

THE STANDARD

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SUSTAINABILITY ISSUE:

THE SECRET BEHIND SUSTAINABLE PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

Page 12

GETTING A MEASURE ON OUR CARBON IMPACT

Page 16

AHAM OR VALORI?



It has been 52 years since I began working in the rental business, going on to establish DisasterCare Platinum and The National Flood School. It is now time that I bow out of those ventures and leave them in the capable hands of my son and daughters. I have always embraced business with both common sense and a scientific approach. I gained this from my aviation training where I was involved in the development of Concorde.

However, I am not ready to completely withdraw from the restoration industry just yet. A chance conversation led me to question a few things that I had not only been doing, but that I had been teaching to other people too. I, like many people in the restoration industry, had simply been following what I had been told by manufacturers and trade bodies. But where was the science – the sense-check and the balance?

I carried out my own simple experiment to put these “things” to the test. I took three desiccant dehumidifiers from the market and rated their performance - not from a quoted extraction perspective, but from a practical viewpoint. I assessed how long they would each take to dry a room. I created a dedicated test chamber in a controlled outer environment. I monitored how each unit extracted water, not from the air, but from a saturated building block. The experiment simply measured how long it took for the building block to return to its dry weight, with all things being equal.

THE RESULTS WERE NOT AS I EXPECTED.

I used a refrigerant building dryer to benchmark the experiment. The results from this were even more surprising. Although these are industry standard, they performed less well using the drag race method, when up against the models that used desiccant technology. The newest model on the market with pressure-neutral capability won, and surprisingly it was the least expensive.

When I first ventured into the restoration industry in 1988, there was a real promotion by companies, such as Munters, who were advocating desiccant technology. Perhaps due to costs or skill expertise at the time, refrigerant building dryers became the norm. We could be on the cusp now of a paradigm shift as costs have improved, as well as engineering experience and knowledge. They now seem faster at drying than refrigerant units.

The comparison of desiccants led to ratification of my new Valori test protocol. Not only an ancestral name, it also means “value” in Italian. It is this value testing I can now offer through my new company, Valori Brands Ltd.

Other tests such as AHAM only consider a set environment water extraction. Anyone in the restoration game knows that this is not a true reflection. The restoration professional needs confidence that a wall or floor is dry. While initial conditions when getting a building dry might be cold and humid, we all know that this will change throughout the restoration period. Therefore, a dehumidifier needs to be able to cope with a range of conditions.

So, whether you are a manufacturer, distributor, or just considering the right product to invest in, give me a call. We can test your units in my custom-built house and discover how they perform in the restoration environment and compare them to others.

This will allow you to make the right choice in purchasing or product development.

Whether it is dehumidifiers, air filtration or air handling, we can test it. I certainly look forward to working with you.

Best wishes,

Chris Netherton,
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Free international calls can be made via WhatsApp.

