



finishing school

Less smell, easier sanding and faster drying. That's why Interform bought a Schubox.



Above: Production Director, David Monks.

Customer requirements are getting more demanding. Requests for faster delivery times and higher quality products places a strain on furniture manufacturers who have to increase their productivity in order to offer a 'just in time' service. At this time of year especially the finishing of panels can mean that this task is more challenging. This is where the Schubox can help.

Take Interform for example. Interform is a specialist manufacturer of furniture for schools, colleges and hospitals. Based in the north of England, the company's client list reads like a Who's Who guide to British education. Its customers are very demanding but, invariably, Interform has a strictly limited timeframe within which to complete total refurbishments. "Often, we have to design, manufacture and fit within the holiday closure period," says David Monks, a director of the company. "That means we have to work very quickly and sometimes, in the past, we've ended up having to refinish panels because they haven't had enough time to dry properly before being stacked for delivery."

Working within such a tight timeframe, another of Interform's problems - and perhaps its biggest - is the smell of lacquer which inevitably remains after the furniture has been fitted. "It can linger for days, even weeks," admits David. And naturally enough, the well-heeled students of Harrow, Eton and Winchester don't like it.

"Since fitting the Schubox," continues Works Manager, Stephen Ogden, "Our drying time after spraying has reduced from hours to just a few minutes and because the Schubox completely cures the lacquer, the residual smells have virtually disappeared by the time we come to fit the furniture."

"Additionally, the lads find it easier to sand the first coat when it's been cured in the Schubox and there's less sanding after the second coat. Before, we had to wait to sand. Now it's so easy. It doesn't even clog the paper so we've seen major savings on sanding papers."

Perhaps unusually, Interform almost completely assemble their furniture before applying the spray finished lacquer. Aside from removing drawers from cabinets, the



Above: "Because it has a highly polished interior, the rays bounce around inside the Schubox and it always dries fully, right into every corner, inside and out."

Right: It was a difficult installation because space was limited. The Schubox occupies the centre section and is accessed via custom-made roller doors which are designed to keep the heat in. In the foreground is the side-loading 'flash-off' chamber.



Left: The control panel is easy to understand and the exceptionally low running temperature is easily visible.



Schubox copes well with completed and fully-finished wardrobes, bookcases, desks, chairs and chests. "Our wardrobes are fully fitted, including piano-style hinges," says Stephen. "Because it has a highly-polished interior, the rays bounce around inside the Schubox and it always dries fully, right into every corner, inside and out. We actually spray the hinges and we seldom experience a problem."

The installation of the Schubox at Interform was an unusual one. Like many Schuboxes, it was a custom design. Sprayed furniture is placed in a side-loading 4.5m wide 'flash-off' chamber, next to the spray bay. The air from the chamber is pumped into the Schubox, thereby destroying unpleasant odours and harmful chemicals from the beginning of the drying process. The Schubox itself is accessed via custom-made automatic roller doors which keep the heat where it's needed. It's also equipped with switch gear, alarms and a sophisticated but easy-to-understand control panel. For safety reasons, because Interform finish over metal hinges, the Schubox runs at an un-

believably low temperature of just 35 degrees, which also reduces the likelihood veneers delaminating.

The Schubox itself is very economical to run: there is a pre-heater which runs on electric for just thirty minutes to get the chamber up to heat. After that, it runs on natural gas.

Admits Stephen Ogden, "It was a difficult installation. It had to be designed in a U-shape, space was very limited and we needed a dedicated flash-off area. There was a lot of structural work to be done to the building in order to make it fit where we wanted it but the engineers were brilliant. It was delivered on time and the chief engineer bent over backwards to ensure every detail worked properly.

"We've had a couple of minor snags since, just running-in things like not pulling enough air through the flash-off area, but Schuberts sorted it very quickly. In fact, they've been superb."

For further details on how the Schubox can help your business, call Schuberts Technical Services on 00000 000000 or visit www.schuberts.co.uk



Above: Stephen Ogden.