



significantly increase productivity and save water

A visiting expert on water resources has set off warning bells during a visit to Australia, with a grim prediction that Sydney could soon be vying with Mexico City for the dubious distinction of being the first of the world's great cities to run out of water. She also predicted that, where water supply is concerned, Melbourne would be running on empty in around 15 years.

Australia is the world's driest continent and projections about a looming water crisis have all sectors of the community concerned, not least industry.

In the printing industry, there has never been a more urgent time to review the use of water. Any water-saving measures should be welcomed, but water savings that arise from bold and proven new technologies that can also raise productivity are a 'win-win' situation that no Australian printing company can afford to ignore. A survey of several Australian print businesses that use the revolutionary new Kodak Thermal Direct non-process printing plate reveals considerable savings can be made in water and chemical usage, without any sacrifice in quality.

Kodak Thermal Direct non-process plates, which were unveiled recently and were demonstrated at IPEX 2006 in Britain last year, not only bring the resolution and imaging accuracy of thermal digital plates without processing, but are ecologically friendly. The new-generation Kodak Thermal Direct plates totally eliminate the need for wet-chemical plate processing. This has resulted in cost savings related to purchasing and maintaining a processor, the logistics of electrical and plumbing connections, chemistry purchase, storage, handling, disposal and most importantly pouring valuable water down the drain.

Lewis Liang, managing director of Print Station, an offset print business in Hurstville in Sydney's south, estimates his company has saved around 6,000 litres of water per month since it switched to the new Kodak Thermal Direct plate at the beginning of 2006. Before the switch, Lewis was using an estimated four

litres of water to clean each A2 plate. With an average of 1500 plates being processed each month, that was a sizeable waste of water. Put another way, 120 printing companies on the same usage rates would drain an entire Olympic-sized swimming pool, all one and a half million litres of it, in two months.

But there are other environmentally-friendly advantages with Thermal Direct as well. Lewis says: "I no longer have developers going past their shelf life." He finds the Kodak Thermal Direct plates save a great deal of production time "just two-to-three minutes" and they are ready for the press.

Estimates vary, and Doug Affleck, the managing director of Printing Creations at Mount Kuringai in Sydney's north, calculates a saving of around five litres of water for each plate, since the 15-year-old business changed to Thermal Direct in early 2006. "On top of that, we're saving around \$700 per month in developer, which was an extra expense aside from plate cost. That's a lot of chemicals and valuable water down the drain". Doug and his team of seven at Printing Creations have not had to

sacrifice any quality with Thermal Direct, as the plate prints a sharp dot at the 200-line screens used in all of the company's jobs.

Meanwhile, Coastline Printing, at Unanderra on the NSW South Coast, has been congratulated by the Federal Member for Cunningham, Sharon Bird, for contributing to the preservation of the environment, when she formally inaugurated the company's new Kodak Magnus 400 Platesetter with Kodak's Thermal Direct processless plates in August.

Ross Freestone of Coastline Printing said the Kodak Magnus 400 platesetter "was chosen by Coastline as the ideal device to ensure that the first-class quality our customers are accustomed to is maintained, and improved upon." The Magnus 400 and Thermal Direct plates offer the dual benefits of productivity and environmental care.

As these printers attest, Kodak's Thermal Direct processless thermal plate is not only the key to significantly increased productivity, but is a vital tool in saving our critical water resources and contributing to a cleaner, healthier environment for all Australians today and in the future.



Ross Freestone and Amanda Dale with the Kodak Magnus 400 platesetter and a Kodak Thermal Direct processless thermal plate