



**The Journey to Sustainability:  
The Courage to Change is in All of Us**

**Claude Ouimet**  
**Senior Vice President and General Manager**  
**InterfaceFLOR Canada and Latin America**

Industrialism developed in a different world from the one we live in today: fewer people, less material well being, plentiful natural resources. What emerged was a highly productive, take-make-waste system that assumed infinite resources and infinite sinks for industrial wastes. In today's world, this approach is archaic and in fact is endangering our prosperity, not enhancing it. That is why fundamental change is required and a focus on sustainability is so important.

Claude Ouimet, Senior Vice President and General Manager for InterfaceFLOR in Canada and Latin America, will present his company's vision, Mission Zero, which is InterfaceFLOR's promise to eliminate any negative impact the company may have on the environment by 2020. This mission embraces cutting-edge philosophies such as Life Cycle Assessment and Biomimicry. Claude believes that all of us, individuals and companies, have the power and courage to change, to be the change, and do something to help address the global environmental crisis.

InterfaceFLOR, the world's leading manufacturer of modular carpet, believes that there is a cure for resource waste that is profitable, creative and practical. InterfaceFLOR is on a mission to create a company that addresses the needs of society and the environment by developing a system of industrial production that decreases costs and dramatically reduces the burdens placed upon living systems.

This vision has created a thriving company culture that embraces sustainability and the concept that entrepreneurial ability is the expression of the individuals' capacity to sense an emerging reality and to act in harmony with it. Claude will discuss how this approach to employee empowerment has become the foundation of the company's mission to become a truly sustainable corporation and is now a driver of employee attraction, retention and has helped galvanize InterfaceFLOR associates.

In his presentation, Claude will share how InterfaceFLOR has embraced change and is taking action to become a sustainable corporation by leading a worldwide effort to design innovative and sustainable manufacturing and development processes. Claude's mix of manufacturing, sales and marketing knowledge gives him a unique perspective for integrating sustainability throughout the InterfaceFLOR corporate culture.

"In November 2007, Claude was kind enough to come to York University and the Schulich School of Business to tell his story on Sustainability. Claude is a brilliant speaker with an engaging style and an inspiring message. His ability to mesh the theory of sustainability with real life business examples brings his story to life. Several months later students are still talking about the presentation - those who have heard Claude speak will never forget him."

**Brad Zarnett**  
**Masters in Environmental Studies, Candidate 2008**  
**Business Strategies for Sustainability**  
**Faculty of Environmental Studies | Schulich School of Business**  
**York University, Toronto, Canada**

"Claude Ouimet put together a fantastic presentation to our agency last June (2007). His presentation pushed us to consider how growing environmental, energy and resource challenges could also present real opportunity for our culture and to our business. Our staff of sixty walked away truly inspired; to this day people still reference many of the points that Claude made in his 1-hour session!"

**Rich Kelleman**  
**VP/Strategic Planning Director ECO Strategist**  
**RIVET Ad Agency**  
**Chicago, Illinois**

"Thank you for the very inspiring talk you gave us this morning (August 6, 2008). Many of your points and phrases were referred to throughout the day at our various meetings! Congratulations for the fantastic achievements gained through the capacity to put such an inspiring vision into practice! There certainly is a lot of food for thought and it's encouraging to know that we can learn from your experiences, and feel encouraged to promote the change that is so necessary on the path to a more sustainable society."

**Carla Duprat**  
**Director of Sustainability**  
**Camargo Correa**  
**Sao Paulo, Brazil**

"Claude Ouimet joined Mayor Matt Driscoll of Syracuse, New York in what was certainly one of the best attended and most engaging sessions at the International Downtown Association annual conference in Calgary, Alberta on September 12, 2008. With the conference emphasizing the theme of 'zero waste', Mr. Ouimet's energetic style, motivational message, and impressive Powerpoint presentation, held the audience in rapt attention. When the session concluded, many participants stayed on to engage Mr. Ouimet in one-on-one conversations. We definitely would invite him to future IDA events."

**David Feehan**  
**President, International Downtown Association**  
**Washington, DC 20005**

"I would like to thank you very much for your presence here in Belo Horizonte, in our Workshop Sustainability and Attitude on Nov. 07, 2008. Hearing from Mr. Ouimet about Interface's model of sustainability was an important moment of inspiration about the true meaning of Sustainability. On the same day, we received a request from our Director to make a new project to implement this initiative in all our activities and it was a result of this partnership with InterfaceFLOR. Interface's experience will be a model for us to build our journey. The reflection of 'The Power of One' was highly recommended and will 'boost' us much more. I thank you for the attention and take the opportunity to invite you to know our operations more fully, whenever you desire. If you can visit other units around Brazil just let me know and my colleagues will have the pleasure to meet you."

**Maristela Rodrigues Junqueira**  
**Vale Mining Company - DEJM / DIFL / GEPCL/ GAMAL**  
**Mina de Águas Claras**  
**Belo Horizonte, Brazil.**

“I was in attendance for your presentation on Monday evening (Speakers Series in Toronto Dec. 8/08) and wanted to thank you again for the impressive, moving and encouraging lecture. You and Interface’s honest enthusiasm and profound commitment to sustainable practices are heroic and extremely energizing. “

**Myan Marcen-Gaudaur**  
**Marketing & Outreach Officer**  
**Planet in Focus International Environmental Film & Video Festival**  
**Toronto, Ontario.**

The Distillery District  
55 Mill Street, Building 74, Studio 402,  
Toronto, ON, M5A 3C4, Canada  
T. 416 531 1769 F. 416 531 8985  
www.planetinfocus.org  
E-mail: [myan@planetinfocus.org](mailto:myan@planetinfocus.org)

## **Biography**

### **Claude Ouimet Senior Vice President and General Manager InterfaceFLOR Canada and Latin America**

Claude Ouimet is the Senior Vice President and General Manager for InterfaceFLOR, in Canada and Latin America. InterfaceFLOR is the world's leading manufacturer of modular carpet. Claude's guidance in Canada and Latin America provides the strategic focus needed to continue to maximize every opportunity and help InterfaceFLOR meet the challenges for growth in these important markets. Claude's 19-year career with the company includes roles in both manufacturing and sales.

InterfaceFLOR is deeply immersed in a mission to become a sustainable corporation by leading a worldwide effort to design sustainable manufacturing and development processes by the year 2020. Claude's mix of manufacturing, sales and marketing knowledge gives him a unique perspective for integrating sustainability throughout the InterfaceFLOR corporate culture. He brings his passion for environmentally-sound practices not only to manufacturing technology and practices, but also to sales strategies and marketing concepts that reflect the company's eco mission. In April of 2007, Claude became certified as a 'Climate Project' presenter, which entitles him to share Mr. Al Gore's powerful and inspirational message.

A native of Montreal, Quebec, Claude now lives in Newnan, GA with his wife, Anne and two daughters, Shanie and Thalia.