SciCan merges with SycoTec, MICRO-MEGA
New dental conglomerate announces to strengthen market presence in Asia

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NEW YORK, USA/LEIPZIG, Germany: In one of the largest industry mergers this year, the Canadian-based manufacturer of infection-control products SciCan has announced its amalgamation with the German-French conglomerate SycoTec, MICRO-MEGA. With a combined workforce of 800 staff and offices in Canada, France, Switzerland and Germany, the new company will form one of the ten largest dental groups worldwide. The financial terms of the agreement have not been disclosed.

Company officials said that the merger is not a buy-out and that all three companies will remain independent under one umbrella. Merger-related downsizing is not intended, but SciCan's German office in Augsburg will be closed and its 25 employees relocated to the future company headquarters in Leutkirch/Allgaei in Germany.

SycoTec, which specialises in dental drives and motors, bought the French manufacturer of root-canal instruments MICRO-MEGA in October last year. The former subsidiary of KaVo has been under pressure lately, owing to a decline in demand in local and international dental markets. According to an article in the newspaper Schwäbische Zeitung, orders in early 2009 decreased by 40 per cent, forcing the company to place almost two-thirds of its employees on short-time.

SycoTec CEO Dr Martin Rickert confirmed that the merger would not only help to prevent lay-offs, but also promote further growth. The latest merger with SciCan is intended to complement the current offering of surgical and endodontic instruments with a full range of infection-control products. “We now can offer dentists and doctors a ‘one-stop shop’, from instruments to monitors to the entire reprocessing system,” he said.

Both companies intend to make use of each other’s existing distribution networks in North America and Europe and strengthen their market presence in Asia.

Dr Rickert, who will lead the new company with SciCan’s current Chairman Armin Zwingenberger, added that most of the positions within the organisation will be filled with existing personnel to avoid unnecessary costs. Although the name for the new organisation is still under discussion, the merger is expected to become legally effective within the next few months, he said.

Struamann goes fully digital at Midwinter Meeting
Sierra Rendon
DITA

CHICAGO, USA/LEIPZIG, Germany: Straumann is advancing its position in the dental market as a provider of comprehensive digital implant and restorative solutions. At the Chicago Midwinter Meeting, which was held 25-27 February, the company revealed its new digital platform Straumann Digital Solutions. The new brand combines computer-guided surgery, intra-oral imaging and CAD/CAM prosthetics under one umbrella. According to the company, it will first be available to dentists in the USA.

In addition to the new system, a new CAD/CAM system, with a new scanner, was launched in Chicago. A number of new products and features, including veneers, inlays and onlays, will also be introduced to the market over the course of the year. Gilbert Achermann, President and CEO, commented: “Digitalisation will impact all aspects of dentistry as digital workflows supersede labour-intensive manual processes, enhancing inter- faces, shortening treatment, reducing potential for error and improving quality assurance.”

“Straumann is committed to bringing the new technologies to customers as part of an integrated array of flexible, reliable solutions that are designed to optimise workflows and enhance patient care,” he added.

Straumann entered the field of computer-guided surgery in 2009 with the acquisition of IWS Solu- tions, a German company specialising in software applications for computer-guided surgery, including surgical template design and fabrication. In the same year, the company also signed a distribution agreement for fefro, an intra-oral scanning system made by US manufacturer Cadent.

Struamann already has an CAD/CAM offering that includes scanners, software and a full range of prosthetics in modern bio-compatible, durable and aesthetically materials through its partnerships with Ivoclar Vivadent.

Straumann Digital Solutions (DIT) (Photo courtesy of Straumann AG, Switzerland)

Medicom introduces next generation of Nitrile gloves

MT WOUDENBERG, The Netherlands: Allergic re- actions have become a major health concern for both patients and healthcare workers who frequently use latex gloves. In addition, every time a healthcare worker takes off his or her examination gloves, washes their hands and then puts on another pair of gloves, they become predominantly vulnerable to dry, rough, irritated and cracked skin. Medicom says to have found a solution to both problems by introducing the SafeTouch Rejuvenate Nitrile Plus to all major markets.

The SafeTouch Rejuvenate Nitrile Plus, which complements the company’s extensive medical glove offering, is enriched with lanolin, vitamin E to nourish, moisturize, soothe the skin.

According to Medicom, the gloves are soft and durable while offering excellent tear strength and puncture resistance. The gloves are also fully textured to ensure enhanced grip in wet conditions. Improved ergonomics ‘latex like’ feel allows precise movement reducing hand fatigue, they added.

(Edited by Daniel Zimmermann, DIT)

GlaxoSmithKline removes zinc from denture creams
Daniel Zimmermann
DIT

LEIPZIG, Germany: Owing to consumer reports alleging neurologically complications with long-term use, Glaxosmithkline (GSK) has announced that zinc will be removed from its denture cream brands worldwide. The British manufacturer also warned consumers of the potential health risks associated with long-term, excessive use of zinc-containing denture adhesives but said that these products remain safe to use as directed on the product label.

Zinc was originally added to denture adhesives to improve adhesive strength. Recent studies, however, have demonstrated that excess amounts of the metal can accumulate over time, resulting in paralysis of some patients. Health experts recommend 8 milligrams of zinc per day for women and 11 milligrams for men. Denture creams contain up to 58 milligrams of zinc per gram.

Dr Howard Marsh, Chief Medical Officer at GSK Consumer Healthcare, commented, “The safety of our consumers is our primary concern. We are taking this action because we have become aware of potential health problems associated with the long-term, excessive use of our zinc-containing denture adhesives. These reports are rare, given that several million people worldwide are users of the products.”

He said that patients who use denture creams on a daily basis should consult their doctor and switch to a zinc-free alternative. The use of too much adhesive might indicate ill-fitting dentures.

GSK will effect transition to zinc-free versions of all affected variants worldwide up to April this year. The label zinc-free will be clearly displayed on the new packaging, the company told the Dental Tribune Asia Pacific.