

Original question

Hello fellow librarians, I am once again looking to pick the collective brain! I'm considering some power doors here, and would love your input on installing them, or if there's anything you wish you had known ahead of time, things to consider, regrets, etc. The project is really two parts, that I'm hoping to do all together:

- 1. Power doors, button activated, for the public bathrooms*
- 2. Automatic doors, motion activated, for the main entrance (like a supermarket)*

I'm in the very early stages, where I know nothing, so all insight and opinions are appreciated!

We have motion activated sliding doors for our front entrance. We like it because it helps with accessibility for folks in wheelchairs and with walkers. However, some of our parents don't care for them because the doors won't stop a running toddler. Two other things I have noticed: 1. When they get misaligned they are very hard to fix. Make sure you've got a good repair service available to you. 2. Our doors are not wide enough to fit an emergency stretcher. When we have a medical emergency, the doors have to be shut off and then opened in a certain way. Staff have to be trained to do this and to put them back together.

Hope this helps! Good luck!

I don't have much information on number 1, but we did have new motion activated automated doors installed four years ago. We were able order our doors from ASSA ABLOY <<https://www.assaabloyentrance.us/en/>>. They supply automatic doors for Beaumont and many retail stores. It was not cheap, but the previous automatic doors had daily issues and we have yet to have any service issues with these doors in four years. Let me know if you need any more information on them.

I checked, and it has been five years instead of four so there is going to be some inflation but we paid approximately \$10,000. They do guarantee their work and provide service if needed.

We went with Stanley Door for our front doors and are very happy with them. We have two sets of doors that move from one side to the other. The cost was \$10,000 about 5 years ago - photos attached. We have a contract with them for basic maintenance. They come once or twice a year, I can't remember now, and check everything to make sure it's all working well. (\$330/yr). There is a switch on the door frame if you want to turn off the automatic opener to bring something large into the building or go back and forth without the doors opening/closing every time. Very handy.

Stanley is great to work with. They have years of experience and are very good at what they do.

No problems. They are flexible so if they get knocked out of place, it's easy to just push them back on the track. They are designed that way so they will swing out when pushed in case of an emergency. You do need to keep salt and debris out of the track but they are really durable. The guy that services ours said he's been with the company for a long time so he's really knowledgeable.

Here's what I have received from my inquiry:

Lots of people recommended Assa Abloy (they referred us to IDN Door and Hardware)

Michael Mullins, MGSE Security
[248-762-4940](tel:248-762-4940), mgsellc@gmail.com

He is based out of Grosse Pointe and does a lot of work on "vintage" buildings with weird doors.

Gandol (Romulus Michigan) – they just gave me a quote for an exterior door operator and I will be asking them for a quote for 2 restrooms. They were recommended to me by our City Building Services superintendent

Stanley - 3300 Byrd Street Dearborn – they did the opener for our new café door

This company installed exterior doors for us and said they could do the operator – but we decided not to add it.

- H & H Glass & Metal on Nelson Street in Detroit. They did a great job on our door install.

We use Record Automatic Doors. It's for our exterior sliders but they do other types. Their headquarters is in Iowa but they send local people over to do the work. I got their name from the sticker on my existing door. I think they either used to be or they bought out Great Lakes, which was originally the name on our door. I've only needed them to do repairs so far, but they've always been prompt and done a nice job. <https://www.recorddoors.com/en/service>

record automatic doors
1300 Metro E. Drive Ste 136
Pleasant Hill, IA 50327

Service [1-800-260-8833](tel:1-800-260-8833)
Web www.recorddoors.com

At CK we have had automatic doors for some time. They work pretty well for the most part, but sometimes we run into issues.

A few things to consider when getting them put in:

- 1) Sensors- Will there be traffic other than pedestrian crossing the door front that would set off the sensors? Cars, sidewalk traffic etc? Or for that matter inside traffic? If there is, the doors will open and close often thus wearing down parts.
- 2) Repair- Parts will wear out and when they do it can take a couple weeks to get in parts- so I would advise two sets of doors if possible, because when one door is out you will have to keep it wide open and heat/cold will be let out or in.
- 3) Contractor- There are not that many companies that service automatic doors. We use Assa Abloy on an as needed basis. Take this into account in your budget.

Those are a couple things to think about off the top of my head.

We have power doors, button activated, in our family restrooms in the children's area. We worked with Matt de Bear at Library Design Associates on these when we renovated that space in 2015-2016. We also have motion-activated power doors, for the main restroom doors in our lobby. You wave your hand over the sensor as you walk out. That was also completed through LDA.

