



## Printing Door Mats In Brilliant Colors All Traditional Sizes





This was one of the many displays at the Zimmer booth for textile printing at Fespa 2005.

## Introduction

Mass customization is the mantra these days. Companies want their logos on everything from clothing to packaging, and now on their door mats.

Several years ago I saw a mat printing system; the output was weak colors, splotchy images, and overall unacceptable quality. Even for wiping your shoes on.

But within the last year technology has advanced to the point that an inkjet printer from Zimmer Maschinenbau GmbH can today produce a personalized mat that is of nice and acceptable quality.

Printing on rugs or mats is not easy. The image tends to get lost in the pile. And some materials take the colors and inks better than others. So you really need to start out with an “inkjet receptive” mat to begin with. You can’t just feed any material in and expect the same results. The preferred material is nylon. Of course the ink you get from Zimmer.

Printing width is up to five feet; as long as you can find material to fit.

Zimmer is a company dedicated to building machines for printing on mats and carpets. This particular machine is the ChromoJet MP, and is made specifically to print on individual floor mats. Actually some of the results look nice enough to hang on the wall.

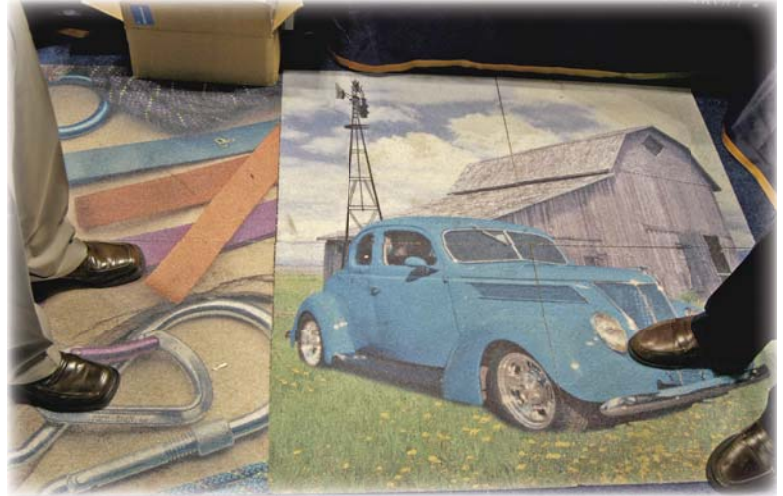


The ChromoJet MP from Zimmer at Fespa 2005

One of the company websites is [www.chromojet.com](http://www.chromojet.com). This primarily lists other websites that discuss inks for fibers, textiles, and mats. The actual website for Zimmer is [www.zimmer-austria.com](http://www.zimmer-austria.com). Zimmer makes many more machines than the ones they show at digital imaging trade shows. At textile and carpet trade shows is where you would learn about the other machines, or on their website.

The markets that Zimmer intends to cover are listed on their website and include

- Digital printing of acrylic blankets (for clubs and teams, for example)
- Wall-to-wall carpet
- Rugs and mats
- Logo and promotion mats
- Bath mats and kitchen carpets
- Carpet tiles
- Terry cloth towels
- upholstery



Dye sublimation rug at NBM 2004 (not from Zimmer)



The Zimmer booth at Fespa 2005



Various mats printed on by the Zimmer machine

The photos available to us from the inkjet printer trade shows cover only the products that they exhibited there, which is only a fraction of the products that Zimmer printers are capable of handling.

Although Zimmer is headquartered in Austria, they also have an office in the US, naturally in the South Carolina area where textiles are still a major industry. Although I do not have experience living in the Carolinas, I lived in Austria for eight years (in Graz, where I did research for 8 years resulting in a PhD degree, and then taught at the university for several semesters). I returned to Austria recently, for lecturing on digital photography in Salzburg.



The Zimmer ChromoJet MP

## Alternative

At SGIA 2005 another flatbed printer was doing door mats. This was the Mutoh Toucan LT Board Printer. Although it is not a dedicated mat printer, it can handle any flat thick object, including a door mat.

As with any other printer, be sure that the ink (mild-solvent or eco-solvent for the Mutoh LT) is acceptable for the material out of which the door mat is made. Since they printed only a single design, I don't have a good feeling of how the Mutoh LT handles a wide range of colors and designs.



The Mutoh Toucan LT Board Printer at SGIA 2005. This printer handles door mats much like the Zimmer ChromoJet MP.

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