

Interactive Whiteboards Take Centre Stage at Digital Schooling Expo

D.I.B Australia recently participated in the fifth national Digital Schooling Expo which was this year held at Firbank Grammar School in Brighton on August 14th to 16th. The theme of the Conference was, "IWB's Support and Extend Good Teaching Practice", something that D.I.B greatly advocates and was happy to demonstrate. Our stand gave attendees from all across the country the opportunity to have a real look and feel at the latest generation of Interactive Whiteboard – the 2Touch. Differing from others on the market,

the 2Touch requires no special software, is a massive 2.4m x 1.2m wide, has no special drivers and can be used as a genuine whiteboard. The aim of the conference as a whole was to go way beyond the IWB as a presentation tool and focus on the power of the IWB to support and extend good teaching practice. The conference was a great success and was timely for all teachers and school leaders who are often faced with meeting the challenge of implementing Interactive Whiteboards into the classroom.



ABOVE: D.I.B Solutions Consultant, Scott Watkins demonstrating to attendees the functions of the board

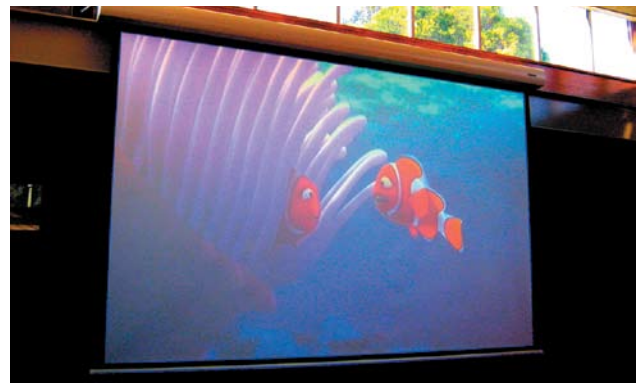
Christian Brother's College Widen Their Horizons

Along with the recent refurbishments undertaken throughout a number of classrooms and student spaces at Christian Brothers College, it was decided by the school that their Year 9 Open Area was to benefit from a new theatre projection system. AV Manager Digby Holmes worked alongside Audio Visual installations company D.I.B Australia to design a solution that would make better use of the space involved so that it was ready for the students and staff the following term.

High quality sound was of a priority given the open dynamics of the room. As a result a XR8P Pro two-way active speaker system was installed. These wall mounted powered speakers enable delivery of high quality audio in large areas and were deemed powerful enough with 100 watt bass and 50 watt treble per speaker. Complementing the audio system was the inclusion of an 8 channel stereo mixer (used to integrate various audio sources



into their audio system), an EXTRON control panel (used to operate the entire room system) and a Screen Technics motorised projection screen. This custom made 16:10 projection screen was chosen as it was able to provide a screen area of approximately 135" diagonal when used in tandem with the widescreen projector chosen for the space. This projector was the new-



ABOVE LEFT: The new-to-the market EPSON EB-G5200W with wide-screen capability **LEFT:** XR8P two way active speaker to provide high quality in the Year 9 Open area **ABOVE:** Screen Technics Custom made 16:10 projection screen

to-the market EPSON EB-G5200W, and whilst the entire area was well equipped with great features, it goes without saying that this projector is essentially the centrepiece.

Designed for low maintenance and reliable long term operation in high use environments the EB-G5200W's major drawcard was its widescreen capability. Meaning

that it would allow teachers to use a larger surface to project movies or documentaries or even deliver large screen presentations that were normally reserved for a hall auditorium. All in all, the new projector system makes for a dynamic environment in the Year 9 Centre, one which will undoubtedly benefit both staff and students in the learning process.

