Japanese takes over European operations of SHOFU

Wolfgang van Hall, the current Managing Director of SHOFU Dental GmbH, will step down but hold a consulting position for another year. He has been with the company for more than 50 years.

Kawashima announced his intention to expand the company’s product line for dentists and intensify sales activities in European markets. Prior to his appointment as General Manager of SHOFU GmbH, he worked in the International Department of SHOFU Inc. in Kyoto in Japan, where he was responsible for several product launches, including Vintage and the zirconium silicate Geramair. He also spent one year as a trainee in the SHOFU GmbH headquarters in Germany in 1984.

“Japanese dental takes over European operations of SHOFU

The German dental market differs greatly from the Japanese,” Kawashima said. “While in Japan there are many independent and smaller dealers, in Germany the main revenue is achieved by dealer groups that use a common sales and infrastructure. This demands a different approach for us as a manufacturer than in Japan.”

Based in Ratingen near Düsseldorf, SHOFU Dental GmbH currently operates in more than 60 markets in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

Its product portfolio consists of instruments and materials for restorative and cosmetic dental procedures.

SHOFU Inc. also maintains a sales office in Tonbridge in the UK.

Demand for dental gold declines

Yvonne Bachmann

LONDON, UK/LEIPZIG, Germany: The demand for gold used in dental applications has reached a new record low in the last quarter of last year. According to the latest report by the World Gold Council, the UK dental applications made of the precious metal recorded a year-on-year decline of 8 per cent in the last three months of 2010. The annual worldwide demand declined by 5 percent compared to 2009 to 49.8 tons worth US$ 2 billion.

The negative trend may have been accelerated by the 24 percent year-on-year rise in the dollar gold price over a period, suggests the World Gold Council’s Gold Demand Trend, a leading industry resource for data and opinion on worldwide gold demand.

“This segment has been steadily declining in recent years due to a migration to more affordable applications and the elevated gold prices during the quarter served only to accelerate the rate of attrition”, it states in the Demand Trend. Substantial falls were recorded in all-most every market. Most significant changes in volume terms were recorded in Germany and the United States.

Goldquadrat, a German manufacturer of dental alloys, approves the latest statistics. “The demand for gold used for dental applications has noticeably declined since 2005,” chief executive officer Wilhelm Mühlenberg told Dental Tribune Asia Pacific. Owing to rising prices, gold has become very attractive to investors but very unattractive to patients, he said.

According to Mühlenberg, this trend is irreversible, even though there is still a demand for gold as it is a reliable dental material and has been used successfully for a very long time.

In contrast with this decline, the worldwide gold demand for all industries, including dentistry, surged to 5,812.2 tons in 2010, reaching a ten-year high and a 9 percent rise compared with 2008, as per the World Gold Council. The major reason for this positive trend was the demand for jewelry, which saw a rise of 17 percent.

In IDS 2011, the world’s largest dental trade fair, visitors swarmed the Piazza of the Koelnmesse fairground. (DTI/Photo courtesy of Koelnmesse, Germany).