2012: No shortage in toothbrush patents

Total toothbrush-related patents now exceed 4,600

By Robert Selleck, Managing Editor

F orget the mousetrap. If you want the world beating a path to your door these days you might be better off trying to build a better toothbrush.

If you built a better mousetrap in 2012 you were in small company, with just eight patents issued by the United States Patent and Trademark Office for devices or improvements containing those or similar words in the title (rat, rodent, trapping, etc.).

If you came up with an idea for a better toothbrush, though, you were part of an army of inventors. More than 150 patents issued in 2012 contained the word “toothbrush” or some similar variation of it in the title, bringing the grand total of toothbrush-related patents in the U.S. to more than 4,600 since the first toothbrush patent was sought by H. N. Wadsworth in 1857 (framed copies of the patent are for sale on www.amazon.com for $99).

A glance through 2012 toothbrush-related patent titles reveals a wide variety of efforts: “dehydrated dentifrice and toothbrush,” “combination toothbrush and peak flow meter system,” “processing method for taper of needle shaped bristle enhanced throughput,” “round toothbrush bristles and processing method thereof,” “motorized toothbrush tip having inner and outer (sic) heads counter around different axes,” “swak tooth cleaning instrument,” “oral hygiene case with dental floss lid compartment,” “tooth cleaning apparatus” and — along the same line of creative titling as that last item — many of the patents are simply titled, “Toothbrush.”

The toothbrush patents cover two general areas: utility or design. “Utility” patents involve a new or improved process, material or composition. “Design” patents have more to do with appearance alone, with no real advancement or change in purpose or use.

In a National Public Radio story Dec. 27, reporter Joe Palca interviewed several of the 2012 “toothbrush” patent holders, ranging from big-corporation product developers to independent dentists and hygienists working on their own time after hours, with minimal research-and-development funding backing them up.

All of the patent recipients interviewed by Palca referenced similar motivation behind their efforts: trying to get people to take better care of their teeth.

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teeth. But a number of the efforts go far beyond that, such as the dual-purposed toothbrush and peak flow meter patented by Dingane Baruti, MD, a physician in Columbus, Ga.

**Toothbrush helps monitor asthma**

Baruti’s abstract for the device describes it as a “system for increasing the compliance of peak flow measurements in children and adults with asthma.”

The patent application for the asthma monitoring toothbrush notes that peak-flow readings ideally should be recorded at the same time every day, but children frequently don’t comply because the meters are often misplaced or forgotten. Baruti posits that linking the flow-metering task to a daily tooth-brushing ritual — by attaching a toothbrush head to double the meter’s purpose — will help increase compliance.

The device also would be wireless, automatically relaying the readings to a hospital or doctor’s office. Baruti, a principal with Dingane Innovations, is actively marketing the licensing to insurance companies under the brand name “FlowBrush.”

Contacted via email, Baruti wrote, “The FlowBrush is the central feature of the FlowBrush/FAST system. I am leading a team of MBA students from the University of California San Diego, Rady School of Management, to bring the asthma-monitoring device to market.”

**Bristles designed to hold toothpaste**

Another invention, the dehydrated dentifrice and toothbrush, is described as having “one or two partspherical pockets formed in the brush surface. Balls or pellets of matching shape of dehydrated toothpaste are placed in the depressions, the brush is wetted and the pellets turn to a gel, ready for brushing. The pellets may be of various colors and flavors to entice children to brush their teeth and may be dispensed from a storage chamber carried in the tooth brush handle.” The inventor is Joshua D. Atkin, a general dentist in Dayton, Ohio.

The “siwak tooth cleaning instrument” is depicted in its patent application as a mechanical concept that “provides a carrying, protecting and application instrument for a siwak stick, to be applied to the user’s teeth for cleaning thereof.” The inventors are Faleh A. Al-Sulaiman and Muhammad A. Hawwa of King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

The instrument dispenses circular toothbrush heads based on lipstick-tube-style mechanics from a container that can be incorporated into the handle of the siwak (a type of toothbrush used primarily by Muslims).
Asthma can affect dental development in children

By Dental Tribune International

Wether mouth-breathing is associated with dental misalignment has long been debated by experts and is not yet understood completely. Now, researchers from India have found new evidence that a compromised airway as found in asthmatic children has a profound effect on craniofacial development.

In the study, researchers at the JSS Dental College and Hospital in Mysore took dental impressions of the upper and lower arches of 88 children, aged 6 to 12. Half had been diagnosed with asthma and half were controls. Among the various findings in the study, it was found that the intermolar and the inter-incisal widths in both arches were smaller in the asthmatic children. This was most significant for a child aged 10 to 12 in particular, especially in the maxillary arch. The arch length in the asthmatic children showed consistently higher mean values in the maxillary and the mandibular arches. Moreover, a deeper palate was observed in this group.

