

IDS for implantologists— Interview with Dr Rolf Vollmer

Innovations are exciting—Professional training (curricula) is indispensable. IDS—The International Dental Show—took place in Cologne from March 24 to 28, 2009. This year's worldwide biggest fair of dental industry focussed on innovations, also with regard to implantology.

Dr Vollmer, you are Vice President of Germany's most traditional implantological expert association. Where do we stand today, and what are we awaiting in the coming years?

The general trend, though I do not agree with it in every respect, is certainly focussed on new surfaces, faster healing processes, and faster patient care. In the next two to five years, progress is probable in the field of biological surfaces. I can also imagine that there will be further developments with regard to bone substitutes, because the "philosopher's stone" has not yet been found. There have been many alleged trends, which sometimes implied high prime costs for users and which later came to nothing. As expected, apart from a number of innovations not really extensive news could be presented.

Which basic problems remain unsolved?

Positive and significant are the solutions to complex technical tasks. Just think about the imaging techniques – e.g. digital X-ray sensors, storage phosphor plate techniques, or filters for special implantological image evaluation, or of the biological parts of the membranes, bone substitutes, growth factors. That is pure innovation. Surprisingly there are some relatively simple problems which have not yet been addressed. It is praiseworthy that in recent years one thing was established as standard. There is often a micro thread in the neck area of the implant which passes over to a macro thread apically. But metric and inch measurements still exist. Not every implant system is stringently compatible with another system. This implies higher dental tool costs for users. It is also more complicated if patients move to live elsewhere, and have to find another implantologist for their treatment. One should at least agree upon uniform sizes for the screws and threads used, perhaps two or three sizes with corresponding screw-wrenches. This would certainly simplify the daily work of implantologists.

Why does DGZI exhibit at such a fair?

That is a good question! We already participated in 2007, and we could deliver a positive summary, though our presentation at the dental show in 2007



mainly focussed on image building. Awaiting the worldwide economic crisis, we also had to think about whether it would be worth the effort and the costs involved, and form part of the fair as an exhibitor. To be honest, I was not sure of that.

And what about the result?

That is more than just impressive. Köln Messe (Cologne Fair) announced a growth rate of 6.9% concerning the number of visitors. More than 106,000 interested dentists, dental technicians, dental assistants and students visited the IDS 2009. Considering our comparatively small booth, we can certainly say that the IDS 2009 was absolutely successful, for we could count 685 qualified contacts altogether. I think that apart from the large number of German visitors, the internationality of the visitors to the fair was indeed remarkable. To sum up, I can say that the IDS 2009 has considerably exceeded all expectations of our association.

What about the talks at the fair? What were they about?

As I have already mentioned at the beginning of our interview, professional training (curricula) is indispensable. Especially at the IDS we noticed an increased demand for implantological curricula and specialist training in Germany and abroad. We are very pleased to see that there was an obvious demand for quality and continuity. Since internationality is traditionally highly rated in our society, it pleases me the most that many foreign members took the chance of the fair in order to get in contact with us, and visit their DGZI.