

Eureka — the old gray tubs aren't what they used to be

By Louise Rachlis

Just like Archimedes, Brian Cotton came up with a solution to a perplexing bathtub dilemma.

Cotton's Montreal company provided the answer to a question which had been facing the Château Laurier hotel for a long time — how to fix up the old but charmingly spacious bathtubs with minimum inconvenience.

"Unlike modern buildings, there was no access to the plumbing through the walls and ceilings," said Cotton, co-owner of Bath-Magic Inc. In a standard replacement of the tubs, the hotel would lose the use of the rooms while renovating was going on.

"Changing the tubs would be a major problem, because they were very heavy — about 800 pounds each — and the hotel wanted to retain the large tubs anyway, because people liked them."

The Château had even tried solutions like painting the bathtubs, but nothing had worked.

Bath-Magic's simple and practical solution was to install bathtub liners, custom molded to fit right inside the 75-year-old extra-large and deep bathtubs. "It was a real shortcut," said Cotton. "Installation took a few hours instead of days, and they look just like new acrylic tubs — without causing any damage to existing walls, tiles, plumbing or floors."

Bath-Magic began selling the tub liners three years ago. The company has also done 600 rooms at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto.