



Ask the Expert

How is commercial glass improving?

I have had the pleasure of witnessing countless innovations in commercial glass over the last four decades. These new technologies have evolved as building methods themselves did, particularly with regard to energy usage. Thanks to the move toward energy efficiency, buildings today are much more airtight. Because

they're so efficient at retaining heat, occupants are turning on their heaters and circulating the air much less than they were before.

This, however, has led to some unexpected consequences. In many cases, tight building envelopes and a lack of air circulation have resulted in condensation and even frost forming

on windows. Heavy drapes or curtains are needed to block the sun, but this in turn hampers air circulation even further. Luckily we've seen exciting developments in glass technology to solve these problems.

Switchable glass is one of these solutions. Like the eyeglasses that turn into sunglasses when exposed to sunlight, this glass becomes opaque to block out the sun's rays during the brightest parts of the day. Some solutions are even sound activated—you can simply clap your hands to turn on the shading effect. Just like that you can block out glare and heat-inducing sunlight. This technology has tremendous potential for changing the way we



Ken Hallam,
Regional Contract Manager,
Binswanger Glass

When you've been in business more than 140 years, you know the essentials. That's the case for **Binswanger Glass**, one of the largest full-service retailer and installer of architectural glass within the residential, construction, and automotive markets in the US. Binswanger's commitment to its customers, its innovative approach, and community feel across 61 locations sets it apart. **Ken Hallam** is one of the company's dedicated employees who immerses himself in industry innovations to offer the latest solutions to enhance commercial projects. He shares his take on the strides the industry has made, and how Binswanger's products not only meet commercial customers' needs, they exceed them.

build commercial buildings, from condos to hospitals. Just think about the potential in a health care setting; instead of needing to manipulate heavy drapes or blinds to control sunlight and heat absorption, workers or even patients could simply clap their hands to activate the switchable glass. Not only does this create a more comfortable environment, it's more sanitary and economical, too.

These are just some of the developments within the glass industry that are transforming how we create commercial spaces.



Read more from Binswanger Glass when Hallam tackles **sustainability in the world of glass** in the fall issue of gb&d.

PHOTOS: HARTUNG GLASS

Switchable privacy glass is becoming the material of choice in health care. It's easy to clean, with a non-porous surface that can be sterilized, and it doesn't mold or attract bacteria.

