



Contract Flooring Association

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CFA comment



The chief executive of CFA: Richard Catt

CFA boosts members' businesses

BROADLY speaking, in terms of marketing, there are two main audiences that we at the CFA speak to.

First and foremost, there are potential contractor members who we reach through various channels including, of course, **CFJ** with its circulation of over 7,000, which includes a high pass-on readership with 99.9% of recipients who actually want to receive it.

Other initiatives include exhibitions and our website www.cfa.org.uk, enable us to reach potential new contractor and manufacturer members, with the obvious message, 'Join the CFA'.

More recently we have put additional effort into the 'why use a CFA member' initiative, promoting it in adverts in publications such as RIBA Housing (Royal Institute of British Architects Directory of Chartered Practices).

The internet also plays a big part in our channels of communication and it's encouraging to find that when you type 'contract flooring' into Google, a link to the CFA website consistently appears in the top half of the first page of results along with **CFJ!**

But is all of this having the desired effect? Do CFA members obtain work through these efforts and CFA membership? I am certain they do and we recently had two good examples to prove this. A few weeks ago I attended the CFA's Midland regional meeting. After giving a short presentation, I chatted informally to those present when I met Neil Kear and John Wells of J & S Flooring, based in Whetstone, Leicester.

To say they are enthusiastic CFA members would

be an understatement, explaining all the ways member benefits have helped them grow a very successful business. It was also fantastic to know that they also undertake a programme of ongoing training. So we naturally discussed how FITA could help.

But the conversation also turned to how much work they receive through CFA membership. Neil and John actually measure this. In the last 12 months they attribute more than £50,000 of contracts to CFA recommendation. Compare this to approximately £10,000 of contracts via a £1,500 yellow pages advert and you can see how powerful the CFA actually is.

I recently had a call from a design adviser working for Guys & St Thomas NHS foundation trust. They will soon start work on a major floor refurbishment programme and our conversation initially related to material selection. However, it also covered the benefits of using a CFA member.

At the end of our call, this design adviser suggested that the use of a CFA member should be considered as part of the basic specification. What more can I say?

Of course this issue of CFJ takes us through Christmas and in to the New Year. So on behalf of the staff at the CFA offices in Nottingham and the CFA council, may I take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



The president: John Alcock

Website for um, anyone?

IT'S Good to Talk!.....or so Bob Hoskins once said and the **CFJ** regional meetings have been our associations' way of encouraging the practise of communication, but I recently attended a couple of these regional meetings, one in Leicester and one in Guildford and frankly they were quite disappointing.

Given the clue is in the name 'Contract' Flooring Association, of the 12 attendees at Guildford only three were contractors, although Leicester fared slightly better with four.

Now I know I've talked before about how it is important for contractors to participate if they are to get the best about of the association, but maybe I've been coming at this contractor apathy from the wrong angle. Speaking with contractors, I know the issues and problems are there and the topics and subjects that we talk about at these meetings are of use; but maybe the question I

should be asking is whether these meetings are the best way of communicating and encouraging the dialogue and open exchange of information that defines the CFA?

This is after all the 21st century and maybe meetings are just too restrictive in terms of time and location and frequency to be universally appealing?

The CFA is working to update its website and maybe an interactive forum would be a better option for communicating as well as providing an informal tool for a bit of banter, industry or otherwise, but with the freedom to dip in and dip out, posting comments, questions and viewpoints, when it is convenient to the contractor.

A website can also bring the wider membership closer with members from up and down the country able to talk, pick up information that would otherwise have been regional and which may well have a much broader appeal.

Additionally, the online forum can

provide a central resource for all information and documents that we publish and, of course, be used for organising social events, but with greater membership input.

Of course such an online forum would be moderated, but I think it could work and would certainly help you the contractor get that much more out of the CFA without having to schedule in meetings, and gamble that all the information presented will all be of interest, or hoping that the meetings will be organised at a time and place that is convenient to all.

An online forum would also allow a faster turnaround of information and coupled with email to replace the letters we presently send out, I believe the CFA could be so much more accessible and timely as well as more cost-effective.

It's just a thought, but I'd welcome your feedback and comments - it is 'your' association and that feedback is important - 'talk to me!'