

Channel Surfing Safely

2008-09-16

Pineapple Hospitality's anti-bacterial ZAPLEXTM TV remote control covers gain traction with guests and hotels worldwide

Ten years ago, Rick Hodges had just checked into a hotel room when his kids started jumping on the bed. Hodges thought to himself, 'I wonder how many people have sat on that bed spread? I wonder how long it's been since it was washed?'

Without even thinking, his hand went to grab the room's TV remote control. It suddenly hit him that the remote is probably just as dirty, if not more, than the bed.

That moment led to Hodges' creation of ZAPLEXTM, a low-cost, disposable plastic cover for remote controls. The clean, clear and easy-to-use ZAPLEX remote covers are antibacterial-infused to protect against germs. ZAPLEX also protects the TV remote control from spills and grime, and saves batteries and their compartment covers from falling out and getting lost.

Since Hodges' initial inspiration, studies have found TV remotes in hotel rooms often are dirtier than sinks, showers and even toilets. Thankfully, hotel owners, operators and guests are catching on to the myriad benefits of ZAPLEX instead of catching on to colds, the flu and numerous other illnesses stemming from bacteria-coated guestroom TV remotes.

ZAPLEXing Bacteria



A recent report from TripAdvisor asked guests, 'What's the dirtiest part of a hotel room?' 11% of respondents voted for the TV remote, behind only dirty carpets and the bedspread.

'People are becoming more conscious about germs and the spread of infection,' says Hodges. 'People carry hand sanitizers with them. Almost every grocery store provides sanitary wipes that customers use to clean cart handles. It's not just the germophobes who use them. It's everyone.'

'ZAPLEX is an ideal way for hotels to differentiate themselves and let guests know they take sanitation seriously and are willing to go the extra mile,' Hodges says. 'After things like SARS scares, flu outbreaks and even the return of bed bugs, any product that helps battle cross-contamination is sitting pretty right now.'

Distributed by Pineapple

ZAPLEX is distributed exclusively to the hotel industry by St. Charles-based Pineapple Hospitality, the premier distributor of sustainable products and marketing programs for the Hospitality Industry.

'When you walk into a hotel room, the last thing you want to be reminded of is the person who was staying there before you,' says Ray Burger, president of Pineapple Hospitality. 'With the TV remote, it's usually the last thing people touch when they walk out, and the first thing they touch when they walk in. It can be the most direct bridge of contact between guests, especially because it is difficult to clean and often overlooked by the very busy custodial staff.'

'ZAPLEX does more than give hotel guests the illusion of cleanliness - it really works. It's anti-bacterial properties stop germs before they spread,' Burger adds. 'Plus, it is quick and simple for the cleaning staff to change between guests. Especially with the entertainment upgrades that many hotels are making - bringing in high-end televisions and entertainment stations - you need this product to protect your investments.'

'The bottom line is ZAPLEX protects your guests, as well as your housekeepers and general counsel, from a host of bacteria-based health liabilities.'

Perfecting the Protective Skin

While Hodges' idea for a remote control cover was pretty simple, it took years to perfect the ZAPLEX formula. It needed to be clear, stretchable enough to fit almost any size remote, yet still maintain the tensile strength to prevent ripping without being tacky or sticky to the touch. Added to that, the product needed anti-bacterial properties without using powders or other compounds that wear off.

'Making this product was a labor of love,' Hodges adds. 'I look forward to seeing where we can take it and how well known it can get.'

The first major market for ZAPLEX to tackle naturally is hotels. The product can be bought in bulk and applied for each new guest. Hodges studied Las Vegas-area hotels' occupancy rates and lengths of stay and found in the city alone, there were 55 million opportunities to apply ZAPLEX in one year, changing the protective cover with each new stay.

Another option is for hotels to carry ZAPLEX in their gift shops and allow guests to purchase them individually for their guestrooms, homes and even places of businesses.

