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Dr. Dan Fischer. (DTI/Photo Claudia Jahn/Oemus Media, Germany)

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Interview: 'Progress is not realized until technology is available to the masses'

by DTI

At the International Dental Show in Cologne, Germany, Ultradent launched a new restorative option with the Edelweiss composite veneer system. Company president Dr. Dan Fischer sat down with Dental Tribune ONLINE to speak briefly about the concept behind the unique system and its advantages compared with commonly used ceramics.

Dental Tribune ONLINE: Dr. Fischer, your company has become a household name in dental offices worldwide when it comes to minimally invasive dentistry. How would you describe your business philosophy?
Dr. Dan Fischer: We are known as an innovative company that aims to go to places where others have not been before. That means that we also tread a different path to many manufacturers, driven by our passion to reach a larger segment of humanity. For instance, we have zero interest in developing ceramics for dentistry that only 5 percent of the world's population can afford. As a company, we want to be able to offer lower socio-economic groups preventative measures and

affordable materials like the new Edelweiss veneers that are being presented here. I think Henry Ford said it best when he said that progress is not realized until technology is available to the masses. Our first goal is to reach the masses.

Dental veneers are very popular indeed. What are the shortcomings of the current market offerings, and what makes your system different?
Dental veneers have been used extensively for many decades now and ceramics have been by far the most common materials used. It is important for clinicians to remember, however, that a ceramic must be supported chiefly by enamel not dentine—even when quality adhesives are used. Direct-placed composite can provide a very good result, but for the majority of clinicians it can be time-consuming and produce results that are not ideal.

For these reasons, we developed a laser-sintered, pressure- and heat-formed composite veneer system with Edelweiss. The laser sintering offers a predictable, quality, aesthetic finish that is extremely wear resistant. The heat-formed (300 °C) composite bonds at very high values, but it can also flex, allowing it to perform well and with greater resistance to cracking, even when bonded to dentine. Since Edelweiss composite veneers are preformed, their laser-sintered enamel shells provide a more cost-effective alternative to laboratory veneers.

In addition, Edelweiss allows for ideal shade selection via the composite used to customize the veneers to the preparation. This can be done for a direct modality or an indirect modality.

Edelweiss veneers offer a great solution not only for the patient on a budget, but also for teenagers and people who play contact sports. They are also great when used for lower anterior veneers because the wear against opposing dentition is superior to that of ceramic. Edelweiss is an incredibly versatile veneer option.

It seems that the product has already generated much interest.
That is right and our office in Cologne was very keen on having Edelweiss veneers at IDS for the first time. We already have many dentists using them and loving them back in the U.S., as well as some very enthusiastic dentists offering courses. I am sure that they will help us to fulfill our vision of reaching more patients.

You are known to work closely with your customers regarding education. Will you also be offering hands-on seminars for Edelweiss users?
We have already begun with educational support. For example, two hands-on courses were recently provided at the annual American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry meeting in Seattle, Washington.

What is the global launch schedule for Edelweiss, and will it be available everywhere?
Edelweiss will soon be available everywhere. For example, the inventor of Edelweiss Dr. Stephan Lampl just completed a multi-city, multi-country trip through South-East Asia. The response there was very good.

Thank you very much for the interview.