

HOTEL GUEST
EXPERIENCE REPORT
2022



**BALKARAN BASSAN, SENIOR DESIGNER
AREEN DESIGN**

Balkaran has worked on a range of international hospitality projects for the past 12 years, across different cultures, briefs and aesthetics. He has worked on projects from start to finish, and his innovative conceptual and storytelling approach is a key driving force in all aspects of the project. With a Bachelor's degree in Architecture and a keen eye for materiality and design, Balkaran has a uniquely integrative approach. His experience of and interest in world cultures has enriched his design aesthetic and understanding of client briefs, strengthening his ability to create diverse and engaging interiors.



THE CASE FOR CHANGE

BY BALKARAN BASSAN

Geberit ONE washbasin

As we look to adapt and evolve from the pandemic, wellbeing is now centre stage. But what does this mean for hospitality design? In this chapter, Balkaran Bassan, Senior Designer at Areen Design, explores the factors influencing the sector in the current climate, particularly the role of personalisation in enhancing the guest experience.



Geberit Acanto compact washbasin and back-to-wall toilet

Chaos, tumult, uncertainty ... more uncertainty. The last two years could easily be defined by these words, but what if there was another side to the story? A side which looks at how we emerge from and respond to this uncertainty by adapting and evolving to both make it through the present and use this as an opportunity to shape our future.

Over 2021, Areen Design had been looking at how we respond to the whirlwind of changes happening around us and how these changes are affecting one of our key design sectors: hospitality. We decided to ask ourselves some questions to begin with. What are the factors influencing hospitality design in the current climate? How has the role of design changed? How have attitudes towards hospitality changed? What do we value the most

in the collective and individual spaces we inhabit or visit? How can we harness design to make a real difference?

There are many ways in which we could answer each of these questions, but several key themes soon started to emerge from our discussions: the need for personalisation, the endless possibilities of flexibility, fostering a sense of wellbeing and actively engaging with 'the bigger picture'.

Each of these are unique and important in their own right, but looking at the themes next to each other we soon began to see a framework of interconnected elements. A framework that could help us navigate hospitality design through the many changes around us, but also as a foundation from which to build on and really engage with change.



GRADUAL SHIFT

Prior to the pandemic, there had been a gradual shift across the spectrum of hospitality design, with multiple global hotel brands through to independent operators taking on the concept of 'lifestyle' design and service. Whilst there was a danger that such an approach could, like previous trends, stagnate, this concept could still align well with the personalisation and flexibility elements. It could also offer the potential for growth and longevity if the elements of wellbeing and 'the bigger picture' were also taken on. Now, all of these are crucial as we look to adapt and evolve from the pandemic.

Of course, with everything that has happened, hotels and hospitality spaces must now also take on increased limits, parameters and restrictions in their function as public spaces. Although this shift has been disruptive, we have been really interested in looking at how manufacturers are overcoming, adapting, and innovating from this disruption.



Geberit iCon lay-on washbasins



"FROM A USER PERSPECTIVE, GEBERIT'S RANGE OF PRODUCTS ALLOW FOR FLEXIBILITY AND COMFORT WITH SEAMLESS DESIGN; ALL ESSENTIAL QUALITIES TO HAVE IN ANY SPACE. HOWEVER, AS A DIRECT RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC WE FEEL THAT GEBERIT'S MANY ADVANCES IN INNOVATIVE CONTACTLESS SYSTEMS ILLUSTRATE HOW BEAUTIFULLY DESIGNED SOLUTIONS WHICH MAXIMISE HYGIENE AND SANITATION ARE KEY TOOLS IN ENSURING THAT HOSPITALITY EXPERIENCES DO NOT MORPH INTO STERILE, DYSTOPIAN, LAB-LIKE SPACES. WITH CONTINUED UNCERTAINTY AND A DAILY CHANGING GLOBAL SITUATION, WE ARE CURIOUS TO SEE HOW DEVELOPMENTS AND INNOVATIONS IN FORM, FUNCTION AND MATERIALITY CAN CONTINUE IMPROVING ON FLEXIBILITY AND THE INTERFACE BETWEEN GUESTS AND PUBLIC SPACES."



Geberit iCon washbasin



Geberit AquaClean Mera shower toilet

HOME FROM HOME

Another emerging aspect of hospitality design in the current climate is how to marry the predominant trend of lifestyle design with life during a pandemic – and integrating personalisation with a sense of wellbeing can help to bridge this gap.

As opportunities to travel are constantly in fluctuation - and significantly more difficult than they were before - hotel guests will expect thoughtful experiences and solutions that allow them to detach from the stress of travel and find their home away from home.

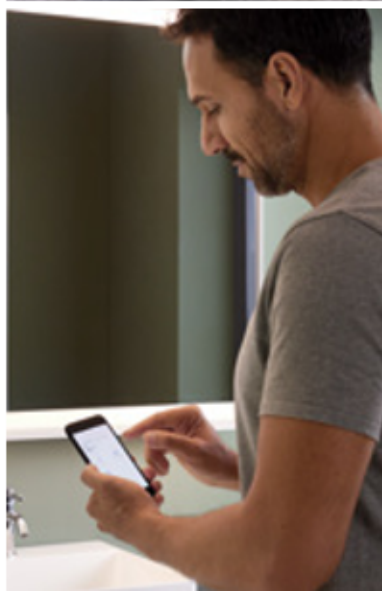
Hoteliers were already looking at more and more ways in which to help guests customise and personalise their environments, and product innovation will continue to be a key driver here.

For instance, Geberit's AquaClean shower toilets can create enhanced experiences for guests through built-in odour extraction, orientation lighting, warm air dryers and user recognition; each feature having been carefully designed to improve the user's experience and ultimately increase their personal wellbeing. Wellbeing, as one of the framework concepts we describe above, is also a crucial factor in ensuring lifestyle design is more than just a trend. We expect to see this becoming an increasing factor through products which help to enhance environments and experiences across the spectrum.

For years Geberit has been a leader in sanitaryware, but we have been really encouraged by how the innovation of its global team is taking on the changes brought about by the pandemic: pioneering products and technology; enhancing each aspect of the user experience and through its commitment to the bigger picture. This multi-strategy approach sets a great benchmark within the industry, and we are excited to see how it will continue to innovate and make a difference towards the world of hospitality design.



Geberit AquaClean Sela shower toilet



Geberit AquaClean Mera shower toilet