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FCICA celebrates 25th anniversary



[SAN FRANCISCO] The Floor Covering Installation Contractors Association's (FCICA) 25th anniversary convention, held here March 14 to 17, offered members educational sessions and networking opportunities to help stay on top of trends and learn from one another. "We are floor covering activists, if there is such a term," said Christopher Capobianco, FCICA chairman. "This association is only as strong as the people who get involved."

The FCICA welcomed 19 new members since July of last year, bringing total membership to 177. At the meeting, the group formed a new committee to look at regional training possibilities, and it will launch a revamped website this May, fcica.com, that will assist in recruiting new members, keep affiliates in touch with training opportunities and present ongoing updates on policy and regulations.

Thomas Wwinner, business strategist and author of *Market Quake 2020*, offered the group advice on how to tackle changes in the marketplace. "You're not installers, you're floor covering specialists to me," he said. "Everybody today has to be a specialist. The closer you stay to the premium customer's needs and changes, the easier it is to strategize yourself for the coming changes."

He said 17 percent of floor covering jobs are premium jobs, 27 percent of installations take margins out of the business, and the remaining 56 percent of clients don't understand the business and need to be educated about what makes an installer different and worth the extra money. "Margins are getting thinner on specification and wider on application," he noted.

Dave Stafford, government contract consultant, spoke to members about networking opportunities. He said networking lets "you become more than a name or a voice on the phone. The most successful people look for ways to waste their time with other people, at parties, golf and trade shows."