

# The Importance Of Working With Floor Covering Professionals When Planning The Design Or Remodel Of A Home Or Business

by Sara Sobota

When designing any home or business, selecting the proper floor covering that is both appealing and also able to withstand the area's future foot traffic is often something that requires the assistance of an industry professional. *Building Industry Synergy* reached out to several area floor covering businesses in Myrtle Beach, Conway, Murrells Inlet & Georgetown to get valuable feedback on the latest products and services available in today's market.

Creative Flooring Designs of Murrells Inlet can take the stress out of your next flooring project because they focus on each customer's needs so they get a truly customized experience. Bob Terrell and his staff strive to get to know their clients' style & needs so they can offer the products their customer desires, combined with superior service.



Bob & Nicole Terrell with Creative Flooring Designs

Creative Flooring Designs provides sales & installation services for both residential and commercial new construction or remodeling customers, throughout the Grand Strand from Pawleys Island to Little River with free estimates and free design consultation services.

When Terrell expanded to their new showroom & design center in Murrells Inlet, his goal was to give customers the ability to see & touch more products but never lose that one on one relationship that made his business successful. "Our goal is to get to know the customer, their needs & what their vision is for their home or business. The showroom is highly organized so people can come in and not only view flooring samples but get valuable product information on what they're considering purchasing," said Terrell.



The Creative Flooring Designs showroom is located @ 12082 Hwy. 17 Bypass in Murrells Inlet, SC.

Terrell realizes customers instinctively head to the big box stores for flooring, thinking they will get a deal, but Creative Flooring Designs offers quality products at amazing prices with the goal of creating a superior experience for the customer. "Many of our customers become our friends and that is what we want. We are your neighbor. Doing business on the Grand Strand, specifically in Murrells Inlet, is wonderful. My wife and I are part of this community; both professionally and personally. When you choose Creative Flooring Designs, our goal is to create an experience that is personalized



Sales & Installation Coordinator, Rick Rodrigue

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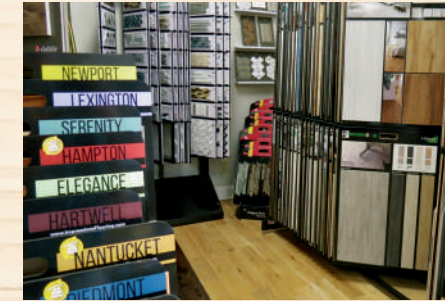


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and significantly less stressful for the homeowner. My professional sales staff is industry trained and our installation teams are not on rotation like the big box stores. I am fortunate to have some of the best sales & installation professionals in the industry on our team," said Terrell.

"A lot of times, when buying materials in the big box stores, you aren't educated on the product and whether it will meet your needs. We offer that information combined with products from all the top flooring manufacturers – who all have warranties associated with their products."



One of the biggest trends Terrell has noticed over the past year or two in flooring tends to be luxury vinyl flooring (LVP) which is waterproof and scratch-resistant. "This product has virtually replaced the laminate market, as well as a good chunk of the hardwood market. It's a great value for the homeowner and gives the look of hardwood at a fraction of the cost, while most LVP are warranted for life," said Terrell.

Apparently, also, the trend for flooring is the bigger, the better.

"With each year that passes, the flooring planks, regardless if it's wood, tile, or vinyl, are getting bigger," said Terrell. "Last year the average plank size might have been 6-inch-wide, but now we are seeing more and more



product lines offering 8 inch and 9-inch-wide planks."

Terrell emphasized that the most valuable aspect of choosing Creative Flooring Designs is his involvement in the day to day operations, which provides an unparalleled level of customer service.



"I am personally involved with almost every customer that comes through our doors," said Terrell. "I get to know them & visit almost every job site during their installations. This way, if I have not had the opportunity to meet them in the store, I'll meet them at their house during their install. I always try and stop by and look at the job, make sure the installation is progressing as it should, and make sure the customer expectations are being met and/or exceeded. That is what sets me apart from any other

flooring showroom out there; customers get personalized service from the owner, not just a salesperson. No matter how much we grow I do not see that ever changing. Growth is good, but I never want to be so big that I do not know my customer."

In 2004, Jaime Pando established a flooring business that emphasizes classic looks, personalized service, and stellar products. Providing service to building contractors, property management companies, and homeowners along the Grand Strand, **Flooring Panda** ensures top-quality projects from beginning to end, every time.



Jaime Pando is very pleased with the professional staff he has assembled. Everyone shown in this photo has been with Flooring Panda for 3 or more years.

"We are dedicated to providing a product that is elegant, unique, and completely yours," said Pando. "We feel that we have the best products and best value for your dollar."

Tracy Hancock, general manager who has worked with the company for ten years, mentioned a few new trends in flooring that are having a major impact on the industry.

"Luxury vinyl plank [LVP] is a popular choice because of its price range and because it's waterproof and scratch resistant, and the

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General Manager, Tracy Hancock (right), discusses the new Revo-Tile product with Territory Manager, Jake Rider (left).

looks now are very close to wood,” said Hancock. “At least half the people who own a home probably own a dog or some type of pet, and because of its qualities, LVP is just killing the market.”

Luxury vinyl tile [LVT] is another highly popular product, as well as a new ceramic tile that’s come out in the last six months and saves time and labor.

