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Carpet tile grows with shapes, styling

Carpet tile continues to grow in the specified commercial flooring market, according to 10 of the top manufacturers that supply the highly functional, highly fashionable product.

Virtually all the suppliers FCW spoke to — Beaulieu, Bentley, Dixie/Masland, Interface, J+J Flooring, Mannington, Mohawk, Milliken, Shaw and Tandus Centiva — reported the most activity this year is in the corporate segment, with significant sales also generated in education (K-12 and higher), healthcare and hospitality.

Corporations are seeking to lure top talent with great looking interiors, reported Mike Gallman, Mohawk Group's senior vice president of product. Colleges and universities are also updating student rooms and public spaces as a way to attract applicants.

Gallman said, "The majority of the volume in both these markets is carpet tile and we expect that the platform could soon make up as much as 75 percent to 80 percent of the commercial carpet market."

Interface has been expanding beyond its traditional markets of corporate and education into the hospitality segment, reported John Wells, president and CEO of Interface Americas. "Hospitality is turning to carpet tile because it has a longer life cycle than broadloom and offers great style and design. And when you use carpet tile in a guest room or corridor, there is less waste than with broadloom," Wells explained.

Steady growth is expected to continue. Gallman said, "We don't foresee any major changes to market conditions through the end of 2015. It has been a solid year and we expect these conditions to continue. Our current forecast for the 2016 market is growth between 3 percent and 4 percent."

Fashion in modular

While carpet tile first moved into commercial for its practical features — ease of handling and installation, as well as the option of replacing a few worn or damaged tiles rather than an entire floor — its flexible fashion is now an important driver.

Brenda Knowles, Shaw's vice president of commercial marketing and product development said, "With the availability of hexagon, facet tiles, rhombuses, oversized rectangles, long linear shapes and long-standing squares and rectangles, 2015 has been the year of the shape — offering unlimited design possibilities."

Natalie Jones, Mannington Commercial's vice president of brand development and creative product, added, "The plank has opened the door for designers to create design through installing in various patterns. There has been an influence from hard surface flooring — LVT and ceramic — to use the shape of the product to create patterns on the floor. It is pattern on a larger scale and can be used for way-finding and space definition," Jones added.

Aside from shape, there is a trend to more texture. "The biggest style trend is higher pile and looser constructions that allow for more texture," said Terry Mowers, vice president of product design at Tandus Centiva. "There is less pattern with various textures creating mix and match floors."

When it comes to color, Jones noted, "Gray is still huge but there is more color coming into commercial, particularly in corporate. There are a lot of blues and greens as well as a wine tone that are trending."

There has also been an emergence of the distressed look in carpet tile as similar to other finishes and furniture in commercial interiors, observed Lee Martin, president of Masland Contract.

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Bentley
 The company recently unveiled its new product Anthem in November as an update to its classic King's Road style. Anthem features a luxurious cut pile in subtle blends of color to create a unique look.



Interface
 From the Near & Far collection by Interface, NF400 features subdued striations the length of the 25cm x 1m planks. Offered in eight neutral colors, NF401 adds texture with carving and curvilinear movement.



Bolyu
 Designed to coordinate with Svelte, Bolyu has added Thread Count, along with Backstitch and Monogram, to its Level Collection of hybrid modular carpet. Thread Count features simple color bands with an accent to create an ombre effect.

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STYLE





Masland

The company offers Flying Embers, a small-scale pattern to contrast with Lava, a large-scale pattern reminiscent of weathered stone. The pair is constructed of 100 percent Universal Fibers Type 6,6 nylon with permanent Stain Resist.



Mohawk Group

Mohawk Group's Iconic Earth collection draws inspiration from natural stone and includes three patterns that stand alone or work together. Two patterns are available in a 12"x 36" plank and one pattern in a traditional 24"x 24" carpet tile.



Shaw

The company's Patcraft division offers the Mixed Materials collection, engineered with carpet and resilient styles

that work together. Fabrix is one of three carpet patterns available as a facet modular tile that works with existing flooring.



Mannington

Part of Mannington's Design Local Collection, Philadelphia is available in an 18" x 36" plank tile with Infinity Modular Backing. Philadelphia features Antron Lumena nylon 6,6 face fiber and Mannington's Infinity RE modular backing.



Milliken

The company's Color Field, tufted of Milliken Certified WearOn Nylon Type 6,6, is printed using Millitron technology and offered in 64 colors, grouped in families of four. A herringbone pattern is one of a myriad of installation options.



J+J Flooring

J+J Flooring Group launched Index, its first 12" x 48" demi plank in November. Index offers expressive color and supporting neutrals to allow color manipulation and a variety of installation combinations.



Tandus Centiva

New from Tandus Centiva, Avant is available as modular carpet and Powerbond in 16 colorways. Tufted in Dynex