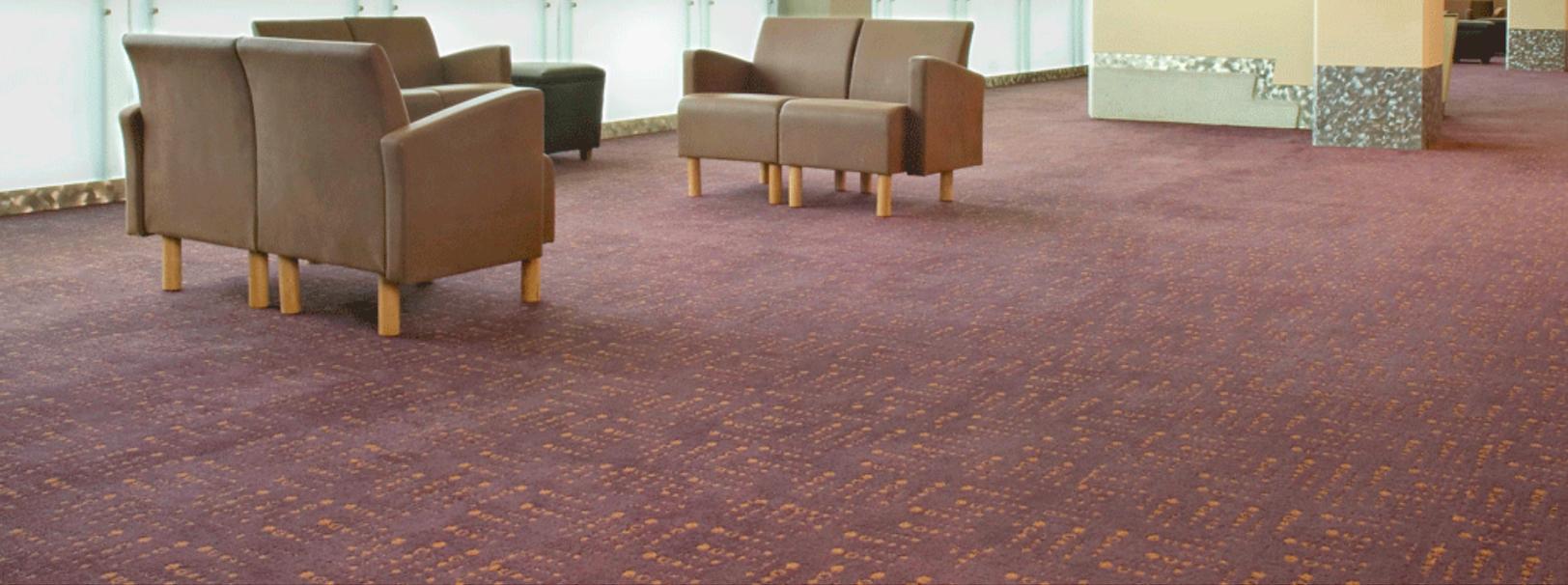


Trends in Commercial Flooring: Better Materials, Enhanced Design and Smarter Decisions



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INTRODUCTION

With the many new and emerging decision-making frameworks, flooring materials, design trends and green practices, owners have more change to understand than ever before. We've published this white paper to help you stay up to date so you can select the best flooring solutions and achieve the greatest value for your floor.

