



Secrets to reduce the cost of maintaining your signage and other assets

SignManager
Signs made easy

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Signs are one of the essential assets for any business. Signs identify your business and represent your brand values in an increasingly cluttered market place. The condition of your signs says a lot to your customers about your company. A clean and well-lit sign says that you are open for business and are proud of your brand. On the contrary, a dirty or broken sign can make your customers unsure if you are open and says that you don't care about your brand or the image you portray. Even if potential customers do not intend to visit your business, a well-presented sign acts as an advertising image and promotes brand awareness.

What are your signs saying about your business?

It is often difficult to keep all of your assets in a permanently pristine condition, especially if you have a very tight maintenance budget. Here are a few ways of reducing the cost of sign maintenance that still ensures they look their best.

- Get a seat at the table when the signs are specified
- Introduce an asset management database
- Replace rather than repair assets beyond their effective life cycle
- Regularly clean your signs
- Plan a preventive maintenance program
- Make it part of someone's role to check your signs regularly

Let's take a more detailed look at each of these ideas:

Get a seat at the table when the signs are specified

A poorly designed sign can cost up to five times as much as a well-designed sign over its lifecycle. Maintenance costs soon build, and many can be avoided by choosing a higher-quality product from the outset. There are many ways in which a sign can be built and a lot of different materials to choose from. The way in which the construction is specified will have the biggest impact on the cost of maintaining the assets for the rest of their life. Consider the balance between the capital costs of procuring a sign and the revenue implications of regular maintenance and unplanned repairs.

Ease of access for maintenance is extremely important. Can the signs be easily opened to access replacement parts? Is maintenance a one-person or a two-person job? Is specialist access equipment required or can the signs and components be easily lowered to ground level?

Component quality is also extremely important. Do the components that are specified have a suitable warranty? Be careful, as a warranty is just a piece of paper, and you will want it to be clear what is covered if something fails. Has the product you are purchasing been proven in the marketplace? Has the company offering the warranty got a good, long track record?

All of these decisions are best made during the design process. If you don't have a seat at the table where decisions are made, you may end up spending up to five times more over the sign's life, than if you bought a well-designed sign that was fit for purpose from the outset.



Introduce an asset management database

Studies show that up to 30% of FM budgets are spent in the cost of technicians travelling to site. These costs soon mount up, as often two trips are required: one to identify the problem and another to return with the correct parts and equipment to finish the job. This can be avoided by recording the details of the signage assets at each site in an asset database. Your signage asset database should identify each sign asset on site, photos, locations, a list of components, dimensions, access equipment and a full work history; including the original supplier and any technicians who have worked on the sign since.

Maintaining a good asset database will allow you to supply accurate information to the repair contractor which will allow them to visit the site once and carry out the repair straight away, using the right components. In many cases, this knowledge will allow you to troubleshoot the problem over the phone with the site manager, and perhaps resolve it without calling out a repairer.

Replace rather than repair assets beyond their effective lifecycle

Old, dilapidated signs do not reflect well on your brand and may be a health and safety risk through electrical or structural failure. If you constantly have to repair a sign over and over again, then it is probably beyond its useful life. To ensure you are not over investing in old assets, it is important to be able to track your spending on each asset, as well as be able to report on those that are no longer economically viable. The cost to replace a sign is often far less than the costs of repairing it over and over again.

Regularly clean your signs

Not only will cleaning your signs regularly keep your brand looking good, but it will also prolong the life of your signs. Well maintained signs cost less to repair as they get older. Cleaning away grime, spider webs, bird nests and importantly ensuring draining holes are cleared regularly, will greatly extend the serviceable life of the sign.

Make it part of someone's role to check your signage regularly

Quite often the manager on site will notice that their sign is not working, but do not report it. If they fail to do so, it often goes unfixed for an extended amount of time, and their awareness of it drops. The longer it remains out of service, the less chance of it being reported as people may assume someone else must have done so already. It is important to make sure that a specified person or role within the organisation has the specific responsibility to check signs regularly. Easy to use apps are available to allow them to do so, for example, SignManager's SignSpot App.



Summary

In conclusion, there are some simple steps that can keep your signs looking fresher for longer. Since a poorly designed sign can cost five times more to maintain than one that was better built from the start, it is worth spending a little more at the outset. If you plan and budget for investment in maintenance, you will make sure your signs look good for longer and cut costs in the long run.



Get help from SignManager

SignManager are independent consultants who help large corporations improve the way they manage their branded assets across all their stores and facilities.

Some benefits of outsourcing your sign program include:

BRAND AND MARKETING MANAGERS benefit from a single point of control to ensure the brand is consistently applied across their national and international presence. You may also wish to set up systems to manage the brand throughout its lifecycle.

PROPERTY AND CONSTRUCTION MANAGERS benefit from having a single point of contact to assist their team. This can provide expertise, a national network of resources, and access to specialist systems to make implementing signage projects simpler. They will also see improved quality control processes, better risk management, a more flexible supply chain and achieve the best market value.

FACILITY MANAGERS benefit from quicker response times from a national network of service-providers and lower costs through the intelligent use of asset data and mobile tools.

PROCUREMENT MANAGERS are empowered to achieve the best market value for their full Capex and Opex budgets.

SignManager provide a mechanism for a competitive bid process for 100% of the spend, rather than just the 60% made up of standard products and services. We can also help you cut costs through improved product design, better buying behaviour and strategic spend analysis.

If you would like our help with a strategy to better manage your signage and branding requirements, email us at info@signmanager.com.au





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