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## How automatic doors bring peace of mind to virus concerns

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Boston, MA The COVID era has likely forever changed the way we think about touching surfaces in public places. As recently as April 2021, the CDC reported that coronavirus can remain viable on non-porous surfaces for days or weeks (while also pointing out that the majority of COVID cases are spread through droplets in the air). Because of this, and the public's strong desire to avoid getting any virus, people are expected to continue minimizing their contact with surfaces, especially in public spaces.

Many businesses have responded to virus threats by having all employees wear masks, limiting store occupancy, and by offering carryout or contactless pickup/delivery. But what is probably the most-touched surface in any business? The door handle.

Next consider how the public viewed automatic doors even before a pandemic. A comprehensive

survey conducted by the American Association of Automatic Door Manufacturers (AAADM) revealed that respondents viewed the presence of automatic doors as a gauge of how much building owners and businesses cared about them. Plus, a staggering 98.9% of consumers who expressed a preference between automatic and manual doors prefer automatic doors.

Taken together, it becomes clear that automatic doors are an effective way to not only address concerns about surface germs, but to clearly signal that an establishment is taking health and safety concerns seriously.

Automatic doors create clear, no-touch pathways to businesses and other public buildings. In addition to their obvious germ-free characteristics, they bring a host of other benefits including convenience for people carrying packages, luggage, or children, and provide equal access to individuals with mobility challenges or other physical differences. They are durable, reliable, easily installed, and more affordable than many owners and specifiers realize. Plus, with public opinion galvanizing, the true question becomes whether a building can afford to be without them.

AAADM is a trade association of manufacturers of automatic pedestrian door systems. AAADM was founded in 1994 with the following mission: to increase awareness of automatic doors and accessibility needs; to increase education, training and professionalism among installers and service providers; and to generally promote the safe use of automatic doors. Each year on March 19, AAADM celebrates National Automatic Door Day to raise awareness about the many benefits of automatic doors, including providing access to those with physical challenges and helping to prevent germs by eliminating the need to touch door handles.

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