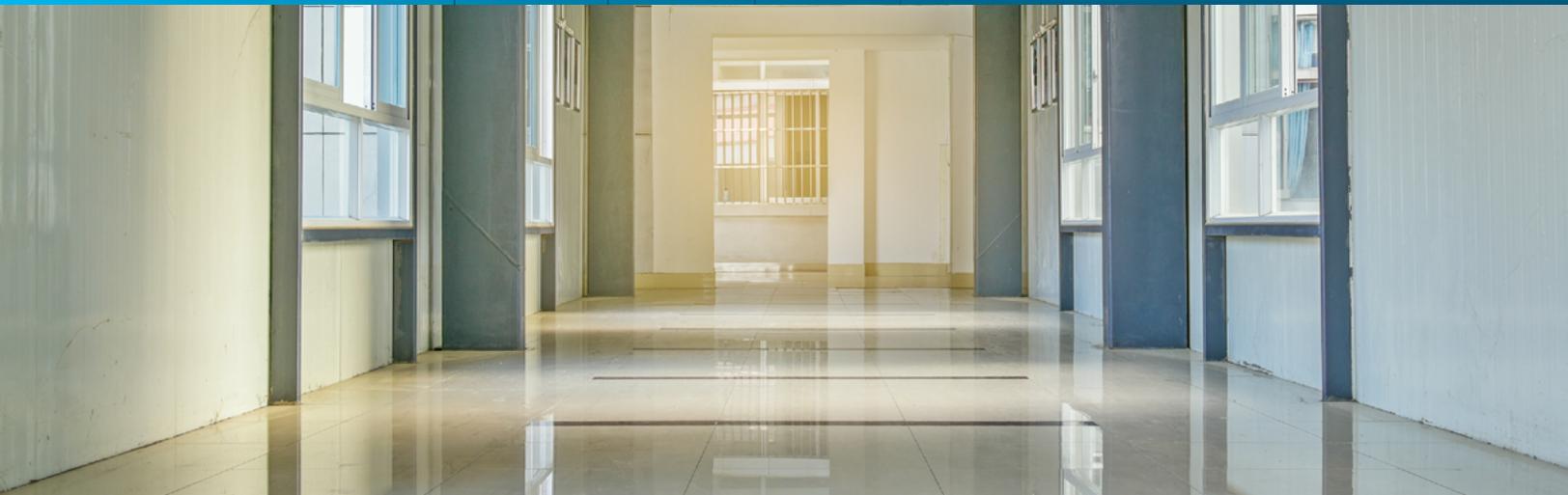


SMARTER DECISION-MAKING

Today, there are more choices than ever when it comes to selecting your flooring materials. In response, owners and designers have developed new, more analytical decision-making frameworks for selecting flooring.

Life Cycle Costing

Over the life of a floor, often in less than five years, maintenance costs can outweigh the up-front cost of materials and installation. Life Cycle Costing is a report used to show the long-term costs associated with maintaining different flooring options. At Spectra Contract Flooring, we believe it's a key tool for [reducing the cost of flooring installation](#). Each and every customer of ours can request a Life Cycle Costing report for any installation.



Evidence-based design in healthcare

Research studies have shown that care environments impact patient results, giving rise to the discipline of [evidence-based design](#), which uses research-based principles to influence design. Many healthcare facilities planners use it as a framework for making interior design decisions, including floor material selection. If you're planning a healthcare facility, you may be able to use it to improve patient outcomes.

Advantage Decision-making System

Some government organizations and architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) firms use [The Choosing By Advantages Decision-making System](#) to make decisions. The process involves formally prioritizing a hierarchy of goals and taking the long-term view in making flooring decisions. Owners can look for solutions that deliver return on investment (ROI) in as little as three to five years.

NEW AND RESURGING MATERIALS

A wide variety of new flooring materials have emerged, and some older options have made a comeback. The most popular materials that we believe offer great value to owners include:

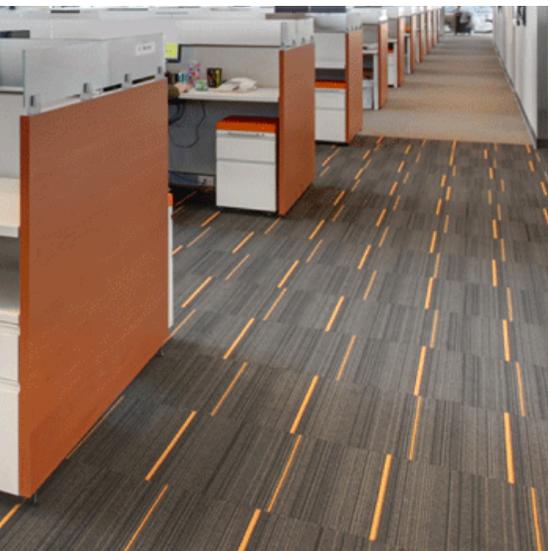
- *Textile flooring*
- *Carpet tile*
- *Luxury vinyl tile (LVT)*
- *Terrazzo*

Textile flooring

Textile flooring is a new product that's a big focus for some flooring manufacturers. It looks and feels soft like a carpet but performs like a sheet vinyl wood and is a great solution for colleges, hospitals, higher education facilities, gyms and more. The price is in line with higher-end carpets, but with higher durability and reduced maintenance costs. Some examples of unique products in this category are [Kinetex by J&J flooring Group](#) and [Flotex Flocked Flooring by Forbo](#). The material can be made to look like carpet tile or broadloom carpet, with patterns or a unique, wall-to-wall design.

Carpet tile

For the past few years, carpet tile has steadily gained in popularity for commercial applications. While carpet tile costs more per square foot than broadloom carpet, installations are faster because there's no cutting of underlay material. In



some cases, waste reduction makes carpet tile less expensive than broadloom. Over the long term, carpet tile reduces the cost of maintenance and repair, since individual tiles can be removed and replaced. Today, new designs and tile shapes are available. Learn more about [carpet tile and broadloom](#).

