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## 2018: The Year of the Screen



Despite screens being around for nearly 200 years, it's only recently with the trend for open glazed living, that they've undergone something of a facelift in the UK – morphing from old-fashioned wood-framed mesh doors at one end of the market, into sleek remote-controlled recessed solar screens at the other.

According to Palmer's research, the shift to high-end bifold and sliding doors is likely to continue this year - 7% growth is forecast to 2020 - delivered through wider DIY channel distribution, a highly competitive market, and continued development of the residential home-improvement sector. This is good news for the large-screen market.

Bifold doors continue to be popular in the commercial sector too, allowing easier movement of vehicles and products in showrooms for example. They also allow for greater flexibility in office configurations, and boost restaurant footprints in the summer. New materials and a competitive landscape are helping to sustain steady demand in this sector.

### The Challenges of Large Glazed Openings

However, as is often common with rapid new product adoption, large, glazed openings increased in number before the UK had identified the most effective means of managing the resulting warmer,

lighter, and more exposed living. The visual impact of large doors is delivering on expectations, but the consequent increases in temperature, bugs, and onlookers has taken some by surprise. Progressive door companies are beginning to address this, and some now offer a solar, privacy or insect product to complement their doors.

At Phantom Screens, we're further ahead than most in our product maturity; we're the only UK company currently offering a recessed, four-sided zipped screen up to 12m wide in a single span. Homeowners, particularly, are catching on to the benefits of screens over curtains; because having invested in renovation, they're enjoying clean, open architecture and are reluctant to compromise the look with bulky fabric. While curtains offer an on/off solution to heat, glare and privacy, they are limited in their flexibility beyond that and require significant space to sit when open - reducing the light gained by installing large doors in the first place.

### Minimal Aesthetic Impact

Screens offer performance flexibility and aesthetic discretion. Retractable, recessed screens don't impact on architectural design - they simply disappear when not in use. Furthermore, the frames can be made to match any RAL colour, ensuring a seamless blend with existing interior design.

### Mesh Performance

High-tech mesh fabrics provide a variety of solutions depending on need - from insect control at around 50% openness, to privacy control at around 5% open. Unlike curtains or smart glass, high-performance mesh fabric provides ventilation, which can further help manage heat build-up.

Phantom Screen offers various meshes, each of which is designed to achieve different results. Although openness factors vary considerably, most mesh types diffuse the light and provide views of the outside, retaining a feeling of openness. Solar meshes block up to 95% of harmful UV rays, so they not only protect skin, but also furniture, rugs and other furnishings too.

At Phantom, we know the market well, having been engaged directly with homeowners at regular events throughout this phase of growth. From customer feedback, we think 2018 looks set to be remembered as the year the UK adopted screens as the ideal dressing for bifold doors and other large, glazed openings.

To find out more about how you can benefit without investment in samples, training or specialist installation knowledge, get in touch with our team today.

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