

Alternative revenue streams for installers

In a new series, Windows Active takes a look at a number of alternative revenue streams for window installers. Here we investigate the area of flat roofing

Inspired by the well publicised campaigns from a number of large national retailers promoting extensions to their product ranges, Windows Active is giving installers details of a host of possible new product lines that can be sold to previous and new customers to increase their revenue streams. The beauty of these products is that they can be installed with minimal training and often use fitting skills similar to those required to fit windows, doors and conservatories. This month we take a look at flat roofing.

Various materials are used for flat roofing, including bitumen, plastic, rubber or mastic asphalt. Of the overall roofing market for waterproofing membranes, bituminous products account for 84% with single-ply plastics and rubbers making up the remainder. Yet, for newbuild projects, the single-ply products now command over 50% of the market and it looks as if this type of roofing material will increase its market share as bitumen products lose their hold in the newbuild sector. According to recent research carried out for the Market Transformation Programme, the total volume of the market



for flat roofing accounted for 25 million m². This is predicted to increase to 29.4 million m² by 2020. For the same period, single-ply roofing is expected to see its market size grow from 4 to 4.9 million m². EPDM rubber flat roofing systems are proving popular with window installers looking to expand their product range.

One such supplier in this burgeoning market is **National Roofing**, a nationwide trade supplier of EPDM rubber roofing systems. Although relatively new to the UK, the EPDM flat roof covering has decades of installation history across Europe and the USA. With a quoted lifespan of more than fifty years, roofs laid with EPDM in the 1960s are still holding good today! Offering 2 types of EPDM rubber roofing system, National Roofing has seen the demand for its products increase by over 30% in the first 6 months of this year compared with the same period last year. The 'self-adhesive' EPDM rubber system is a 2.5mm thick layer of reinforced EPDM that is supplied in manageably sized rolls. The 'self-adhesive' EPDM features a non-slip surface that can be walked on immediately after it is laid. It is joined at the overlap using a hot-air gun that provides a visible bleed-out at the edge, showing a good weld. The second EPDM system from National Roofing, the 'one-piece' system, utilises large sheets of 1.14mm thick EPDM rubber to cover roof areas in one piece and, depending on the style of the roof, eliminates the need for on-site joins.

Sarnafil Roof Assured also provides flat roofing solutions to window, door and conservatory installers. Marketing Manager, Mark Harris says: "There is an addressable market of over 5 million homes for the replacement of flat roofs on garages, extensions and porches and the product has been recently used on prominent television programmes such as *Grand Designs* and *Property Ladder*. Several regional installation companies have been achieving great success with the product and this is set to continue as

installers seek new and emerging sales opportunities."

Mark adds: "While many installation companies look at the distress purchase from homeowners for windows and doors and a more aspirational purchase of a conservatory, there is a whole lot more they can offer the consumer. Why just promote these typical product ranges when you could offer a flat roofing solution that can be applied to over half a dozen applications? Installers should consider the low marketing costs and high potential rewards of door drops, advertising, point-of-sale materials etc for flat roofing solutions. Sarnafil Roof Assured offers all this and more as part of a comprehensive marketing support package."

National Roofing's General Manager, Chris Reeks, reiterates the point, confident that EPDM is the perfect partner for fenestration companies: "More and more window installation companies are evolving into complete home improvement companies to cope with today's market. By offering a product that is installer-friendly, has few components and will last in excess of fifty years, an installing company can be provided with a lucrative revenue stream."

EPDM rubber roofing is a cold working product, so does not require high insurance premiums, neither does it need extensive training to be able to install it. "We provide full installation workshop days," continues Chris, "where companies can gain experience with the product and learn how to overcome everyday roof obstacles with ease. The workshops are held regularly at our main factory in South Wales and are always well attended. More importantly though, there is no charge for attending!"

Sarnafil is also keen to offer training. Only when installers have successfully completed an induction programme that includes classroom education, practical workshop training, first installation assistance and an introduction to the available marketing campaign will they become Registered Installers.

The potential is endless for flat roofing as it offers wide-ranging installation possibilities from orangery-style conservatory installations to bay windows and porches.

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