

The Commercial FLOORING REPORT

Volume 16 • Page 1

for the Commercial Floor Covering Industry -TOTALLY GREEN PUBLICATION

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DOUBLE STICK INSTALLATION WHAT YOU MUST KNOW



The most popular method of installing carpet in the hospitality market is the double stick method but it is also used extensively in all commercial environments. Double stick refers to installing a carpet cushion, whether it is slab rubber, densified polyurethane, needle punched synthetic fiber or rebond,

by gluing it to the substrate and then gluing the carpet onto the cushion. This installation method can be compromised in a number of ways resulting in obscenely expensive monetary losses and business interruption which can be incalculable for a hotel or business.

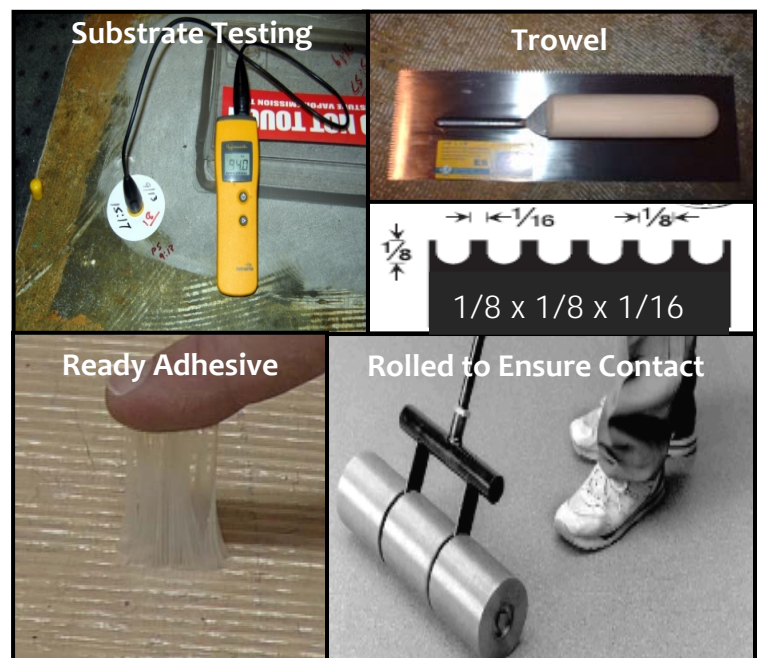
DOUBLE STICK INSTALLATION	
Carpet Pile	
Adhesive	
Cushion	
Adhesive	
Substrate	

The first consideration is making sure you use a flooring contractor such as a Starnet member with installers who have years of experience with this system or who are INSTALL trained. The second consideration is making sure you specify the proper, methods, components and techniques for this type of installation which includes the cushion such as a Healthier Choice product and the adhesives. The condition of the substrate must be determined to insure the cushion stays on the floor. Wood surfaces such as plywood or particle board must be sealed with a latex milk type emulsion such as Shaw's 9050

primer. The concrete substrate must be tested for moisture and alkalinity and remediated if any compromising conditions exist

such as high moisture vapor emission rates or high alkalinity, both of which can cause the adhesive to fail. I'd recommend using the Koester system. Next is insuring the proper trowel is used to apply the adhesive to the substrate, that the adhesive has the proper open time and that the cushion is placed into the "ready" adhesive and rolled with a 65 pound roller to insure it makes full contact between the cushion and substrate.

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For installing the carpet to the cushion a trowel that applies a larger amount of adhesive should be used, such as a 1/8 x 1/8 x 1/16 "U" notch. Again, the adhesive has to have the proper open time, generally about an hour, depending on weather and ambient conditions, with fans blowing across it, not at it, to aid the drying. One of the biggest causes of failure is placing the carpet into the adhesive before it properly sets up. If the adhesive is too wet it may bond more to the carpet backing than the cushion and be displaced if stepped on or kneeled on causing failures such as buckles, wrinkles and bubbles later on. The seams must be sealed and properly made, which can be done with or without seaming tape. Seaming tape is not mandatory and, in my opinion it should not be used. You don't have to use seaming tape on direct glue down installations and double stick installations just substitute the cushion for the substrate, so seaming tape may create more problems. It can telegraph through at the seams looking unsightly or flex, split or crack causing seam failure. I do not specify it on any projects we have for double stick as it is not necessary.



Seam Sealer Being Applied

After the carpet is placed into the adhesive it should be rolled with a 65 pound roller (nothing heavier than 75 pounds max should be used) If the carpet is placed into the adhesive while it is still wet and rolled with a 100 pound roller, as is often

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the case, you can bet there will be problems. Double stick is not an installation method that can be rushed. It is a slow and methodical method. Any step not done properly and carefully can lead to buckles, wrinkles, bubbles or the complete release of the carpet from the cushion or the cushion from the substrate resulting in an expensive failure. After installation it is recommended to keep any traffic off of the installed area for a minimum of 24-48 hours. Also, you must use protect the finished floor with a masonite material.



