“Foreign markets are very important to us”

An interview with Olaf Sauerbier, CEO of VOCO GmbH, Cuxhaven, Germany

The company VOCO based in Cuxhaven at the northern coast of Germany is an established international provider of high-quality dental materials. Amongst products for restorative dentistry, they also offers a wide range of materials and preparations in the field of prosthetics and prophylaxis. Dental Tribune Group Editor Daniel Zimmermann spoke with Olaf Sauerbier, CEO for Marketing and Sales, about new products and aesthetic trends in restorative dentistry.

Daniel Zimmermann: The Association of Dental Dealers in Europe (ADDE) has recently predicted growth rates above 5 per cent for most European dental markets.

Olaf Sauerbier: To be honest with you, the recession never really caught us. We usually tend to perform slightly better than the overall market and expect to be no different for this business year. The year 2010 has started off better than last year ended and we have seen some significant growth in most of our business segments in Q1/Q2.

Although we have invested significantly in our German businesses by extending our sales team by 15 new employees, foreign markets are very important to us. At the moment, we are expanding our existing businesses worldwide, especially in North America. It will take a while before we are able to take full advantage of the enormous potential this market has to offer.

Did the products you introduced two years ago at IDS Cologne meet your expectations?

The most important product we introduced at IDS in terms of sales was definitely the non-oozing, non-dripping NDT syringe. This new delivery form helped us to levitate sales of most of our highly flowable materials like Grandio Flow, Grandio Seal or Ionoseal.

Our gingiva-shaded restoration system Amaris Gingiva has also shown a good performance. We have to admit that the market for such a product is still small but, on the other hand, we see the demand for aesthetic restorations of exposed necks of teeth increasing due to demographic changes and people getting older. Those who have highly aesthetic requirements will find it hard to pass by this product.

Another bestseller has been the one-component light-curing nano-reinforced self-etch bond Futurabond M that we launched in SingleDose and in a 3-bottle value pack. Not to forget the Re-bilda Post System, an awarded complete set for post-endodontic treatment for placing 15 posts, that has been sold successfully in Germany and abroad within a short amount of time.

There are some segments in dentistry, in particular dental implants, that are struggling with decreasing sales. How is the situation in the market segments you are involved in?

The recession might have had devastating effects on companies offering upscale materials and equipment but the situation in restorative and preventive dentistry is looking much more promising. In the sectors we are involved in, however, we can see a strong recovery.

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actively involved, such as pros-
thetics, prophylaxis or dental ce-
ments, we were able to achieve
growth rates between 10–20 per
cent last year.

Filling materials did not per-
form that well due to increasing
market competition. There are
plenty of new and innovative fill-
ing materials on the market right
now and we have to invest a lot
to stay ahead with new develop-
ments and products.

What trends do you see im-
pacting the industry at the
moment? All manufacturers
are striving for a product that of-
fers almost ideal properties for a
filling material and exhibits the
same physical properties as natu-
ral tooth substance. All our com-
petitors are developing towards
this ideal but I see us quite ahead.
We have been working with nan-
optechology since the early 2000s
and launched our first nano-hy-
brid composite Grandio already
in 2003. This product is still in
high demand in Germany and
many other markets.

But we did not stop there. With
Grandio®SO, we are now able to
present another nano-hybrid
composite to the dental commu-
nity that has outperformed our
original expectations. Taking all
its physical properties into ac-
count, it is probably the most
dentoid material on the market.

When and where will it be
available? It is already available in
Germany and other selected
European markets. Like its pre-
cessor, Grandio®SO is univer-
sally applicable but a little more
translucent so it can be also used
for restorations in the maxillary
anterior region. We will still offer
Grandio to our customers world-
wide. In the end, it is the dentists
who decide which product they
are rather going for.

Do aesthetics play a more
prominent role in the devel-
opment of a composite? The
primary goal is function. There
is a place for aesthetics, too, but
it must not compromise function-
ality or the stability of the filling.
There are different points of view
in dentistry regarding this matter
right now but for us the primary
goal cannot be highly opaque
teeth that might be currently en-
vogue among Hollywood stars.
In the US, for example, we found
that doctors were using the white
opaque shade of our flowable
composite Grandio Flow for an-
terior restorations as this is usu-
ally the shade that most strongly
bleached teeth have over there.
Normally, we recommend it to
be only used to whiten dark spots
or in the case dentists absolutely
need an opaque layer.

However, this is not the direc-
tion we want to go. Teeth have a
natural translucency and we
want to keep it that way. I believe
with our current portfolio we can
offer dentists a good solution to
achieve long-lasting and natural
esthetic restorations alike.

