

The Power of Steam:

What lurks beneath? The difference between presentation & cleanliness

IN THE ACCOMMODATION INDUSTRY, PRESENTATION IS PARAMOUNT. FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE EVERYTHING AND GUESTS ARE QUICK TO MAKE JUDGMENTS ABOUT THE CLEANLINESS OF THEIR ACCOMMODATION.

It is common to think that presentation and cleanliness go hand in hand. If a facility is pleasant on the eye, smells fresh and linen and towels are regularly changed, then a facility is clean. However, this isn't the case and this type of thinking can be highly deceiving and lead to the spread of bacteria and disease.

Most accommodation owners, managers and staff would agree that hygiene is essential to the daily operations of their business but some are unaware they may be using outdated cleaning methods. It is no longer acceptable to use cleaning methods such as the mop and bucket, and these traditional methods are the ones that may provide the "presentation" but not the "cleanliness".

There are still four common cleaning myths that are specific to the accommodation industry. If left unresolved for a long period of time, it can have dramatic effects on your business and guests.

Smelling "nice" - The smell of a room does not relate to the cleanliness of the room. In reality, no smell usually means something is clean. A fragrance or perfume merely masks bad smells and does not solve the original problem.

For example, carpet crystals are a common mask of bacteria and grime. Carpet crystals remove dirt and soil deep within the carpet. This is where the smell is coming from and where bacteria are being harboured.

Fresh sheets - Many accommodation cleaners know the prevalence of bed bugs. Therefore, much attention is paid to the daily replacement of bed sheets and linen, and regular vacuuming of beds but these processes will not eliminate bed bugs.

The eggs that are laid by bed bugs are extremely difficult to get rid of, and the only way to eliminate bed bugs and their eggs is through deep steam cleaning.

Vacuuming - Traditional vacuuming is one of the main cleaning methods in which people think that something is clean but it actually only looks clean. Vacuums merely produce a top surface clean rather than the necessary deep clean. Vacuuming only lightly picks up surface dirt, when the actual odour-causing grime, dirt and soil is deep down. Spots and spills should not be eliminated with just a traditional vacuum but rather through both washing and vacuuming or steam cleaning.

Bathroom and chemicals - Bathrooms are typically cleaned by methods such as human scrubbing and large amounts of chemicals. With a high number of visits and guests, this can lead to the build up of body fats, hairs, bacteria from wounds and potential disease outbreaks.

Bathrooms are one of the main rooms that can accumulate a large amount of unhygienic and unhealthy matter putting the health of your guests and business reputation at risk.

Manual scrubbing and chemicals won't completely break down and dislodge matter and bacteria that build up in the pipes and even on



surfaces. For example, a surface may "look" clean, but there is underlying bacteria, soap scum and mould that cause time.

Today's modern commercial cleaning processes that meet industry guidelines and standards involve steam cleaning, microfibre and investing in specifically designed machines.

Supersteam - Supersteam is superheated, dry and consistent steam. Supersteam is steam that is heated to a temperature of 180°C and at this temperature, it kills all bacteria and vapourisers all mould, grime and stain build up.



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Microfibre - Microfibre is a man made synthetic textile fibre usually made of very fine nylon or polyester fibre strands. Traditional cloths spread residue and dust around rather than pick it up. Microfibre has strong holding power and is designed for thorough cleaning.

Specifically designed machines - There are cleaning machines designed to manoeuvre around critical surfaces. Toilet cleaning presents with many hard to reach areas and there are machines today that are able to steam clean, detail clean and flush out hinges.

However, when ensuring your accommodation facility isn't just presentable but thoroughly clean, it can also be of benefit to look at industry trends. Keeping up with trends will ensure that you are always keeping up with the most modern processes and the highest standard of cleanliness. Over the years, as guests' needs change, cleaning processes will also need to be altered. Keeping a close eye on industry trends will ensure your business is not left behind.

For example, there is a growing trend in commercial businesses towards placing importance on being environmentally friendly, particularly in the accommodation industry. Cutting down on laundry and towel washing services is one way that businesses are doing this. Showing your visitors and guests that your cleaning processes involve no harsh chemicals is another selling point in demonstrating your facility is environmentally friendly. Eliminating harsh chemicals will show your guests and visitors that your facility is modern and environmentally conscious, as well as eliminating the risk of allergic reactions from harsh chemicals amongst guests that may be sensitive.

Keeping health factors at the forefront of your cleaning processes will ensure your cleaning methods are meeting "cleanliness" standards rather than just "presentation" standards. ■

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