

Small Case Study

How a New England Hospital Cleans their “Town”

One of New England’s leading hospitals has added on to its facility to serve the ever increasing needs of the many communities it serves. With the latest addition, hospital administrators decided to do more than just add healthcare-related structures. Instead they decided to build a mini-city.



On the main floor of one of the hospitals new wings is an indoor replica of small town American village with all kinds of shops from gifts and cards to coffee shops and restaurants. Originally, the “streets” in this make believe village were to be carpeted. However, at the last minute, the designers decided it would be more authentic and if hard-surface flooring were installed, even better if it gave the look and feel of cobblestone. As a result, a cobblestone-looking grout and tile flooring was installed on the imitation small town streets.

The designers were right. The hard surface flooring adds greatly to the atmosphere they were trying to create but a problem soon emerged that was not quite anticipated. Because literally hundreds—if not thousands—of people walk the indoor roadways everyday, seven days per week, the floors, especially the grout areas, became seriously soiled by the end of each day. This was especially true near the entrances to the many restaurants and coffee shops.

Compounding the problem, cleaning technicians were limited as to how much cleaning could be performed during the course of the business day. The hospital “town” opened for business at 7 each morning and closed at 10 in the evening. During those 15 hours, except for spills which needed to be cleaned up for safety reasons, there simply were too many people using in the area to do any significant cleaning until closing.

The hospital had several floor machines and burnishers but only one auto scrubber, which was an older machine, seldom used. The scrubber was brought in to clean the “town’s” streets but the maintenance crew soon found it ineffective at deep cleaning the grout areas of the cobblestone street. Further, the machine was not easy to use and it was old. Hospital administrators doubted the machine could hold up to all the service requirements of keeping the village streets clean and decided the new old town village needed a new auto scrubber.

How to Select an Auto Scrubber

This hospital has a fairly extensive process that must be followed before any new piece of equipment the size and cost of an auto scrubber can be acquired. Some of these items include:

- Several major brands must be considered from different leading manufacturers
- The jansan distributors are to present “cost of ownership” information, which provides an idea of how dependable and durable the machines are along with how much downtime be expected
- Added in recent years is an environmental checklist that helps determine if the machine is Green and/or more environmentally responsible than comparable machines
- As the selection process narrows, two or three machines are actually used in the hospital facility to see how well they perform and for custodial workers to evaluate them.

“It’s usually this last step, actually using the equipment in the hospital, that helps us make our decision,” said one of the hospitals top administrators in the custodial department. “Some manufacturers have glossy advertising brochures and beautiful looking machines, but putting the machine to work and seeing how it performs is what really matters.”

After about six weeks of investigation, a new auto scrubber was selected. The hospitals choice: The BR 28/30, one of Tornado’s new

World Class cylindrical auto scrubbers with a 28-inch cleaning path and 30-gallon solution tank.

World Class Machine for Small Town

“There were several reasons we went with the Tornado machine,” says the administrator. “And the first one was the fact that it was a cylindrical and not a conventional rotary machine.”

Cylindrical machines have four to six times more contact pressure on the floor and because they use brushes instead of pads, most users find they can better deep-clean porous tile and grout areas. Also, the cylindrical brushes rotate inward, at about 1,300 rpms. The inward rotation prevents “slurry” from getting on walls and the higher rpm provides more effective cleaning.

“BR 28/30 can also make 180-degree turns, something we need on the village streets,” says the administrator. “And also it’s quiet. At 67 decibels, its one of the quietest scrubbers on the market.”

Cylindrical machines also tend to be Greener than most rotary machines, the hospital administrators were glad to find out. They tend to use less water and chemical than rotary machines and one set of brushes last long than 100 rotary pads. This significantly reduces the amount of janitorial equipment trash added to the community’s landfills.

Cost of Ownership

“It seems like they designed the BR28/30 with our in-house service department in mind,” says the administrator. “Most all of the mechanicals are easily accessible. We can easily access the batteries, vacuum motors, and hoses; even the brushes are quick and easy to change.”

Obviously, being able to tackle service requirements in-house instead of sending the machine out for repairs saves money and overall the distributor convinced—and the hospital soon discovered for themselves—that the service record with the BR 28/30 is better than that of the other auto scrubbers evaluated. In fact, Tornado has a history of building highly-durable, dependable machines, whether auto scrubbers, vacuums, or extractors.

“Our ‘village’ is one of the best additions to our hospital we have ever made,” adds the administrator. “And now we can maintain it with one of the best auto scrubbers on the market, Tornado’s BR 28/30.”