**Nobel Biocare World Tour launched in Shanghai**

**NEW YORK:** Makers of dental veneers aren’t smiling so brightly these days as the slowing US economy weakens demand for expensive optional treatments. In the first quarter, companies such as diversified manufacturers 3M, DANAHER or dental distributor Henry Schein reported slower sales of items like braces and crowns. “Market growth has slowed in higher-end discretionary procedures,” said Bret Wise, chief executive of manufacturer DENTSPLY International, during the company’s US$11.03 billion third quarter, subject to customary closing conditions. The transaction is expected to build the combined company’s potential for growth in the chocolate, non-chocolate confectionery and gum categories.

“When this transaction is completed, we will be proud to welcome Wrigley’s associates to our company,” said Paul S. Michaels, Global President of Mars. “The strong combination of two leg­endary American companies with a shared commitment to innovation, quality and best­in­class global brands provides a great basis for this combination. We are looking forward to continuing on our path of growth by jointly de­veloping those values even further.”

**5M acquires IMTEC Corp.**

said in a conference call. 5M saw the same slowdown in dis­cretionary treatments, the company said. Oral care comprised about US$1.05 billion in 2007 revenue, first-quarter dental revenue for existing busi­nesses was subject to customary closing conditions, including ap­plication of the relevant state and agency regulatory clear­ances. Both parties hope to achieve a digital ‘total resto­ration’ approach with more options than ever, including IMTEC implants, 5M’s ad­vanced digital workflow solu­tions,” said Jeffrey Lavers, Vice President and General Manager, 5M ESPE. “To­gether, we will have an end­to­end implantology solution, making the process easier, faster and better for dentists everywhere.”

**McLEAN:** Mars Inc. has recently announced a merger agreement with Chicago­based Wm. Wrigley Jr. Co. in a transaction valued at approximately US$2.5 billion. Under the terms of the agreement, Wrigley will become a separate, stand­alone subsidiary of Mars while shareholders of Wrigley will receive US$80 in cash for each share of Common Stock and Class B Common Stock.

The proposed transaction is subject to customary clos­ing conditions, including ap­proval by Wrigley stockholders and certain governmental and agency regulatory clear­ances. Both parties hope to close the transaction within the next 6 to 12 months. With US$5.4 billion in sales, Wrigley is a world leader in gum and confections. The transaction is expected to build the Mars business by strength­ening and diversifying its con­fectionery business, and en­hancing its potential for growth in the chocolate, non-chocolate confectionery and gum categories.

**Takeovers**

**ST. PAUL:** 5M ESPE recently announced the acquisition of IMTEC Corporation which will give the company access to the fast growing segments of dental implants and cone beam computed tomography (CBCT). Although terms of the transaction were not disclosed, a definitive agreement has been signed by mid-April be­tween the two companies, ac­cording to a press release. The transaction is expected to close in the third quarter, subject to customary closing conditions.

“Our combined digital products and expertise will enable a digital ‘total resto­ration’ approach with more options than ever, including IMTEC implants, 5M’s ad­vanced digital workflow solu­tions,” said Jeffrey Lavers, Vice President and General Manager, 5M ESPE. “To­gether, we will have an end­to­end implantology solution, making the process easier, faster and better for dentists everywhere.”

**Biocare wins patent infringement suit on LUMINEERS**

hands-on courses and one­on­one sessions on the latest tech­nologies in aesthetic and restora­tive dentistry. Dental students and dental profession­als also participated in a Poster Awards Programme that gave them the opportunity to share their experiences using the com­pany’s products and solutions.

In China, 11 per cent of the population is dentu­lous (approximately 145 million people) and also becoming aware of the impor­tance of a healthy, confident smile and they want to restore their self-confidence through a ‘Smile Makeover,’ Nobel officials said.

“In terms of cosmetic or aes­thetic dentistry, smile makeovers can typically correct most defi­ciencies,” said Jeffrey Lavers, advanced digital workflow solu­tion, “We are pleased to report that Dr. Jeffrey Lavers, chairman of Den-Mat. “The decision in Den-Mat’s fa­vour, affirming the summary judgment in the original case,” said Dr. Robert Issen, president and chairman of Den-Mat. “The Federal Circuit found that while the district court construed ‘ready for mounting’ too nar­rowly, it nevertheless affirmed the district court’s summary judgment of non-infringement, because even under the cur­rent claim construction, clearly no infringement occurred. The district court’s summary judgment is com­pletely different.”

LUMINEERS leave original teeth untouched while tradi­tional veneers usually require the removal of sensitive tooth struc­tures. Besides tooth preparation, they offer permanent whitening and are used in many cases to finish orthodontic treatment, ac­cording to the company.

**Dentistry slows down in the US**

**LOS ANGELES:** Den-Mat Cor­poration’s summary judgment verdict dismissing the infringe­ment allegation of PSN Illinois was recently affirmed by the US Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. Chicago-based PSN had alleged that Den-Mat’s LUMINEERS manufacturing process, along with similar processes em­ployed by companies like Jacoral Vivadent, Micro Dental Labs, Na­tional Dentex Corp, and Dentsply infringed the claims of its now expired US patent No. 4,579,550.

Den-Mat won the summary judgment on a claim construction basis that its product, LUMINEERS, did not fall within the scope of the asserted PSN claims. The appeal to the US Court of Ap­peals for the Federal Circuit cen­tered around the interpretation of the phrase “ready for mounting,” which the district court had inter­preted to mean “leaving the ve­nue untouched and cemented to and cemented on a patient’s tooth for which it was custom­ized,” according to court docu­ments. In its initial ruling the lower court had determined that the de­fendants’ process did not infringe the patent because it did not leave the veneer ready for mounting.

“We are pleased to report that the Federal Circuit issued the decision in Den-Mat’s fa­vour, affirming the summary judgment in the original case,” said Dr. Robert Issen, president and chairman of Den-Mat. “The Federal Circuit found that while the district court construed ‘ready for mounting’ too nar­rowly, it nevertheless affirmed the district court’s summary judgment of non-infringement, because even under the cur­rent claim construction, clearly no infringement occurred. The district court’s summary judgment is com­pletely different.”

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The combined company would have a strong foundation of established brands in six core growth categories including well known products like M&Ms, Snickers, Dove, Mars, and Doublemint.

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