairman and CEO. Two years later Mark Bissell was named president and CEO, with John continuing as chairman. Also in 1996 BISSELL broadened its line of floor care products through the acquisition of the Singer line of upright vacuums and deep cleaners from Ryobi Motor Products. The purchase particularly helped BISSELL gain a more significant presence in the upright vacuum sector, as well as in the lower price end of the market--the company's products generally fell into the upper end. Within the deep cleaning category, BISSELL already had been successful in the area of canister models (the Big Green) and portable models (the Little Green). In 1997 the company launched its first upright model, the PowerSteamer. BISSELL continued to build up its line of deep cleaners with the late 1997 debut of Steam 'n Clean, the mid-1998 introduction of the Spot Lifter, and the spring 1999 launch of the PowerSteamer ProHeat Plus. The Steam 'n Clean model, at a retail price of less than \$150, was the industry's first competitively priced steam cleaner; it also was touted for its compact size, allowing users to comfortably hold it in their hands, and for cutting warming time from 20 minutes to 30 seconds. BISSELL promoted the new product exclusively through infomercials for the first several months after its launch. The Spot Lifter, retailing for just \$59, was a handheld, portable model and was cordless and rechargeable. The PowerSteamer ProHeat Plus, an upright deep cleaner retailing at \$299, was said to be the first deep cleaner to contain a heating element. The Hoover Co. filed two lawsuits against BISSELL in May 1990 alleging patent infringement in certain features of BISSELL deep cleaners and upright vacuum cleaners. BISSELL quickly countersued but the parties reached a settlement in May 1999 shortly after the suits went to trial. The agreement was not disclosed but Hoover stated that the settlement "included an agreement regarding future use of Hoover extractor patents under license." By the late 1990s deep cleaning machines had clearly replaced carpet sweepers as the core BISSELL business. Although the company held 90 percent of the sweeper segment, that translated into only five percent of overall sales. With its increasingly varied line of floor care products, its emphasis on new product development, and its aggressive marketing and advertising efforts, BISSELL was certain to remain a major player in its industry. It also seemed likely to remain a private company. In mid-1999 Mark Bissell told HFN--The Weekly Newspaper for the Home Furnishing Network, "We have a very loyal shareholder base. Our vision is to continue to be a family-held company, and to balance liquidity with the needs of shareholders. ... I have three kids. My brother has three kids. So there are a lot of Bissellettes running around. We hope that someone from the next generation will rise up from the ranks and run the company." Principal Subsidiaries: GRAPHICS DIVISION: Atlas Tag & Label, Inc.; ATL East Tag & Label, Inc.; BISSELL Graphics Corp.; Imperial Graphics, Inc. HEALTHCARE DIVISION: AbilityOne Corp., Am Fab Inc., Sammons Preston Canada Inc.; Sammons Preston, Inc.; Midland Mfg. Co.; Tumble Forms. INTERNATIONAL: BISSELL Australia Pty Ltd.; BISSELL Ltd. (Canada); BISSELL Homecare Inc. (U.K.); BISSELL Inc.-U.A.E. (United Arab Emirates). Principal Divisions: Homecare Division; Graphics Division: Healthcare Division. Further Reading: "Bissell, Inc. 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