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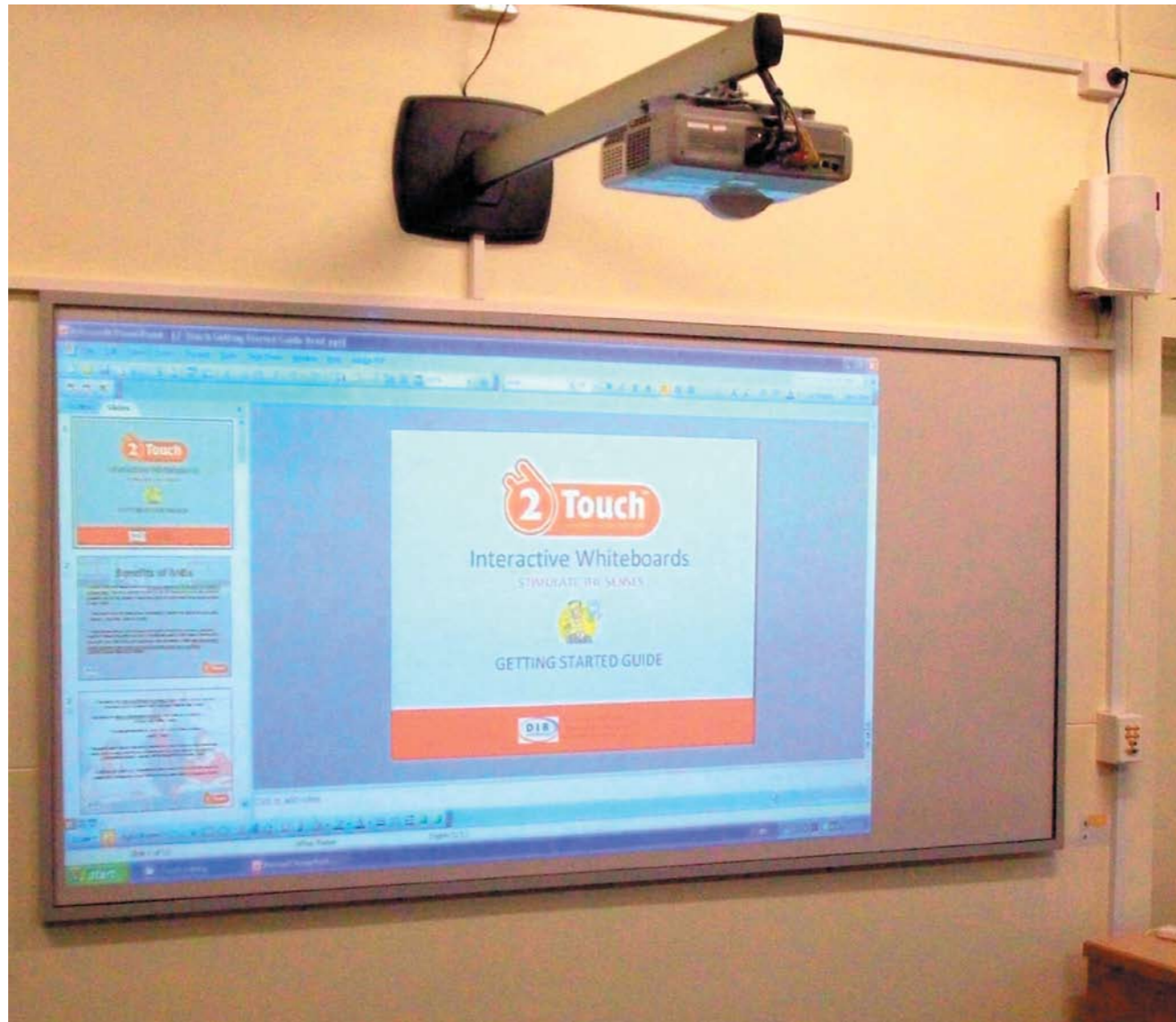
2Touch Interactive Whiteboards Introduced at Fintona

Situated in the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne Fintona is a girl's school from Prep to Year 12 that aims to provide its students with the opportunity to explore their interests within a broad and balanced education program. With that ethos in mind, it was decided by the school earlier this year to install a new projector system into a key learning space in the Senior School. IT Manager Grant Frazer enlisted the services of D.I.B Australia to provide this room with a solution that would enhance both teaching and learning for staff and students, as well as bringing a more interactive element to classes.

