MARKET RESEARCH REPORT
Traveler Perceptions of Self-Cleaning Surfaces

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS
NanoTouch Materials, Akron-Canton Airport
and Western Reserve Hospital
In early 2016, the Customer Service Manager of the Akron Canton Airport contacted NanoTouch Materials with interest in using self-cleaning surfaces.

After discussing several ways that self-cleaning surfaces could be deployed in the airport, the decision was made to start with the TSA security bins. This was identified as a problem area since people were being asked to place their shoes in the bins, many times after recently walking outside, on restroom floors, and on other dirty surfaces. Other travelers would then place personal items like glasses, wallets and phones in the same bins where those dirty shoes had rested.

After more than a year of testing for durability and the ability of the nanotechnology to provide the self-cleaning action without interfering with security screening equipment, the bin mats and handle skins were approved for use. On August 29th, 2017 Akron-Canton became the first airport in the world to deploy self-cleaning surfaces for travelers. Because increased cleanliness supported community health initiatives, Western Reserve Hospital agreed to sponsor the cost of the NanoSeptic mats and skins for this project.
The Participants

NanoTouch Materials
NanoTouch Materials is the first and only manufacturer of NanoSeptic continuously self-cleaning surfaces. The NanoSeptic surface uses a mineral nano-crystal which is powered by visible light to create an oxidation reaction stronger than bleach. All NanoSeptic products are made in the USA, along with a research and development lab, funded by a $2 million grant, which is constantly developing new products and applications in an effort to provide cleaner, healthier (less chemicals and poisons) places in which to live, work and play. And this mission is being embraced worldwide with the help of distributors in 30 countries. NanoTouch is out to create, not just a clean world, but a self-cleaning world! More information is available at nanoseptic.com.

Montage Marketing
Montage Marketing specializes in experiential marketing and market research. Utilizing consumer and market data to identify passion points and points of influence, Montage delivers a clear understanding of the marketplace and consumer behavior. More information is available at montagemarketinggroup.com.

Akron-Canton Airport
Akron-Canton Airport serves over 1.4 million travelers per year, offering nonstop service to 14 destinations and one-stop access to the globe aboard four exceptional airline partners. More information is available at akroncantonairport.com.

Western Reserve Hospital
Western Reserve Hospital is an advanced community hospital, dedicated to exceptional patient care and excellence in healthcare services, as well as education, community outreach and the overall wellness of Cuyahoga Falls and the surrounding areas. Owned and operated by physicians in the community, Western Reserve has a staff of more than 1,000. More information is available at westernreservehospital.org.
The Research

NanoTouch Materials provided 300 security bins along with the mats and handle skins which went into use at 6:00 a.m. on the morning of August 29th. This time and date was chosen to maximize exposure to a combination of business and leisure travelers throughout the day. Montage Marketing, out of Bethesda, MD, was on sight to conduct the market research due to their specialty in experiential marketing. The desire was to capture the thoughts and reactions of travelers both before entering the security area and after completing the security screening.

152 travelers submitted survey answers and another 35 agreed to a more lengthy interview with the on-site ethnographer.

The Results

88% of travelers said that their perception of a business was positively impacted by the use of NanoSeptic surfaces.

64% of travelers indicated they would select a business (airport, airline, hotel, cruise) which uses NanoSeptic self-cleaning surfaces over one that does not. This became an overriding theme in the research data. Because the surfaces were visible and communicated what they did, travelers felt safer and more secure with their travel environment. The result was a more positive perception of the airport and TSA.

83% of travelers would not put their personal items directly on a hotel bathroom vanity or put food and personal items on an airplane tray table. If forced to do so, almost 50% of travelers would take action to clean those surfaces themselves using wipes or hand sanitizer as a cleaning agent.

52% of respondents expressed an interest in purchasing a portable self-cleaning surface to use in their travels after seeing the surfaces in TSA security. This presents a revenue opportunity for travel & hospitality business which can sell portable products. Hotels and cruises can sell this type of travel accessory in their gift shops, and airport retailers now have a new category of travel product to offer.

63% of respondents rated hotels as the number 1 type of facility which concerned them when it came to cleanliness.
Data Dispels Business Assumptions

81% of travelers indicated that they were concerned about the cleanliness of public surfaces. This result extended even to businesses that made cleaning a priority. This indicates a lack of consumer trust that could only be overcome by visible or tangible efforts...seeing is believing.

In fact 46% of responses showed that travelers believed hotels were not clean. This was regardless of brand or cost, and goes against the belief in the hospitality industry that cleaning efforts need to be hidden or else the traveler will think the hotel is dirty. What’s more, the use of visible self-cleaning surfaces produced a halo effect on consumers. They assumed that the business or facility was cleaner overall just by seeing a self-cleaning surface.

Q. Would you put food or personal items on travel surfaces such as airplane tray table or hotel bathroom vanity?

- Yes: 18.0%
- No: 82.0%

Q. Would you select a business based on their use of self-cleaning surfaces?

- Yes: 84.0%
- No: 8.0%
- Neutral: 8.0%

Q. Do you believe the rest of the facility is cleaner because you saw self-cleaning surfaces (halo effect)?

- Yes: 85.0%
- No: 1.0%
- Neutral: 14.0%

Q. How did self-cleaning surfaces impact your perception of the business or facility?

- Positive: 78.0%
- Neutral: 21.0%
- Negative: 1.0%

Q. Would you be interested in purchasing a portable self-cleaning surface?

- Yes: 92%
- Neutral: 8.0%