

Interview

WITH RON DUNN, FOUNDER AND CO-CEO OF CARPETSPLUS COLORTILE®



THE BENEFITS OF JOINING A BUYING GROUP



Q. LET'S JUMP RIGHT INTO THIS, WHY SHOULD AN INDEPENDENT RETAILER CONSIDER JOINING A GROUP?

A. Networking. Above everything else, joining a group involves appreciating the added value and benefits of proven ways and best practices and connecting with other retailers from around the country.

Q. WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE PRIMARY RESISTANCE?

A. Independent retailers do not want to lose their independence. That also is logical. Entrepreneurs are visionary, innovative, risk takers, determined and proud. The last thing they will have is someone that comes into their business and starts telling them what to do. Entrepreneurs also crave learning, value networking and are passionate about improving. Our group protects all of this. The primary resistance I find involves misconceptions regarding the ability to maintain independence.

Q. WHAT DO YOU SAY TO A RETAILER WHO SAYS THEY DON'T NEED A GROUP TO BE SUCCESSFUL?

A. Of course sharp business leaders can be successful without the added benefits that a group will bring, but the question is, can someone lead their company to greater success and profitability quicker and with fewer mistakes by learning from others? Logic says yes. Am I better off waking up in the morning with an entire team of specialists behind me developing marketing, merchandising, sales, business growth ideas and options, am I better off with the buying power of my one business or connected with hundreds of other stores, would a private label add value, and am I better off being able to pick up the phone and call other retailers from around the country to add their insights and experience to my decision making process... or am I best off going to battle alone?

Q. OK, SO PLAY THE PART OF THE WAITER. WHAT ARE YOUR MOST POPULAR OFFERINGS?

A. As an **appetizer**... Proven Ways. After traveling the country and visiting our stores we compiled two volumes of secrets to success in consistently growing sales, reducing costs, improving efficiencies and increasing profits. Pages and pages of rubber meet the road how-to insights written by our members for members.

Soup and salad would be what we call Design Values. These are exclusively negotiated carpet and hard surface go-to specials highlighted in an easy access display offering a win-win for the consumer and retailer.

The main entrée involves merchandising and showroom options involving a full menu of private labeled displays that provide a beautiful and congruent look. **Side dishes** include aggressive consumer financing, web and social media support, on-going promotional events and product diversification options. The **dessert tray** encompasses our passion for effective networking through annual conventions, retail summits, the "Drive Across America" visiting stores and mining more proven ways and a weekly newsletter that goes to all members. The **coffee** that is added at the end are the added rebate dollars earned from dollar one on purchases from all of our suppliers.

Q. IS THERE ANYTHING RELATING TO INCREASED SALES AND PROFITS THAT YOU CAN GUARANTEE TO A STORE THAT IS THINKING ABOUT JOINING?

A. I will tell you what the executive management team at one of our industry's largest manufacturers said to me: "Ron, we really like your group because when someone joins, that person, through the years, becomes a stronger business owner and their company grows." Our goal is to provide independent flooring retailers a wide menu of effective tools to help them grow a strong team and business. Part of that team involves the networking with other members.

Q. WHAT WOULD YOUR EXISTING MEMBERS SAY REGARDING THE BENEFITS OF JOINING A GROUP?

A. I encourage you to call a few of them and have them weigh in. What you will hear is a buffet of benefits that are available to choose from. I liken our group to a fine dining experience. There are all kinds of great items on the **menu** and you can't possibly consume them all in one visit, so order what makes most sense for you today.

Q. HOW CAN A RETAILER FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OR BECOME A MEMBER OF CARPETSPLUS COLORTILE?

A. The best thing to do would be to contact our member services team at 800-261-6456 and we will provide more information.