We installed grocery-style motion activated automatic doors in 2020. They are from Stanley Door.

Let me know if you would like me to take pictures, or if you want me to put you in touch with our Building Supervisor for his practical take on these. I can also put you in touch with our Business Services person for cost information.

Here are photos of the main doors, exterior and interior. I also include a close-up of the switch that is on each door, to hold the door open, turn it on and off, allow exit only (handy at closing time). The door sensor can be calibrated to various distances to mitigate the doors opening when someone walks by; the trade-off is that as someone who wants to go through the doorway approaches, you want the doors to open at the right time so that they don't feel like they are going to crash into the doors if they don't change their rhythm. We went with the 6-panel retracting door because the opening couldn't be made any larger and this door allowed the maximum opening—someone coming in and someone going out can both go through at the same time.

We leave the doors in the "on" position all of the time, and occasionally do need to reset them by turning them off and then back on. During the very cold days we had a few weeks ago, the outer door stuck open (sensor issue due to temps) and we needed a service call. But they have been pretty good otherwise.

Here are photos of the manual push buttons in the family restrooms in children's. You have to pull on the door to get in, and the auto-assist arm on the door opens it the rest of the way. To get out, you can push the button or turn the handle and push, the auto-assist does the rest.

Here are photos of the lobby restroom sensor openers. Like the children's restrooms, this is only on the inside. From the outside, you push on the door and the auto-assist opens it fully. From the inside, you either pull the door handle and auto-assist does the rest, or you wave your hand in front of the sensor and the door opens automatically.

I added these types of automatic doors to a former library in a former state. Two things I wish I had planned better.

1. You have to keep the buttons low for ADA accessibility, but this puts them right at the level of a 4 year old. Four year olds love to push buttons. Parents don't seem to mind their 4 year olds pushing buttons if it keeps them busy. Constantly opening and shutting doors are a nuisance and a safety issue.
2. Having doors that automatically open and shut and that lead directly outside of the library are also fascinating to four year olds, who can run extremely fast when being chased by their parents. It is also quite the safety issue.

These are things I wish I had thought of. I still don't know the best solution to these issues. Good Luck.

Hello, I saw your email about the power doors for the bathrooms. One library I worked in had renovated the entire inside to be more accessible. What I noticed when we reopened, the bathroom doors (women, men and gender neutral) had a power button on the outside to get people in. However, there was no automated or power button on the *inside* of the bathroom to let people out. My father has some severe physical disabilities, a person like him or someone with other limited mobility wouldn't be able to get out of the bathroom.

Just my thought.

We added, hands free, power doors to our restrooms:

1. They work pretty well and it's nice to have the touch free option.
2. They are slow....
3. When opened, the men's door is slow and you can see into where the sinks are... not really a problem, but sometimes odd...
4. We put this on a single, family restroom that has a manual lock on the inside of the door... the power door does not really work well, because it doesn't unlock the manual – so

you have to touch the door to unlock and open the door. Had I realized this, I would not have put it on that door.

We also have push buttons for our main entry (not auto opening). Issue with these is really that they are slow.... Which is good if you are using a walker, cane or wheel chair... but for people walking, you have to wait for the second door to open. I would like to think that people walking are not using the push button. Also, the slowness in the winter causes a lot of cold air to come into the building. We have an electric heater in the area between the two sets of doors to help alleviate the heat loss.

Also – remember that you will need to bring in the locksmith and the electrician. The electrician was costly.

All in all I would I recommend this route – it is so handy for the patrons.

Ours you wave a hand in front of it to activate. Not sure how sensitive they are – ours are not really in an active area.

Make sure you have local folks who repair whatever you install!! We have an aftermarket automatic door opening system that was added in 2018 during renovations. It wasn't put on very well (we discovered in Summer 2021) and it started to have some major function issues. Sadly, there isn't ANYONE in our area doing this work anymore! So we have one functional door at our front entrance at the moment. So be sure you have available repair services in your area.

You might want to consider new doors that are motion activated, as opposed to an after market solution. Perhaps you already are!

We're struggling to figure out what to do now... If I could go back in time, I would look at all door options including very easy opening (instead of automatic) and/or a combination of the two. I DO think that automatic doors are super important for those patrons with mobility/strength concerns, parents with small children, and given the pandemic...they are even more appealing than ever.

As far as bathrooms go, I would also look for easy open options along with the automatic options. Door repair gets so much trickier once power is involved... and every kid, every kid, every kid must push the button!

Just my 2 (somewhat tarnished) cents on automatic doors!