

## How is the Floor Box Industry Reacting to the Current COVID-19 Pandemic?

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and our Government's lockdown measures are being felt in every sector of the construction industry.

Despite Cableduct bracing itself, the popularity of floor boxes continues for both aesthetic and practical reasons. With such persistent demand for this growing trend, we take a closer look at how key customer groups, are not just surviving, but thriving in the most challenging circumstances.

### Contractors

With construction contributing 6% to the GDP, it is one of the sectors that is encouraged to stay open. Many sites have slowly started to reopen with a significantly reduced workforce and while adhering to the government's social distancing guidelines. Some businesses are even expensing cabs for employees who previously relied on public transport to commute. With many contractors and sub-contractors working as self-employed, they have revised working process to fall closely in line with the government sanctioned [site operating practices](#).



Contractors are also liable for their own costs, including contractual damages for late completion; this has led to a recent surge in orders being placed in advance as they want to avoid reopening and waiting for goods to arrive. With such a large customer base in action and demanding floor boxes, the production and trade of floor boxes at Cableduct continues at a steady pace.

### Architect and M&E Consultants



Architects and consultants are mostly still working, albeit operating remotely. RIBA have invested heavily in their technical systems and were encouraging flexible working arrangements well before the government mandated lockdown. Architects have taken measures to continue their operational practices by prioritising financially stable clients and assessing clients' commitment to projects. As well as planning for their immediate pipeline, architects are investing more time into research, consulting and finding solutions for newer projects further down the line.

As a result of this resourcefulness and forward thinking, the demand for both standard and bespoke floor boxes has seen relatively little detrimental impact from this global pandemic.

## Consumers

The original floor boxes started out as a space-saving tool for the packed offices of post war NYC. Since then, commercial and retail projects have generally produced the highest demand; however Cableduct are now seeing substantial growth in the number of homeowners and residential properties demanding floor boxes as standard.



A simple solution to the impracticalities of hovering near a wall to charge your phone or dragging extension leads around, the floor box is fast becoming a common household item. Furthermore, with so many families confined to their homes, floor boxes in domestic projects are a major boost to health and safety, protecting adults and children alike by minimising the trip hazards of trailing cables.

Now that many homes double up as a school, a living area and a workspace, your kitchen table has become your work desk and your work station has become a classroom. With trailing cables becoming the new norm, an efficient and discreet cable management system is necessary for adapting to the changing dynamics of UK households.

Cableduct is gearing up for a surge in domestic demand due to child safety benefits of floor boxes. We've also started taking early orders for residential projects who want to be at the front of the queue when the country eases back to a state of relative normality and projects re-start at pace.

## Distribution Channel

Many national wholesalers are continuing with a "business as usual" philosophy despite reduced deliveries; distribution hasn't stopped regardless of a decline in staff numbers, as companies continue to trade while following the government's health and safety procedures. A small handful of independent wholesalers are also working with limited staff; some are even closing stores but continuing with a "click and collect" process. Some national wholesale businesses have also adapted to continue servicing key customers and projects, including vital projects for the NHS and other essential key workers.



## Manufacturing

The Government has asked that manufacturing companies, including Cableduct, continue making and trading products. As an integral part of the economy, manufacturing contributes 10% to the UK GDP. On the 8<sup>th</sup> April, we received a letter from the UK Secretary State for Business, Alok Sharma, thanking us for “contributing to the resilience of our nation [...] and the enormous efforts you are making to support the UK”. Specifically for the floor box industry, many projects and installations for education and healthcare establishments are being prioritised with an increasing number of domestic and commercial sites beginning to reopen shortly thereafter.



Forward thinking project teams are now beginning to place orders for sites that have not yet opened, due to the increased lead times. In this way, they assure themselves that the products they need will be ready upon their return, enabling them to hit the ground running. In some circumstances, Cableduct are willing to store completed orders while waiting for the site to reopen.



At present, Cableduct continue to produce and engineer products, providing both standard and bespoke floor boxes to companies and projects all over the globe. We have yet to see a drastic change in standard lead times; however we are mindful that demand is increasing as sites re-open and project teams plan ahead. Being safe, open and transparent with our customers is and always will be our number one priority.

If you or your customers have any questions regarding our operations in these difficult circumstances, please feel free to call us on 02086831126.