In addition, malocclusion was frequent in the asthmatic children, the researchers said. More than 45 percent of those in the 6-to-8-year-old group had an open bite, 20 percent a crossbite, and another 20 percent were found to have an increased overjet. Among the 10-to-12-year-olds, 15 percent had an open bite, 30 percent a crossbite, and 10 percent had an increased overjet.

The findings indicate that increased airway resistance in the respiratory system induced by allergic asthma may cause children to change from nasal to oral breathing, which can trigger modulations in craniofacial growth patterns.

Mouth-breathing may cause permanent changes in the musculoskeletal relationship, the researchers concluded.

Researchers in India find higher frequency of malocclusion

A summary in the patent application states that “the droplet further can have a dissolvable outer membrane that defines a volume with toothpaste inside the volume. The outer membrane can include a tail portion, which is configured to be embedded into the bristles of a toothbrush. The provided droplet further can include plurality of extensions coupled to the outer surface of the outer membrane where the plurality of extensions can have a triangular shape, a barb shape or the like. In one aspect of this embodiment, the droplet further can include a logo, a cartoon character, a word or the like printed on the outer membrane.”

Few patents become products

The odds of any of us soon using freeze-dried balls of toothpaste, lip-stick-style brush-head dispensers and precisely measured droplets of toothpaste sporting cartoon characters are likely slim. Earning a patent is just one small step in an arduous journey from idea to actual product.

You see far more patents than products, patent attorney John Rizvi said. “Garage inventors” to study the market to find out who is selling the closest related product and then contact that business. If it sees your idea as a threat, it might want to buy the concept to control it — or add it to its product line. As with most inventions, the odds of success are stacked against dental-product inventors, with only a minuscule percentage of patents materializing into widely available products. But a dawn the dental aisle at theuper market reveals new oral-care products that break through every year, and even more "latest-and-greatest" oral hygiene concepts can be found online, such as the "dissolving trillion-dental-toothbrush package" (it’s worth a Google search, if you haven’t seen it).
English-only workplace language policies

Avoid significant liability by following proper implementation

By Stuart J. Oberman, Esq.

As our country evolves and its citizenship becomes more diverse, questions regarding limitations on the language used in the workplace are becoming more common. In the past, English was so widely spoken that workplace language issues did not arise frequently. However, U.S. immigration patterns have changed significantly, and the workplace is the primary environment where members of different cultures come together to accomplish goals, requiring communication. Additionally, to maintain employee morale, employees need to be comfortable at work. In attempting to create a successful and harmonious workplace, many dental practice owners have contemplated implementing workplace policies restricting the language spoken in the workplace to English.

Laying the groundwork

English-only policies are controversial and can lead practice owners to significant liability exposure if improperly implemented. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines presume that English-only rules constitute discrimination, making employees more likely to win complaints before the EEOC. A practice owner must show that the English-only rule is necessary to safe and efficient job performance. The EEOC presumes that English-only rules create an atmosphere of inferiority, isolation and intimidation; however, there may be legitimate reasons for a practice owner to institute these rules. In fact, English-only rules may prevent a hostile work environment among English and non-English speaking employees.

If an employee sues his or her employer, alleging that an English-only rule constitutes illegal discrimination, the employee must show that the rule adversely affects a protected class (people of their national origin, race, etc.). The owner of the dental practice then has an opportunity to show that the rule is consistent with business necessity and is job related. Even if the practice owner shows a business necessity, the employee may still prevail by showing that an alternative to the English-only rule could have accomplished the same goal with a less adverse impact on the protected class.

English-only rules are not specifically addressed by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the federal workplace discrimination code. However, there is a question as to whether one’s primary language can be treated as a characteristic of national origin, triggering the protections of Title VII. In 1988, a federal court held that discrimination based on linguistic characteristics of a national origin group could render a viable claim under Title VII. However, this ruling did not give much power to the linguistic protection allowed under the EEOC guideline because effective communication is a requirement of most occupations. English-only rules relate directly to linguistic characteristics, however, national origin does not necessarily relate to linguistic characteristics. Since the EEOC defined national origin to include linguistic characteristics, claims of national origin discrimination on the basis of an English-only rule can generally be brought under Title VII.

Deciding whether the English-only rule is essential to the operation of a dental practice can be difficult. The need for English-
only rules in dental practices may be much greater than the need for such rules in large corporations, because dental practice owners have fewer employees and resources.

The safety and productivity of dental practices are uniquely tied to their employees, in contrast to large employers. Because there are so few employees in a dental practice, lack of communication can be detrimental to the output of the practice. Because each case requires an in-depth, fact-based analysis to determine business necessity, dentists should consult a qualified attorney before implementing an English-only rule within their practice.

