

ROB McLORINAN
ARMSTRONG FLOORING

NATIONAL SALES & MARKETING MANAGER,
AUSTRALIA / NEW ZEALAND

Armstrong Flooring have been Inspiring Great Spaces in Australia since 1969. Their dynamic and innovative team, champion integrity, creativity and sustainability to develop products that positively affect the spaces where people live, work, learn, heal and play.

Armstrong Flooring Pty Ltd has a leading position in the commercial flooring space in Australia. What are the core strengths that have put Armstrong in that position?

Overall, the company's strength is attributable to its 106 employees, many of whom have been with us for over 25 years. This is particularly important out in the field, where customers can deal with someone they have known and trusted for a long period. There are three other key strengths – product quality, service and customer retention.

The business prides itself on manufacturing and delivering product that will exceed customer expectations. In the major project space, it's not unusual for product from our current range to be replacing product we manufactured decades earlier. The old flooring is still performing as well as it did the day it was installed. Putting the customer first is hardly a new and dynamic concept, but it reflects Armstrong's culture.

In 1890 the company's founding father Thomas Armstrong put a different spin on the adage 'let the buyer beware' by saying 'Let the buyer have faith'. Today this is still the core of Armstrong's culture. Many customers in the flooring market have been with us for decades.

You are the only vinyl manufacturer in Australia. How does Armstrong meet import competition?

Armstrong Flooring has been manufacturing vinyl flooring and walling in Australia since 1969. We keep pace with the latest technology and have a research division, which ensures we are manufacturing vinyl flooring that is highly competitive and entirely appropriate for the market. Behind the product we have knowledgeable sales and service personnel who support our customers from order placement through to installation and maintenance.

Do you export product?

We are very proud of the fact that when everyone is lamenting the demise of Australian manufacturing, Armstrong Flooring is not only making product here, but is also exporting. About 20% of our production goes to customers in 21 different countries on five continents. We even export to China!

How important is innovation and the introduction of new technology to Armstrong Flooring?

Very important. We recently invested \$1.5 million in new machinery and in the next two years we plan to buy new technology worth \$2 million to produce improved coatings. Our aim is to be at the leading edge in

the manufacture of vinyl flooring within the Armstrong Flooring global family and by doing so, be the world leader.

The company has a strong emphasis on product sustainability and its 'green' credentials. Does that provide a marketing edge?
Most definitely. Armstrong Flooring's Australian made vinyl floor and wall products, achieve third party certification by NCS International to the Green Building Council of Australia's 'PVC Best Practice Guidelines' and by ecospecifier to GreenTag® Greenrate 'Level A' which permits use of Armstrong Flooring's best practice PVC products in GBCA Green Star projects. This is becoming more important in building construction across all our commercial markets.

You mentioned that you have a high rate of employee retention. What strategies does Armstrong utilise to retain and motivate its employees?

We have a very intricate engagement process, whereby we encourage employees to develop within their roles, or seek experience in other parts of the business.

We work hard to give them the skill sets they need. One advantage we have over our competitors – who are all importers is that we have

more options for our employees, from manufacturing through to HR, finance, technical, marketing and senior management. Being a global company, there are opportunities overseas as well.

Finally Rob, what is Armstrong Flooring's vision for the future?
Designing innovative flooring solutions that inspire great spaces, that's what motivates and unites the people of Armstrong Flooring.



For more information contact Armstrong Flooring Pty Ltd, 29-39 Mills Road, Braeside VIC 3195, phone 03 9586 5500, email customer_services@armstrongflooring.com, website www.armstrongflooring.com