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MR RUBBER KICKS OFF THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL UNDERLAY



Interfloor launches the Campaign for Real Underlay this month in a drive to encourage retailers and wholesalers to sell more high quality rubber underlay products. The campaign headlines a tongue-in-cheek Mr Rubber character – the iconic man from the ‘Ministry of Rubber’ – with a rubber manifesto detailing the five laws of real rubber underlay at www.realunderlay.com.

Rubber underlay products are featured as offering outstanding durability or ‘boingability’ and fantastic underfoot comfort, also known as the ‘ahhhhh’ factor. There is a vast range of options in terms of colours, textures, thicknesses and specialist applications aimed at consumers’ different needs and budgets.

Steve Woodhead, Interfloor marketing director says: ‘The focus of the campaign, through the flooring trade press, will be to promote the advantages of selling rubber underlays in terms of consumer preference, performance and sellability. Recent research has shown that 82% of consumers prefer sponge rubber underlay and 85% like crumb rubber underlay. They prefer rubber underlay because of its luxurious, hard-wearing and long-life properties and, as one consumer put it, “because it looks like a proper underlay should”.’

This, combined with the prominence of the Tredaire and Duralay brands, plus the incredible range of rubber, provides excellent opportunities for retailers to up-sell. Both brands have a long-held reputation for comfort, durability and high performance through products that make carpets look better, feel more luxurious, and last longer.

For consumers who demand luxurious comfort there are luxury rubber underlays such

as Tredaire Colours Red. If the need is for a really hard wearing underlay for high traffic areas or dining rooms, Duralay offers a range of crumb rubber underlays with 100% boingability such as System 10 or Treadmore.

And, of course, there are specialist rubber underlays for wood or laminate floors (such as Duralay Silentfloor Gold); low tog underlays for underfloor heating (Duralay Heatflow) and even crumb/felt combination underlays for maximising comfort and durability such as Duralay Kensington Deluxe.

Rubber underlay represents over 60% of carpet underlay bought in the UK and its popularity abroad is growing. Interfloor exports to more than 70 countries and is increasing its rubber underlay sales to Europe, the Middle East and China.

Some flooring retailers are already convinced of the qualities and profitability of sponge and crumb rubber underlay.



Martin Stoneman: 'We only sell quality brands'

Martin Stoneman of Stoneman and Bowker – Exeter's longest established home furnishers – is proud of his company's enviable reputation in the South West. His range of carpets include quality brands such as Axminster, Brintons and Ulster, so he demands only the best for the underlays he supplies, which is why he uses Tredaire New Supreme and Willow Green

sponge rubber underlay.

Mr Stoneman says: 'We sell only quality brands to the top of the market, and have employed the fitters – who we trained ourselves and some of whom we have used for more than 30 years – so that we ensure absolute quality.'

'We have been using the Tredaire and Duralay underlays continuously for many years, and have tried new products if the customer insists. But we always come back to the tried and tested quality products we know and which give the look, feel and durability our customers demand. 'We have used PU products if the customer requests it, though we prefer to use only high quality products. Our customers know they want the best and they're very happy with Tredaire and Duralay rubber underlays,' says Mr Stoneman.



David Hartley: 'Rubber underlay has stood the test of time'

David Hartley of family business, David Hartley's Carpet Market in Burnley, sells direct to the consumer and also has floorcovering contracts for local landlords in the rented accommodation market.

He says: 'I have tried the new PU underlays, and it's true that the product is easy to handle, but rubber underlay has stood the test of time so I have switched back,' he says.

He likes the quality and durability of Tredaire Colours Red and Duralay Hallmark Supreme that offer particularly good value for money.

His family Carpet Market business also employs his two sons, Chris and Ash, his cousin Sherry and his two brothers-in-law, Jason and Colin, plus there are other nonfamily members in the business, which was launched 15 years ago.

'I do buy from other suppliers, but I have bought from Interfloor for many years. In fact one of the ladies who works for Interfloor bought a carpet from me and I asked her what underlay she wanted. She had Colours Red, so I thought that if she wanted it for her own home, then it must be good.'