**Applying the law to dental practices**

Dental practice owners who have a justifiable business necessity for an English-only rule may be prevented from enforcing the rule because of their inability to bear the financial burden of litigation. The financial constraints on dentists are unfortunate, because situations often arise within their practices that could justify use of an English-only rule. Unlike large corporations, practices often: (i) require their employees to work closely together; (ii) do not have access to resources that would allow them to deal with a variety of languages in the same work environment; and (iii) cannot transfer or discipline employees easily. Therefore, the business necessity test should be handled differently when applied to a dental practice.

The business necessity test can be summarized as a determination of whether the English-only rule is necessary for the safe and efficient operation of the practice. The business purpose must be important enough to override any racial impact; the rule must carry out the purpose that it purportedly serves, and there must be no acceptable alternative practice that would better accomplish the business purpose advanced, or accomplish it equally well with less racial impact. The main issue is whether the English-only rule is necessary for the effective supervision of the practice.

Courts use six factors to justify an English-only rule in the workplace, which are: (i) worker safety; (ii) ensuring effective supervision; (iii) improving productivity and efficiency of the business; (iv) promoting worker harmony; (v) improving customer relations and satisfaction; and (vi) improving an employee’s English skills when English is not their primary language. While each of these justifications may be somewhat relevant for dental practice owners, the most useful justifications are discussed below.

**When English-only might be OK**

First, courts have upheld English-only rules implemented to ensure effective supervision. Several courts have found that business necessity justifies rules to ensure that English-speaking supervisors could understand what was being said in the workplace. Effective supervision is extremely important in a dental practice.

The dentist’s ultimate business goal is to run the practice productively and efficiently, and dentists must be able to understand the employees to do so. If employees are speaking about work-related topics, the dentist has an interest in asking them to speak English to ensure that they are not misunderstanding each other. If employees are speaking about personal topics, the dentist has an interest in asking them to restrict that speech to lunchtimes and breaks, no matter what language they speak.

Second, courts have upheld English-only rules implemented to increase the productivity and efficiency of the business, which closely ties into the effective supervision factor. An English-only rule may increase a dentist’s productivity because it ensures that work conversations are carried on in a language that everyone can understand. The issue is whether there is more disruption to the work environment with or without the English-only rule. This is a persuasive argument. Hostility among employees can negatively affect the productivity and efficiency of the practice. Creating an English-only rule may increase productivity for dentists because all the workers would understand each other.

Third, courts have upheld English-only rules because they promote worker harmony. Dentists or employees who speak only English may feel threatened, isolated, and/or alienated by non-English speakers. This factor is extremely important when dealing with dental practices. Courts have upheld the use of English-only rules to avoid isolation or alienation of employees who only speak English. Rather than creating an atmosphere of inferiority, isolation, and intimidation, these rules can actually alleviate an atmosphere of racial tension. While English-only rules cannot be justified by fear and prejudice, dentists have a legitimate interest in ensuring that their employees are not making derogatory comments about each other, either as harassment or basic ill will.

Finally, a fourth justification for the business necessity of an English-only rule is to improve customer relations and satisfaction. Dentists usually have no trouble justifying a rule requiring employees to speak English with English-speaking patients. However, dentists cannot discriminate on the basis of a patient’s fear or prejudice. Depending on the patient base, it may improve patient relations to implement an English-only rule. A patient may feel intimidated if he or she cannot understand what the dentist is saying. Because patients who primarily speak foreign languages may be comforted by the use of languages other than English, courts have held that improved customer relations are in and of themselves insufficient to justify business necessity.

**Conclusion**

While dental practice owners may have legitimate business justifications for implementing an English-only rule, it is very important for the practice owner to understand the possible legal ramifications of such an action. Because this area of law is relatively undeveloped, it is strongly recommended that any practice owner who is considering implementation of such a rule seek advice from an attorney who is familiar with employment law.
YDC 2013: Broad educational offerings for entire dental team

Yankee Dental Congress runs Wednesday, Jan. 30 through Sunday, Feb. 3

Organizers of the 2013 Yankee Dental Congress have reached across all dental sectors to put together an educational program that offers something for every member of the dental team.

The event’s primary intent is to ‘Build Bridges through Innovation, Technology, Wellness and Inspiration’ to new opportunities in the dental profession. Toward that end the Jan. 30 – Feb. 3 program at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center features 350-plus continuing education courses spanning a vast range of topics.

