So, what do you call a group of dental dealers? This was the question that occupied me as I made my way to a hotel in Hinckley, just a few miles from the Nuneaton HQ of our hosts for the next two days, dental equipment manufacturer A-dec.

General Manager Karl O’Higgins and his team were on hand to welcome a full house of attendees to the A-dec Dealer Sales Meeting. This was an intense event, ranging from presentations aimed at informing the dealer network about A-dec’s current position and future plans, to guest speaker Chris Barrow who gave his thoughts on the ‘state of the nation’ for the dental industry.

Product launch
You may be surprised at the thought of a gaggle (yes, that is my collective term) of dental press people at a dealer meeting, but invited we were and we were able to see the launch of two new product offerings as well as see more about the A-dec Spectrum of dental chair solutions.

First to be unveiled was the A-dec 200, a complete system packed with features for added accessibility and comfort - all at great value and within a neat compact package. Developed in conjunction with dental professionals around the world to offer a solution for the wide range of practice styles found in global markets. General Manager for A-dec UK, Karl O’ Higgins said: “As the new point-of-entry to the A-dec family of dental chairs and delivery systems, we knew that A-dec 200 would have big shoes to fill. Our systems have always been known for reliability. Even our entry-level systems have the reputation for durable performance with minimal down-time."

‘Designed for success’
Fitting into the A-dec range of systems between Performer and A-dec 300, the A-dec 200 was launched with the tagline ‘Designed for Success’. Features include: four preset positions; double-articulating headrest; seamless upholstery; telescopic assistant’s arm and oversized tray; multi-axis light.

Karl added: “A-dec manages the full manufacturing process to provide dentists with the most reliable equipment possible. Just like our A-dec 500® and A-dec 300® systems, A-dec 200 allows every practice to enjoy the same quality and performance that dentists, dental schools, and healthcare institutions in more than 75 countries rely on day-after-day and year-after-year. It really is the right product at the right time and at the right price.”

Cabinetry
Another offering to be unveiled was a new range of cabinetry solutions. A-dec teamed up with cabinetry manufacturers DentalStyle to create a range of ergonomic and versatile cabinetry designed to be used with the Zirc colour coded trays (see below). Ciaran Hynes, A-dec’s Operations Manager, discussed the company’s thought process behind the new range and
the importance of taking into account the working environment of the whole dental team to reduce the rates of occupational Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI).

After a very intense morning of presentations, the post-lunch sessions were a chance to take a closer look at what A-dec and their partners had to offer. Four breakout sessions were organized, and the attendees were separated into groups to attend each session.

**Three bagger**

First up was Chris Barrow who discussed the importance of customer service. Quoting the famous ‘three baggers’ concept from Walmart founder Sam Walton, Chris looked at his nine ‘cardinal rules’ for delivering exceptional customer service:

- Don’t pass the buck
- Develop a customer charter, and broadcast it
- Don’t try to hide mistakes
- Be very clear when communicating with clients/patients and follow it up in writing
- Don’t assume that clients/patients know as much as you do (even when they say they do!)
- Ask yourself if you’re delighted with your work. If you are not delighted, how can you expect patients to be?
- ‘Walk the floor’ – be visible to your team and patients
- Surprise people with follow up calls
- Ask for word-of-mouth referrals, these are the most cost effective way to grow your business

Next to present was Nicolle Folven, Vice-President for Sales & Marketing at Zirc, a US-based company specialising in the organisation and sterilisation of dental instruments. The company’s colour-coded system for the different procedures in surgery is a concept being embraced by A-dec and was one of the concepts behind the new cabinetry range.

**Anti-Microbial**

Nicolle discussed in more detail why using colour-coded tubs and trays could help reduce stress and improve infection control measures within a dental practice. She then walked through some of the products, emphasising the use of the anti-microbial agent Microban® in the manufacture of their tubs and trays.

The third session was an overview of the A-dec spectrum, by Eugene O’Malley and Mark Harris (Territory Managers). This was a chance for the attendee to ask questions about each of the chair solutions and get a feel for the differences between each one.

The final session was split to give further insights into surgery design. Discussions centered on best practice for infection control and decontamination in practice, a closer look at the new cabinetry range and Karl O’Higgins giving a practical look at ergonomics in a dental surgery and how this can improve working conditions for the dental team and the experience of the patient.

**Healthy competition**

The day was then topped off by a fantastic meal and a chance to indulge in some healthy competition as a huge Scalextric track, racing simulator and two Nintendo Wii consoles were set up, as well as a set of casino tables for the more sedate competitors!

This event was a very intense and worthwhile day, and a big congratulations should go to the whole A-dec team for organising such a great event. Oh, and in case you were wondering, my collective term for a group of dental dealers is a busyness!