

2023 Trends for the Cleaning Industry

2 years ago



Insight from Nina Wyers – Marketing & Brand Director at The Floorbrite Group

Green and Sustainable

The last few years has seen a keen increase in the interest of sustainable and “green” products. With ESG being the new focus across the board, there is far greater awareness of goals and expectations from contractors and customers alike which extends to their supply chains, manufacturers and distributors. Even as costs continue to rise due to the price of raw materials, the appetite for investment here is steady with suppliers looking to reduce chemicals, VOC’s and plastic usage in their products.

Robotics

Whilst the jury may still be out with regard to robotic cleaning machines, they are increasing in popularity. Robotic machines can genuinely provide a far better standard of cleaning compared to the old-fashioned mop and increase levels of productivity too. With recruitment challenges remaining across the industry, machines that are able to map floor plans and complete tasks without human operators are becoming an attractive solution for staff shortages too. However, the initial investment required for a long-term return on investment (ROI) still remains a barrier for some.

Technology

It’s all about the data. Customers today are keen to track data driven, real time reporting. There has been a clear shift since 2000, with an emphasis on quality, moving from products to services. Increasingly we are moving to daytime cleaning to pick up issues throughout the day. Using innovations in technology helps us to achieve improvements in quality by increasing productivity and creating improved reporting systems and processes. These can be tracked via sensors placed in meeting rooms and washrooms. Wireless sensors or QR codes provide flexibility for usage anywhere and can track trends for the busiest times of the day in specific areas. Over time, the information can be used to predict and plan for when a presence is required in washrooms for example, ensuring teams are focused in the right areas at the right

times.

Staffing

With the exodus of cleaning operatives from the industry during the pandemic, roles such as delivery drivers and warehouse operatives were filled due to the rise in online shopping. Staff shortages are therefore an ongoing issue in the battle to attract the workforce to return to the cleaning industry, although improvements are rippling through the sector. The pandemic shone a positive spotlight on our industry to highlight the front-line work in keeping people safe, which has changed perception and appreciation of our workforces. However, the work needs to continue ensure our operatives feel valued, well remunerated and supported. Reward schemes, employee assistance programs and wellbeing initiatives should all be standard practice these days. The British Cleaning Council is also supporting to raise the profile of our industry as a viable career path with qualifications through an Apprenticeship Levy funded industry-wide Apprenticeship for the cleaning and hygiene sector which has been submitted to the approving body. It is hoped that the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) will give the final agreement and confirmation for the Apprenticeship Standard and End Point Assessment within a couple of months although there is no fixed timeline at the moment.

Costs

How are customers and service sectors adapting to a post Covid-19, Brexit world and war in Ukraine? With the rise in energy costs, interest rates, raw materials and payrates there doesn't seem to be an end in sight currently on the impact on the price of products and services for end users across the FM sector.

By Nina Wyers – Marketing & Brand Director at The Floorbrite Group.

Floorbrite is a 2nd generation family business providing commercial cleaning, specialist cleaning, window cleaning, washroom, hygiene and consumable supplies, waste and environmental management, pest control, plants and grounds maintenance, security and high-level building access solutions. With 50 years industry experience, Floorbrite has grown to become one of the leading soft service providers in the UK FM sector.

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