On the program’s agenda are some of the top speakers in the industry today, including:

• Alan Budenz, DDS, Laney Kay, JD, Loretta LaRoche, and Tieraona Low Dog, MD (general dentistry).
• Stephen Chu, DMD (implants).
• Anthony Cardoza, DDS, and Dave Juliani, DDS (Technology).
• Jeff Brucia, DDS, Gordon Christensen, DDS, PhD, Jacinthe Paquette, DDS and Cherilyn Sheets, DDS (restorative dentistry).

Titles of some of the major educational opportunities include: the Eighth Annual Conference for Women in Dentistry; Dental Management of Sleep Apnea Fast Track; the Dentist as the CEO Series; and for students and new licensees, a New-Dentist Itinerary.

C.E. in exhibit hall

You can connect with some of the brightest minds in dentistry on the exhibit hall floor of the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center and discover the latest trends, techniques, products and services available through a comprehensive field of 450-plus exhibitors. You also can attend premier continuing education courses right on the exhibit hall floor. Among the highlights are:

C.E.-On-the-Exhibit-Hall-Floor Courses — Check out 25-plus high-quality hands-on courses and lectures at no charge or at a significantly reduced rate.

Dental Office Pavilion — This is a great opportunity for anyone considering implementing new dental equipment and technology into their practice. Presented by Henry Schein Dental, there is no extra charge to take advantage of this leading-edge learning opportunity.

Healthy Living Pavilion — Change your life while also earning C.E. credits. You can learn from experts about various diets and discover how to be a healthier you.

High-Tech Playground — Discover the latest equipment and technologies in an informal setting without sales pressure, at no additional charge, right on the exhibit hall floor.

Live Dentistry — At no additional charge, learn from some of the industry’s top clinicians as you watch them perform live, cutting-edge procedures. All of the supplies for these sessions are provided by Patterson Dental.

On the lighter side

YDC 2013 also will give attendees the chance to relax: Have Lunch with Jenifer Weiner on Thursday, Jan. 31, or kick back with your favorite beverage, light fare, and upbeat music on the Yankee Boardwalk, open to everyone on Thursday evening. Learn more about interior decorating with design personality Candice Olson at Candice on Design, or share some giggles when Kathleen Madigan takes the stage for Friday Night Laughs, both on Friday, Feb. 1, 2013.

Register at www.yankeedental.com for Yankee Dental Congress 2013 and join an anticipated 28,000 dental professionals for four days that promise to inspire, inform and entertain you like nothing else.

(Source: Yankee Dental Congress)
Biggest dental show likely to draw 118,000

The entire dental industry, including all of the international market leaders, will be represented at the International Dental Show in Cologne, Germany. Dental medicine and dental technology will be on display, as will equipment maintenance and infection prevention techniques.

Approximately 118,000 attendees and more than 1,900 exhibitors from 55-plus countries are expected at the world’s largest trade fair for dentistry and dental technology this March. Held every two years the show is organized by the GFDI Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Dental-Industrie mbH and the commercial enterprise of the Association of German Dental Manufacturers (VDDI). It is staged by Cologne-based Koelnmesse GmbH. This 35th edition of the show runs March 12–16. The focus is on business and product information and the latest findings in science and research.

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The event will also showcase services as well as information, communication, and organization tools. The broad range of products on display from around the world will give visitors the opportunity to get a comprehensive overview of the global dental industry in terms of services, product innovations and the latest trends.

Registration and ticket sales are available online at www.ids-cologne.de. (Source: Koelnmesse GmbH)

Pacific Dental Conference: Pause to explore Vancouver

Canada’s largest two-day trade show is March 7–9 in the heart of some of Canada’s top tourist attractions

Experience the true flavor of the West Coast and earn C.E. credits at the same time. The Pacific Dental Conference has an expert line up of local, North American and international speakers. With more than 150 presenters, 150 open sessions and 36 hands-on courses covering a variety of topics, there is something for every member of your dental team.

Explore the largest two-day dental trade show in Canada (www.pdconf.com) and have the year’s first opportunity to see the newest equipment. The spacious exhibit hall invites attendees to see innovative new techniques demonstrated on the live dentistry stage and examine products and services from more than 300 exhibiting companies with representatives who are ready to engage attendees in discussions on creating practice solutions.

After the conference, you can take a day to relax and revitalize by exploring some of the great tourist attractions in Vancouver. The ocean is steps from the Vancouver Convention Centre, and pristine snow-capped mountains offer choice spring-like skiing conditions.

(Source: Pacific Dental Conference)
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MEETINGS

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Hands-on workshops filling fast for 2013 American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry meeting in Seattle

Those who haven’t registered yet for the 2013 American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry conference in Seattle should do so quickly because course selection is open and registration numbers are trending higher than in previous years.

