SCHAAN, Liechtenstein: Medical representatives from Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and Singapore accepted Ivoclar Vivadent’s invitation to travel to Schaan in the Principality of Liechtenstein for the 2011 Asia-Pacific Media Event. In addition to a media conference, the manufacturer of material systems for high-quality dental applications arranged a trip through the Swiss Alps on the famous Bernina Express.

Ivoclar Vivadent has always had a strong focus on Asia-Pacific and is committed to continuing to play a key role in the region’s future development. The company currently runs six subsidiaries, a manufacturing site, and a marketing and sales office, and employs a quarter of its more than 2,400 employees worldwide there. A strong regional presence is also facilitated by collaborating with leading dental publishers in Asia. When Ivoclar Vivadent invited to Schaan, the location of the company’s headquarters, for the second time since 2006. The goal was to inform the guests about Ivoclar Vivadent’s developments and future goals, as well as connect professionals with each other to create a strong information network. “Events like these not only give us an insight into how the company functions from day to day, but also create a common platform for publishers like myself to exchange ideas and share knowledge,” Radal Gulhati, Group Publisher of Medi-Media India, commented. The unique social programme, which included cooking homemade pasta in a 650-year-old farm house, certainly contributed to this exchange.

With a 14% growth rate in Asia-Pacific, 2010 was a successful year for the Ivoclar Vivadent group. According to the company, worldwide sales totalled CHF659 million (US$767 million) in the past year, an increase of 9.5% since 2009, a growth that can be attributed to an increase in the company’s major product categories and brands. In particular, growth rates above the market average were achieved in the all-ceramics, cements, adhesives, denture teeth and equipment sectors. Moreover, use of the worldwide leading all-ceramic brand IPS e.max increased by a remarkable 48% from the previous year amongst dental technicians and dentists in the region.

Ivoclar Vivadent has adapted its product portfolio to take account of the needs of the Asia-Pacific markets specifically. Accordingly, the company’s range includes the Tetric N-Ceram and T-Econom composites alongside the VarioLink N, Multilink N and Multilink Speed cements. By expanding its sales force, the company has been able to further build on this strong position and consolidate its regional market presence.

“The rapid development of the Asia-Pacific region will continue in the future,” Christian Brutzer, Sales Director for Asia-Pacific, said. “For 2011 alone, we expect an increase in sales of 9% to 10%.” To keep pace with the increasing demand, Ivoclar Vivadent has strengthened its presence in the region. The existing marketing and sales offices in India, Singapore and Korea have recently been reorganised into subsidiaries, and a branch in Japan and a subsidiary in China are to be established. Furthermore, a regional product portfolio will further strengthen and expand Ivoclar Vivadent’s market presence.

LONGHINI, UK/YORK, USA: American dental manufacturer DENTSPLY International Inc. has signed a definitive agreement to acquire AstraZeneca’s subsidiary Astra Tech, headquartered in Molndal in Sweden. At the end of June, the companies announced the transaction, which is anticipated to be completed during the second half of 2011.

AstraZeneca headquarters in London. The company recently sold its dental implant business to DENTSPLY (DTE/Photo courtesy of AstraZeneca plc, UK).

Astra Tech, which recorded worldwide revenue of US$555 million in 2010, has two main business divisions: a dental division, which is engaged in the research, development, manufacturing and marketing of dental implants and a health-care division, a business focused on medical devices for use primarily in urology and surgery. The first rumours of a possible sale of the subsidiary arose last November, when London based AstraZeneca announced it would review strategic options for its Astra Tech unit, which is now being sold for approximately US$1.8 billion.

According to DENTSPLY, headquartered in York in the US, the transaction combines two of the fastest growing dental implant businesses, creating a strong global competitor with a number three market position. “Astra Tech provides a dynamic opportunity for DENTSPLY in several areas. The combination more than doubles our position in dental implants while expanding the breadth of our portfolio in this growing segment of dentistry,” Rett Wise, DENTSPLY’s Chairperson and CEO, stated. “The urology and surgery business and management team provide us with additional growth opportunities within the broader medical devices category with a strong market position and an exciting pipeline of new products. The level of innovation and clinical research at Astra Tech is extremely complementary with our existing business and strategy and will clearly differentiate us from our competition,” he added.

David Brennan, CEO of AstraZeneca said, “Following a comprehensive strategic review, we believe this transaction represents an excellent outcome for AstraZeneca shareholders. The high degree of interest and the competitive nature of this process is evidence of the value that the employees of Astra Tech have built in the marketplace. I want to thank them for their contribution and believe they are well placed to build upon this successful foundation under DENTSPLY’s ownership.”