

Bespoke enclosures guarantee electrical installation quality in pod bathrooms

The ease and speed of on-site installation for pre-built bathroom pods manufactured off-site are revolutionising many fields of building construction. Today's state of the art units are elegantly designed and have all the fittings associated with modern bathrooms. Enclosure manufacturer Spelsberg UK, is helping pod builder Offsite Solutions develop ready to run electrical systems that can be connected up as soon as the pod is in place.

First generation bathroom pods could be somewhat utilitarian, but project managers loved their simple installation, which saved time and cost, reduced risk and guaranteed quality. Over the years the concept has been developed so that today's pods include all the features and fittings that define a comfortable modern bathroom. This has increased the complexity of the electrical wiring required, but Offsite Solutions has worked with Spelsberg UK to develop a solution that can have the bathroom functioning within minutes.

Today Offsite Solutions is the premier bathroom pod manufacturer in the UK, supplying over 10,000 pods every year to leading contractors and developers. Based in Somerset and employing 250 people, the company offers a comprehensive range of high quality bathroom pods to suit all sectors and budgets, from cost effective GRP composite units, to top of the range steel framed pods.

"The GRP pods tend to be used in student accommodation, care homes, military establishments and refurbishment projects," explains Jake Goddard, Offsite Solutions' Site Operations Director. "Steel frame pods are usually destined for installation in residential, and hotel buildings."

While Offsite Solutions design capabilities have grown to meet demand, some aspects of the business remain the same; such as the need for quality electrical enclosures. It has formed a supply partnership with Spelsberg UK, the largest supplier of non-metallic enclosures, ex-stock, in the UK, to ensure that it specifies the best solutions for any given application with minimum lead times. Where necessary Spelsberg is even able to design and machine customised solutions and assemble them with DIN rails and terminal connections prior to delivery.

"Spelsberg has been working with Offsite Solutions for about six years, and is now our major supplier of electrical enclosures," says Jake Goddard. "The relationship between the two companies has grown and deepened over the years, and we increasingly appreciate Spelsberg's flexibility, insight and expertise."

Through understanding Offsite Solutions' drive to advance the concept of pod bathrooms, Spelsberg has developed many bespoke solutions and is committed to delivering them, ready to install, on the short lead times often required in the construction sector.

Simple bathroom pods originally relied on Spelsberg's A Box enclosures. These are empty enclosures built to a quality standard suitable for use in demanding environments. They are made from glass fibre reinforced polycarbonate and supplied with a polycarbonate lid. They have double membrane seals and insulating plugs to ensure full protection of the electrical connections within. They are available in a number of sizes and can be customised if required.

Over the years Offsite Solutions has used many other Spelsberg enclosures models, particularly the TK units, which are available in a number of different materials and sizes and have optional features such as transparent lids. It is more and more common for these to be used to provide bespoke solutions, so prior to dispatch Spelsberg fits them with DIN rails, terminals, cable glands and other equipment as required for specific pod designs. This means Offsite Solutions simply has to mount them into the pods and connect the external wiring.

As a general rule, there is one electrical enclosure per pod, so that all connections are in one place. Thus, when installed on site, only one set of connections has to be made, and, once the equally rational plumbing is connected, the bathroom is fully functioning and ready for use.

As pod design continue to evolve, Spelsberg's sales engineers regularly meet with Offsite Solutions' technical teams to consider the latest developments and upcoming needs. The main driver for developments is the increasing expectations of bathroom users. Where once a bathroom – conventional build or pod construction – was a strictly functional space, there is now increasing demand for mood and task lighting, multi-function showers, automatic water temperature control, automatic ventilation and steam extraction etc.

Spelsberg UK Managing Director, Chris Lloyd, says: "Offsite Solutions effectively makes an infinite variety of pods, which we meet with a service level where we design bespoke enclosure solutions almost immediately. We have to consider many aspects, such as the ingress protection levels and general toughness required in the different usage environments and the space available for our units. Usually they are screwed-through surface mounted, but we always have to make sure that the fixing procedure is simple and can be done quickly. And of course aesthetic plays a part because Offsite Solutions pods have to look great as well as function perfectly."

Spelsberg is recognised for the quality of its products, while its willingness to go the extra mile in terms of customer service sets it apart and allows it to develop long lasting, value adding relationships with customers like Offsite Solutions.

“Space for you”

Spelsberg's company philosophy is based around the idea of providing flexibility and freedom to its customers. The space provided within each junction box; the large distribution and warehousing space; and the freedom to customise almost any product, irrespective of quantity, all equates to “Space for you”.

About Spelsberg

Spelsberg is one of the largest manufacturers of electrical enclosures in the world. With over 4,000 enclosures available as standard and further customisation possible, it offers solutions for almost any application.

With the largest supply of non-metallic enclosures, ex-stock in the UK, its products are often available for delivery within 24 hours; customisation is possible on any product, including bespoke entries, engraved corporate logos or fitted terminals, within 48 hours. Products can be ordered direct from Spelsberg or from most leading supply specialists including RS, Rapid, Farnell and CPC.

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