The conference, April 24-27 at the Washington State Convention Center, will offer hands-on workshops and lectures and give attendees the opportunity to earn up to 24 certified continuing education credits. Attendees also can take the Accreditation Written Exam on April 25 to begin the process toward earning the Aacd’s credential.

“We encourage everyone who’s interested in Aacd 2013 to sign up as soon as possible,” said Aacd President Ron Goodlin. “Course selection (opened) Dec. 7, and we are expecting that a lot of workshops featuring our headliners will fill right away.”

Headliners at this year’s meeting include Drs. Frank Spear, John Kos, Newton Fahl, David Garber, Maurice Salama, Betsy Bakeman, Jacinthe Paquette and Cherilyn Sheets.

In addition to lectures and educational events, the event features many social and networking activities. A welcome reception will take place April 24 at the Experience Music Project Museum, which is near the base of the Seattle Space Needle.

Last year’s event was in Washington, D.C., and the hope is that this year’s West Coast location will enable many other dental professionals to embrace this educational opportunity — especially those who are located in Pacific Rim countries.

“For two years on the East Coast, we’re ready to bring great cosmetic dentistry education back out West,” Goodlin said. “Not only will we offer exceptional education, but Seattle is an amazing city everyone must visit. If you come to Seattle, you’ll walk away with a new skill set, a renewed perspective on the field of cosmetic dentistry, and a lot of new friends.”

For more information, or to register, please visit www.aacdcconference.com, to view a digital edition of the conference guide.

AACD course registration open

About the Aacd

The Aacd is the world’s largest nonprofit member organization dedicated to advancing excellence in comprehensive oral care that combines art and science to optimally improve dental health, esthetics and function. With more than 6,400 cosmetic dentists and professionals in 70 countries, AACD fulfills its mission by offering educational opportunities, promoting and supporting a respected Accreditation credential, serving as a user-friendly forum for the creative exchange of knowledge and ideas, and providing accurate and useful information to the public and the profession.

(Source: American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry)

Smiles in the Sun begins with fishing tourney

Interested in participating in the Smiles in the Sun fishing tournament on Wednesday morning, sponsored by Shoal! If you’re planning to fish you should arrive on Tuesday, April 23. The clinical portion of the meeting begins Thursday, April 25. The 2013 session is on the beach in Long Boat Key, Fla. Above: Photo/Provided by Smiles in the Sun

About Smiles in the Sun

The Long Boat Key Resort and Club is a five-star property that will allow you to learn, play and relax in an idyllic location. Seminars in the Sun 2013 has put together a high-value program of internationally known speakers to bring you the most current information in several disciplines. Jack Hahn, DDS, is known throughout the world as the inventor of the NobleReplace implant and will share his experience in placing more than 30,000 implants. From diagnosis and case selection, to implant surgery, to restoration, Hahn will offer expertise and a wealth of knowledge to better enable you to treat your patients.

Howard S. Glazer, DDS, FAGD, is an international author and clinician who will discuss the ever-changing world of materials and products to give you a better understanding of what is in the marketplace. His knowledge of the “latest and greatest” materials will guide you through the jungle of the big catalogs to better understand what is faster, easier and better for your patients and for you.

Additionally, there will be two mini seminars designed for dentists, spouses and staff to gain an understanding and appreciation for what the electronic and social media can do to put you and your practice in the forefront as a leading dental office. Tennli Toole from Smile Reminder/Solutions Reach, will share the secrets of building patient loyalty when patients are not in the office — by integrating user-friendly acquisition tools into your daily communications. She will give you an easy-to-follow recipe for success without having to remodel your team’s work habits.

Dareen Seigel and Svetlana Vinovtsiev will show you how to get your website to the top of the search engines. From the top of Google, to dominating social media, these two wonderful speakers from www.topdentists.com will show you how they have already helped more than 2,000 of the most successful dentists in the United States build and maintain an effective online marketing program.

All these presentations will make a positive difference in your daily practice and should not be missed. In addition to the education program there are many social functions planned, including a welcoming reception, fishing tournament and sunset beach bash barbecue. Access by air is easy via the Sarasota, Tampa or Regional Southwest airports.

So whatever you pleasure, Smiles in the Sun 2013 has the answer. Learn in the morning and play all afternoon in a wonderful location at a beautiful time of year, enjoying the best that the west coast of Florida has to offer. See you there!

More information about the meeting is available at smil.esinthesun@verizon.net, www.smilesinthesun.net or by calling (631) 423-5300.

(Source: Smiles in the Sun)
Greater New York Dental Meeting attracts more than 53,000

2013 GNYDM set for Nov. 29–Dec. 4

Final registered attendance numbers for the 88th annual Greater New York Dental Meeting came in at 53,481, of which 18,305 were dentists representing all 50 states and 130 countries. The meeting continues to be the largest dental meeting in the United States.

