



## Restrooms designed for hospitality apps

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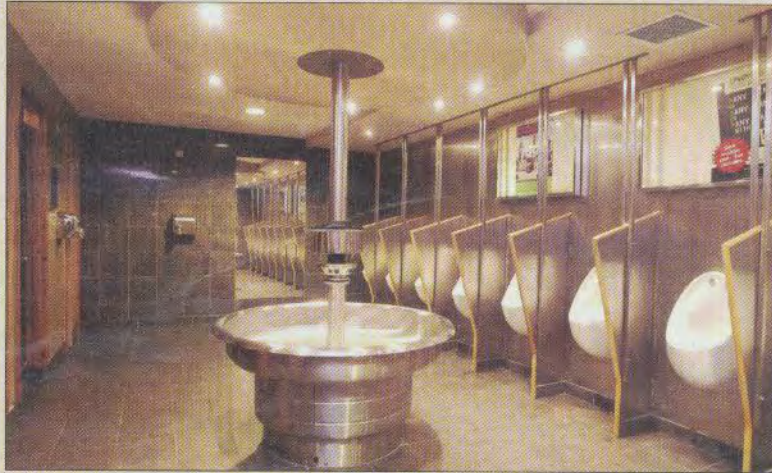
Getting a job and installing the plumbing fixtures is one part of the restroom equation. To add value, contractors must partner with architects and designers in the upfront planning phase, beyond just the mechanicals. This can be particularly important for hospitality applications, which tend to be more specialized and consumer focused than others.

Hospitality facilities such as hotels, retailers and restaurants each have unique restroom needs. Yet, these facilities also have something in common — they all recognize the critical role restrooms play in visitors' impressions of their establishment. Increasingly, building owners are looking for ways to make their restrooms special and even extend their building's overall design philosophy.

### Restrooms for retail

Malls and retail stores are continually finding ways to make shopping more convenient and comfortable, particularly for parents with young children. As a result, many malls and larger department stores are adding family restrooms as part of new construction or renovation projects. Unisex restrooms are required by the 2003 International Building Code for these projects, but many retailers are going beyond the minimum unisex toilet room requirements.

Providing larger family-friendly facilities help parents of opposite sex children, such as a father with a young daughter, and are also a convenient option for individuals in wheelchairs and their caregivers. Upscale shopping centers have found that adding lounge areas, nursing rooms, and extras like child-height toilets and handwashing fixtures make shopping easier for



A circular stainless steel washfountain serves as the visual centerpiece of the men's washroom at Lloyd's No. 1, The Trafalgar, in Portsmouth, England. The washfountain is as economical as it is practical for the washroom's design — the unit accommodates up to eight users at one time.

everyone. To meet these needs, manufacturers are developing new products that are universal in their design and fit seamlessly into attractive family restrooms.

Matching accessories that are appropriate for multi-use restrooms can help keep the areas tidy. Consider oversized trash receptacles to hold large volumes of dirty diapers. Location for the diaper changing stations is important — be sure they are out of the main traffic pattern and ideally separate from the handwashing area.

Stainless steel accessories are usually a good choice for busy restrooms. Recessing paper towel dispensers and other fixtures makes them even tougher. Sometimes a surface mounted accessory can be a temptation for bored teens who may decide to try to knock them off the wall. In addition, recessing these units gives the restroom a more polished look and saves space.

### Restaurants and bars

Large family restrooms are rarely a concern for restaurants and bars. In fact, just the opposite is usually the case. Saving space to allow room for money-making tables and bar areas, however, is a priority.

Since nearly every patron enters the restroom at some point during their visit, making restrooms part of the dining or drinking experience is a must. In addition to creative uses of tile or slate, installing unique handwashing fixtures is a cost-effective way to achieve this design goal.

Owners of one of the most famous bar chains in the United Kingdom, Lloyds No. 1, installed an unconventional handwashing station in their

men's restroom as part of a renovation project in July 2004. The bar, located at The Trafalgar building in historic Portsmouth, Hampshire, needed to be updated as part of the transformation to become a Lloyd's bar. Meeting the space constraints for

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a men's restroom in the mezzanine area of the building was a prerequisite — planners hoped to avoid moving the restrooms to another area of the building or creating an additional men's room.

Ultimately, the men's washroom was designed to not only fit aesthetically with its surroundings, but become an attraction unto itself. A stainless steel circular washfountain was specified, rather than eight wall-mounted basins. This allowed the designers to meet building regulations for the number of lavatories relative to water closets without increasing the size of the men's washroom. An added benefit is that the one washfountain was easier and less expensive to install. Moreover, facility staff say patrons enjoy socializing around the centrally located fixture.

Boogie McCain's Music Hall, a nightclub with a New Orleans flair in Gadsden, Ala., has taken a slightly dif-

ferent approach to handwashing as part of its restroom additions. The club owner, Carl Weaver, wanted a sleek look for the new men's and women's washrooms to contrast with the facility's old-fashioned charm.

Working together with Allen Ross at Gadsden-based Plumber's Wholesale Supply and Brown Sales Associates in Birmingham, Ala., Weaver personally specified a new type of solid surface, multi-height lavatory system. These wave-shaped solid surface handwashing fixtures incorporate a taller sink with a lower one that meets ADA compliance. The almost-completed restrooms will have a fluid, contemporary look and the lavatory systems will coordinate with the African slate tile on the floors.