The room now boasts the world's first short throw widescreen projector – the EPSON EMP-400W. Ideal for use in conjunction with interactive whiteboards, the EMP-400W allows wide screen presentations with a short projection distance, meaning that it is able to display a 60 inch picture from a distance of just 65cm. This virtually eliminates the shadow and glare affect that is often a problem when students or teachers are presenting at the front of the class.

However, what really set this room apart from previous projector installations throughout the school was the inclusion of the latest generation Interactive Whiteboard (IWB), the 2Touch. The goal for this room was to achieve an IWB solution that was large and easy to use for both staff and students. The 2Touch is just that. Standing alone at 2.4 metres wide, not only does it act as a touch (finger or pen) capable interactive whiteboard but it also has a ceramic steel whiteboard surface for everyday classroom use. This feature appealed greatly to the school as it meant that instead of having two boards in the one room (as is often the case if for example a Smartboard was installed) they could install the 2Touch, which would act as both a normal whiteboard or alternatively the teacher could plug in a computer or laptop and go interactive, ultimately increasing the total whiteboard space.

Essentially the 2Touch offers the school the same features as a traditional whiteboard with teachers able to write directly on the board, marking objects, highlight or labelling elements on the screen and erasing errors. However the difference is that it also gives them the ability to save or print out the results without any additional effort.



Along with the installation of the board itself, the school was also provided with an Easiteach® software package. Easiteach® (considered by many to be the world's best interactive whiteboard software) will enable the teaching staff to access the full benefits of the board. Teachers are able to use it across the curriculums, enhancing learning and gaining greater pupil engagement. Teachers will have access to ready made lessons and content across Literacy, Maths, Science, Geography, English and more.

The installation of this new projector and Interactive Whiteboard system will provide great advantages to the students at Fintona, some of which include; increased enjoyment and motivation, greater opportunities for class participation and collaboration with their peers, less need for note taking and perhaps the most important, it will easily accommodate for different learning styles. Routine activities are enhanced by the use of the 2Touch IWB, because the pace is so much faster, the material is well presented and the teacher's

attention is focused on the pupil's response rather than writing the next question on the board. The new system will also offer great potential for teachers, enhancing the quality of teaching and reducing class preparation time.

If your school is interested in finding out more about the NEW 2Touch Interactive Whiteboard please contact a D.I.B Solutions consultant today on (03) 9457 4800.

EPSON G-Series: Powerful Installation Multimedia Projectors



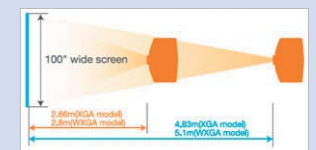
Here at D.I.B Australia we are celebrating the recent release of the EPSON G-Series range, a new class of projectors built with the latest projection technology. Comprising of the EPSON EB-G5100, EB-G5200W (widescreen) and the EB-G5350 (wireless), the projectors while delivering different features were all designed for reliable long term operation with minimal maintenance in high use and high traffic environments such as classrooms and hall auditoriums.

The EB-G5350 offers absolute flexibility in today's network environments and is capable of wireless PC-free operation, supporting Windows Vista Network Presentation capability for easy presentation sharing over networks, and offers XGA resolution at 5000 ANSI lumens brightness and 1000:1 contrast ratio. With its 5000 ANSI lumens in high brightness mode, the EB-G5350 delivers brilliant presentation quality, even in the largest of classrooms or school halls.

