



Net Effect carpet tiles in Black Sea colourway integrating seamlessly with stylised wall art and yellow accents in a meeting room at the Holiday Inn Express Newcastle

DESIGN SHOWCASE

Investing in the future

Pro-invest Group makes its **Holiday Inn Express** hotels an attractive investment

Boutique investment firm Pro-invest Group is currently working with InterContinental Hotels Group to roll out the Holiday Inn Express brand across Australia and New Zealand. The Sydney-based investment group specialises in private equity real estate and real estate asset management.

Through its subsidiaries, Pro-invest Developments and Pro-invest Hotels Group, the company oversees the entire development and hotel management process from acquiring land, designing and building the hotel, planning and fitting the interiors, as well as running the day-to-day hotel operations.

Pro-invest Hotels Group's managing director, Phil Kasselis, believes controlling the entire hotel development process puts the company in a unique position: "The ability to challenge conventional thinking is a big advantage to us as a hotel developer, owner and operator as we benefit from our ability to adapt to change and try new things." >

Product
Fastforward
Net Effect™
Portmanteau

Design
Joseph Pang Design
Consultants



Net Effect carpets in a range of custom colours pave the lounges, communal areas and meeting rooms of the Holiday Inn Express Sydney Macquarie Park

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This also helps to make their real estate projects more attractive to investors – those who aren't just concerned with profits or short-term gain, but are looking for sustainable, future-proof hotel investment opportunities. A meticulously planned hotel development backed by a strong international brand and built to the highest sustainability standards ticks all the boxes for today's savvy investors.

Buildings are responsible for approximately 23 per cent of Australia's carbon emissions, so Kasselis sees climate change as a problem that the hospitality industry must address. As well as working closely with sustainability initiatives such as Hotel Owners for Tomorrow and producing regular sustainability reports, he sees new purpose-built hotels as the key to reducing the impact that buildings have on the environment. "It's a significant advantage to be able to future-proof our hotel portfolio, not just from a technical perspective but also with the introduction of environmental standards and initiatives. By having control and oversight of a hotel's entire lifecycle we can implement sustainability measures and derive tangible advantages, such as reduced utility bills and operational expenses."

Pro-invest also recognises that sustainable hotels are appealing in other ways: "Developing our hotels in the most environmentally friendly manner possible has benefits beyond finances, it helps us to improve our product offerings and stay ahead of the competition."

A positive effect

As part of the procurement process, Pro-invest considered local suppliers as well as some overseas suppliers from South East Asia. "Interface has a well-established reputation in providing a product that is fit for purpose, makes commercial sense, is good for the environment, while being aesthetic and sustainable," Kasselis said. "We collaborated with Interface's Sydney office and our interior designer Joseph Pang to select carpet designs for our public areas and guestrooms."

Established in 2004, Joseph Pang Design Consultants is a Sydney-based specialist hospitality interior design studio. Its owner Joseph Pang told us that he had selected Interface products for previous hospitality projects because of "their modern design, low maintenance, longevity and – most importantly – their highly flexible application."

A carpet tile that calls to mind the unmistakable movement and rhythm of the ocean, Interface's Net Effect™ collection is a common sight in Holiday Inn Express Hotels in the region as Joseph's team have used it in every hotel. Net Effect is made from 100 per cent recycled yarn, which is partly made up of fishing nets collected by locals in small fishing villages in the Philippines, Cameroon and Indonesia through our Net-Works initiative. A collaborative project in partnership with the Zoological Society of London that began in 2012, this inclusive business model tackles several problems at once: fishing nets are removed from coastal environments, reducing marine plastic that wreaks havoc on marine life; local families earn a fair wage for the nets they collect; community banks, set up by Net-Works, provide financial services to local families; while the next generation learns the value of taking care of the environment.

Discarded fishing nets are collected by hand from the shoreline and directly from fishing businesses when the nets have become damaged, preventing them from being thrown into the ocean in the first place. The nets are then compressed and tied into bales by the local communities

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We are strong supporters of Interface and its flooring products. Interface has great credentials and we're big admirers of your mission to eliminate any negative environmental impact by 2020. Our investors and our employees can't wait to see how Climate Take Back produces new ways to remove carbon from the atmosphere

Phil Kasselis
Pro-invest Hotels Group's managing director



Sky above, sand below, peace within. Working with Joseph Pang Design Consultants, Pro-invest created an extraordinarily relaxing guest experience at the Holiday Inn Express Brisbane Central using our Fastforward carpet tile collection

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using a special machine. The bales are collected and delivered to Aquafil, a partner of the Net-Works programme and manufacturer of the recycled Nylon yarn we use in many of our carpet tile collections.

