



CAN GREEN, CLEAN AND COST CONTROL EVER GET ALONG?



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The case for a flexible hard-floor scrubbing programme

You've heard the old saying, "How do you want it—fast, cheap or good? You can choose two." The message, of course, is that you can't have everything. But cleaning professionals today are being asked to deliver "everything"—environmental sustainability, high levels of cleanliness AND cost efficiency. So HOW can they do it all?

Hard-floors are routinely cleaned and maintained with automatic floor scrubbers that, in the past, were not equipped to handle variable soil loads and different hard surface types.

Maintaining the flexibility to achieve the exact cleanliness level required for different areas, surface types and soil levels with the minimum effort, time and resources is key to meeting the complex requirements for green, clean and cost-efficient floor cleaning. Here's a closer look at three factors that contribute to a flexible floor-scrubbing programme.

1. Rotate solutions (water and detergents) for different soils, areas and surface types

Because there is no single "best" approach for every hard-floor scrubbing need, being able to match the solution to the soil level and surface type is an important factor in an effective cleaning programme. Certainly, cleaning with just water reduces environmental impacts (no chemicals to dispose of) and possible health impacts (no detergent exposure for workers or building occupants). Using only water as a cleaning solution works well for removing surface dirt, can help remove detergent residue that accumulates on floors and can also reduce costs because there are no detergents to buy.

However, water alone often can't adequately clean high-traffic areas or cut through certain soil types such as greasy, oily messes. A flexible scrubbing programme allows cleaning staff to easily select the necessary detergent type and strength—or clean with water only—as required by different floor conditions and areas of the building. Accurate application of water, detergent and down pressure eliminates the risk of exposing building occupants to excessive detergent use. It also reduces the costs and environmental impacts of overusing water and detergents while ensuring that floors are properly cleaned.

2. Spend more time cleaning, less time getting ready to clean

With the labour cost contributing up to 90% of the total cost of cleaning, the more time operatives are actually cleaning, the more cost-efficient your cleaning program is. Proper planning and the right equipment can reduce set-up/clean-up processes, making it possible for staff to make adjustments while they're cleaning.

In a flexible scrubbing programme, operatives have the equipment and practices to handle high-traffic areas such as entryways or tough soils like grease without stopping to modify their cleaning approach. Ideally, a floor scrubber dispenses water and detergent separately so that operatives don't have to pre-mix solution or empty tanks to change detergents or solution strength. A program that allows cleaners to minimise time spent prepping machines and make fewer cleaning passes through a facility is not only flexible, it's time- and cost-efficient.



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3. Use fewer machines for more tasks

Automatic floor scrubbers can represent a significant capital investment for facilities or building services contractors, and the purchase cost is only one part of the overall cost of machine ownership. Maintenance and operating costs also influence the total cost of ownership. Every cleaning machine requires specific training for operators, space for storage, plus parts and on-going maintenance. A floor scrubber with flexible cleaning modes can mean purchasing fewer machines and reducing training and maintenance costs. The most flexible machines are capable of cleaning in multiple ways and allow staff to use the same piece of equipment for any floor-scrubbing job, which leads to reduced costs and higher cleaning productivity.

There's a commonality in these factors that contribute to a flexible scrubbing program. They all empower cleaning staff to match the way they clean to what they need to clean. Putting this control into the hands of in-house cleaners and building services contractors allows them to combine environmentally preferable practices with effective cleaning and maximum cost efficiency. The result is a cleaning program that works in perfect harmony.



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