

In the dock

Andrew Smyth

Key account manager, Kährs

■ **Did you get into trouble at school?** Of course I did! I remember a time when I wedged a school friend and hung him up by his pants (on a peg in the gym changing rooms). It was fun at the time, but now I know it was very wrong! I had to pay 50p towards replacement pants!

■ **What was your first part-time job?** I worked Saturdays as a Barrow Boy at Butlins, Bognor Regis. We didn't get paid, just worked for tips.

■ **What did you spend your first pay cheque on?** My mum.

■ **What was your first full-time job?** A sailing instructor at Bosham Sailing School. What a great job that was, being paid to enjoy your hobby!

■ **What was the best piece of advice you have been given?** Women are always right.

■ **What was your worst business mistake?** I once bought a quantity of flat pack garden benches. The bees' knees I thought...wrong, I was stuck with them.

■ **What was your greatest business achievement?** Finally selling the above and not making a loss.

■ **What car do you drive today and what does it say about you?** I have a company

car; it's a very sexy Volvo S60 complete with go-faster spoiler! It says I am an old bloke who doesn't care what he drives, which I'm not and I do!

■ **If you could have invented any product what would it have been?** Cats eyes..... Do you know how rich that guy became!

■ **What do you most like about the flooring industry?** My job at Kährs of course! Oh and the people are pretty good too...

■ **What do you least like about the industry?** The constant influx of low priced Asian produced material. This puts European producers under constant margin pressure. To the consumer the products look the same but we know they are not.

■ **Name one change you would make to the industry.** Encourage companies and contractors to embrace training in both installation and selling skills. Wooden floors are often seen as problematic. They only become a problem when the sales people or installers do not carry out the basic requirements.

■ **Which company in the flooring industry, other than your own, do you admire?** A number of companies are interesting but I do admire Amtico, for their marketing strategy.

■ **Where should we have a flooring show?** I'm not a great advocate of trade shows, but if I was then Leicester, as it's central to everyone.

■ **Which single possession would you rescue if your house caught fire?** My fireproof box, with that I can start again.

■ **Do you have any hobbies?** Yes, I wakeboard in the summer and Ski in the winter. In the meantime, I use the gym.

■ **How do you relax?** Spending time socialising with friends and family and going to the gym.

■ **What is your favourite tippie?** Lager...I'm a bit of a heathen when it comes to my choice drink.

■ **How many times a year do you take a holiday?** As often as circumstances will allow. My favourite destinations are The Caribbean and South Africa (you can't beat the food in SA) and France for skiing.

■ **What is your idea of heaven?** Spending time with friends and family on our boat down at the lake.

■ **What is your idea of hell?** Going home at the end of a great holiday!

Andrew Smyth making waves

■ **Which one record and book would you take to a desert island?** *I'm leaving on a jet plane* (or a raft) by John Denver. *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, you never know it might help!

■ **Who would you like to be stuck in a lift with?** Lara Croft!

■ **If you could be anyone (living or dead, fictional or real) who would it be?** Nelson Mandela, he is an inspiration to us all.

■ **Choose five words that describe yourself.** Tenacious, committed, loyal, sociable, and humorous.

■ **Do you have any regrets?** Of course, we wouldn't be human if we hadn't done things we regretted equally, so there are things I wish I had done but didn't!

■ **Do you have any unfulfilled ambitions?** Lots, but there's plenty of time.

■ **What was your most embarrassing moment?** I don't generally get embarrassed.

■ **If you had to choose another career what would it be?** A pilot, I love planes. **CFJ**