

## PRESS RELEASE

### 50 years of Coral Entrance Flooring

This is a story about passion and innovation which started over 200 years ago, as the Kaars Sijpesteijn family, founders of the Dutch Forbo activities, started their business weaving and trading cloth for sails. Sails for mills and ships. In those days more than a 1000 mills were situated in the area around Krommenie and a lot of ships were build.

Today we talk about disruption and we look at the Taxi business being eaten by Uber. Well guess how disruptive steam was for the family who lived from wind powered mills and boats.

However as real entrepreneurs they have been continuously looking for new opportunities and noticed in the earlier days what Linoleum could do for their customers. They looked however for more opportunities to expand. Like weaving firehoses and the production of bathmats.

And bathmats is the first link into Coral. The family went to the US and bought a revolutionary machine, called a tuft machine. It happened to be the first tuft machine in Europe. Whilst weaving has been a horizontal movement, suddenly with a tuft machine, vertical movements gave a whole new direction and enabled them to produce bathmats.

In those days most entrances didn't have an entrance mat and in case there was something, it turned out to be a hardly working coir mat. Still the market needed a solution to keep the dirt and moisture out.

Whilst there are many routes into innovation, in this case it was a matter of seeing the opportunities and combining things.

The bathmats took water from your feet, the coir didn't work, the varied climate in Holland gave food for thought and a tuft machine was present. The clever result is the invention of the first professional entrance mat.

Now the product needed to be branded. A good working entrance mat is like a barrier for water and dirt. And whilst the first mats have been traditionally dark colored to hide dirt, the bathmats in those days showed the demand for color.

Combining a barrier and color, makes combinations like the Great Barrier Reef, build from a colorful structure called Coral. Coral was born.

That moment, 50 years ago, is just the start of a journey. A journey where science entered, laboratories where build, test rigs and test plants came in and a lot of knowledge is bought in from universities and other industries.

Today's products and services therefor hardly relate to the first mats. What haven't changed however is the fact that Coral is developed with and for customers.

The broad range of today has been a result of the commercial customer demand and the Entry Science on the other hand. Riding the waves of trends like modular, loose lay, eco, easy and for sure the wish for bespoke products have boosted innovation.

Internal factory programs like "Specialist in Specialties" gave Forbo all the flexible manufacturing techniques to deliver these innovations.

From the best professional entrance mats in the world, to real bespoke solutions for the Rail and Marine sectors. Dedicated to our customers.

