**Merchant Bathroom & Kitchen Showroom of the Year 2022**

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With COVID-19 still prevalent through 2021 and beyond, the increase in people spending time/working from home created a significant boom in home renovations.

Rated People’s annual Trends Report showed a 12% rise in demand for home improvement jobs in 2020, with home and garden maintenance topping the list of most in-demand jobs during lockdown.

Because of this trend (as well as an eventual easing of lockdown restrictions), we saw an opportunity to re-design and re-model our bathroom showroom to help promote sales. Despite fully refurbishing our display at the start of 2019, this spike in home renovations – coupled with the launch of Infinita’s new 2020/2021 bathroom catalogue – prompted us to make changes to better service our customers.

Plus, bathroom design trends change every year, and we want to continually showcase the latest styles and products to customers who may be looking to update their bathroom or WC.

As a result of these changes, we’ve seen a dramatic increase in visitors to our plumbing department – and in particular, an increase in repeat visitors. The updated displays allow customers to see first-hand how their bathroom could look, as well as giving them the opportunity to view the quality of the Infinita range.

But one of the strongest additions to our bathroom showroom has been our VR setup.
 **Virtual Reality is one of our top sales influencers**

Virtual Worlds allows a customer’s bathroom to be designed in a 4D environment – complete with manufacturer products – that can then be viewed using a VR oculus headset or on a desktop, mobile or tablet. When wearing the headset, customers can walk around their re-designed bathroom using their bathroom’s exact measurements and dimensions.

The two main reasons for implementing this software were:

1. To help customers make an informed decision prior to making an expensive purchase.
2. To increase sales by up to 30%.

We’ve received some excellent feedback from both customers and bathroom fitters, and we’re currently in the process of creating various case studies to advertise this service in more detail.

**Customer reviews of our VR experience**

*“Virtual Worlds at Berry’s gave us the opportunity to view how the basin and toilet feature would look and gave us the confidence to make the purchase”* – Paul Canning (Customer)

*“The image we received from C&W Berry helped us get a better idea of how the bathroom would look before it was installed. We also had chance to change a few things before we got to the final design and the staff were very helpful when it came to choosing the right shower”* – Hannah C (Customer)

**Sales**

Since making changes to our showroom, we’ve seen over £240,000 in sales for Infinita bathroom products.

**Conclusion**

Although we’re only a single-site builders’ merchant, we’ve made incredible strides over the past year to improve our bathroom showroom.

Unlike some of the previous winners of this category, we’re not just a bathroom specialist. We stock a whole range of products from timber to electricals.

This year though, we recognised an opportunity to both increase sales and better service our customer base. So we invested time and money into our on-site bathroom display, trying to showcase as many products as possible from the suppliers whose products we stock.

We believe that our new display allows customers to better visualise how their new bathroom could look, as well as showing them different options for their budget. And our sales figures agree. In just 8 months, we’ve seen over £240,000 in sales for Infinita bathroom products.

Likewise, the addition of Virtual Worlds also helped provide designs to potential customers via email when access to the site was limited due to the effects of the pandemic.

Because of how successful these changes have been, we have plans to make further improvements over the next 12 months.