“This step has long been an ambition of ours”

With a full range of sophisticated dental burs on display at the 2014 FDI Annual World Dental Congress, UK-based dental manufacturer Prima Dental has launched its new business in its new business-to-business operation in India. Dental Tribune Asia Pacific met with sales manager Dan Hodgson and managing director Richard Muller to discuss the relevance of this market to the company and Prima Dental’s plans for its activities in the region.

Dental Tribune Asia Pacific: Why did you decide to launch your business operations in India at the FDI ABDC above all other events?

Richard Muller: The FDI congress is an event that holds international implications. As you may know, we export to 85 countries around the world. While we certainly look forward to extending our business on the Indian subcontinent, we also expect to meet relevant business contacts from overseas. The FDI congress is a particularly good event for that.

Dental Tribune Asia Pacific: Did you have any history in India?

Richard Muller: Actually, we have been operating actively in the Indian market through presentations at trade shows, like the World Dental Show in Mumbai, since the mid-1990s. After almost 20 years, we are now here with our own business. This step has long been an ambition of ours.

Compared with the other markets you operate in, what particular challenges does the Indian market pose?

Each country has its own tax regime and legal system. It took us a while to understand the complexities of the Indian system and we have had to navigate through a great number of technical issues. In terms of the dental profession, there is clear potential in both the public and private sectors. While the latter is not large in percentage, it is certainly large in numbers. The public sector is still relatively under-developed and we expect it to take a little bit longer, probably two to three years before we can achieve substantial sales in the sector.

What in your opinion makes your products particularly suitable for the Indian market?

Dan Hodgson: The core of our products is that they are reliable and very precise. They have a number of special features that add to their strength and durability. The burs we are introducing in India are particularly focused on the needs of the market. We have conducted a great deal of research with local dentists to understand their product requirements and the purposes for which they use the products. This has helped us to determine a range that really addresses the market here.

Why do you think your products are available nationwide?

Dan Hodgson: Here at the FDI congress, we are launching with our northern distributors, but we are also seeking distribution partners in the south and in the east during the show. We will soon have clarity in this regard.

What further plans do you have for the region?

Richard Muller: We will certainly use our new Indian base to explore the whole subcontinent. Asia has a growing share of our total market, although the predominant share is the North American and the UK markets. We also have significant business in South Korea, Japan and Indonesia, where we recently established a new distribution network. We will be concentrating our efforts on India, however.

Thank you very much for the interview.

Nobel Biocare to join Danaher dental business

ZURICH, Switzerland/CHARLOTTE, USA: Danaher, a US health care conglomerate of brands from various industries, and Swiss dental manufacturer Nobel Biocare announced that the two companies have entered into a definitive transaction agreement. In order to further expand its global dental business, Danaher has offered to buy Nobel Biocare, which is the second-largest supplier of dental implants worldwide, for CHF2 billion (US$2.1 billion).

Earlier this year, Nobel Biocare confirmed that it had been approached at the end of July by third parties with a potential interest in acquiring the business. Now, the company’s board of directors has unanimously decided to recommend that Nobel Biocare’s shareholders accept the offer, which includes the acquisition of at least 67 per cent of all shares.

According to Danaher, it reaches about 99 per cent of dental practices worldwide through an extensive network of dealers and direct sales. With the acquisition of Nobel Biocare, the company will become one of the largest consumable and equipment competitors in dentistry, especially in the premium segment of dental implants, with expected sales of US$3 billion. Danaher also stated that it is planning more investments.

Both companies disclosed that the transaction is scheduled for completion by late 2014 or early 2015. Once the acquisition has been completed, Nobel Biocare will operate as a stand-alone company within Danaher’s dental business, maintaining its own brand and identity.

Since 1984, Danaher has acquired more than 480 companies, KaVo Kerr Group, which unites leading dental consumable, equipment, high-tech and specialty brands under one platform, was formed at the beginning of this year. The group includes KaVo, Kerr, Axix, SybronEndo, Instrumentarium Dental, SOREDEX, i-CAT and Implant Direct.