



PRESS RELEASE

POP UP MY BATHROOM

The latest trends in bathroom design

Pop up my Bathroom

- ISH Water visualises the trend towards living bathrooms
- Bathroom Interior – when the washbasin becomes a room divider
- Green Bathroom – intelligent products for more sensuousness and sustainability in the bathroom
- Easy Bathroom – the comfort bathroom that adapts to its users

Today's bathrooms are no longer chilly, wipe-clean functional cells. Bathrooms are turning into living space. As simple as this meanwhile ubiquitously manifest megatrend might sound, its impact on the sanitary industry and the conceptual possibilities for bathroom design are nothing short of revolutionary. As a result, expectations of the aesthetics and functionality of contemporary bathroom design are growing. Accordingly, there will be more than "just" new products on show at the world's leading fair for the sanitary industry, the ISH in Frankfurt. For it is not the bathtub that is being reinvented, but the entire bathroom.

Pop up my Bathroom: model games for individual life designs
Where would you like to take a bath? How about a bathroom on the roof of a townhouse, by a lake in the forest or in an old vaulted cellar? Wouldn't you like to climb into the water in a

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castle? Or walk across a floor of moss when you step out of the greenery-entwined shower? Perhaps you'd like to take possession of an old factory hall with enough room for adventurous furnished islands and so much space that you can dance in front of the washbasin? What would your favourite place look like?

The three bathroom scenographies featured in the photographs describe the trends "Bathroom Interior", "Green Bathroom" and "Easy Bathroom". They relate to function-differentiating room concepts "away from the wall", sustainable bathroom design that takes the user "back to nature" and the concept of a comfortable and convenient bathroom that makes life easier for everybody, whatever their age. "We decided to feature these three trends because we believe they will provide the decisive impetus for the development of new product concepts and new bathroom layouts," says Jens J. Wischmann, Managing Director of the VDS, in explanation of Pop up my Bathroom's focus. "We believe they answer consumers' need for more cosiness and relaxation, for environmentally aware behaviour and sensuous experiences, as well as for a straightforward, self-determined way of life well into old age."

Like pop-ups, the scenographies of the three bathroom visions make us believe in their fundamental feasibility, they compel us to think about the theories of cosiness, sustainability and multigenerational compatibility.

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The photo spreads show bathrooms in unusual places: an old factory, a greenhouse, a castle. They are intended to represent different environments – an urban setting, a life in the midst of nature and a luxuriously dignified ambiance. The scenographies are meant to remove the bathroom from its conventional context so as to reveal its creative potential. Each of the spreads establishes an emotional relationship between the respective trend concept and the user, whose fantasies – with the emphasis on my bathroom – have been turned into reality.

Bathroom Interior – away from the wall

The future of the bathroom lies in playing with the space. The crucial question that home builders and bathroom planners must ask themselves is no longer how to equip the wall but how to interpret the room as a space and zone its functions. Today's modern collections are geared towards the individual implementation of layout concepts. They can be used to subdivide the bathroom into various zones, perhaps into a shower-and-toilet area for hygiene and another area for relaxation. But there's more to it than dividing walls, sliding doors and diverse wood décors that link the bathroom design with the rest of the living areas. The change is more far-reaching than that and even extends to the concept and design of the products themselves. Furniture is increasingly being assigned the role of differentiating between zones and functions. It's no different in the bathroom. That is why modern bathroom design will favour products with precisely this architectural quality. However, it is not primarily a question of efficiency but of the quality of the experience and the needs-



based zoning of the increased space available. Grooming has become an established and increasingly broad-based hedonistic culture that is being differentiated into various sub-functions – such as washing, cleansing and refreshing, facial and beauty care, daily routines, switching off and relaxing, dressing and even fitness or socialising. “Bathroom Interior” means seeking individual solutions in order to adapt the floor plan to the habits and ideals of specific users.

Green Bathroom – back to nature

Many people dream of a bathroom surrounded by greenery and coupled with eco-compatible comfort. But designing a “Green Bathroom” isn’t quite as easy as our romantic ideas about a natural, wholesome lifestyle would seem to suggest. On the contrary: the way to a sustainable bathroom is paved with highly complex products and technologies. The Green Bathroom is a concept for the future that strives for the optimal combination of water and energy-saving products, eco-compatible industrial production, a sustainable use of materials and enduring design. Sustainable product concepts are mainly aimed at reducing the amount of water used because, in the bathroom, water consumption often means using additional energy to heat the water as well. Thanks to flow restrictors, aerators, shower shut-off valves, sensor and thermostat technology, modern showerhead technology and bathtubs with cleverly designed, volume-saving shapes, the water requirement can be greatly reduced without any noticeable loss of comfort or convenience. Nevertheless, sustainability in the bathroom remains a question of behaviour too. The economy



flush buttons on the toilet have to be used, and showering remains far more economical than taking a full bath, which is a very special luxury indeed – not only in terms of environmental aspects. But there's more to a Green Bathroom than saving water. Water means vitality and sensuousness as well.

