

Hospital Upgrades

Elevators are interiors, too

Making the case for cab interiors in a renovation project budget

Introduction

In the U.S. and Canada, there are 1,000,000 elevators, and each elevator carries on average 20,000 people per year or a total of 20 BILLION passenger trips annually. According to the National Elevator Industry, Inc., the average rise of an elevator is 4 to 5 floors or 40 feet. Add up all those numbers, and that means elevators travel 1.36 BILLION miles per year. That's more than 2,700 trips to the moon and back.

As Indiana Jones said, "It's not the years, it's the mileage." We would argue it's the mileage *and* the years.

When one considers a major renovation, it's easy to focus on spaces like corridors, lobbies, offices, lounges or patient rooms ... in other words, all the public-facing spaces.

We would argue that right after the lobby, a hospital's elevators are the very next public-facing space patients, families, healthcare workers and visitors see.

This white paper lays out the case for cab renovations as part of an overall building update. After all ... elevators are interiors, too.

Sources of elevator cab damage and shoddy appearance

Over time, elevator interiors can get damaged ... especially if the cab is used for moving patients and equipment. Over time, all that traffic can ding up, gouge and scuff walls with carts, gurneys, and large pieces of medical equipment.

Then there's the simple aesthetics - styles change and a cab's interior can start to look dated. Throw in damage and it's a one-two punch of ugly. Then add in flickering fluorescent bulbs and it's the trifecta of a not-so-pleasant ride.

Why renovate the cab?

Some of the main reasons to renovate the cab interior are to update the appearance and make it more appealing by giving it a refreshed look, make the interior more energy efficient with LED ceilings or add extra protection to the cab walls.

Another reason to enhance the appearance is that some people are terrified of elevators and suffer serious anxiety when riding in one. Interior upgrades can help ease those few minutes they spend riding the elevator by providing a more-comfortable and appealing environment.

Making a good first impression

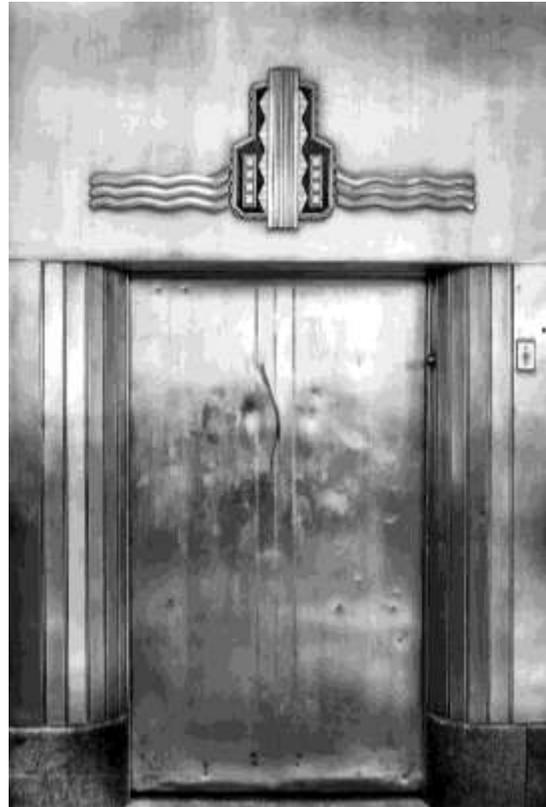
One of the first things people will notice about the elevator is the cab appearance. When most of the elevator performance equipment is expected to last 15 or more years when installed, the cab interior may need to be changed a couple of times in that span to keep up with the change in times, especially true for those trying to attract or retain tenants.

Cab durability is tested in high-traffic facilities such as hospitals. The first impression of damaged and worn out cab interior may have a direct, negative impact on the overall experience of patients, guests and visitors. Further it might translate to their perception of the level of care and service they receive.

Riders won't see the new mechanics

A hospital may spend millions on a major renovation ... or maybe just thousands on a new coat of paint and other items to refresh the décor. Leaving an old, damaged, dark and dingy elevator cab out of the renovation budget may leave your beautiful upgrade project with a serious black eye.

If you budget \$50,000 or \$100,000 on only elevator *equipment* upgrades, riders will not notice anything new and will still feel like they are in an "old" elevator ... they can't tell that you just spent big bucks replacing the jack, power unit, controller and door operator. When thinking elevator renovation, you should consider both mechanical and interior upgrades.



How to breathe new life back into elevator interiors

New Panels



The elevator panels/walls are what truly make up the appearance of the cab. These panels can look like or be made out of just about anything you can think of. Elevator panels take a beating – from hospital beds to luggage carts, tenant move-ins and outs, construction equipment, vandalism and just about anything else people can cram or ram into an elevator.

Most cabs are not designed to withstand these impacts and are subject to being damaged where the contact is made. You will see cracks, chipped surfaces, dents, dings and holes throughout elevator cabs. Frankly, this damage gives the impression the owner does not care about upkeep of the building, which in turn may speak about the entire organization ... it's all about perception.

Maintaining the brand image of the facility must be of the utmost importance for people trying to retain clients and give visitors a pleasant experience. Sometimes material designed for durability is overlooked because of first appearances or first costs. The downside is the material chosen may look fine for the first month or so of abuse, but then deteriorates and must be replaced with a more-durable product.

New ceilings and lighting

Elevator ceilings come in many different styles while lighting for the most part is generally halogen, incandescent or fluorescent. Lighting may not seem to be a big deal, but when you take into

consideration that in most cases these lights stay on 24/7, they are running for 8,760 hours a year. That's a lot of energy ... and money!



Most of incandescent and fluorescent bulbs are rated for about 5,000 hours, whereas LEDs are rated sometimes up to 50,000 hours. That means instead of replacing bulbs every year you are replacing them every five or more years, not to mention decreasing your elevator lighting-energy consumption in some cases up to 90%.

Another important aspect of the elevator is the amount of lighting in the cab. People are more comfortable in a well-lit interior and a brighter ceiling can make the cab look newer and cleaner with an increased lighting output.

New Handrails

You may not think much about handrails in your elevators unless you are trying to meet ADA codes or you go to lean on or grab something that is not there. This is another elevator product



that comes in different shapes, sizes and finishes. Not only do handrails make an elevator cab look complete, they also provide stability -

something to grasp - while the elevator stops and starts, sometimes not as smooth as one desires. Typically this is not a big deal, but if you are elderly or injured and need all the support you can get, it is a welcomed sight, that also helps reduce the risk of a fall.

One other aspect of handrails to consider - they can act as a wall guard, too, by providing a stand-off from the wall to reduce the chance of a cart or dolly strike on the panel.

Elevator as brand ambassador

The inclusion of logos and graphics can help carry and reinforce the brand message. At Alamance Regional Medical Center in Burlington, N.C., a three-cab renovation included new interiors with custom graphics in the cab panels.



Ascend's Orion™ cab style with Brushed Silver lower panels and Natural Maple upper panels is shown here.

A closing note about installation ... and downtime

One final and critical aspect to bear in mind is that interior cab renovations cannot ... or should not take the cab out of service for too long a time. Taking a cab down for renovation increases the potential for longer wait times as passengers have to switch to another cab.

Ideally, the cab renovation materials and process should be designed to cut downtime to a bare minimum. Renovation packages should be designed for simple and easy modular installation.

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