

Active Display Group cleans up with new screen-treatment unit

When Active Display Group installed a Chim92 screen cleaning machine in April, managing director David Gittus expected to see staff and the environment benefit because of its automation and biodegradable cleaners. However, with over 50 large screens needing daily cleaning, he never expected to see significant workflow improvements or a full complement of screens ready every day.

'We used to clean the screens manually,' he explains. 'We had two operators and ran double shifts, so it took 16 hours and they often didn't keep up. We had lots of screens tied up waiting to be washed – some up to three weeks – so then we'd be picking ones needed for the next job to clean first.'

With the Chim92 installed, the process takes just five hours and one operator supervising while doing other tasks. Each screen is washed in eight minutes and once air-dried is ready for coating and the next job. Square-profile frames are also being replaced with angled



onesto facilitate better water runoff and reduce chemical transfer to subsequent stages of the process.

'Our inventory of screens is always ready now. We didn't expect that. It's really smoothed out our workflow,' said Mr Gittus.

Since acquiring APG Displays and Four-Colour Digital in 2004, the company has grown steadily into Australia's largest POP supplier, says Gittus. Recent projects include Commonwealth Games' venue signage, vacuum-formed illuminated signs for over 800 National Australia Bank branches, and

fulfilling the signage requirements of the APEC conference as it travels throughout Australia.

The Melbourne manufacturing facility at Mulgrave houses screen printers (a 4-colour and 2-colour capable of 2.8mx1.65m prints, two smaller 2-colours, and several single-colour machines), an HP Scitex Veejet flatbed printer, numerous roll-to-roll devices, finishing equipment, and a full-size 6-colour Komori offset press. Between 50 and 60 screens require cleaning each day.

Manual cleaning causes increased sick leave

Manual cleaning was an unpleasant task. It meant working the whole shift outside in a damp concrete washing bay, applying vapour-producing solvents and chemicals by hand, and hose-washing after each (five or six) cleaning stage. Gumboots were essential. Contaminated water flowed through an interceptor before draining into the sewerage system.

Gittus admits to a high incidence of sick leave and big staff turnover in the screen-cleaning job. While the manual process is standard practice in the industry he says it is unlikely to be acceptable in five years' time. With the new machine, the operator's environment has been 'transformed'.

The four-module Chim92 Cyclematic M system is fully-enclosed. Once a frame enters the first module, all cleaning takes place inside the chambers and the frame is only handled again when it exits the final module.



From left: Adco Engineering MD Brad Kyberd congratulates Active Display Group's managing director David Gittus on the installation of the Chim92 screen cleaning system.