Cascade fittings – now available in economical versions too – and fittings that dispense unpressurised water make us forget the elaborate inner workings and remind us that water is an immensely valuable natural resource. And finally, when it comes to the choice of materials, it is hard to think of any other material that is as innocuous to produce, as safe for the occupants of the house and of such enduring quality as sanitary ceramic. With guarantees of up to 30 years, even the energy-intensive process required to produce enamelled steel for bathtubs and shower trays appears in a more acceptable light – and demonstrates just how important timeless design and top-quality products are in the bathroom. Ultimately, the most sustainable bathroom of all is one that will last a long time and stay just as attractive as the day it was installed.

Easy Bathroom – as simple as it gets

Age-appropriate and multifunctional bathroom design isn't merely a question of style, it's a conceptual approach. An increasing number of people are coming to realise that it is their bathroom that will eventually decide whether or not they can live a self-determined life well into old age. But a family-friendly comfort bathroom means even the smallest members of the family ought to be able to use it independently without their alarmed mothers having to watch over their every move. And if

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dad wants to enjoy his power shower before he sets off for the office, he shouldn't be driven to despair just because junior has manipulated the shower settings. In times of demographic change and individualised lifestyles, what both society and the real estate sector need is a bathroom concept that can satisfy the needs of very different users and be adapted to changing requirements. An "Easy Bathroom", simple, practical and beautiful into the bargain. Timelessly beautiful: a room for youngsters and for old people who don't feel their age. Disabilities, whatever their nature, should not be the prime concern when planning a bathroom. Instead, the ultimate goal is to omit anything that would discriminate against certain individuals. It is the art of reduction that makes the difference. The trend towards minimalistic furnishings and – level-access – XXL showers, as well as the growing desire to integrate the bathroom with the living space, are certainly compatible with an age-appropriate bathroom design. If sufficient space is available, a bathroom with this kind of "Universal Design" can easily be adapted and made barrier-free should the need arise later on. More than anything else, however, an "easy" bathroom is human. It is geared towards tolerating mistakes, doing some of the thinking for its users and conveying a sense of normality. That is why even the technology is at the service of its human users. Once the settings have been made, all that's needed is a push of a button to activate individual programmes with complex sequences. But the buttons have to be big enough and installed low down. That way, dad isn't the only one who can enjoy a customised wellness routine: granny and the kids can pamper themselves as well.



Eco-aware bathroom technology with sex appeal

Bathroom design is flirting openly with circuits, chips, smart programmes and LED technology. It is being joined by wall-mounted elements and sophisticated air-conditioning technology in the Bathroom Interior Trend and by intelligent design, refined materials, dirt-repellent and slip-resistant high-tech finishes in the Green Bathroom and Easy Bathroom: independently of the conceptual approach, the technisation of bathroom products, fixtures and furnishings is on the advance, from electronic control elements in taps and wellness products all the way to lighting technology and multimedia stations. This too seems to be a parallel development in all sectors of interior design right now. But the bathroom in particular offers huge potential for innovation, especially in terms of sustainability, safety and easy usage. In the bathroom, technology doesn't just remain invisibly concealed inside the products, it is palpable too: it makes the daily routine and hours of relaxation more individual and the fixtures and fittings easier to use; for many technology lovers, it enhances the attractiveness of the entire bathroom. Hardly surprising then, that – besides sustainability and design – the technisation of the bathroom looks set to be the dominant trend theme at this year's ISH.

Lifestyle expertise of the sanitary industry

The photo campaign by the VDS is being accompanied by a website (www.pop-up-my-bathroom.de/com) which, in line with the pop-up motto, invites users to try things out and play interactively, as well as providing some teasing snippets of



information. In 2010, the prior campaign was nominated for the International German PR Award. The current sequel focuses on the exemplary photos, which are intended more as icons for visionary bathroom design than as practicable layout proposals.

The VDS sees this campaign not just as a communication measure for its member companies but also as a source of inspiration for the entire sector that is intended to appeal to planners and interior architects as well. Jens J. Wischmann believes the content dossier on the ten trends that was published in 2009 is representative of the diversity inherent in the Bathroom Experience and the current threads of development and is delighted with the latest photographic translation: “Our content dossiers visualise the sector’s potential for everyone to see; our sector has long since gone beyond the installation of pipes and is pressing its claim to be perceived as a lifestyle industry,” says Wischmann, calling for a change in the sector’s image. “The sanitary industry stands for an incredibly broad spectrum, from water-saving toilets all the way to wellness rain-shower systems and complete interior design concepts.”

The German Sanitary Industry Association (Vereinigung Deutsche Sanitärwirtschaft e.V., VDS) in Bonn is the umbrella organisation for German companies in the bathroom and sanitary sectors and consists of 10 member associations from industry, specialist wholesale and specialist trades. The SME sector represents total annual turnover of approx. 17 billion euros. It is integrated within the entire sanitation, heating and



air-conditioning sector with its approx. 50,500 companies and more than 400,000 employees. The VDS represents members' common interests in public, particularly in the form of extensive PR work for the bathroom as living space.

From 15th to 19th March 2011, more than 2,300 manufacturers will be presenting the world's biggest collection of innovative bathroom design, sustainable sanitary solutions and eco-friendly building technology at the ISH in Frankfurt am Main.

Editor's note: you will find extensive text material on the three trends "Bathroom Interior", "Green Bathroom" and "Easy Bathroom" on the attached DVD or in the "Pop up my Bathroom" trend book.

Further information:

www.sanitaerwirtschaft.de

www.messefrankfurt.com

www.pop-up-my-bathroom.de

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