

# CASE STUDY INDUSTRIAL SUBSTATION33



**Substation33 is an innovative social enterprise and electronic waste recycling centre that not only prevents hundreds of tonnes of e-waste from entering landfill but provides thousands of hours of paid employment and work experience.**

## A RANGE THATS BEAUTIFUL INSIDE AND OUT

As a not-for-profit, social enterprise initiative, Substation33 provides a safe and supported work environment for work for the dole participants, special needs youth, and at risk community members. The centre accepts electronic waste from the local community, council and businesses providing an outlet for the recycle of computers, monitors, servers, office equipment, televisions, household appliances and any other obsolete or unwanted electronic equipment.

Tony Sharp is the Social Enterprise Development Manager for YFS' Substation33. The centre operates through the collection, manual disassembly, sorting, and selling of electronic waste," Sharp says. "Some of it is upsold – refurbished and sold – some of it, we break down into its individual components, and they become a sellable product. All money goes back into keeping Substation33 alive and supporting our staff".

The centre has also set up mini-substations in eight schools where e-waste is disassembled by high school students providing real world experience.

## NOTHING IS WASTED

Where possible, waste components are put to good use and refurbished onsite. Batteries collected from the e-waste are used to build battery packs to power pushbikes. Open source technology has provided the knowhow for building the packs. Staff have also built their own 3D printer which currently operates using virgin plastic. The next step is to recycle good quality plastic e-waste to produce feed material, effectively closing the loop. Several local high schools have received ready-made 3D printers as well as kits for students to assemble their own 3D printers. One of their innovative volunteers produces bespoke bluetooth speaker units from the various e-waste components.

## SUBSTATION33

Substation33 and YFS are leading the way for socially and environmentally sustainable enterprises.

## ECOBIZ OBJECTIVE

- At Substation33 we are turning the environmental liability of electronic waste in positive social outcomes at no cost to the customer.
- Continue to provide a safe work environment for at risk community members and ensure over 95% of our e-waste is diverted from landfill.

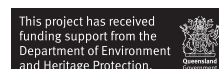
## ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

- Diverts around 100 tonnes of e-waste from landfill per year
- Provided over 9000 hours paid employment and over 25,000 hours of work experience and volunteering during 2015
- Won numerous awards including: Logan Eco Awards – Sustainable Business, Logan Disability Award 2014, 2015 Social Enterprise Award, Premiers Sustainability Awards Finalist, Australian Top 5 (Runner up) in the Chivas Regal Social Entrepreneurs Global Search
- Only 2.9% of the received electronic waste had a final destination of landfill
- Achieved ISO14001 certification
- 1 Star ecoBiz Champion (Waste)

[Watch the full story here](#)

THE ECOBIZ TEAM IS ALWAYS  
AVAILABLE TO HELP YOU.

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