The use of digital technology seems to be changing dentistry forever and nowhere has this been more obvious than in Italy in May, where numerous manufacturers from Italy and abroad showcased their latest devices and materials to thousands of dental professionals at this year’s Amici di Brugg dental show.

Besides Henry Schein’s ConnectDental pavilion, a booth dedicated entirely to the company’s combined portfolio for an all-out digital workflow and other services such as Sirona’s Digital Dental Academy, a new application designed for Google Glass draw special attention from visitors. Specifically designed to work on the head-mounted device, Dental Glass is intended to improve workflow in dental practices by projecting information directly in the clinician’s field of view, similar to a pilot’s head-up display. This way, clinicians can remotely access patient records, among other data, display radiographic images, or manage appointments through voice recognition software or a touchpad located at the earpiece, according to the Italian developer Gerhò, a subsidiary of the Breitschmid group. The manufacturer said that the app will also allow the capture of photos and video in high-definition format through its built-in camera.
Google Glass is currently only available in the US. When the device will be released to European markets is still unclear owing to some technical limitations and the lack of distributors, according to reports. The technology, however, is currently being experimented on for its future use in general and dental medicine. Last year, for example, Dental Tribune reported on the first maxillofacial surgery broadcast with the device, which took place at Hospital de Molina in Murcia in Spain.

Completely digital solutions however are already available in dental offices. BIOLASE, for example, offers such solutions and has expended great effort on its Total Technology Solution in recent years. In addition to its complete range of dental lasers, the US dental technology company now offers sophisticated imaging equipment and CAD/CAM solutions, such as the GALAXY BioMill System, which allows digital fabrication of restorations chairside.

“The adoption cycle of new technologies is growing increasingly shorter and more advanced technologies like the Waterlase will rapidly find their way into dental practices. Dentists that do not upgrade their equipment will likely begin to lose patients, become uncompetitive and lag behind,” BIOLASE CEO Federico Pignatelli explained to Dental Tribune International (DTI) at the show.

DTI CEO and publisher Torsten R. Oemus confirmed this forward-looking corporate strategy by emphasising the strong points of the digital revolution: “Turning dental offices into high-tech playgrounds is indeed becoming a global trend, which reaps rewards for patients and dentists alike. Technology is what differentiates a modern dental office from a conventional one, increases patient flow, and advances diagnostic and treatment outcomes, which ultimately leads to increased revenues.”

He invited dentists who are unsure about how digital technologies could benefit their practice to attend the Digital Dentistry Show, the first edition of which will be held in autumn 2014 at the International Expodental show in Milan in Italy. Focusing entirely on digital products and applications for dentistry, the unique expo format will not only showcase the latest products and solutions by leading providers in the field, but also offer education in the form of lectures and webinars from 16 to 18 October.

Information about what to expect from the event and how to register is available on the events website: www.digitaldentistryshow.com.