The EB-G5200W enables users to make an impact with wide and powerful images. With the increase in widescreen viewing, it features an original widescreen picture that automatically detects and resizes any aspect ratio (4:3/16:10/16:9). More horizontal space allows you to use a larger surface to project wide spreadsheets, presentation, educational videos and interactive whiteboard space. The EB-G5200W also delivers WXGA (1280 x 800) widescreen resolution at 4200 lumens and is designed for low maintenance and peace of mind in high use and high traffic environments.

Rounding out the G-Series is the EB-G5100 – the perfect balance between precision and performance, it offers XGA resolution at 400 ANSI lumens brightness and 1000:1 contrast ratio. With its wide zoom ratio (a powerful 1.8x optical zoom) it can project a 100" screen from a distance of as little as 2.66m. As a result, this short-throw feature means that even in the smallest of rooms, presenters can deliver large screen presentation that demonstrate the projector's advanced image and colour technologies.

The entire EPSON G-Series projectors have easy maintenance features such as one-touch filter removal and easy side lamp access, providing reliable and flexible operation and a low cost of ownership, ideal in a school environment.



TOP: The EMP400W virtually eliminates the shadow & glare affect that is often a problem with normal projectors
TOP LEFT: The EMP400W allows widescreen presentations with a short projection distance
LEFT: The 2Touch IWB is now a focal point of this Senior School classroom
ABOVE: Easiteach® software will allow teachers access to ready made lessons & content across a wide range of subjects.



HINTS 'N TIPS

16:10 Widescreen Projection – The Way of the Future



Widescreen projection has been a feature of the domestic AV market over the last 10 years but has crept into the education market and exploded of late. More and more, teachers and presenters are coming to realise that they can make more of an impact with wide powerful images and as such the widescreen projector is becoming more apparent in the average classroom.

For some time now, the standard TV/projector screen size ratio has been 4:3, whereas widescreen displays introduce a much larger 16:10 format. Ergonomists' have been recommending widescreen for a long time, because it is thought that human vision is better adapted to width than height. It is said to offer a more 'natural' view, especially when you consider that we see in a kind of widescreen with our eyes. With widescreen you can see approximately 33% more compared to the more conventional 4:3 format.

Widescreen projection offers more width in the image over the standard 4:3, which from a desktop point of view means more windows open at one time or more aspects (i.e. toolbars of a software application that can be visible at the one time). More horizontal space also allows users to use a larger surface to project wide spreadsheets, presentations, corporate videos and allow more interactive whiteboard space.

It seems with all the inherent advantages of widescreen projection and the increasing amount of widescreen laptops appearing in classrooms, the next big decision to face the school community is whether or not to stick to the current 4:3 format or branch out into 16:10. Of course there might be some issues faced with the more conventional 4:3 format. For instance if a 4:3 projector is installed in conjunction with an IWB and they were to plug in a 16:10 laptop then they would have do



one of two things. The first would be to adjust the video properties of the laptop to ensure the image fits well on the IWB – a nightmare for most IT Managers let alone staff who are not so technology savvy. Or alternatively they would have to allow for the projector to 'letter box' (a process by which the widescreen image would need to transfer into standard format whilst preserving the image's original aspect ratio) This would drastically reduce the space on the IWB, which is particularly an issue for a standard size IWB, as the area to work with would only continue to get smaller.

However, with that latest generation of Interactive Whiteboards (IWB) recently released, (specifically the 2Touch IWB) the issue of decreased board space would diminish. Unlike conventional Interactive Whiteboards the 2Touch is 1.2 x 2.4m in length, making it horizontally longer than most out on the market. The extra board space for teachers is invaluable, and coupled with a widescreen projector it can prove to be an innovative addition to the classroom.

Considering all these factors it would appear that widescreen projection is seemingly the way of the future for many classrooms throughout Victoria. With the new range of widescreen projectors recently released onto the market and readily available, schools have at their disposal a tool which offers them more horizontal space and a larger surface in which to gage their pupil's attention – even in the smallest of classrooms.

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