



*Vicken Hekimian*

## SCENE CHANGE OPENS IN SYDNEY

AV industry upstarts Scene Change have opened office number four in Sydney.

"The response to the first three offices show that clients like a bit of free choice in their AV, so we felt it was time to bring it to a major market," said Director Peter Kolevas.

Local partner in Scene Change Sydney is Vicken Hekimian, former Regional Director of Operations at Staging Connections and a respected fifteen year veteran of the industry.

"I was really attracted to the idea of building a smaller, close knit team where the crew feel a real sense of ownership of their show," he said.

Like other Scene Change offices, Sydney will offer a purely technical service, preferring to leave creative, decoration and styling services to other specialist suppliers.

"We're working with a lot of event producers who want to feel secure that we're not trying to muscle in on their turf," said Hekimian.

Elsewhere, Scene Change Wollongong has won the contract for in-house AV at the Wollongong Sports and Entertainment Centre (WSEC), a complex that contains a 6000 seat venue and St George Dragons home ground WIN Stadium.

"Offering the Scene Change service gives us the strength of a national

brand, with the highest level of equipment quality, but also with the local responsiveness and autonomy that our clients need," said WSEC General Manager Stuart Barnes.

"Scene Change also gives us wider services than normal hotel AV, bringing a lot of experience in major entertainment production, sports, broadcast support and community events."

Scene Change Wollongong's Sean Keaveny had previously worked at the centre for five years.

"Clients are suddenly discovering Wollongong as a convenient meeting destination, and there's a lot of hospitality growth going on here. We believe the Centre will become the focus for major meetings here," said Keaveny.

Meanwhile Scene Change founders Peter Kolevas and Ian Whitworth are getting a great deal of amusement from wild industry rumours about their company. Their Top 5 from the August grapevine:

1. Scene Change is actually a wholly-owned business unit of Staging Connections, with elaborate 'resignation' charades to cover transfers of staff from one brand to the other.
2. Kolevas has lost his house on the business.
3. Gary Hackett is the secret backer of Scene Change.
4. Scene Change Tasmania staff have been running a landscaping business on the side.
5. Scene Change equipment has been seen in the windows of Cash Converters.

"It's hilarious. And all bollocks obviously, but the fact that we're being talked about suggests we're upsetting the status quo out there," says Whitworth.

He reports solid sales performance for each of the first three Scene Change offices, and expects Sydney to do likewise in a short period of time.