

Ladies and Gentlemen – Good Morning

I would like to take a short period of time this morning to take the lid off some of the problems that we find in dealing with Washrooms around the world - But, may I firstly say

It is a genuine pleasure to be here today on behalf of Initial Washroom Solutions as Platinum sponsors of the World Toilet Summit.

For those of us who immerse ourselves in the world of the Washroom, it is an all too rare occurrence to find ourselves standing in the spotlight of public attention but in bringing the World Toilet Summit to Europe, we believe Jack Sim, ably assisted by the British Toilet Association, has succeeded in doing just that.

We have an enormous opportunity over the next 3 days to communicate the concerns we all share about the adequate provision of washrooms and to celebrate the positive benefits in health, hygiene and sheer feel-good factor of encountering a modern, clean, well-equipped, and well-maintained washroom.

It is our collective responsibility to ensure that this opportunity is taken and the message both delivered and received.

National Toilet Associations – there are now 24, are becoming better and better at lobbying Local and Central Governments around the world to provide more and higher quality public-access toilets, whilst commercial companies, such as my own, can set the levels of public expectation and therefore, public demand by taking responsibility for the quality of “away-from-home-washrooms” in peoples’ places of work, in the shops they use, in the schools and colleges they attend, in the pubs and restaurants they eat in and the hotels they stay in.

Both approaches have their place and we must all accept that the most direct route to change must come through public awareness and public demand.

The alternatives are “unattractive” to say the least. The spectre of under-provision of public-access toilets would haunt every member of the community – just ask any mother with young children. Having found a toilet, is it clean enough to use? Is it serviced and supplied with paper? Can you wash your hands? Can you dry them? Are there nappy-change facilities? Is there somewhere to prop my child? Or, do I risk it? - What are the odds?

On average we visit the washroom 6-8 times every day and every time the washroom is used:

- Bacteria are ejected from the toilet during flushing, we call it the sneeze effect. Those bacteria will continue to fall-out onto surfaces (and people) throughout the washroom for several hours (and each time 1 million plus bacteria remain in the WC Toilet Water until the next flush). I have to ask :
 - Would we stand next to this?
 - Then why would we stand over this?
 - And, why would teach our children to do this?
- Bacteria in flush water splash onto and under the toilet seat waiting to come into contact with the skin of both hands and more delicate parts of the next user.
- Salmonella bacteria have been known to survive on toilets for as long as four weeks - or until we carry them away.
- Under favourable conditions 50% of men decide to leave a washroom without washing their hands – and 25% of all women – what of unfavourable conditions??

In short, poor washrooms have a very nasty habit of spreading disease and sickness – “Bog Standard” is no joke.

Jack, you are right to fight the case for adequate provision and we need to make sure that the washroom, once found, is safe to use.

Now, I don't know about you, but I find modern sanitizer units to be fascinating things. Modern sanitizers contain bactericides to kill bacteria on contact with the flush water thereby sanitizing both the toilet and the aerosol "fall-out" on outside surfaces. – Laboratory tests have shown a 99% reduction in contamination on toilet seats.

The question is - do the users of washrooms know that? And, if they did know that would they demand sanitizers in every washroom they use?

Modern sanitizers also contain surfactants – surface active detergents and scale inhibitors which help to remove and prevent the encrusted deposits and films of bio-plaque which are bacterial feeding grounds.

- I am sorry if I am telling you things you already know. (I had a very forgiving grand-mother) but again, are the users of washrooms aware of that and if they were aware would they demand sanitizers in every washroom they use?

This is the opportunity we have over the next 3 days. Tell the story – increase awareness, reassure people that there are tried and tested solutions and make a commitment to continue to improve provision of toilets, service techniques, materials and equipment.

- We must continue to innovate in every point of our interaction with the washroom so that dispensers are "touch-free", hand-drying is automatic and hand-washing is accepted because it is easy and risk-free and the benefits are understood.
- We must continue to train and equip cleaning staff so that they destroy bacteria and not move them from place to place.

- And finally, we must continue to improve the understanding of the providers and managers of washrooms of the responsibility they hold and their share in what should be a common objective
 - To realise the positive change for good in everyones lives from having ready access to high quality washrooms.

Jack, I thank you for the opportunity you have given us and we look forward to the challenge of spreading the message.

Thank you.