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LVT remains on trend

The result of more brands, more choice, competitive pricing and better than ever design choices is the ever-growing share of LVTs in the flooring market, says Nav Dhillon, Marketing Manager, Gerflor

The global luxury vinyl tile (LVT) share of the flooring market continues to thrive with continued and steady growth anticipated as far ahead as 2025. In the UK growth has been particularly noted in the private commercial sectors.

In response to the healthy status of LVT flooring over recent years, more brands have been attracted to the market almost tripling the number of players in just six years. Its phenomenal success has resulted in an increasing upward trajectory of flooring market share over floorings like other vinyl, wood, ceramic and alternative floorings, as well as growth in areas where LVT is most often used within the private commercial sector like retail, offices and hospitality. As more brands have entered the LVT market they have brought with them greater choice and contributed to prices becoming more competitive.

Gerflor has been developing and manufacturing LVT flooring for international markets for over three decades and is therefore a well-established brand and not a new player in the market. Yet our approach and enthusiasm towards the creation of new design concepts and improving the performance characteristics of our floorings does not waiver or diminish.

The LVT market, being design-driven, is kept fresh by the fact that designs, colours, textures, finishes and tile and plank formats are continually renewed, improved and expanded upon. Innovative new solutions can therefore be provided to the end users who demand the latest looks and to those that need the scope to create interior schemes that attract people like customers, staff or homebuyers, whilst making a good and long-lasting impression.

By keeping abreast of top, decorative international trends and incorporating them successfully into ranges with appropriate nuances to more than satisfy a wide range of end users' requirements, flooring manufacturers are continuing to offer the breadth of choice that is needed in design-led industries, which in turn supports the expansion of markets for LVT flooring.

As a result, LVT flooring tends to be specified where a high level of design innovation is a crucial element in both new build and renovation projects. Historically this has been mainly in areas like retail and offices where fashion and image are of upmost importance but functionality is essential. However more traditional users of ceramic, wood and alternative floorings, like hotels and other hospitality venues, are increasingly using LVT flooring as an easy maintenance, cost-effective solution, which can also make an interior design statement to encourage people across the threshold and enhance the guest experience.

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In addition, healthcare establishments are increasingly considering flooring designs that differ from stereotypical clinical looks and which contribute to overall aesthetical schemes. Many healthcare building specifiers are taking a holistic approach to include floorings and how they interact and impact on patients, residents and staff.

Needless to say, the necessary standards and criteria must apply in healthcare but for areas where LVT and cushioned vinyl floorings are suitable, their aesthetical and performance characteristics can at times be beneficial to well-being. For instance, by using appropriate design, colour and texture a homely and natural or a calming and restful ambience can be easily achieved.

Fuelling the imagination of those who specify and use LVT flooring is the mission of flooring specialists like us who supply many different markets. We have to provide the scope that is wanted and the choices that are needed in design, colour and specification options, which is why some flooring collections contain both trend-setting elements and popular designs with enhancements.

Key trends may come and go by season, but strong, unique designs are the mainstay, which are regularly enlivened with new hues, textures and finishes that embrace current decorative fashions. But, trail-blazing, pioneering new designs and risk-taking colour palettes are essential when competing in global markets: after all these are what get noticed in an international arena. It is by interacting with designers world-wide and examining influential design influences and trends that flooring manufacturers are able to continually innovate.

For 2020 Gerflor have identified several key trends which will influence flooring designs, the first being based on folklore. Inspired by wildlife, primitive motifs from folklore traditions, ancient civilisations and craftsmanship, it is eclectic and bohemian. It encompasses materials such as wood, stone, leather, natural fibres and ceramics bringing warmth and character to the floor.

Nature is an ever-popular influencer with our desire to reconnect with our origins and centres on wood on the floor, in furniture and objects. Natural woods that are smooth to the touch and have ultra-matte varnish finish take us back to basics, helping designers to create a cocoon, away from our busy urban lives

Geometrics are a mainstay with strong linear patterns that bring joy with dynamic designs and repetitive patterns. Stretching back to the Art Deco movement of the 1920s, and with iterations throughout the ensuing decades, geometrics have drawn their inspiration from Eastern, African, or Scandinavian motifs, for always more colourful fantasy.

We are seeing emerging trends based on nostalgia and luxury that look back at a time of chic and sophistication, an era of ultra-elegance. Inspired by the Art Deco movement, this trend has luxury and aesthetic beauty at its heart. It incorporates rich materials, such as leather, wrought iron and gilding, blend beautifully with geometric patterns, strict and dynamic forms, especially on the floor.

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Finally, the industrial look of a New York loft space continues to appeal and nods to an industrial past incorporating brick walls, polished concrete or half-destroyed floors and recovered materials. This trend is minimalist, yet warm and complemented with hints of burnished metallic.

However, it's not all about aesthetics: in addition to permanent adhesive, LVTs now come with built-in loose-lay installation systems for fast-track fitting and repair to provide an appropriate solution for most installations. LVTs also encompass the advanced construction technology necessary for outstanding performance with wear layer options suitable for moderate to high traffic installations.

The addition of protective polyurethane treatments applied during the manufacturing process provide easy-to-clean, scratch and stain resistant surfaces that look good for longer. They are also environmentally sustainable with cushioning, warmth and acoustic characteristics.

In a competitive world, the LVT flooring market remains a promising one with endless design possibilities, keen prices and innovative solutions for both new build and refurbishment projects; its outlook is rosy.

Learn more about Gerflor products at www.gerflor.co.uk/ 01926 622600 / email: contractuk@gerflor.com

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