### Hotel and casino restrooms

There are few places where image is more important than in hotels and casinos. To that end, many building owners are interested in fixtures and accessories for public restrooms that are durable, but also specific to their brand. Special requests are not uncommon and can often be accommodated by manufacturers.

The Golden Moon Hotel and Casino, Choctaw, Miss., for example, requested special toilet partitions for its restrooms. The Golden Moon Hotel and Casino sought a golden color phenolic material with an engraved casino logo on each of the restroom doors. Partitions were custom made to match the gold-leaf color of the casino's logo.

Maintenance is another concern for casinos and other hospitality facilities that are open around the clock. Since there's no down time for repairs, facility managers should be given a stock of replacement parts for lavatories and other fixtures so they can be fixed immediately. The Golden Moon keeps a repair kit and supply of parts for partitions on hand at all times.

Depending on the facility, hospitality applications may have extremely high-traffic washrooms. It is important to keep traffic volume and flow in mind when designing a restroom and selecting products. Mounting toilet partitions from the ceiling and hanging fixtures on the wall keeps floor spaces open and saves on cleaning time. Solid surface lavatory systems are usually easier to clean than individual china lavs since the fixtures have one continuous bowl, resist stains and graffiti can be wiped away with everyday cleaners.

Jumbo-sized tissue dispensers and  
(Turn to Bradley, page 36.)



Multi-height solid surface lavatory systems, like those being installed at Blues Club, are attractive and extremely durable, making them a good fit for a variety of busy restrooms — from hotel lobbies to malls and more. Multi-height lavatory systems work well for users of all sizes and abilities and can be effective in family restrooms.





## Bradley

(Continued from page 34.)

heavy-duty soap dispensers can reduce restocking time. Choosing electric hand dryers over paper towels eliminates excess trash. In addition, dryers are more cost-effective, better for the environment and keep the restroom more sanitary.

### Finishing touches

Lighting can make restrooms look welcoming or cast harsh shadows on the restroom and even make it seem poorly maintained. Lighting should complement light levels throughout the rest of the store or restaurant. Recessed lighting above lavatories and mirrors is often a good choice, rather than traditional strip lighting. Sensor-activation and dimmer switches are a couple of options to consider.

Materials should have a similar fit and finish to the rest of the facility. But choose wisely to keep restroom germs at bay. If sustainability is a factor, this will need to be addressed immediately. Consider the application and speak up if you think a designer is choosing a material that will not be durable enough in the restroom. For example, bamboo is environmentally friendly and attractive, but recycled glass tile is probably a more durable choice for restroom floors.

Although plumbing fixtures should be kept relatively neutral in color to increase their lifespan, accessories

are an easy way to add color or interest. If a wavy solid surface fixture is installed, a light fixture, mirrors, shelves and other accessories can be chosen that have similar lines.

**Many building owners are interested in fixtures and accessories for public restrooms that are specific to their brand.**

Partition and towel dispenser colors can coordinate or contrast with restroom walls. Just be sure materials are consistent throughout and are of the same high quality.

These are just a few of the many things to consider for hospitality restroom design. Different applications will have different needs — there is not a one-size-fits-all formula. Building relationships with local architects and attending design conferences, in addition to plumbing-specific seminars, is a great way to learn more. Staying informed about the latest products and trends is essential. After all, if you can bring more value to a project than the next person, who is most likely to get the work? ■

*Kris Alderson is the marketing manager at Bradley Corporation, a manufacturer of plumbing fixtures, washroom accessories, partitions, emergency fixtures and solid plastic lockers based in Menomonee Falls, Wisc. For more information, call 800/BRADLEY or visit online at [www.bradleycorp.com](http://www.bradleycorp.com).*

## Basco offers single source solution

As Basco celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2005, the nation's leading custom shower enclosure manufacturer is fulfilling its mission as the industry's Single Source Solution provider for shower doors and enclosures. Thanks to a \$1.3 million, 50,000-square-foot expansion that was recently added to its Mason, Ohio headquarters, and a new network of distribution centers designed to get Basco products and services closer to customers, Basco continues to make shower doors easier and more profitable for contractors.

"Our Single Source Solution makes selling Basco products easier because we focus on two things — the customer's needs and the precision it takes to meet them," explained George Rohde, president and CEO of Basco. "The breadth of our product lines, approach to innovation, knowledgeable customer services staff, on-time delivery, product guarantees, and full training programs make selling Basco hassle free and profitable."

Through Basco University, a cornerstone of the Single Source Solution, contractors, installers and other professionals can take advan-



At Basco University, more than 1,000 contractors, installers and other professionals have taken advantage of the company's comprehensive training program and learned ways to be more effective and efficient.

tage of the company's comprehensive training program. The classes are designed to help sales teams sell more, and help installers be more effective and efficient, ultimately saving both time and money.

"Throughout our 50-year history, we have been a very contractor-friendly company," said Rohde. "We've thought through every possible hurdle our customers may face when ordering and installing a shower door system and through our Single Source Solution we've eliminated these obstacles, making it even easier to do business with Basco."

### Basco University expanded

In January 2005, Basco opened the doors to its new 4,500 square-foot, state-of-the-art training center, home to the company's highly acclaimed Basco University. Basco University offers installers intensive, hands-on classes on the proper techniques and methods for best installing glass shower doors and enclosures. The courses address how to correctly measure for the doors, how to check for out of square, out of plumb conditions, selecting the proper tools and product differentiation.

"Since initiating Basco University in 1999 the program has been very successful. More than 1,000 graduates (Turn to Basco, page 38.)



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