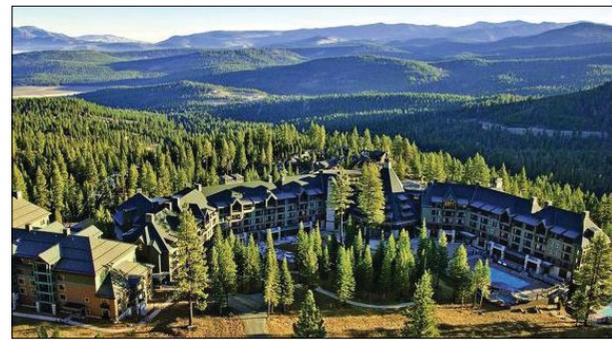


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F L O O R C O V E R I N G W E E K L Y



The National Floorcovering Alliance (NFA), a group of industry-leading retailers, will gather here in Lake Tahoe at the Ritz-Carlton this April. See story on page 8.

Tile takes share

BY LAUREN MOORE

Thanks to stronger builder, residential remodeling and commercial markets, as well as advances in technology, the tile market was the second strongest growing floor sector in both dollars and square feet in 2016. The fourth quarter report from Catalina Research said U.S. ceramic tile sales are estimated to have increased 6.4 percent in dollars and 4.1 percent in square foot sales.

And industry executives anticipate that growth will continue.

"I expect a similar result for the overall category in 2017, driven primarily by new home construction and commercial segments," said Gianni Mattioli, executive vice president, product and marketing, Dal-Tile Corporation. Mattioli also cited improvements in technology as creating opportunity for growth. "Innovative technologies are transforming the category, and tile is becoming an increasingly popular option across many segments," he added.

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Mattioli's worldwide view

BY BRITTANY WALSH

[Dallas] Born in Italy's "Tile District," Gianni Mattioli can't remember a time when he wasn't around tile. He joined Marazzi after graduating college and has held roles in a variety of areas throughout the business, from finance to marketing to CEO. As the current executive vice president of Dal-Tile Corporation, this experience lends him a unique vantage

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Daltile's Woodbridge

Easing installation pain

Adhesives work faster and are more versatile

By Elise Pillion

With a qualified labor shortage facing installation today, adhesive makers have turned their focus on developing multi-use products that save time and money. And, products are being created as strong — and efficient — as possible.

“Multi-use, problem-solving adhesive solutions have been the focus in the flooring industry for several years now,” said Wade Verble, vice president of business development for DriTac Flooring Products. “The ability to offer a user-friendly product that can achieve multiple results with one, single-component adhesive application is advantageous to the end-user and customer.”

This type of product efficiency will continue to be a main focal point in the flooring adhesives and installation products industry — however, offering customer-driven flooring installation solutions that installers prefer will always play a prominent role in any industry, Verble said.

“Some installers prefer multi-solu-

tion products that make an immediate impact on time and efficiency; others prefer more traditional ‘double-stick’ or two-part installation methods that are time-tested and also achieve superior results,” Verble said. “Allowing end-users to make decisions on the type of product and installation method they prefer will always maintain merit.”

Hardwood can present installation challenges, particularly when taking a glue-down approach. In fact, many North American installers previously refused to install solid wood planks with an adhesive. That’s why Stauf USA developed its PUK-455 adhesive, since there was nothing like it on the market, said vice president of sales and marketing David Ford, and it can be installed under wide planks.

Additionally, it helps stabilize the wood and reduces common cupping associated with wide-plank floors. And it has performed in a way that Ford said he’s never seen — the com-



HPS Schönox offers a full array of product.

pany took hickory hardwood, which is historically unstable compared to other species, and glued down a 6-inch board over concrete, outdoors, even under rain, and the wood still wouldn’t budge, Ford said.

Laticrete’s Permacolor Select grout reduces the amount of space needed on store shelves because it uses only one bag of grout per base rather than needing 40 skids of grout. It can be displayed in a showroom and also provides a solution for various color selections with the ability to customize with 80 stocked colors.

Mapei has developed products to reduce installation time while maintaining even floors, even when exposed to poor conditions like rain or freez-

ing temperatures. Its line of Ultraplan self-leveling underlayment also includes its new Ultraplan Extreme 2 self-leveling underlayment, which can be installed in extreme weather conditions (after six hours it won’t be affected by intermittent rain and after three days can withstand freezing temperatures, according to the company) and it also saves time for installers since it means the floors can be stalled earlier compared with other products, said marketing executive Diane Choate.

Many companies, like Bostik, have also said that customer feedback has played a vital role in developing its new products. To address problems associated with moisture, Bostik recently re-introduced its Hydroment Vivid

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INSTALAY GETS THE JOB DONE

rapid-curing, cement-based grout. It also uses cutting-edge technology to reduce previous issues with color consistency, blotchiness and wet abrasion.

“This has extreme resistance to moisture,” said Chad Bulen, Bostik’s technical service manager, consumer and construction business unit. It’s available in 36 colors and is stain-resistant, he added.

HPS Schönox has also been focusing on time and moisture mitigation with its new EPA Rapid, said principal Thomas Trissl.

“Installers can do the demo in the evening and in two to two-and-a-half hours can do the patching, put on primer, leveling and in the morning the moisture mitigation has already been taken care of,” he said.

Moving forward, engineered adhesives and coatings development will remain a focus, especially as new flooring products present new technical challenges for the industry, said Allan Preyer, director of strategic accounts for W.F. Taylor.

“Underlying this challenge is the ongoing difficulties of engineering products that are robust yet flexible enough to allow adhesives to compensate for the vagaries and variability of installation circumstances,” he said.

[Farmers Branch, Texas] InstaFloor North America aims to help customers save time and money with its range of flooring installation products, including its InstaLay underlayments with a specially-developed self-adhesive.

According to the company, InstaLay is cost-effective and made from sustainable materials (recycle crumb rubber from tires, for instance) combined with superior performance, including acoustic properties.

“With current problems in the installation market including a shortage of qualified labor, InstaLay is a great solution since it reduces labor time for many installations, meaning more time for other jobs and a better bottom line,” said Bas van Genderen, managing director of InstaFloor North America.

InstaLay 25 high grab is the company’s most versatile underlayment and can be used to install most types of LVT, wood, carpet and natural stone/porcelain/ceramic tiles, with no additional adhesives needed.

“InstaLay is unique in that it facilitates very rapid installation times compared to conventional methods and most installations can be loose laid, which means the installation can be done over most existing floorcoverings without damage,” van Genderen said. “It also masks mi-



InstaLay is made from sustainable materials such as rubber crumb from worn tires.

nor subfloor imperfections, often eliminating the time and cost required to re-screed the floor. There are no wet adhesives required, no VOC’s and it provides many added benefits such as a world-class underlayment in all cases. It never collapses, is naturally anti-fungal, is anti-fatigue and, compared against equal thickness materials, it provides the best performing acoustic membrane in the world. It is not an underlayment nor an adhesive, it’s a combination of all the above, making it a unique, proven flooring installation method.”

The InstaLay product range also includes five other underlayments designed for specific floorcoverings (like installing carpet tiles, broadloom carpets and thicker LVT products), or with certain performance qualities.

InstaFloor was founded in the UK in 2011 after four years of research and development and patented registration of its InstaLay products. InstaFloor North America was founded in 2014 and has office and distribution warehouses here in Farmers Branch, Texas. All products are currently manufactured in South Africa using customized machinery. The company now exports to more than 50 countries globally.

— Elise Pillion

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