Cushion Being Rolled

In the last month alone we have been involved with two sizeable double stick installation failures. One of them failed because the wood substrate was not sealed, there was not enough adhesive applied - cushion to floor and carpet to cushion - and the cushion used was incorrect. In the other case the carpet was placed into the adhesive while it was still wet, the adhesive lacked the tenacity necessary to anchor the carpet and the carpet was rolled with a 100 pound roller. When the carpet was pulled back, in both cases, most of the adhesive was stuck to the back of the carpet and very little was on the cushion. Both of these installations began failing within two years of being installed.



Failed Cushion to Wood Substrate

In yet another double stick installation case this year a representative of a hotel insisted the installers place tackless strip in front of each guest room entry and around the outside perimeter of inset custom rugs. Tackstrip should never be used with a double stick installation and it definitely should never be used in front of a doorway. The use of the tackstrip in front of guest room entries makes the property liable for any injuries to guests. One step outside the door by

front of guest room entries makes the property liable for any injuries to guests. One step outside the door by a guest onto the tackstrip in stocking feet or barefoot is going to result in a claim or lawsuit being initiated by the guest that the property owner is guaranteed to lose. It's important the specs written for double stick installations cover all of the information provided here and then some. Of course, you can completely eliminate double stick installation failures by employing FreeLay® technology on any carpet to be installed.

If you need help with your specs or have questions on them for double stick or any other installation method, call us and we'll help you. You should never expose yourself to preventable losses and certainly not in this economy. All flooring problems can be prevented. Prevention is cheap insurance compared to the alternative.

WOOD FLOORING IN COMMERCIAL APPLICATIONS

With more and more wood flooring being used in commercial applications it is important to know as much about wood as possible. First and foremost you have to select a wood flooring material that will actually hold up to commercial use. Knowing that wood will scratch, dent, and gouge is the first step. It also has to be acclimated to the installation environment before installation and the environment has to be

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maintained from that point forward. If this is not done the wood can and will shrink, cup, lift, crack or otherwise be distorted.



Wood flooring is, after all, still a tree but in board form and it will do the same things when made into boards used for flooring that it does in the forest. Wood can and will, expand, contract, warp and, as previously stated, dent, scratch and gouge. Wood flooring must be protected after installation to prevent damage to it that you cannot blame the

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dealer, installers or manufacturer for. If you put cheap material, or "value engineered" wood flooring into a high end application, it will perform like a value product. If you expect more you're delusional and any failures resulting from the specification of the incorrect product or one incapable of delivering the type of performance expected, is the fault of the specifier. You get what you pay for.



Gouge in Engineered Wood Floor

Relative to wood installation it is necessary to follow the manufacturers' instructions exactly and maintain the environment as mandated – no exceptions. Reality is governed by the laws of nature and physics and the inherent characteristics of wood.

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Following are excerpts from the editor's column in Textile World magazine I want to share with you that I thought were excellent. These are wise words to help you.

"Leadership, partnering and collaboration take on new meanings and are in more demand during these trying times. These are times when the industry needs to come together, to reach out through the various supply chains to partner and offer higher value and better cost solutions. Two casualties that won't get much press are innovation and marketing – areas that actually should be in higher demand in a tough business environment."



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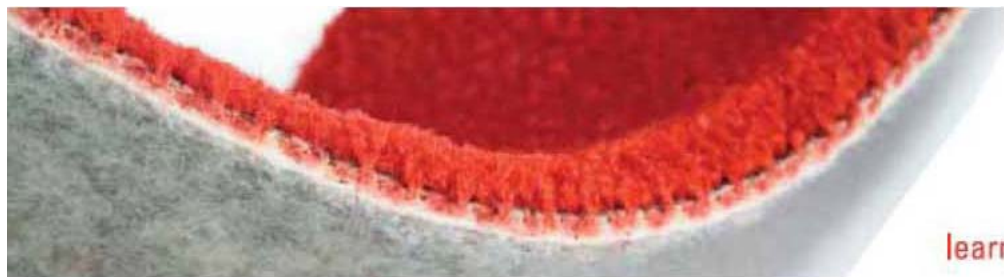
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"Marketing, in its various forms, should increase in a difficult sales environment if a company plans to survive an economic downturn. You can't withdraw – marketing either means more sales or it doesn't." "Are you saying to yourself, we need a solution, we need to find new customers, we need something new to sell, we need to go to our existing customers and see if we can help them find new business or help them more in some way? We need to challenge everybody in our company to build through tough times"

"Choosing to lead, partner and collaborate with redoubled efforts in innovation and marketing means survival and, when the marketing improves, a stronger market position that reaps the dividends of effective crisis management will be yours."



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