

Sports Floors adds sales territories as competitors shrink in marketplace

BY MICHAEL SHEFFIELD

The last three years have been the best in history for Sports Floors, Inc., but Bruce Gleneck, the company's founder, hopes things get even better.

Sports Floors installs and maintains gym and fitness floors. It is the only Connor Sports Flooring representative in Memphis.

Sports Floors, Inc.
President: Gleneck says Sports Floors had \$4.9 million revenues in 2006, with Reese Road \$2 million of that coming from Mississippi in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. But with no www.sports floorsinc.com 2007, revenues dipped to \$3.99 million. An NCAA rule change in 2008 that pushed back the 3-point line for all of its schools from 19.9 feet to 20.9 feet, helped the company remain steady in 2008 with revenues of \$3.93 million.

Gleneck says the company has also expanded its territory into Louisiana, which adds to its coverage of Arkansas, Tennessee and Mississippi.

When schools build or renovate their sports facilities, business comes to him, but marketing the company extends past waiting for business. Gleneck and his sales staff attend basketball tournaments in all four states to meet with coaches and athletic directors, putting faces with names. They also attend architecture shows to make sure architects know there is a local company

that does flooring in the area.

"You never know who's pulling the trigger, so you have to get to them all," Gleneck says. "We don't do a lot of mailers because when we hear about a lead, we try to get people in here."

Gleneck invested \$500,000 in the company's new headquarters, which it moved into earlier this year on Reese Road. The 8,400-square-foot facility includes an 1,800-square-foot showroom that allows clients to see and try out more than 30 different

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floors to determine the best fit. The building and showroom have been a dream of Gleneck's since he started the company and saw a similar floor in Atlanta.

"This is the culmination of 15 years of hard work and I wanted it to be the nicest showroom in the country," he says. "The Connor reps came in here and were so impressed, now they're redoing theirs."

Gleneck's strategy has always been to reinvest in the company over the years, whether it has been paying good salaries to ensure he got and retained

the best employees or buying the land and building a new facility in tough economic times.

Willie Gregory, director of U.S. community affairs for Nike, Inc., says Gleneck has always worked hard to provide superior quality and workmanship. Nike donated a floor to LeMoyne Owen College, which Sports Floors installed. The company installs Nike's Uniforce Floor, which is made partially from recycled basketball shoes. The company has one of the floors at its Memphis distribution center.

"They get it," Gregory says. "We have a great working relationship with them."

Gleneck says the next step for Sports Floors is to keep business coming in. Last year Memphis City Schools added 13 new gym floors and work should be steady this year. Gleneck says his goal is to continue growing Sports Floors' market share in all of its markets. It currently has 50% of the market in Mississippi and around 40% in Louisiana and Tennessee.

He's seen long-time competitors go out of business recently, but he's confident Sports Floors will continue to grow and anticipates hitting the \$5 million revenue mark in the next couple of years.

"The stronger companies survive, and we're pretty strong," he says. "Everything will come back around. We may have to take a couple of steps back, but we'll be OK."



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Bruce Gleneck at his Sports Floors showroom