Organizers of the 2012 Greater New York Dental Meeting describe the event as a complete success. The convention/exhibition/congress, held Nov. 23–28, opened in the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center just four weeks after Superstorm Sandy cut a path of destruction across the Eastern Seaboard of the United States.

The Javits Center experienced some exterior damage and extensive flooding on its lower level, but an around-the-clock effort had it up and running in time for the meeting to open as scheduled. The GNYDM was packed with its usual vast array of the latest in technologies, resources, products — and an extensive agenda of educational opportunities.

Meeting organizers report that the reaction from attendees, exhibitors and sponsors was unanimous. Not only were the exhibit floor, clinicians and networking events well received, but sales opportunities were described as unprecedented.

Planning is well under way for the 2013 meeting. The dates are Nov. 29 through Dec. 1 for the scientific meeting and Dec. 1 through Dec. 4 for the exhibit hall.

The Greater New York Dental Meeting is sponsored by the New York County Dental Society and Second District Dental Society.

The high-energy event, which never has a pre-registration fee, draws top dental professionals with an expansive exhibit hall and more than 300 educational courses, including full-day and half-day seminars, essays, hands-on workshops and a live, 430-seat, high-tech patient demonstration area.

Free registration is now open for 2013 at www.gnydm.com.

(Source: Jayme McNiff, Greater New York Dental Meeting)
Partnership creates bigger C.E. footprint

xpAPce, a fast-growing online dental C.E. company, has entered into a strategic partnership with Dental Hub, which is part of Medical Health Imaging. Dental Hub offers the complete xpAPce library of online courses to its 30,000 monthly visitors. These courses cover a vast range of topics, including talks on sleep apnea, pain control, periodontics, bone grafting, ceramics, traumatic injuries to children and more. To view up-to-date course listings visit www.dental.healthimaginghub.com/continuing-education.html.

Dental Hub is an informational dental website guided by Dr. Jeff Burgess. The site includes up-to-date articles on dental health, technology, teledentistry and dental implants. In addition to being editor-in-chief at Dental Hub, Burgess will become an xpAPce academic advisor and scholar, presenting lectures in oral medicine.

Managing director named
Bill Martin has joined xpAPce and XPsquared to manage operations. He brings with him more than 15 years of experience in management and business development within the educational and private sectors. He has already guided another start-up in the education sector to profitable growth.

Martin's past experiences include a role at the U.S. Council for International Business, which is a leading public policy organization for Fortune 500 companies. There, Martin oversaw all sales, marketing and communication functions. Under his leadership, revenues grew by 18 percent. His earlier corporate experiences included leadership positions at firms such as Thomson Reuters, JP Morgan Chase and American Express.

Martin graduated cum laude with a bachelor’s degree from Cornell and an MBA from the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania.

What is xpAPce?
The company name “xpAPce” is an abbreviation that stands for eXPerience AProved Continuing Education. An innovator in dental continuing education, xpAPce offers CERP-approved online C.E. courses, in alignment with its mission to enhance patient outcomes, reduce risk, share knowledge and exchange ideas with the world’s leading scholars on a broad range of topics. Visit at www.xpapce.com.

XPsquared: eLearning and online dental community:
xpAPce’s eLearning takes place in a unique format: an online dental community. Dental professionals can earn C.E. credit, visit vendors at their leisure, view new products, download PDFs, contact a sales rep, attend a meeting and more. Visit the Education and Vendor Hall for a list of scholars and courses — and to see the vendors that have booths inside the community.

For information about becoming a vendor, contact info@xpsquared.com. For a snapshot of both of the organization’s websites, visit www.xpsquared.com, where all courses and vendors are listed.

Courses also are available live and on demand on the Dental Tribune Study Club website, www.dtstudyclub.com.
Kuraray renames one composite product and launches a new one

New premium composite covers all 15 classical shades

Intuitive single-shade matching
Clearfil™ Majesty Esthetic is now Clearfil Majesty ES-2 Classic. This intuitive product is the only composite with VITA-approved shades, and it enables shade matching with a single shade. Kuraray reports that its pioneering light diffusion, or LD technology, creates restorations that are virtually invisible, making shade matching simple—with only a single shade.

Available in syringe or PLT (preload tip), Clearfil Majesty ES-2 Classic is easy to shape and polish, and can be used in either a mono- or multi-layer technique. Clearfil Majesty ES-2 Classic is available in 16 perfectly matched VITA shades, which includes specialty shades for bleaching.

