

# KRAUS Floors with More

**MAKES A BIG IMPACT AT SURFACES**

Kraus has introduced a new corporate identity and branding program at this year's Surfaces show. Customer-facing divisions and private label collections are now all branded under the Kraus name. In the past there were a variety of brands that products and divisions went under.

In addition, a new corporate tag line, "Floors with More," has been added to the Kraus name, so that customers equate Kraus not only with carpet but also with other kinds of flooring. The tag line also puts an emphasis on Kraus floors having unique features, and are not just commodity products.

"Kraus was known as a manufacturer of carpet and fibre, but in recent years we've expanded our distribution centres for carpet and flooring to such an extent that today just over half our thousand employees work in manufacturing," commented Kraus' President and CEO, Gary Witt. "We doubled our space at Surfaces 2007 to showcase more of the hard-surface and soft-surface collections that we now stock in more than twenty cities across North America."

"Though we at Kraus made our name in contract carpet, today we sell nearly as much residential as commercial carpet, and nearly as much hard-surface as soft-surface flooring," commented Brad Vollrath, head of Kraus' Distribution Group. "With this new identity program, we've harmonized a confusing array of brand names. Until recently, commercial carpet was branded Kraus, while residential carpet and flooring were branded Lifestyles. Customers in the US Northwest knew us as Kraus Sound, Northeast customers as Kraus Sorce and Canadians as Kraus McMahon. Now it's all Kraus. Simple."

"We chose our new tag line to better communicate our product scope and our differentiation strategy," commented Kraus' Senior VP Walter Eckhardt. "Kraus - Floors with More.' expresses that we market not only carpet but also other flooring types. And in every category, we differentiate our offerings from regular commodity products with unique features like our famous ZipperLock® backing, with more warranty coverage, with more local stock, and so on. Kraus doesn't aim at the lowest price - we aim to offer the unique product features across a broad spectrum of price points."



Walter Eckhardt stands next to Kraus Carpets display that features carpets made of Strudex fibre and features their ZipperLock® backing system



product with rival products, he'll shift the conversation from just initial price to life-cycle cost and customer satisfaction. His client will value our products far higher than commodity alternatives. So our new tag line also means, 'Floors with more profit for our customers.'"

Kraus' head office is in Waterloo, Ontario, but also has manufacturing facilities in Dalton, Georgia; and Queensland, Australia. Kraus employs about 1000 people around the world and has more than twenty distribution centres across North America.

One of the latest product lines for Kraus is Finest Floors, a Brazilian Wood Flooring brand. At Surfaces, Derek Brooks, Senior Director of Marketing, was excited about the future for the brand, "Finest Floors is a brand that Kraus sells throughout North America and has exclusive distribution rights to. We're very excited about the growth of this line because of our partnership with the manufacturer of "Finest Floors" who is one of the largest suppliers in Brazil."

Kraus believe that there will be some major changes in the availability of hardwood flooring from Brazil over the next few years.

"Right now there are probably about 20 to 30 manufacturers of wood flooring in Brazil, but there are going to be less and less as the government is clamping down. One of the key things, of course, is making sure that the Brazilian rain forest is taken care of. So over the next few years you're going to see only about four to five manufacturers survive. Finest Floors is one of the biggest and is very environmentally responsible, and extremely concerned with issues of quality," said Brooks.

"We are very enthused about the addition of our latest hard surface products: Kraus Premium Laminates, Kraus Premium Hardwoods, Kraus Luxury Tile. Value engineered products that allow for seamless performance, fashion innovation and great profit opportunity for our retailers. Stay tuned for many exciting introductions throughout the next few months," says Derek Brooks.

## **KRAUS IN-STOCK GUARANTEE**

Kraus have expanded their Quick Ship program of mid-priced commercial broadloom from 30 colourways to 65, including multi-colour loop patterns, some in solution dyed nylon and others in Strudon poly-nylon, as well as coordinating solid colour loop and cut pile carpets.

Performance broadlooms up to 500 yards are guaranteed to be in stock for immediate shipment in a single dye lot.