

4 February 2014

## Gerflor plays its part in the creation of family firm's superstore

With the largest of its six outlets measuring 4,700ft<sup>2</sup>, the decision by independent electrical goods retailer HBH Woolacotts to create a new 18,000ft<sup>2</sup> store was a big step in the company's expansion.

And Managing Director Martin Hemmerle, son of the family firm's founder, had a clear idea of what he wanted to create at the St Austell flagship. He commented: "We wanted the retail environment to look different to the normal superstore. In some stores it's just about how many boxes you can fit in, but that's not retailing, it's about making it an experience."

Helen Morse, senior designer at design, shopfitting and management consultancy AM System Ltd, was responsible for bringing the vision to life for the St Austell store. She used international vinyl flooring specialist Gerflor's Creation Luxury Vinyl Tile & Plank (LVT) range with its 89 realistic wood and mineral finishes to define spaces, without obvious walkways, which would showcase the goods in similar settings to customers' homes and create a cafe and cookery demonstration area.

Wood-effect Creation Moon Island planks were used to create lounges and apartment floors, while Creation Marble Modena was used for white goods on the ground floor. The darker Creation East Side mineral tiles and wood effect Buxton oak planks were also specified for audio-visual spaces and office environments. The work was carried out by Bodmin Flooring Centre.

Helen Morse said: "We wanted to pull out all the stops and do something more adventurous. The vision was to create an apartment on a mezzanine floor to encourage visitors, as it's hard to get people upstairs. It looks fantastic and when you get up there there's also a cook shop, a cafe area with space for cookery demonstrations, and eco appliances."

She added: "Because it's a big space, it could take a strong finish so we kept it pale, with whites and greys, and got the flooring to work a little harder. I liked the Creation colour palette; the timbers look authentic, and Moon Island is very popular at the moment."

Usually specified for public and commercial areas needing a sophisticated look while coping with high footfall, Gerflor launched its new range of Creation Luxury Vinyl Tiles and Planks after listening to customers' ideas and demands. The range has many products with bevelled edges for added realism and includes seven unique design concepts and three striking modern themes.

With a wear layer of 0.7mm and an overall thickness of 2.5mm for added durability, Creation's good looks are underpinned by an abrasion group T rating. The application of Gerflor's unique PUR+ surface treatment as standard allows for easy cleaning and improved resistance to scratching. It significantly delays the need for wax and provides excellent resistance to chemicals.

The end result is that 18 months after opening the St Austell superstore, Martin Hemmerle is delighted with how the flooring and store looks. He said: "We have had a fantastic reaction from our customers. It's the largest electrical retail store in Cornwall and it's quite different. The suppliers are absolutely delighted as well and we've had a lot of visits from national dealers to see what we've done."

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### FACT SHEET:

Client: HBH Woolacotts

Designer: AM System Ltd

Contractor: Bodmin Flooring Centre

Project: HBH Woolacotts St Austell

Products used: Creation Moon Island, Creation Buxton Oak, Creation Marble Modena, Creation East Side.

### With Compliments:

Natalie Lake

The Studio 4

Grosvenor House

Central Park

Telford

TF2 9TW

Tel: 01952 234 005

Email: [nat@thestudio4.co.uk](mailto:nat@thestudio4.co.uk)

### Issued on behalf of:

Navjot Dhillon

Gerflor

Wedgnock House

Wedgnock Lane

Warwick

CV34 5AP

Tel: 01926 622 600

Email: [contractuk@gerflor.com](mailto:contractuk@gerflor.com)