Redefining composite technology
Kuraray says new-to-the-market, Clearfil Majesty ES-2 Premium is redefining composite technology. With the only VITA-approved shade concept, this new composite material covers all 15 classical shades with only five enamel and dentin shades. Kuraray reports that its proprietary light-diffusion, or LD technology, adds the finishing touch, easily blending to the color of the surrounding tooth structure.

Available in syringe or PLT (preload tip), Clearfil Majesty ES-2 Premium combines exceptional aesthetics and economical value, which the company says makes it perfect for any dental practice.

For more information about Clearfil Majesty ES-2 Classic, Clearfil Majesty ES-2 Premium or any other Kuraray product, visit www.kuraraydental.com, or call (800) 879-1676.

(Source: Kuraray)
Handpiece manufacturer NSK aims for global leadership

80 percent of revenues generated outside Japan

By Dental Tribune Asia Pacific

It is no secret that the years since the global financial crisis have not been very kind to companies in Japan. First, the recession slowed business investments significantly down, then the negative effects of last year’s tsunami and the massive destruction it wrought almost brought the world’s third largest economy to a halt.

For NSK, one of the country’s largest dental manufacturers, troubles in the home market are its least concern because the company conducts most of its business elsewhere. According to president and CEO Eiichi Nakanishi, with whom Dental Tribune International recently had the opportunity to speak at the company’s headquarters in Tochigi, more than 80 percent of the company’s revenues are now generated by its operations outside of Japan.

In the last three years, NSK has been performing particularly well in mature markets such as Europe and North America, where it boosted its presence with the opening of its new headquarters near Chicago last year, despite unfavorable conditions such as high market saturation and the ongoing decline of the yen against the dollar.

Centralized distribution building market share in Asia and Europe

Since 2009, Nakanishi has also seen his company regaining market share in Asia through centralized distribution and after-sales support offered by its new subsidiary in Singapore.

Another significant contributor has been NSK’s European office in Germany, which accounted for almost one third of the 22.2 billion yen ($278 million) in sales the company reported in 2011.

“‘That is why economic conditions in our home market have little or no impact on our overall business. We really think globally,” Nakanishi explains.

According to the 48-year-old, who has run the company since 2000, one of the major reasons for NSK’s strong market position, even in established markets, is its dedication to innovation and quality, combined with the excellent after-sales service it is able to provide to customers in almost every country except North Korea. But this hasn’t always been the case.

Long history of quality, growth

Founded in the 1930s, the company had a rough start, and operations were completely halted during World War II. The production of dental handpieces resumed in 1951, however, the company has grown extensively and now employs more than 700 people in its Japanese offices in Tochigi and Tokyo.

NSK continues to produce the vast majority of its products’ precision parts in-house, which, according to Nakanishi, is one of the main reasons that dentists now identify the company with high-quality products. “We employ many good engineers and marketing people who help us to constantly improve our brand and make it more attractive to dentists,” he says.

One of NSK’s recent innovations, launched at last year’s IDS in Cologne, Germany, for example, is the Ti-Max Z series, a durable premium handpiece that is claimed to have the smallest heads and necks in the sector, as well as an exceptionally low noise level and virtually no vibration.

The Surgic Pro surgical micromotor has also received much interest, particularly by dental implant surgeons, and is now distributed alongside systems by major implant manufacturers. NSK asserts it pays close attention to the needs of its customers, a philosophy that has resulted in products such as the S-max pieo, which was developed solely for the treatment of patients with smaller mouths, such as children.

Core business: Handpieces and small-motor equipment

Moving into other markets is conceivable but unlikely to happen anytime soon, Nakanishi says. Even though his company has begun to enter new areas in the past decade with the launch of instruments such as ultrasonic scalers and polishers, its core business will remain dental handpieces and other small-motor equipment.

“When it comes to handpieces, we have produced more innovations than our competitors,” he remarks. “Our goal is to become the No. 1 company worldwide in this segment.”
Total Technology Solution

BIOLASE hands-on showcase includes all-new EPIC laser

BIOLASE, a leading dental laser manufacturer and distributor — and distributor of NewTom and 3Shape TRIOS technologies in North America — will showcase its full line of award-winning laser systems, 3-D cone-beam devices and digital intraoral scanning technology at all major and regional dental trade events, beginning with Yankee Dental Congress in late January.

The company will feature the products in its new Total Technology Pavilion, a large space with functioning equipment to allow hands-on demonstrations and discussion of the full range of applications. The pavilion also features an overview presentation of the total-technology concept, along with brief presentations by practicing dentists who have deployed such technologies in their practices.

“We are proud to present the Total Technology Pavilion at the Yankee Dental Congress and beyond,” said John Bernhard, director of marketing at BIOLASE. “It represents the collective effort of multiple teams to create an environment where dental professionals can spend time with our groundbreaking technologies to gain an understanding of their applicability in the dental clinic.”

