



Ceramic floor tiles reach new heights

CERAMIC floor tiles are taking an increasing share of flooring contractor sales compared with other flooring products, according to research by **Mel Budd**, above, of Consulting Plus carried out in the second half of 2007.

The research programme interviewed over 200 floor contracting businesses to assess the change in sales of a range of floor types.

For each of the main flooring products, floor contractors were asked whether they were more or less important to their business than a year ago.

Of those firms that installed ceramic floor tiles, 68% replied that ceramics were more important to their company when compared to a year ago with 14% saying they were less important.

This was the best performing product group out of all those surveyed with vinyl being second followed by wood flooring and then carpet tiles.

The top three performing product groups are all hard flooring products and reflect the continued growth trend of this category.

Mel Budd comments: 'The reasons for the move towards hard flooring and away from textiles are well documented and include fashion trends, availability, ease of maintenance and health issues.

'In addition ceramic floor tiles have benefited from the growth in underfloor heating which takes away the cold feel of this product and means that ceramics can be

Share of flooring contractor sales compared with previous year					
	Higher share	About the same	Lower share	Higher share	Share index*
Ceramics	68%	18%	14%	100%	+54%
Vinyl	44%	44%	12%	100%	+32%
Wood	32%	54%	14%	100%	+18%
Carpet tiles	34%	48%	18%	100%	+16%
Lino/rubber	26%	54%	20%	100%	+6%
Broadloom	21%	53%	26%	100%	-5%
Laminates	22%	34%	44%	100%	-22%

* This is the different between the % of respondents saying the product had a higher share of their sales less the % saying the product had a lower share

used in more rooms in the house.'

He observes that new build houses also have a greater area allocated towards rooms more likely to use ceramic tiles, for example downstairs cloakrooms, ensembles, conservatories and utility rooms.

The growth of lower cost imported ceramic tiles from the Far East and Eastern Europe at the expense of the traditional sources from Spain and Italy has meant volume growth has outstripped value growth, according to Consulting Plus.

The worst performing flooring category was laminate with 44% of businesses who installed laminate saying it was taking a smaller share of their business and only 22% responding that it was taking a larger share.

One of the reasons for the fall in share of laminate is the reduction in price of solid and engineered wood

flooring and so more users are switching to real wood and away from laminate, says Mel.

He believes that many users are also looking for a better quality finish and have looked to upgrade from laminate to other hard floor finishes.

The ConsultingPlus table above shows flooring contractor responses for each product group and will reflect a real change in volume of a specific product or a relative change in volume compared to other products.

Consulting Plus is a research and marketing consultancy focussing on the flooring market.

The company carries out regular research in the flooring sector and has worked with over 30 flooring manufacturers and distributors.

For further information:

■ www.consultingplus.co.uk

■ info@consultingplus.co.uk

■ T: 01252 668748

Industry in brief

New diploma welcomed

Nearly 4,000 pupils are expected to enrol for the Construction and Built Environment Diploma in September. The new qualification is said to reflect the needs of employers. It combines practical skills with theoretical and technical knowledge. www.cbdiploma.co.uk

£1,000 training offer

ConstructionSkills is offering an additional grant of £1,000 per employer for companies which make a formal training commitment pledge, submit a training & development plan and undertake three out of 10 optional related activities. This grant is available on a first come first served basis and only to registered in-scope contractors. www.citb.co.uk

FeRFA apprentice plans

FeRFA offers two fully grant funded two-year apprenticeship schemes for In-situ resin flooring and to prepare and profile substrates, both leading to NVQ level 2. Apprentices attend two-days training a month at centres around the UK. T: 01252 714250 www.ferfa.org.uk

Safety move by MCG

Supervisors on Major Contractors Group sites must attend the two-day Site Supervisors' Safety Training Scheme (SSSTS), part of the ConstructionSkills' Site Safety Plus (SSP) courses. T: 0844 844 1315

Rogue employers warned

The Government is to crack down on rogue employers with new powers, including heavy penalties for serious offenders, including breaches of the national minimum wage.

Last chance to vote

in the only flooring awards

exclusively

chosen by readers

... and you can

WIN a £50 voucher* from

MARKS & SPENCER

***There are five £50 vouchers in a free prize draw**

Turn to page 43

RIBA grants CPD status to BAL leisure seminar



BAL (Building Adhesives Limited) has achieved RIBA CPD status for its presentation 'Leisure facilities: specifying tiling works'. The seminar is designed to assist in the design process for successful specification and installation of ceramic tiles for leisure environments to ensure longevity of performance and service.

Ceramic or natural stone tiles are said to be particularly suitable for tiling both new build and refurbishment works, and the presentation highlights a successful case study.

The seminar also addresses relevant health and safety issues and provides guidance on the correct selection of materials to avoid potential costly problems.

■ T: 01782 591120