Some European companies
are developing specifically for
the North American market. Is it
the same with you? We
sell exactly the same products
in North America as we sell in Eu-
rope. Usually, most products are
launched there six months after
the have been put on the Europe-
an markets. The only difference
is the type of shades. In Germany,
for example, the majority of den-
tists uses A3.5 which does not
play any significant role in mar-
kets like the US where A2 is more
common.

Will Grandio®SO be the main
focus of your presentation at
IDS next year and are you
planning to introduce more
products? Grandio®SO will
be indeed the main focus of our
IDS presentation but there are
certainly other products that we
intend to launch there. You will
have to come to the show and see for
yourself.

Olaf Sauerbier talks to DTI

Grandio SO will be the focus for 2011

ANNUAL DENTAL TRIBUNE STUDY CLUB
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For the third year in a row, the DTSC hosts its annual
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focused lectures in various areas of dentistry.
Find us on the Exhibition Floor in Aisle 6000,
Room # 3.

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For more information, please contact Julia E. Weh Kamp, C.E. Director, Dental Tribune Study Club
Phone: (416) 907-9316, Fax: (212) 244-7185, E-mail: j.weh.kamp@DTStudyClub.com

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28
10:00 - 11:20 Clinical Exam Dock, FABC.
BEAUTIFUL. GO WITH THE FLOW - COURSE: 3260
11:30 - 12:00 John Huckabee, DDS
LIGHT CURIED ADEHESIVE DENTISTRY - SCIENCE AND SUBSTANCE - COURSE: 3320
12:00 - 2:00 Martin Goldstein, DMD
A SIMPLIFIED APPROACH TO MULTI-LAYER DIRECT COMPOSITE BONDBING - COURSE: 3448
2:45 - 3:45 Jay Reitzick, DMD, MD
3D IMAGING AND CT-GUIDED DENTAL IMPLANT SURGERY - 3850
9:00 - 9:50 Lucas Ribeiro de Souza, DDS, M ScD
TOTAL FACIAL ESTHETICS FOR EVERY DENTAL PRACTICE - COURSE: 3860

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29
10:00 - 11:20 W. Noel Brandt/Dr. Danch
ECO-FRIENDLY INFECTION CONTROL: UNDERSTANDING THE BALANCE - COURSE: 4120
11:20 - 12:20 Gregor Kallman, DDS
INTEGRATING NEW ADVANCES IN DENTAL MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES INTO YOUR RHEUMATOID PRACTICE - COURSE: 4130
12:25 - 2:25 Various Speakers
OPPORTUNISMS IN YOUR PRACTICE WITH 3D CONE BEAM TECHNOLOGY - COURSE: 3410
2:45 - 3:45 David McGarvey, DDS
HIGH RESOLUTION CONE BEAM WITH PREXION - COURSE: 3430
9:00 - 9:50 Lhotzsky, DDS, M ScD
DETECTING CORONARY HEART DISEASE THROUGH PERIODONTITIS AND PERIPLANTITIS - COURSE: 4116

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30
10:00 - 11:00 Faith E. Paradagis, DMD, PhD
DENTAL HYPERSENSITIVITY - NEW MANAGEMENT APPROACHES - COURSE: 3330
11:00 - 11:20 Greg Pannone, DDS
LASERS IN PERIODONTAL THERAPY - COURSE: 3120
1:20 - 2:20 Dev Almg, DDS
INTRODUCTION TO CONE BEAM CT (CBCT), ESPECIALLY AS IT PERTAINS TO PREVENTION OF FAILURES IN ORAL IMPLANTOLGY - COURSE: 3110
2:45 - 3:45 Laura Ryan, DDS, PhD
DETECTING CORONARY HEART DISEASE THROUGH PERIODONTITIS AND PERIPLANTITIS - COURSE: 3140
9:00 - 9:50 Diego-Mariano, DDS
CONTEMPORARY CONCEPTS IN TOOTH RELEASMENT: PARADIGM SHIFT - COURSE: 3150

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1
10:00 - 11:00 M. Albiez
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE, WASTE MANAGEMENT FOR THE DENTAL OFFICE, AND OSHA COMPLIANCE - COURSE: 4040
12:00 - 1:00 Various Speakers
HARD AND SOFT TISSUE LAYERS - COURSE: 3870
12:45 - 1:45 Dr. Guang Heater, Dr. Erica D. Dorn, Dr. Karkawin, Dr. Tewson-Hunter
REVOLUTIONARY IMPLANT DESIGN UNVEILED: A COLLECTION FROM THE MASTERS - COURSE: 3860