

Press

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The World's Leading Trade Fair for The Bathroom Experience, Building Services, Energy, Air Conditioning Technology and Renewable Energies

Frankfurt am Main, 12 to 16 March 2013

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ISH 2013: Bathroom Trend "Bathroom (R)Evolution" – on the way to an intelligent feel-good machine

A type of bathroom for anyone with a pronounced need for convenience, safety and control

With the integration of digital technologies, the bathroom is about to undergo a fundamental transformation

When it comes to safety, convenience and individualisation, the bathroom of the future won't make any compromises. With "Bathroom (R)Evolution", it's the human being that occupies centre stage and shapes his environment to suit his needs. At the ISH, the World's Leading Trade Fair for The Bathroom Experience, Building Services, Energy, Air Conditioning Technology and Renewable Energies in Frankfurt am Main from 12 to 16 March 2013, this development will be taken up in the form of the "Bathroom (R)Evolution" trend. The trend for 2013/14 will be presented in the "Pop up my Bathroom" trend forum launched by Messe Frankfurt and the German Sanitary Industry Association (Vereinigung Deutsche Sanitärwirtschaft / VDS) four years ago.

Design has changed the bathroom and made it more aesthetic, more pleasure-oriented and cosier. Now, with the integration of new materials and modern technologies, the bathroom is about to undergo a fundamental transformation. For more so than in any other area of the home, designing the bathroom is about designing the interface between the human being and the technology.

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Many bathroom users dream of a bathroom that welcomes them with a pleasantly warm ambience in the mornings and prepares them



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gently for the day. In the dark months of the year, for instance, they want to step into a pre-heated room that doesn't dazzle them with overly bright lighting and plays their favourite music or the news over the radio or display. The tap recognizes the user's wave and, without being touched, sends water at the pre-programmed temperature gurgling into the washbasin. In the evening, the bathroom welcomes him home with atmospheric lighting and a programmed shower sequence, or with a bathtub that automatically fills itself to the desired depth at the push of a button. Warmed towels and toilet seats, sensor-controlled safety lighting, shower toilets and colour programmes in the shower or pre-heated sauna are just some of the other convenience packages the bathroom of the future holds in store for us as almost standard features.

If a car can recognise its driver and click the seat into the right position accordingly, why shouldn't the bathroom follow suit and be wired up as a single unit programmed to serve the individual needs of its user? This can be achieved both by digital technologies and intelligently designed products which, thanks to minimised components, can be made extremely slender indeed when necessary. The design solutions of the future will do away with the original contradiction between modern aesthetics and a bathroom that has been designed for safety with grab bars and barrier-free products. Easy-care finishes are just the sector's prelude to an overhaul of surfaces, materials and features that will make the time spent in the bathroom totally worry-free – with no fear of slipping, getting scalded or using the wrong lever under the shower. After hygiene, safety and freedom from worry are probably the two most important needs that have to be satisfied in the bathroom, followed by convenience, intimacy and recreational appeal – whether that takes the form of bathtime fun, entertainment, shared experiences or meditation.

Control over water, energy and a self-determined life

When it comes to safety and convenience, the bathroom is a sensitive area. It is no coincidence that "barrier-free" is a catchword in modern bathroom planning, for it does not just affect the safety of everyone who uses the bathroom, it is a basic requirement for an ever-growing group of older people who want to live an independent life as well. "Bathroom (R)Evolution" makes these needs its top priority by applying ergonomics both to the individual sanitary products and to the bathroom as a whole. It turns the bathroom into a "pampering machine", a space that attends to the needs of its user and cossets him – especially relevant for an ageing person who cannot always retain complete control of his body.

In design, ergonomics stands for products and tools with a human shape that is adapted to the human body and human needs. Ergonomics is, so to speak, the basic law of good design. Although the technisation of everyday life has brought a never-before-seen degree of convenience to our homes, it has brought a new problem area as well: the usability and individualisability of technical products. Older people in particular are aware of this problem when it comes to using telephones and televisions. Besides designing user interfaces for computers and displays, interface design must thus also turn its attention to the ergonomic design of the bathroom. In future, the sanitary industry will thus have to focus even more strongly on this field. The path it has chosen to date aims for a sensuous bathroom that can be used intuitively.

"Bathroom (R)Evolution" is a multimedia phenomenon

"Bathroom (R)Evolution" takes this approach one step further. It increasingly involves hands-free technologies for the fittings, lighting and toilet flush. In addition, water and smooth surfaces are feasible as projection surfaces for light and information. "Bathroom (R)Evolution" is a multimedia phenomenon. The mirror cabinet could

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for instance become an information centre and database that can store and retrieve medical or cosmetic information. In future, product design will increasingly be about finding forms that harmonise with the programming consoles and digital control units.

Besides the implementation of what is technically feasible, designers will also concern themselves with selecting what should be implemented as well, for not every gadget will seem meaningful in the long term. The challenge will lie in adapting technology to people's individual needs.

Not for dyed-in-the-wool purists

"Bathroom (R)Evolution" is not for people who like an elemental, back-to-the-roots feel. Puristic design, yes. But apart from that, this bathroom is anything but plain and simple – everything is crammed full with technical sophistication. Once the hygiene routine or fun programme has been completed, there's a Wii console waiting for the technology buff, a gym mat for the yoga disciple or a relaxing armchair for the slightly older amateur golfer. And while they're here, why shouldn't they watch the latest James Bond movie after a nice relaxing bath as well?

Photos to accompany this text are available at:

www.ish.messefrankfurt.com/trend_report

Background information on Messe Frankfurt

Messe Frankfurt is Germany's leading trade fair organiser, with 467.5 million euros in sales and 1,725 active employees worldwide. The Messe Frankfurt Group has a global network of 28 subsidiaries and approx. 50 international Sales Partners, giving it a presence for its customers in more than 150 countries. Events "made by Messe



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Frankfurt" take place at more than 30 locations around the globe. In 2011, Messe Frankfurt organised 100 trade fairs, of which more than half took place outside Germany. Messe Frankfurt's exhibition grounds, featuring 578,000 square metres, are currently home to ten exhibition halls and an adjacent Congress Center. The company is publicly owned, with the City of Frankfurt holding 60 percent and the State of Hesse 40 percent. For more information, please visit our website at: www.messefrankfurt.com