'Anybody I talk to who has used the product can't travel without it anymore,' Hodges says. 'One person told me, 'I put a shower cap over the remote because I didn't know what else to do.'''

ZAPLEX also is being marketed to institutions such as hospitals and schools, where the threat of spreading infections is a major concern. The protective skin for TV remotes also can even be used in households for extra protection. In those cases, the covers should be changed about once per month.

International Exposure

ZAPLEX is catching on in the U.S. and abroad.

'We are in discussions with major hotel companies in the U.S. about ZAPLEX,' Burger says. 'More so, we now have international distribution in seven countries and are seeking additional distribution worldwide in several verticals.'

Ronnie Beier of Brussels-based DrionRent SA/NV is looking to showcase ZAPLEX at an upcoming Healthcare Exhibition in Europe, and to distribute the product in Belgium, Luxembourg and possibly several other countries down the road.

'We will offer this product in professional markets and healthcare communities,' Beier says. 'Due to our focus in the healthcare sector and knowing the importance of proper hygiene, we are convinced ZAPLEX has broad appeal and benefits.'

Key Features

Features of the ZAPLEX remote control cover include:

Easy for housekeeping staffs to apply,

Disposable: change with each new guest,

Its anti-bacterial pyrithione compounds, also known as Promicide Z300, were developed to reduce the hosting of bacteria and mold in plastic and related products - providing sanitary protection,

High perceived impact at a low cost per stay ratio,

Saves on lost batteries and their compartment covers,

Protects TV remote controls from spills and grime, and

One size fits virtually all remote controls - ZAPLEX can stretch up to seven times its original size without breaking!

'You wouldn't stay in a hotel that didn't change sheets in-between guests, so why should you jeopardize your health without protection for one of the dirtiest areas of a hotel room?' Burger asks. 'With ZAPLEX, you can rest assured your guests will return, happy and healthy.'

Cover Your ... Remotes

University of Arizona microbiology professor Chuck Gerba, aka 'Dr. Germ,' recently conducted a study that found TV remote controls are the highest carrier of bacteria in hospital rooms - even more so than toilet bowl handles, bathroom doors and nurse call buttons.

'Remote controls have three times greater levels of bacteria than any other site in hospital rooms,' Gerba says. 'While they are not hospitals, I suspect hotels also suffer a bit from bacteria transfer via remote controls. Remote control protectors sound like they might be a good idea - especially since common colds, flu's and MRSA's (methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus strains) can survive on surfaces such as remote controls for up to three days.'

'Lack of awareness about where germs lurk is a real health problem because people touch these objects and 80 percent of infections are spread through hand contact,' says Gerba, who notes that while 95 percent of people say they wash their hands after using a public restroom, only 67 percent actually do - and only 33 percent use soap!

About Pineapple Hospitality

Headquartered in Saint Charles, Missouri, Pineapple Hospitality(TM) is The Co-Founder and Host of the ANNUAL GREEN HOSPITALITY CONFERENCE, an EPA ENERGY STAR(TM) partner bringing fresh ideas to hospitality guests' doors and owner/operators' bottom lines - including FreshStay(R) (www.freshstay.com), EcoRooms(R) & EcoSuites(TM) (www.EcoRooms.com) Environmentally Sensitive Amenities(TM), EO(R), Neutrogena(R) and greenSPA(TM) amenities and AVIVA dispensers, Energy Efficient Lighting and Controls, Custom Linen & Towel Re-Use Programs, Green Key Cards, Energy Management Systems and Controls, High Performance showerheads, the Nature's Mist(TM) deodorization

system, Zero Odor, and dozens of other products and programs. For more information, please visit www.pineapplehospitality.net, or call us at 636-922-2285.

This article comes from Hotel News Resource

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com>

The URL for this story is:

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/article34575.html>

© 1998 - 2008 Nevistas and the author.

Brought to you by Hotel News Resource

Distribute your news on our Network

See what all the buzz is about at:

http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/Info-news_account_info.html