

Architectural PRODUCTS

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innovative materials for
diverse applications



A Peek at the 2009 Surfaces Tradeshow

Despite the economic downturn, the 2009 Surfaces tradeshow in Las Vegas showcased a variety of new products and possibilities, in terms of both technology and green architecture and design. Four trends emerged in the field of materials, specifically hardwoods: sustainability, new texture techniques, simple coloration and enhanced finishes. Nancy Jackson, president of New York-based Architectural Systems Inc., discusses these subjects with *Architectural Products*.

"Sustainability is not just a trend anymore it's a movement. And this was clear at Surfaces," says Jackson. As the demand for green products increases, manufacturers are producing not only sustainable materials, but also environmentally friendly accessory items, adhesives and finishes to match the original product, she says. For example, two of the product lines her firm exhibited at the show included the wood panel collections, Ecolinea and Ecotextures, which are offered in coordinating flooring.

"If a product reads easily as an organic, environmentally friendly product, [specifiers] would want to use it not only as a wall, but also as flooring," Jackson relates.

Another trend Jackson noticed at the show was the creation of authentic-looking aged woods on new hardwoods. This textured effect is created by distressing, rustication—brushing the wood with pigmented oil, or smoking—a treatment where the tannins in the wood react to the process. "A raw, textured appearance is the result," says Jackson. An example of this budget-friendly trend would be European Hardwood Collection's Zimbabwe smoked wood.



COLORFUL:

Manufacturers are working to keep color choices simple and soothing. Whitewash stains and warm, dark brown tones were popular at Surfaces. "At both ends of the color spectrum, these palettes evoke a feeling of comfort and stability," says materials expert Nancy Jackson. Pictured are textured panels from ASI's Ecotextures line.



NEW LOOKS:

A number of new finishes made an appearance at Surfaces, including thru-color finishes, cork flooring and hard-wax-oiled finishes. Pictured is Ecotexture flooring in the color steel.



ECOTEXTURES:

Wood panels in basket-weave, in the color natural.



DISTRESSED:

An example of texture created by distressing. The product is from the European Hardwood Collection called Fine Sawn, Amsterdam.



ECOCOLOR HARDWOOD:

Example of the thru-color finish on hardwood.



GREEN THROUGH AND THROUGH:

Integration of sustainable materials is becoming more critical down to adhesives and finishes. Pictured is ASI's Xtreme WRT finish on VenCork Flooring.