



Manufacturers have developed custom finish options ranging from graphite to brushed nickel to polished brass that each instill a sense of luxury. Photo credit: Sloan

Elevating the restroom aesthetic through unified design

Recent trends aim to make the restroom a design destination.

By Morgan Butts

The commercial restroom plays a pivotal role inside a building. As one of the most visited areas in any commercial building, the restroom goes a long way toward shaping the overall perception of a facility. When someone goes to an office building, they'll probably use a conference room or maybe take a brief tour, but they're almost guaranteed to use the restroom.

With this in mind, it's critical for restrooms to leave a positive lasting impression on its users — all while leading the way in water-saving and hygiene-friendly solutions.

It's for this reason that architects and designers are now unifying their restroom projects by specifying products that are developed with one cohesive aesthetic. Not only are commercial restroom manufacturers facilitating new opportunities to design elegant restrooms with matching products, they're also advancing technology to help these aesthetic products stand the test of time and create an impressive restroom experience for years to come.

The finishing touch

Traditionally, polished chrome has been the accepted aesthetic for commercial restroom products. But what if the designer could make a creative statement with a unique finish across the entire restroom? That dream is now a reality, as manufacturers have developed custom finish options ranging from graphite to brushed nickel to polished brass, instilling a sense of luxury.

These finishes are setting the tone for modern specification across a number of restroom products, including flushometers, faucets, soap dispensers and hand dryers — satisfying the trend for product customization that has gained increased popularity both in the United States and internationally.

Make your mark

Organizations are now able to extend their brand where it's never gone before — the restroom.



Thanks to commercial restroom manufacturers' ability to add laser-etched engravings to faucets and flushometers, companies such as the Colorado Rockies are adding a unique branding element to differentiate themselves in these high-traffic areas. Photo credit: Sloan



Chicago's Shedd Aquarium recently branded its faucets to add a new level of visibility to its brand. The aquarium is now effectively boosting its brand while also showcasing high design all in one product. Photo credit: Sloan

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Manufacturers that utilize a Physical Vapor Deposition (PVD) process are enhancing their products' resistance to chemicals and abrasion that can occur with daily cleaning by bonding the finish at the molecular level. Photo credit: Sloan

Thanks to commercial restroom manufacturers' ability to add laser-etched engravings to faucets and flushometers, companies are adding a unique branding element to differentiate themselves in these high-traffic areas. Increasingly popular in sports venues such as Denver's Coors Field — which features the Colorado Rockies logo on its faucets throughout the club level in a recent retrofit — this aesthetic movement has



Finishes such as matte black (pictured above) are setting the tone for modern specification across a number of restroom products, including flushometers, faucets, soap dispensers and hand dryers — satisfying the trend for product customization that has gained increased popularity both in the United States and internationally. Photo credit: Sloan

quickly spread to high-end hotels, restaurants, airports, fitness centers, casinos and more.

Already one of the most recognizable logos in the Chicago area thanks to its 87-year commitment to the community, Chicago's Shedd Aquarium recently branded its faucets to add a new level of visibility to its brand. The aquarium is now effectively boosting its brand while also showcasing high design all in one product.

Preserving high design

These design trends are transcending the previous aesthetic opportunities within the restroom, but if the product designs lose their luster from scratches and corrosion after just a few months or a year, all that creative effort can be overshadowed.

That's why maybe the most important part of the design trend is an emphasis placed on pairing original design with long-term durability. Manufacturers that utilize a Physical Vapor Deposition (PVD) process are enhancing their product's resistance to chemicals and abrasion that can occur with daily cleaning by bonding the finish at the molecular level.

The push toward PVD technology is also helping facility maintenance teams ensure long-term cohesion across entire sets of products within the restroom. For example, if a restroom

has eight PVD faucets and one needs to be replaced, the new faucet will look just like the others. Whereas, if those faucets were finished using a different process, they would fade over time, and the new faucet, soap dispenser, hand dryer or flushometer would not match. If you're making the investment of a unified, eye-catching aesthetic across your restroom, choosing a manufacturer that uses a PVD process is an important layer of insurance to protect that investment for years to come. 

Morgan Butts is the product line manager for faucets, sinks, soap dispensers, hand dryers and showerheads at Sloan. Sloan has been providing innovation in water-saving fixtures for over 114 years.

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