

Russell White

Owner and md, Allbrite UK



Russell White, building a successful company, but women need not apply

■ **Did you get into trouble at school?** Yes. For making a home brew in a hideaway right above the teachers' common room!

■ **What was your first part-time job?** Assisting in a bakery.

■ **What did you spend your first pay cheque on?** Having my hair permed. Style is my first name!

■ **What was your first full-time job?** Working behind a bar.

■ **What was the best piece of advice you have been given?** Put the hard work in, be patient, and the good things will come – always remember Rome wasn't built in a day.

■ **What was your worst business mistake?** Employing women!!

■ **What was your greatest business achievement?** Helping Allbrite UK steadily grow and achieve success, which has hopefully positioned us to achieve even greater things in the future.

■ **What car do you drive today and what does it say about you?** BMW – It says I like the good things in life but also want good value for money.

■ **If you could have invented any product what would it have been?** I'm doing it now – a domestic wind turbine that doesn't need planning permission and can cut utility costs by more than half.

■ **What do you most like about the flooring industry?** The smile on people's faces when their floor is laid and we have finished our job.

■ **What do you least like about the industry?** Awkward floors that are not level.

■ **Name one change you would make to the industry.** I'd tighten standards to make it more difficult for people to sell poor quality products.

■ **Which company in the flooring industry, other than your own, do you admire?** Khars, the wood flooring company because they have a positive outlook and move with the times.

■ **Where should there be a flooring show?** We liked Harrogate but it's quite small, so I'd go for Birmingham's NEC because it's the biggest and best – more central than anywhere else, easily accessible, and it's a far better venue than London's Excel. It's also hassle-free to get out of once the event is over.

■ **Which single possession would you rescue if your house caught fire?** The wife!

■ **Do you have any pets?** Four chickens, a cockerel, two saddle-back pigs, and a Westie dog called Izzy. All for food – apart from Izzy!

■ **Do you have any hobbies?** My latest hobby is driving JCBs and dumper trucks. My family and I are renovating and converting a derelict farm into our home; it involves quite a bit of excavating, which is great.

■ **How do you relax?** At the farm doing renovations and planning how to turn it into the 'greenest' home in the UK with zero utility costs. It's tremendously satisfying and therapeutic.

■ **What is your favourite tipple?** Pernod and lemonade.

■ **How many times a year do you take a holiday and what is your favourite destination?** With the business growing we are importing more products, so we have travelled quite a lot lately – to China and Israel, combining business with pleasure. Both are fantastic places, with fascinating histories.

■ **What is your idea of heaven?** A sunny summer day at the farm with the family, enjoying a barbecue.

■ **What is your idea of hell?** A combination of a rainy day, an uneven floor and a grumpy customer!

■ **Which one record and book would you take to a desert island?** A Leona Lewis album, and any of the magical Harry Potter books.

■ **Who would you like to be stuck in a lift with?** Just my own happy reflection in the mirror.

■ **If you could be anyone (living or dead, fictional or real) who would it be?** Barack Obama.

■ **Choose five words that describe yourself.** Optimistic, determined, entrepreneurial, cheerful and happy.

■ **What was your most embarrassing moment?** Turning up at a client's house and when they opened the door, joking that we were Jehovah's Witnesses, only to find that they were Jehovah's Witnesses. Fortunately they forgave us and we still got the job.

■ **Any unfulfilled ambitions?** I'm working on them at the moment through the business and the farm. We want to demonstrate that the 'good life' doesn't have to involve hemp underpants. It is possible to install efficient electricity-generated eco energy systems that significantly cut annual utility costs, and still enable you to live a modern lifestyle.

■ **If you had to choose another career what would it be?** Well, I've already run a nightclub, worked in a bar, owned a video shop – and now with Allbrite UK we not only supply underfloor heating but also solar energy products. Plus living on the farm we aim to raise our own animals and grow our own veg for food. I don't think there's much more left for me to do, other than maybe produce that wind turbine and distribute it worldwide. **CFJ**



RENOVATE
Service for the flooring industry

INDOOR COURT MARKING

We can paint court markings on most sports surfaces including:
GRANWOOD • WOOD • JUNKERS • DYNAMIC-HARO
TARKETT • BOEN-BOFLEX • VINYL • GERFLOR • SPORT 'M'
TARAFLEX • ALTRO MONDO • POLYFLOR • POLYTRED
FLEXIFLOR • STANDARD • FORBO

You do the Fitting, Laying, Sanding or Scrubbing and call us for our competitively priced, fast, friendly **COURT MARKING SERVICE**

Call Duncan of
RENOVATE Contracts Limited
on
Mobile: 07773 846587
Tel/Fax: 01455 851900