Mix & match

The interior design theme created by Joseph Pang Design Consultants for Holiday Inn Express isn't the standard corporate hotel design. They have developed a bold mix and match style – a reaction to the overuse of minimalism and perfectly matching interiors. Bright colours, printed patterns and a mix of furniture inspired by different eras combine to create something fresh, welcoming and homely. Vibrant patterned rugs are a cornerstone of the mix and match trend, which allowed the design team to embrace some of our most exciting patterns and colourways.

The theme is a progression from the interiors seen at other Holiday Inn Express hotels around the world, which sometimes include red as a highlight colour in furnishings, but otherwise play it safe with browns, greens and blues. The mix and match theme is also used in recently opened locations outside of Australia and New Zealand, but Joseph Pang Design Consultants have taken it a step further, with brighter colours, more unorthodox printed patterns and more striking floor coverings.

For Pro-invest, Interface flooring is an important part of the Holiday Inn Express brand in Australia. According to Kasselis: "Our guests are exposed to the Interface flooring product throughout their journey at the hotel, as they progress from the lobby to their rooms, through to the meeting and conference spaces. The look, feel, and overall quality of the flooring product contributes to the overall image of Holiday Inn Express hotels."

This use of bright contrasting colours can be seen at Pro-invest's first Holiday Inn Express in Australia, built in 2016 in the Macquarie Park suburb of Sydney. The hotel achieved 4.5 stars out of a possible six on the National Australian Built Environmental Rating System (NABERS) that measures environmental impact – the highest of any hotel in Australia at the time. Blues, greys and browns – the standard colourways for Net Effect – are used throughout the hotel, but Joseph's team wanted a striking red for the lounge area, so we



Our Portmanteau carpet tiles, chosen for the communal lounge at the Holiday Inn Express Adelaide City Centre, are both shamefully lush and good for the planet

manufactured a custom colour to their exact specifications. The custom tile was used to create shimmering watery pools within a larger carpeted area.

Elsewhere, vibrant yellow divider screens and royal blue cushions complete the look.

A more refined mix and match interior design was used at Holiday Inn Express Newcastle on the east coast of New South Wales, which opened in March 2019. Here bright colours are reserved for highlights such as cushions and light fittings. Stylised intricate patterns take centre stage, from the map designs seen on walls and dividers, to cropped lettering on cushions and the ocean-inspired carpet design of Net Effect.

The Holiday Inn Express Newcastle was one of the first buildings to take advantage of Interface's Carbon Neutral Floors programme. Choosing Interface's Carbon Neutral Floors resulted in the retirement of 34 tonnes of carbon offsets, helping to prevent the same emissions as a car travelling 134,122 km from going into the atmosphere.

Modular benefits

Pro-invest has also introduced operational initiatives that benefit the environment, such as allowing guests who stay for more than two nights to opt out of housekeeping services and phasing out single-use plastics. This drive for operational sustainability was also a factor in the procurement process, since our modular flooring system means individual tiles can be removed and replaced. "In the event of accidental spillage carpet tiles can be repaired easily compared with the time and effort of replacing a large area of broadloom carpet," Phil explained. "This avoids having unsightly stains in public areas or having guest rooms out of order for extended periods of time. Not being able to sell a room due to water damage or staining can be avoided with modular carpet."

Phil sees the advantages when it's time to refurbish too: "With modular flooring, we can replace our flooring gradually, either room by room or floor by floor without overly disrupting the business. Traditional broadloom carpet usually requires hotels to shut down whole areas for long periods of time and remove all of the furniture."

Like-minded partners

Since 2016, when Pro-invest began working with Interface, the group has noticed a big uptick in enquiries from investors about sustainability and climate change. "That's why it was important to us to partner with Interface as a supplier of carbon neutral floors. Our organisational culture is undergoing a shift towards sustainability, so we must continue to roll out our initiatives that our staff and investors can believe in and stand by. Partnering with reputable providers such as Interface is a priority for us."

We appreciate Pro-invest Group's commitment to reducing carbon emissions – and it seems the feeling is mutual. "We are strong supporters of Interface and its flooring products," Kasselis added. "Interface has great credentials and we're big admirers of your mission to eliminate any negative environmental impact by 2020. Our investors and our employees can't wait to see how Climate Take Back produces new ways to remove carbon from the atmosphere."



In an Accessible Room at the Holiday Inn Express Brisbane Central – bringing the ocean indoors with Net Effect in Pacific colourway