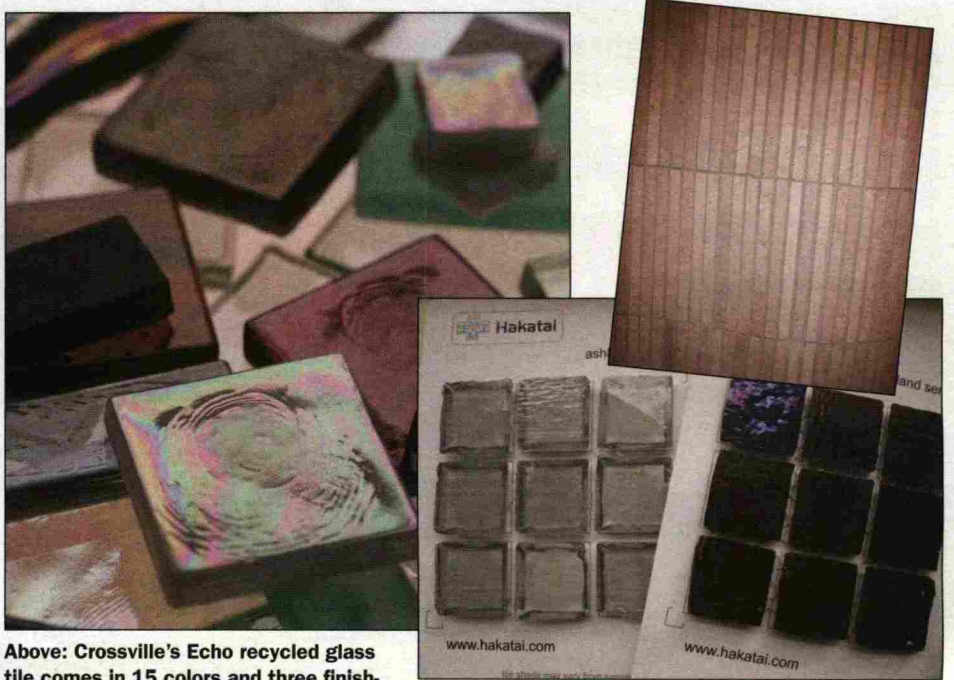


Coverings 2008: A view from the floor

By Tanja Kern



Above: Crossville's Echo recycled glass tile comes in 15 colors and three finishes: clear, iridescent and frosted matte;
Top right: EmilAmerica's Green Tech is made from 40 percent post-industrial recycled materials;
Bottom right: The Ashland-e series by Hakatai uses 30 percent to 70 percent recycled glass.

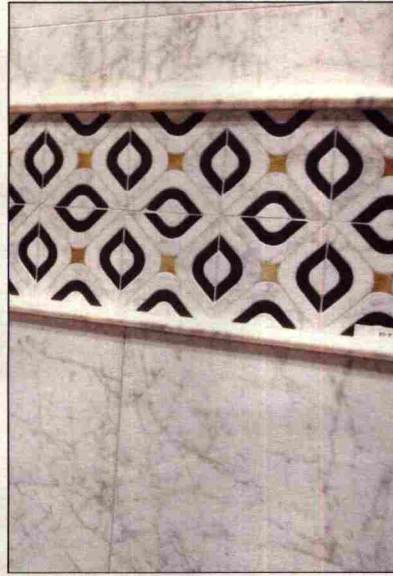


Grout Boost's additive makes cement-based grouts resistant to stains without sealing.



Black & white beauties

For timeless beauty and instant elegance, opt for black-and-white combinations in the bath, kitchen or fireplace surrounds. “Natural materials and classic colors won’t date as quickly,” said Michael Mabe, spokesperson for Florida Tile. “The American market is taking baby steps toward color.”



Top left: White grout makes Oceanside Glasstile's black and gray tiles pop; Top right: Italy's Bacci Marmi showcased decadent black and white marble with a splash of yellow; Bottom right: Florida Tile's Pietra Art tumbled marble works well in residential and most commercial applications; Bottom left: Tagina Ceramiche's Fucina porcelain tile is accented with artist's brushstrokes.

[ORLANDO, FLA.] Staying ahead of the game means remaining abreast of the latest trends in the marketplace. *FCW* worked the show floor at Coverings to discover the most stylish and innovative launches. The following are some of the key trends witnessed this year.

Practical solutions

With more money being spent on decorative tile, ensuring proper installation and longevity is a key concern.

Eco-conscious

Recycled products have come a long way from their humble beginnings, thanks to better technology. “The more recycled content a porcelain product has, the grayer it typically is,” said Paul Hyde, sales manager for EmilAmerica. “Improved engineering brings out lighter colors.”

Focus on luxury

“For the past 20 years, all the attention has been placed on the details in cabinetry,” said kitchen designer Ellen Cheever, ASID, of Wilmington, Del. “Now, people are focusing on luxury surfaces.”



Top left: Neo Hedonism by Rex has the luxurious look of horn in three different sizes; Top right: Wood and marble cohabitately effortlessly in this new launch by Stile-Artistic Design; Bottom right: Studio Prima enhanced natural travertine tiles with screen-printed designs that are then handcarved by tile artisans.