“It clicks in like you would LVT, and there’s benefits because there’s no acclimation time,” said Hancock. “For LVT, you still have to acclimate for a couple days, and with regular tile, you’ve got mortar and grout. With this, you put down a pad, and then just lay it



Flooring Panda’s Myrtle Beach location is @ 864 Kingswood Dr. (Behind Suds Car Wash On Hwy. 544) & the Shallotte, NC location is @ 5298 Main St. (Next To NC DMV).

and click it right over the top of the pad. There’s no mixing grout; it’s premixed, so you just put it in and it’s good to go.”

Hancock emphasized that builders benefit from this more efficient product and process.

“With builders, the great thing is when you put tile in, you’re looking at a minimum of two days, usually three days, because you’ve got to wait for it to set, and then you’ve got to come back and grout it, and now you can set it and grout it all in one day.”



Jaime Pando has established an excellent relationship with many builders across the Grand Strand. Mark Hiltz (left) with Hiltz Construction has been doing business with Jaime for many years.

Pando added that Flooring Panda has an excellent relationship with builders because their team works around and within builders’ schedules.

“Our installers have a high attention to detail, providing quality installations,” said Pando. “We are always very reliable and flexible with the contractor’s scheduling requests. We like to integrate our business with theirs.”

Hancock also mentioned the company’s commercial business, including extensive projects they’ve completed at Coastal Carolina University as well as a restaurant complex on Ocean Boulevard in Myrtle Beach at 14th Ave. North, including Tin Roof, Bandito’s, and the brand-new Epic Arcade.

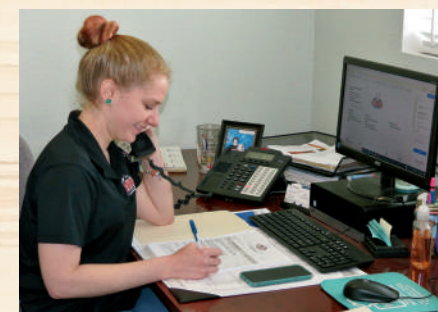
“We are very proud and grateful for all of



Warehouse Leader, Thomas Jackson (on forklift) has been with Flooring Panda for many years.

the relationships that we have established over the past couple of decades,” said Pando.

The company transitioned its name from the Flooring Depot to Flooring Panda about two years ago, adding a mobile element to its



Mindy Berry is involved with inside sales & also works the front desk as you enter Flooring Panda.

brand with wrapped vehicles that bear the fuzzy, black-and-white mascot.

“We wanted something to catch eyes,” said Hancock. “When you see a big panda driving down the road, it catches your attention.”

One of the biggest trends in the flooring industry is WPC, waterproof flooring. “It has taken over the market; it is crazy how much we’re selling these days – almost 60% of all sales now,” J & S Flooring owner Gregg



Gregg Pierce with J & S Flooring

Pierce noted. “The flooring has a vinyl wear layer and clicks together with beautiful wood or tile visuals. It is scratch-resistant and waterproof, very durable, not as cold as other floors, and easier to install, repair, and replace.

Plus, it costs less than most hardwood floors.” Mr. Pierce offers waterproof flooring from about a dozen manufacturers and has installed it in multiple projects, including \$2 million dollar homes and everything in between.

J & S Flooring has provided Pawley’s Island, Murrell’s Inlet, Litchfield, and the entire Grand Strand area with quality name brand products with exceptional service at affordable prices for over 26 years. Catering to both homeowners and building contractors, J & S Flooring has a 10,000 square foot showroom and warehouse, located in Georgetown, which allows them keep a lot of stock on hand for cash and carry projects. They also have a full sample showroom on site. They offer carpet, wood, tile, waterproof



The J & S Flooring 10,000 square foot warehouse & showroom is located @ 2104 S. Fraser St. in Georgetown, SC.

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flooring, and materials for complete kitchen and bath remodels.

Another trend Mr. Pierce has noticed is the desire for custom shower upgrades,

especially those in master baths. "People are remodeling or renovating bathrooms, creating larger walk-in showers, adding benches and multi head showers, accenting with glass and

tile," he explained. People of all ages are buying older homes, gutting them, and creating what they want. Those customers typically design dream kitchens and baths in their remodel. J & S Flooring also supplies to general contractors of commercial properties, as well as dozens of custom homes each year.



By being a member of the "Abbey Carpet and Floor" buying group, they get to offer customers hundreds of options including "Abbey" exclusive products. That affiliation also helps protect the pricing for their customers, gives better preference options in colors and styles, and extends warranties. This includes a 60-day no questions asked guarantee.

Your flooring choices dramatically affect the comfort and look of your home or business; you need to make the best choices possible. J & S Flooring understands this type of investment requires finding a company that provides both service and skill. "The box



stores are great if you need a hammer or a piece of sheetrock, but flooring is one area that requires great service and unmatched skill," Mr. Pierce explained. Pierce's showroom staff of seven will guide you through the decision process; his installation department of twenty will install your product professionally every time. "Some of these guys have been with me a very long time - they know what they are doing," Pierce added.

Word of mouth referrals and returning customers continue to help J & S Flooring grow. Their continued BBB Rating of A+ is proof of their desire to always go above and beyond what their customers expect. "We offer fair pricing, we send experienced installers out, and we stand behind everything." ■



**1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE**



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Gregg Pierce

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"J & S Flooring has been installing floor covering for my company for over 15 years now. They are a superior value vendor that offers great selections and top-notch workmanship. They are just excellent. They show up when they say they will be there."

-Bob McCarley  
Coastal Builders

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