

Digital technology and CAD/CAM will determine dental market development

An interview with Dominique Deschietere, President of the Association of Dental Dealers in Europe



◆ Dominique Deschietere

■ Supported by growth in major markets like Germany, sales of dental equipment in Europe have proven relatively stable since the last IDS took place in 2011. *today international* had the opportunity to speak with Arseus Lab CEO and newly elected President of the Association of Dental Dealers in Europe (ADDE), Dominique Deschietere, Belgium, about the current state of the industry, and the challenges that lie ahead.

today international: Last year, the European Union announced the revision of its medical device regulations. How is this going to affect the dental industry?

Dominique Deschietere: The diversity and potential for innovation in our industry contribute to improved dental procedures and prosthetics, from which the patient can only bene-

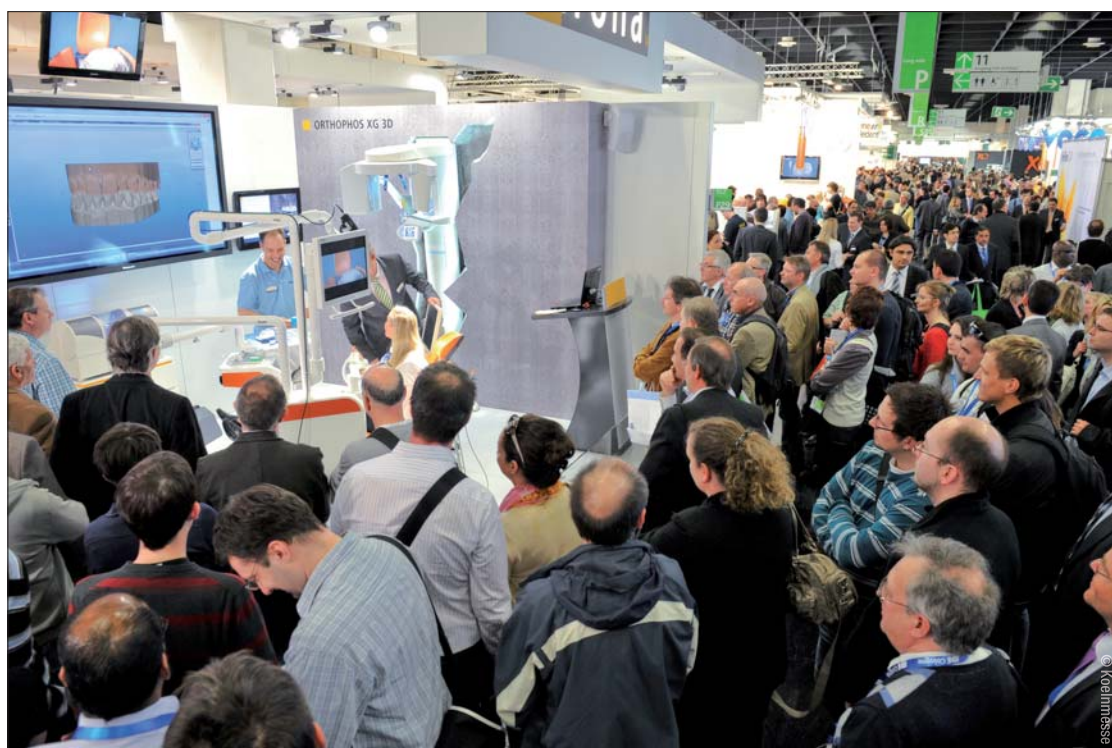
fit. As the dental industry and the health-care sector in general produce a wide range of products, from extremely sophisticated devices to consumables, we as distributors need to be vigilant regarding medical device regulations. The regulatory framework provided by the EU for market access, international business relations and legal agreements is in the patient's best interest. However, we also think that these matters should be adapted to the dental distributor market.

Why do the current regulations need to be changed at all?

