

Ad Rail USA Offers Innovative Approach to Minimizing Spread of Germs

Opportunity

Ad Rail USA[™] Safe2Touch is an innovative approach to helping facilities minimize the spread of germs on public escalator handrails. Starting in 2008, the product's original concept consisted of a protective film layer that is applied to the existing black rubber or plastic handrail on an escalator. Safe2Touch can be easily applied in convention centers, hotels, arenas, stadiums, airports, malls, and other public facilities with escalators worldwide. The film is laid over the escalator handrails and includes safety messaging integrated into advertising and brand images. This allows for a sleek design promoting various brands that catch the public's eye while increasing safety.



When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, facilities and public venues began looking for new ways to improve cleanliness and safety. “Ad Rail USA Escalator Handrail Media, whose primary business was with trade shows and events in the convention space, was affected by the closing of venues coupled with all out-of-home media advertising budgets frozen. In 2020, our business model shifted its focus to escalator safety cleaning and disinfecting methods for the traveling public. This resulted in the Safe2Touch program,” said Robert Lovell, Ad Rail USA CEO.

The Safe2Touch Program would help venue operators lessen the spread of bacteria on high-touch surface areas, such as handrails, while still utilizing advertisement space. “Venues were and still are very concerned with keeping their venues safe for future pandemic awareness and other safety processes that protect the traveling public, making this a strong solution,” said Lovell.

Solution



Public facility escalator riders were reluctant to hold on to handrails because of germ association and bad public perception. Due to the pandemic, this concern has increased, hence increasing the liability even further. Safe2Touch allows direct connection between brands and their core audience while improving safety measures for everyone.

“Facility employees and escalator maintenance subcontractors are now being introduced to Ad Rail USA Safe2Touch GBAC[®] STAR[™] Registered Programs & Technology training. This includes how to properly clean and disinfect escalator

handrails on a regular basis. As for changes, we've begun installing germ-preventing film during media installations and annual facility safety programs. This has fine-tuned our process for our new Safe2Touch program plan, focusing more on germ prevention and minimizing trips and falls,” said Lovell.

Ad Rail USA communicates safety information and processes monthly to its support base. Contacts span from all public facility venue operators to the biggest sponsorship brands in the country. The responses to the introduction of the Safe2Touch GBAC Registered Program have been widely embraced by all, recognizing the reluctance to hold on to escalator

handrails because of known high-level germ build-up on this surface. Ad Rail USA is constantly educating on hazards related to escalator handrails, and how the Safe2Touch GBAC Program significantly minimizes this issue.

Results



By achieving GBAC STAR registration, Ad Rail USA has found the following benefits:

- **A new meaning to the product.** Prior to the pandemic, Ad Rail USA saw tremendous results from facilities utilizing their product. Research found that 85% of escalator riders noticed the ads, and up to 70% more escalator riders held on to the handrail. “The GBAC STAR Registered Program designation helped us define the science behind our safety process, which ultimately morphed into clear objectives that drove our new Safe2Touch marketing plan, defining the differences of our business from media to meeting the public’s safety concerns,” said Lovell.

- **Increased safety in facilities.** Ad Rail USA has been able to communicate its Safe2Touch brand awareness and processes across 3,000 GBAC STAR Facilities. Along with germ prevention, the new designation has been shown to help escalator users gauge the speed and direction of the escalator while passengers enter and exit, thus encouraging more riders to hold on and take a more natural step on and off. This helps minimize the risk of slips and falls while addressing people’s health and cleanliness concerns.

- **A bright future ahead.** Ad Rail USA has just begun its partnership with ISSA’s GBAC organization but has been very pleased with its involvement and support. The company plans to continue to grow its business through the current and future GBAC STAR Facility Accreditation network.

“It is important for facilities to not be complacent in preparation for what we all now know as the possibilities of another national pandemic and how it has altered our personal lives and businesses,” said Lovell. “ISSA, GBAC, and its members are an important attribute to our mission to educate and recommend both germ prevention and trips and falls on escalators.”

Visit our website at [GBAC.org](https://www.gbac.org)

Contact us by phone at 1-800-225-4772 (North America)
or 1-847-982-0800 (outside North America)



About GBAC, a Division of ISSA

Composed of international leaders in the field of microbial-pathogenic threat analysis, mitigation, response, and recovery, the Global Biorisk Advisory Council[™] (GBAC), a Division of ISSA, provides training, guidance, accreditation, certification, crisis management assistance and leadership to government, commercial, and private entities looking to mitigate, quickly address, and/or recover from biological threats and real-time crises. The organization’s services include biorisk management program assessment and training, infectious disease and biological material response and remediation, the GBAC STAR[™] Facility and Service Accreditation Programs, training and certification of individuals, and consulting for building owners and facility managers.