

Members Eager for Alliance Flooring's 25th

By Ken Ryan

Alliance Flooring—the buying group comprising CarpetsPlus, ColorTile and Carpetland retailers—is celebrating its 25th anniversary this week in Orlando, Fla., with members looking forward to their first fully attended convention since the pandemic started.

The three-day conference will feature breakout sessions— with seminars from interior designer Donna Moss (Making the Sale by Design), sales consultant John Kimmel (Increase Sales by Understanding Human Behavior) and The Dixie Group's Pami Bhullar (Selling in the Post-COVID-19 World - Increase your Quality Sales by 25%). A general session, product showcase, trade show and awards ceremony will also take place.

As with all Alliance Flooring events, suppliers are encouraged to attend all the functions throughout the conference. “A vital part of the mix is growing solid supplier relationships,” said Ron Dunn, co-CEO. “Our core suppliers continually pass on that as a group our members outpace the industry in sales growth. Within two years of a retailer joining our group, they see an increase in sales spurred by stronger business practices. Our members enjoy each other, care for each other, share information and help each other in incredible ways. Being a part of these meaningful, growing relationships is our biggest cause for celebration going into this convention.”



RETAILERS CHIME IN

It's not just management that's excited about getting members and vendors back together after such a long delay. FCNews asked several Alliance members for their thoughts heading into the March 13-15 convention. Following is a sampling of their observations.



MARK STRAUCH

Floor Craft, Colorado Springs, CO

It's been a couple years since I've been at a convention, so it will be good to reconnect and interact directly with members and suppliers. The other members have so much knowledge and you are able to learn from them. As Ron Dunn says, 'All of us together are so much stronger than by ourselves.'



DON CANTOR

Lake Interiors, Chelan, WA

None of us are competitors; we're all friends. That makes it a family atmosphere. When we first started we were a smaller store and leaned on other members like Mark Strauch as to what it takes to get to the next level; I spoke to many others dealers like Stacy Pape and Brent Compton who are full of knowledge. Now that we are an established dealer, we want to give back because so many have given to us.



BEN CASE

The Carpet Collection, Lockport, N.Y.

The openness to share success formulas. We have learned so much from other members by conversation at conventions and really cherish the relationships we have formed through this group. In addition, the branding and private labeling really help protect margins and give continuity to the showroom. This gives us an edge when people go from one store to another.



KEVIN ROSE

Carpetland USA, Rockford, IL

I truly enjoy the friendships that have blossomed out of the Alliance annual meetings. It is always a great time, and the sharing of best practices is very important and interesting. Discussing the flooring industry changes with some of the 'old guys' like founders Ron [Dunn] and Jon [Logue] is always worthwhile and enjoyable. They are great friends and always genuine, which is hard to come by in the business world today. I raise my glass to both of these men who have assisted in the growth of the Alliance community and the many businesses under that umbrella.



MIKE MONTGOMERY

Montgomery's CarpetsPlus COLORTILE, Venice, FL

The best part of every convention is the bonding and interacting with members and suppliers. You get to not only talk with people who are having the same concerns or issues but also the mill suppliers and their outlook and projections for the upcoming year.

The biggest benefit/advantage of being a member is the extensive network you have to draw from. Many times I have contacted other dealers to speak with about products or problems with certain products. It also allows us to expand our purchasing power and reach. We have access to over 400 stores and the products they may carry or have access to that we do not, which is huge.



KATE BUTCHER

Hoosier CarpetsPlus COLORTILE, Bloomington, IN

Conventions are like a family reunion. I love to hear and share ideas, and there is a lot a great information from the vendors as well as the other stores. Being a member has given us great insight into the manufacturers and their products. Alliance Flooring keeps up to date with news and flooring trends that help us to keep an advantage to our competition.



JOSH ELDER

CarpetsPlus COLORTILE of Gainesville, FL

I always look forward to the camaraderie and fellowship with my fellow members and suppliers. They have all become friends over the years. It is the best networking event I go to every year with other business owners who are open about their business and business practices.

One of the biggest advantages of being a member is our membership. We are a family, and we all work together to help each other grow and improve our businesses. The leadership at Alliance Flooring sees and encourages the family environment as they know we are all much stronger as a group than individually.