The main reason for the revision is that current EU legislation dates from the late 1990s and is considered insufficient by many for our rapidly changing market. In addition, some member states of the EU have tended to interpret some of these rules broadly, which is not necessarily to the benefit of the patient. It also makes competition uneven for those distributors who adhere to the regulations. Therefore, it is essential to impose new regulations in order to increase traceability of dental products within and beyond the borders of the EU.

According to a 2011 survey by your organisation, sales of dental materials and equipment in Europe remained relatively stable. What is the current state of the industry on the continent?

Preliminary figures from our latest survey of the industry show that,



◆ Visitors watching a product presentation at IDS 2011. According to Deschietere, European dental practitioners and laboratories have become rather reluctant to make large investments.

except for a few countries, the market has achieved good sales. There might be a slight decrease in traditional product segments, as old technologies are replaced by new ones but it is still too early to provide a clear picture on the current market situation. Unfortunately, not all figures from our 2012 industry survey to be discussed during the IDS are available yet. However, we would like to invite everyone to our

presentation to be held on Wednesday, 13 March, at 16:00 in the Blue Room at the Koelnmesse fairground.

During a press conference in December in Cologne, the Chairman of the Association of German Dental Manufacturers, Dr Martin Rickert, said that the outlook for markets in Southern Europe is rather negative owing to the financial constraints the health-care sector is facing at the moment. What is the situation really like there?

It is no secret that some countries in Southern Europe that suffered most from the financial crisis are showing a negative trend with regard to dental investments. It is likely that this will be reflected in the sales figures from last year.

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Where do you see the industry heading, and what segments are the most likely to grow in the next few years?

We will definitely see significant growth in digital dentistry as new technologies like intra-oral scanners, as well as digital imaging and planning instruments, find their way into dental practices. Dental laboratories too are increasingly making use of CAD/CAM technology. Both these developments will determine how the market and the dental business models will develop in the future.

Europe has traditionally been one of the largest markets for dental

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While sales of sundries and technical services increased slightly in 2011, equipment sales decreased by over 2 per cent. Have dentists become more wary of investments?

Socio-demographic developments and changing patterns of reimbursements by public health services and insurers have had an impact on patients' health-care spending.

As a result of the financial crisis, people have had difficulty accessing capital through bank loans, renting, etc. which means they have less money available for medical and dental care. Consequently, dental practitioners and laboratories throughout

material and equipment, rivalled only by North America. How important have markets overseas become?

It goes without saying that in terms of economic growth, spending ability and other factors, the BRIC countries hold great potential. Dental distributors in Europe will be involved in this process as we gain access to other products and technologies from around the world. From this, competition will only increase within the EU. Our members will have to follow these changes carefully and learn to respond to them in a professional and transparent manner.

Thank you for the interview. ◀

AD

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IDS Speakers' Corner

TUESDAY, MARCH 12

- 14:00 – 14:30 **Dan McOwen**
CBCT/DVT 2013: Latest information, comparisons and purchasing guidelines
- 15:30 – 16:00 **Prof. Gianni Gaetta**
Velscope—saving lives, not only teeth

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

- 11:00 – 11:30 **Dr. Fay Goldstep**
Predictable proactive periodontal treatment
- 15:30 – 16:00 **Michael Bauer, M.Sc.**
The Use of Erbium lasers for Stimulation of Bone Growth Factors (PDGF)/Erbiumlasereinsatz zur Stimulierung der Knochenwachstumsfaktoren (PDGF)

THURSDAY, MARCH 14

- 11:00 – 12:00 **Dr. Gianluca Gambarini**
TF adaptive—a novel approach to canal instrumentation
- 12:00 – 12:30 **Dr. George Freedman**
Cement free implants and long term maintenance

FRIDAY, MARCH 15

- 11:00 – 11:30 **Dr. Henriette Lerner**
DVT 2013: Neuigkeiten, Vergleiche und Tipps zur Entscheidungsfindung
- 16:00 – 16:30 **Dr. Derry Rogers**
Introduction of new SDI products. Your Smile. Our Vision.

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