Terrazzo

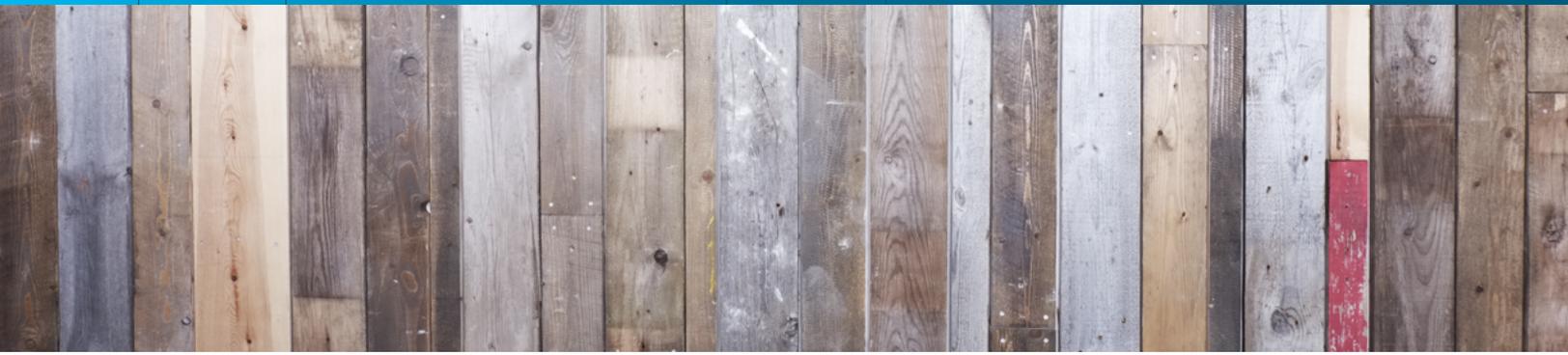
A premium hard-floor material, terrazzo has traditionally been used to communicate quality in upscale buildings. After years of taking a back seat to newer, less expensive materials, terrazzo is finding new uses in the entrance areas of healthcare and educational facilities. Its durability allows it to withstand heavy use and constant rolling of carts and wheelchairs, making it a strong option for handicap accessibility. Though it carries a high up-front cost, terrazzo provides low maintenance costs and great longevity. Today, manufacturers offer sustainable terrazzo made with recycled materials.



Luxury vinyl tile (LVT)

LVT, particularly loose-lay LVT, flooring has become tremendously popular for many applications. Since LVT can be a floating floor, it requires minimal substrate preparation and demolition, lowering total installation costs in renovated facilities. It's replacing many uses where vinyl composition tile (VCT) has traditionally been specified due to costs. Though LVT costs three times more than VCT up-front, it's still affordable and is far more durable, usually costing less than VCT in the long run. It's easy to maintain, as individual pieces can be removed and replaced. LVT now comes in a wide variety of finishes and can be manufactured to look like wood, ceramic or stone.





TRENDS IN GREEN FLOORING

Sustainability and energy-efficiency savings have become a standard part of many projects. Two green trends are particularly worthy of mention, the move to new sustainability evaluation systems and the emergence of new green materials.

Move toward new green standards and sustainability measures

Many companies are adopting a new system to evaluate green materials. For nearly the past decade, U.S. Green Building Council ([USGBC](#)) [LEED certification](#) requirements have set the standard for green, energy-efficient and sustainable materials. But new LEED v4 requirements are far more stringent than older LEED requirements, making it more difficult to get projects and materials LEED Certified. As a result, owners are turning to alternative systems, and one of the most popular is [Green Globes](#), which focuses heavily on energy-efficiency savings and sustainability return on investment (SROI).

Emerging green materials

Many owners are making sustainability part of their flooring with reclaimed wood floors. For many projects, this is a new option, because [reclaimed wood](#) is available in more materials than ever, making it possible to use it in more designs.

Another great option gaining in popularity, [bio-based tile](#) (BBT) is affordable and made from rapidly recyclable, natural materials. Similar to LVT, it features durable performance and design versatility.

DESIGN TRENDS

Today, there's more choice in design than ever before. In this section, we explore some of the latest flooring design trends.

New choices

There's a big movement away from the traditional 12x12 square tiles for many flooring types. Some of the newest options include:

- *Hexagonal carpet tile and resilient flooring*
- *Rectangular tiles*
- *Planks available in LVT and other resilient flooring options*

The versatility afforded by having flooring available in more shapes has made many new design schemes a reality. It's now possible to reinvent traditional patterns in interior designs and create a truly unique look.

Digital graphic applications

The emergence of digital graphic applications has made it possible to create premium designs on durable, cost-effective materials. Essentially, manufacturers print, adhere and seal in a beautiful digital finish onto flooring materials. Digital graphic applications are now available on LVT, porcelain and laminate, among others. Natural textures, stone, premium marble and the wood grain look are popular, quality designs. With digital graphic applications, they can be added to flooring that stands up to moisture and heavy wear, saving money up-front and reducing long-term maintenance costs.



MORE ABOUT SPECTRA CONTRACT FLOORING

At Spectra Contract Flooring, we're committed to staying at the cutting edge so we can provide you the greatest value for your flooring investment. Our highly trained teams use the latest technology to rapidly and cost-effectively install commercial floors. We've delivered some of the most intricate installations for some of the biggest projects nationwide. Prior to installation, our flooring experts help you evaluate flooring options and select the best solutions for your interior design, budget and facility environment. To start your project, [request a flooring consultation](#) with our experienced team.