



Karen Wallace

meets

Mark Rutty



Mark Rutty, project manager at Flooring Solutions London, says that customer care and service are vital to his business:

BASED in Bromley, Kent, Flooring Solutions London was established in June 2006 by Mark Rutty.

Formerly contracts manager for a flooring company, Mark founded his own company after observing 'corners being cut to compensate for tight budgets.'

'I was working long hours in my previous job, so I decided to set up on my own and do the work properly. I chose the name Flooring Solutions to show that we can provide a solution to every problem.'

Having over 15 years' experience in the construction industry, Mark acts as a contracts manager and leaves floorlaying to the experienced freelance fitters he employs.

'I believe my strengths are in managing the fitters and understanding clients' needs. For example, I was invited to price a job for a 45-bed hotel in St Mary Cray. It needed a lot of repair but the budget was very tight.'

'It's about listening to clients and giving them what they need, not just trying to sell them something

Conscientious contractor



Tufted carpet fitted at the 90 Degrees Restaurant in Southampton by Flooring Solutions London

which may not be fit for purpose simply in order to make a quick buck.'

In his first 10 months of trading, most of his work was in the hotel and leisure industry, working with various manufacturers, installing their products in new-build hotels and refurbishment projects.

These included four 'Travelodge projects in 2006/07, the largest being a 120-bedroom hotel in Hatfield. Among his other clients are Ramada Jarvis, Marriot and Express by Holiday Inn.

He reckons that around 80% of his turnover in the first year came

from hotel work.

A shock happened recently when a manufacturer he was working for went bust. 'As a result we became much more proactive in marketing our services. We advise all contractors to take out credit insurance, especially in the current economic climate.'

Luckily, Mark gained a new client fairly quickly – an open-ended contract with a property maintenance company in the Bromley area.

He also managed to increase his work in pubs, clubs and casinos, mostly in and around the M25. However, he has also undertaken projects further afield in places like Birmingham, Yeovil, Norwich and Southampton.

Success, he believes, comes from taking a 'can do' approach. 'I try to be flexible and reliable and we always try to make the client's life easier. I pride myself on delivering excellent customer care, quality workmanship and competitive pricing.'

'Customers appreciate being kept in touch. They want peace of mind and that's why, on larger projects, I always have someone on site for the duration of the job. This helps build a rapport with the site manager; it means that most problems can be quickly resolved.'

Mark's current main focus is to expand the business, building new relationships with larger

manufacturers. He says: 'I'm in it for the long haul. This is why it is important for me to maintain high standards and have good working relationships with clients. I firmly believe that you are only as good as your last job.'

'The fitters I employ play a vital role in the company, so it's vital to maintain a good relationship with them. They have taught me a lot over the years.'

He is also grateful to manufacturers' representatives, such as Tony Steer of F Ball and Co for their support and advice.

Around 30% of his work is in the domestic sector and he states: 'We value every customer, whether it is Mrs Jones down the road or a major hotel chain or an influential local authority.'

Mark's marketing efforts have already led to stronger ties with big industry names such as Polyflor and Birch International.

Indeed, through his contact with Birch he has been invited to join a tender for the 2012 Olympics. Success will be a major boost for his business, having so many Olympic venues in his 'backyard'.

His motto is:

Placing your feet firmly on the ground, remaining focussed and offering hassle-free contracting, and getting the job done smoothly and efficiently. **CFJ**

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Teka dur 14mm laminate engineered board installed by Flooring Solutions London in an Islington apartment