"I believe that the future is already here"

[BACKGROUND: ©CIFOTART]

At the latest congress of the World Federation for lasers Dentistry in Barcelona, laser specialist company Syneron Dental Lasers introduced its new LiteTouch model of dental lasers for hard & soft tissue treatments. Laser magazine spoke with the company's President & CEO, Mr Ira Prigat, about the benefits of the new model and future prospects of laser technology in dentistry.

_laser: *Mr Prigat, how does the new LiteTouch model differ from its predecessor?*

The new CE-marked LiteTouch model was unveiled at the World Federation of Laser Dentistry International Congress in Barcelona in mid April 2012, where Syneron Dental Lasers participated as a Gold Sponsor. We showcased Laser-in-the-Handpiece innovative technology and clinical applications of LiteTouch in various fields, including endodontics, periodontics, pediatric dentistry and implantology.

The new LiteTouch model was especially designed to meet high regulatory standards and features an adjustable screen and an angled socket extension to improve the ergonomic positioning of the laser applicator, which is slightly thicker than that of the previous model, but is able to provide our users with improved ergonomic and wider clinical capabilities. Additional elements and accessories in the new model were added based on the feedback provided by users for enhanced device manoeuvrability and portability.

Users will also notice that the new LiteTouch model comes in a variety of new and existing colour options.

_*Some of the previous models were found to not fully comply with European regulatory standards. Please elaborate how you have overcome this issue over the past several months?*

We at Syneron Dental Lasers believe in keeping high standards of safety, efficacy and service for LiteTouch and take much pride in the feedback we receive from our world-wide users, enthusiastic researchers and speakers. As with other similar cases in the dental industry or other industries, companies can experience deviations. Earlier this year, Syneron Dental Lasers conducted a test which concluded that some LiteTouch systems currently on the EU market were not fully compliant with the Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) part of the Annex I of the Medical Devices Directive.

Our foremost concern was to ensure the safety of the machine to both users and patients and to provide our users with an adequate solution, so they could continue to benefit from their LiteTouch system. This is why we instantly commissioned an in-

dependent third-party expert analysis of the situation. The results were that there was no risk whatsoever to either users or patients. No safety or efficacy feature of our device was affected by the EMC issue. We then immediately put together a team of international experts in order to provide our stakeholders with quick and reliable solutions covering all aspects, working hand-in-hand with the local authorities in each country. Last, but not least, we developed a new model that not only solved the problem but also provided our users with a new and improved alternative.

After putting in place all these necessary activities to address this issue, Syneron Dental Lasers received reinstatement of the CE certification for its new LiteTouch model from its notifying European body, MDC. For complete user satisfaction and, together with its parent company, Syneron Medical Ltd., the company decided to go beyond just repairing the existing equipment, and offer our users the new LiteTouch model.

_How have the market and users responded?

Thanks to the special working relations and close synergy with our world-wide partners we were able to address the situation quickly and at the same time receive support for all the actions that were taken. Our partners appreciated our transparent and responsible approach as well as the seriousness with which Syneron Dental Lasers handled the matter. They continue to express their appreciation through their unequivocal commitment to the Syneron Dental Lasers Family. Moreover, we managed to bring on board new distributors in Europe and recently announced the appointment of a new distributor in Germany, the well-known and respected LH Medical GmbH, and a veteran distributor of cutting edge medical, dental and aesthetic products. We spend a lot of time and effort in selecting our distributors because they are the ones who are most in contact with our users and we can say that we are quite fortunate to be able to work with very strong, ethical and highly reputable partners such as LH Medical GmbH in all of the other countries where we are currently selling our products.

The reaction and feedback we are receiving from LiteTouch owners who have already started to work with the new model are excellent. Our users acknowledge that the look & feel of the machine is similar and they are happy with the new features that were incorporated into this new model. The new and modern design is slightly bigger, however,

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our users who operate at more than one location continue to enjoy the portability of LiteTouch and carry their unit from one clinic to another across different locations.

_How can the new LiteTouch help dentists today?

In the category of hard and soft tissue lasers, LiteTouch is the world's first versatile and only non-fiber Erbium:YAG dental laser. Our system allows dentists to focus on their performance of the clinical treatment and on their patients, rather than be constantly concerned about causing damage to the laser fibre. Thus, dentists can quickly and easily integrate LiteTouch into their daily routines and enjoy the complete expression of their dental mastery.

The new Laser-in-the-Handpiece technology imitates the performance of the turbine drill while integrating all the advantages of a laser. The energy of the Erbium:YAG laser is rapidly and massively absorbed by the water in the tissues, offering thereby great cutting power and precise incisions of both hard tissue and bone. Thanks to LiteTouch, dentists can obtain improved clinical results and can gain lots of time. Their patients benefit from an overall improved experience and reduced healing time. Moreover, the compact and friendly shape of LiteTouch naturally fits into any dental office without intimidating the patients.

Elsewhere, extensive research conducted over a period of three years by leading professors from Europe and Asia concluded that LiteTouch owners enjoy an over 27 per cent increase in their annual revenue shortly after their initial training course. In addition to the technological advantages of LiteTouch, these financial results are contributing to the constant increase in sales per territory.

_What are the prospects of laser technology in general?

It is clear that the dental industry has started advocating lasers, as an increasing number of scholars have been involved in research activities that prove the efficacy of lasers in a wide range of dental procedures. Furthermore, a growing number of universities have already adopted special laser education programs in their curriculums, thus sending a clear message that lasers are the future. More solid proof of this has recently emerged as we learned that the organisers of the most influential event in dentistry, the bi-annual International Dental Show, will be featuring dental laser technology as its major theme during its next meeting in 2013.

I believe that the future is already here. More and more researchers and scholars are becoming enthusiastic about laser technology, because of its proven physical and clinical advantages. Until recently, the main market entry barrier was the lack of knowledge and the exiguous research in this field. We have largely contributed to help overcome these shortcomings and are expecting the market to remain quite dynamic. By feeding back the clinical information gained from doctors to distributors, following various educational programmes, we can pursue the technological development that addresses the clinical needs of dentists, in particular with regard to shorter healing time and greater benefits for patients, enjoy an overall improved experience each time they go see a dentist.

I can tell you that it is exciting to take a central role in the laser revolution and to see my vision brought to life. We are at the dawn of a new era in dentistry thanks to lasers. Syneron Dental Lasers is committed to paving the way for greater access to this technology. Our Erbium:YAG LiteTouch laser has opened the doors to new dental treatment possibilities, significant time and cost savings for a large majority of everyday procedures for which patient comfort is significantly enhanced. Our mission now is to share this knowledge around the world so that dentists may fully enjoy the free expression of their mastery while more and more patients experience better dentistry with laser treatments and finally eliminate their fears of going to see the dentist._

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