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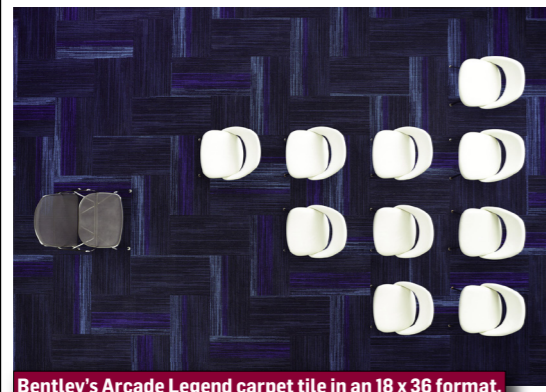
With the country's premier commercial contract show set for June 9-11, take a sneak peek at some of the latest and greatest flooring intros.

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Contract: State of the industry



Bentley's Arcade Legend carpet tile in an 18 x 36 format.

MARKET IMPROVING, ALBEIT WITH SOME ROUGH PATCHES

By Ken Ryan

The contract/specified market continues to shake off the effects of the recession as it returns to a more favorable pattern of slow, steady growth. Flooring executives who estimated last year's growth in the low single digits expect 2014 to surpass 2013 levels, despite a terrible winter that hindered first-quarter activity for much of the country.

Many commercial projects that were on hold—some for sev-

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Award of Excellence

Shaw captures its fifth Best Overall Manufacturer title

By Ken Ryan

GARDEN CITY, N.Y.—For the third time in four years—and fifth time in the award's history—Shaw Industries was voted the industry's Best Overall Manufacturer in the 18th annual Award of Excellence competition.

It was one of two major awards for Shaw, which also won the Award of Excellence for Environmental Leadership. Shaw has earned the award every year since its inception in 2010.

"These awards are an amazing testament to the hard work of our associates and their dedication to creating a better future for our customers and our communities," said Randy Merritt, president of Shaw Industries.

"These awards are particularly meaningful because they are

based on a survey of customers across the industry," he continued. "Relationships with our customers are at the core of our success—and every associate has a role to play in ensuring that those relationships are developed and protected through superb service and high quality, innovative, sustainable products."

"Thank you to *Floor Covering News* for the honor. Thank you to our customers who voted for us. And thank you to all of our Shaw associates for serving our customers well."

Mohawk Industries won Best Carpet Manufacturer for Group A, one of four awards for Mohawk companies. "At Mohawk, we continue to invest heavily in innovation in the carpet segment," said Tom Lape, president of Mohawk

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Carpet tile blends style, substance and practicality

By Ken Ryan

Modular carpet is quickly becoming the go-to choice in commercial applications as specifiers leverage the product's attractive styling and multiple format options along with ease of installation and maintenance benefits.

According to flooring executives, carpet tile now represents about 60% of the total revenue—and 50% of volume—in the commercial carpet market, a percentage that has only increased in recent years.

"I think the looks today in modular carpet are far superior to what they were a few years ago," said Dan Frierson, CEO, The Dixie Group. "People have found ways to develop styling that is really attractive; at the upper end of the business, beautiful products is what it is about and I think that can be accomplished with broadloom as well as modular, which gives customers a choice."

Natalie Jones, vice president, commercial brand development



This expansive argyle pattern from Milliken's Inis Mór collection gives designers added flexibility in their commercial uses.

and creative product, Mannington Commercial, said carpet tile is clearly a design element in today's commercial interiors. "Advancements in tufting technology, unique yarn processing capabilities and the introduction

of different size formats are all creating looks we have never seen before. The result is a portfolio of design components with complex textures, rich aesthetics and colors, as well as formats that allow the designer to combine elements in ways that are tailored to the unique needs of each project."

The functionality and maintenance benefits that modular carpet offers are among the factors that have fueled growth in the corporate, K-12 and higher education markets. But there is also cost to consider; in sectors where budgets are tight, carpet tile has fared well because it is a lower-cost alternative in comparison to products

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Karndeep

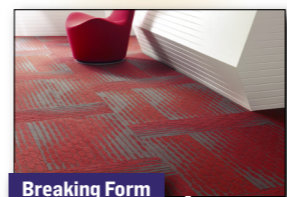
Karndeep will use NeoCon to highlight its Opus, Art Select Woods and LooseLay collections. Designed with commercial specifications in mind, Opus features large-format floor tiles and wood effect planks that are simple to work with and easily installed. Karndeep LooseLay is an award-winning, glueless line that features 12 plank and eight stone designs. LooseLay is ideal for commercial applications and is 100% recyclable. Art Select Woods includes realistic wood visuals, handcrafted textures and intricate grains. All products have low VOCs and adhesives are free from harmful emissions.

Metroflor

NeoCon will mark the launch of Aspecta, a new global brand from Metroflor that focuses on the architecture and interior design community. The brand includes a range of 56 wood grain planks and 50 stone and abstract tile floors developed for the global design community. The dry-back flooring offers a breadth of design expression spanning metal, abstract, solid hues, concrete, and wood and stone visuals, enhanced by the authentic textures. Aspecta views sustainability as a fourth pillar of excellence in the luxury vinyl flooring business (with design, color and texture as the first three). The plant in which Aspecta is produced has attained ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 for tiles and planks, which together with their adhesives are FloorScore certified to assure strict quality standards and good indoor air quality.

Mohawk Group

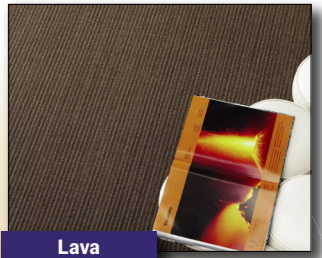
With four product launches, one particular introduction that stands out is Breaking Form, a modular carpet collection offered in 12 x 36 planks. The company collaborated with architect and designer Mac Stopa, whose innovative designs feature bold colors and three-dimensional patterns. Breaking Form is made with DuraColor nylon fiber technology with 30% recycled content and EcoFlex ICT premium vinyl modular backing system, which includes 35% pre-consumer recycled content and is Gold NSF/ANSI-140 certified. Additional products that will be unveiled at NeoCon include Why Y—also designed with Stopa—a new LVT collection with a unique Y shape, offered in 18 x 18 tiles; Simply Tailored, Karastan Contract's latest broadloom line, and New Vintage, a modular plank offering with 12 x 36 selections.



Breaking Form

PacifiCrest

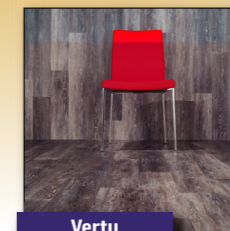
Three dynamic cut loop products that will be showcased at NeoCon are Lava, Molten and Ember. The line includes three coordinating patterns created from Ultron Ombré nylon 6,6 in a 25-color palette. Lava is a tribute to igneous rock created by cooled lava, and Molten takes its inspiration from a molten lava flow. Ember is reminiscent of the glowing ash of a smoldering fire. PacifiCrest carpet is third-party certified to CRI Green Label Plus standards.



Lava



Opus



Vertu

Parterre Flooring Systems

Parterre will launch a new resilient plank called Vertu. The collection features 33 new designs that embody the artistry of nature and weathered wood designs. These designs, named after famous artists and pieces, can either accent bolder patterns or create a neutral, inviting commercial space. Parterre's products are made with 25% post-consumer and 20% post-industrial recycled material.

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