EPIC standard set for diode lasers

New to the Total Technology Pavilion this year is the EPIC Total Diode Solution, the newest laser from BIOLASE. It’s described as being packed with one category-exclusive feature after another, setting a new standard in diode laser performance and value. A graphical touchscreen gives dentists fingertip access to as many as 20 common soft-tissue procedure presets — plus 20-minute full-mouth whitening and FDA-cleared temporary pain relief. Additionally, EPIC can be a financial boon for many practices because of its integrated, FDA-cleared protocols for laser hygiene and perioging, as an adjunct to scaling and root planning. Plus, a new ComfortPulse setting reduces pulse length as little as one ten-millionth of a second to avoid heat build-up at the surgical site — for fast tissue cutting with less patient discomfort.

3Shape TRIOS digital scanner, full range of WaterLase all-tissue lasers

Another addition to the Technology Pavilion is the 3Shape TRIOS digital intraoral scanner system. The TRIOS digital solution, which includes a hand-held scanner, operator’s control cart and intuitive software, provides faster impression taking, improved accuracy and clinical results, reduced need for retakes and less adjustment and grinding. TRIOS’ unique features include: spray-free scanning; high accuracy optimized for an extensive range of indications; clinical scan validation; online communication with the dental lab; and intuitive SmartTouch user interface.

Other products in the pavilion include WaterLase iPlus, WaterLase MIX and WaterLase MD Turbo, the company’s full range of all-tissue laser devices. WaterLase iPlus represents a pinnacle of 20 years of research to improve cutting speed to match that of a high-speed drill, with a fraction of the discomfort and ancillary challenges a dental drill creates, such as microfractures, smear layer and more. The WaterLase MIX and WaterLase MD Turbo are described as being ideal for practices seeking a basic, lower entry point for all-tissue laser dentistry. “Although the WaterLase MD platform was first released in 2004, there have been many improvements and refinements, including a more flexible fiber, faster-cutting handpieces and many other important improvements,” said Dmitri Boutoussov, BIOLASE chief technology officer and long-time member of the company’s innovative R&D department.

NewTom compact CBCT technology

Finally, the Total Technology Pavilion has full-size models of NewTom Cone-Beam Computed Tomography (CBCT) technology. The technology is relatively new to dentistry and is a more compact version of standard medical CT imaging that uses a cone-shaped X-ray beam to obtain a multitude of radiographs that construct digital 3-D models of maxillofacial anatomies.

BIOLASE is a biomedical company that develops, manufactures and markets dental lasers and distributes and markets dental imaging equipment. The company’s laser products incorporate approximately 290 patented and patent-pending technologies that provide biological treatment and clinically superior performance with less pain and faster recovery. Its imaging products provide cutting-edge technology at competitive prices to deliver the best results for dentists and patients.

BIOLASE’s core products include dental laser systems that perform a broad range of procedures (including cosmetic and complex surgical applications) as well as a full line of dental imaging equipment and CAD/CAM systems. BIOLASE has sold more than 25,000 lasers. Other products under development address ophthalmology and other medical and consumer markets.

(Source: BIOLASE)

All-in-one, lab-free chairside inlays in one appointment

VOCO describes the recently launched GrandioSO® Inlay System as the first chairside inlay system of its kind. The all-in-one solution kit offers all the matching components to fabricate 15 indirect composite inlays.

GrandioSO Inlay kit achieves the same high quality as lab or CAD-CAM composite inlays. Composite inlays have several advantages over ceramic; they are similar in wear to natural teeth, aesthetically natural, repairable, and easy to bond to. GrandioSO inlays have approximate material cost of $25 per inlay, significantly less than lab or CAD-CAM manufactured inlays. Clinicians can increase their profit or offer less expensive alternatives to their patients.

All components in the kit are optimally designed to fabricate inlay in just one appointment. In addition to tried-and-true award-winning products GrandioSO, Futurabond DC, Bifix QM and Dimanto, the kit has a new, specially developed VPS Die Silicone for fabrication of model teeth in 30 seconds. The VPS Die Silicone is a high-definition material with high final hardness. Using conventional techniques, it produces realistic models that are ideal for use in the fabrication of inlays or temporaries. The composite inlay is created extraorally, according to the principles applying to the placement of fillings, and the restoration is then cemented into the cavity with Futurabond DC and Bifix Q. The patient is thus treated with a high-quality composite inlay in just one appointment.

Contact VOCO at (888) 688-3384 or by email at infousa@voco.com. Visit online at www.vocoamerica.com; earn free C.E. credit on education site www.vocolearning.com.

(Source: VOCO America)
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