2019 GNYDM highlights latest dental products and technologies

By Dental Tribune International

NEW YORK, U.S.: Held from Nov. 29 to Dec. 4 at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, the 2019 Greater New York Dental Meeting (GNYDM) demonstrated once again why it is the country’s largest and most anticipated dental congress by offering an inviting mix of educational sessions, hands-on workshops, product launches and more.

The 95th iteration of the free-to-attend annual event attracted more than 52,000 attendees from all parts of the dental industry. A large number of these visitors were international. The German Pavilion featured a variety of companies displaying their wares under a “made in Germany” banner, while another area of the convention center showcased a broad range of Korean companies such as META BIOMED and DIGIRAY.

More than 300 educational courses and events were conducted over the course of the 2019 GNYDM, covering topics as diverse as adhesive dentistry, guided implant surgery and early detection of oral cancer. A number of these courses were run entirely in Spanish, an inclusive choice that considered the approximately 41 million native Spanish speakers who currently reside in the United States.

Live dentistry sessions were held each day in the convention center and proved to be a hit with audiences. Among these sessions were “Executing Accurate Aesthetic Dentistry,” in which Dr. Michael Apa discussed techniques for preparation, temporization and the integration of digital technology, and “Modern Materials in a Digital Era,” a session presented by Dr. Justin Chi and sponsored by Glidewell Dental.

The Utah-based startup company Weave was present at the 2019 GNYDM to publicly debut Weave Payments, a full-scale payment processing platform for small and medium-sized businesses, and 3DISC launched the latest version of the Heron IOS, its solution for intraoral scanning.

The 2020 GNYDM will be held once again at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center from Nov. 27 to Dec. 4, 2020.
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07 CHECK
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Waiting is the Hardest Part

The next ping came in the middle of the night, nearly 12 hours after the team returned to Ultradent HQ. "About 8 go the next morning 1 logged on and saw we got ping starting about 2 in the morning. But they were very remote, and we wondered if it was right. The prediction calculator said it was supposed to be by Flame Gorge and this was in the middle of the Uintas," Simmons explains.

The prognosis for recovery was far from ideal—the payload landed deep in the mountains, not far from the second highest peak in Utah. "The forest service told us it's not accessible by car, it's 10–12 miles in from the trailhead and they were sitting around 90 inches of snow at the time," says Simmons. "We were like, OK, we need snowmobiles, snowshoes, cross country skis [. . .] we're going to get this thing."

"We knew we were going to go get it, go rescue it. We were making jokes like 'no VALO light left behind!' but that's when we realized there might be a real safety risk of getting stuck in the Uintas," Brown says.

Reconnaissance missions got underway while the team waited for the snow to melt, turning Brown into Ultradent's own Indiana Jones. "I would drive out to the trailhead, which is 15–18 miles on a dusty road, after a three hour drive from Ultradent, and from the trailhead it was still 10 or 20 miles of hiking to where the payload landed. One Saturday I woke up early [. . .] I figured I'd be fine because I had a Jeep Grand Cherokee," Brown says with a sarcastic grin. "I drove two miles on the dirt road and got stuck. I had to get pulled out by some mountain-dwelling locals. That was embarrassing. Then I got stuck again driving down the mountain and had to get pulled out again."

Ultradent videographer David Landers succeeded where Brown's recon efforts fell short. He was able to get fairly close to the landing zone and returned with a realistic perspective on what a retrieval mission would entail. "He came back and said, 'It's at least a two-day trip,'" Simmons says.

Into the Wild

Back at Ultradent, the team regrouped and picked August 8, 2019 to set out and recover the payload.

Horses were enlisted to help the would-be mountain trekkers trek through the wilderness. The venture into the backcountry began exactly 99 days after the launch.

It was a rainy morning and they arrived at the trailhead to find a waterlogged path. After a few soggy hours of riding, the team made it to their picturesque day-one destination. "We spent the night at a place called Dead Horse Lake in the middle of the Uintas. Beautiful scenery," says Simmons.

Tired, soaked, and sore, the crew set up their camp for the night. "Oliver bought a whole new hammock and chains, actual chains to hang it up, and a brand-new sleeping bag. But his sleeping bag didn't get packed, so he was up there without one," adds Simmons. "We had to find Oliver's 'accommodations' so we flipped the horses' wool pads upside down in his hammock."

"The wool pads from horses that had just ridden in the rain for 10 miles," Brown quickly interjects. "They smelled like butt."

At sunrise the team awoke and launched a drone in hopes of spotting the payload box from above, but alas, no visual—for that, more hiking was in order. "I thought at that elevation (roughly 10,000 feet) it would be all barren with just rocks," says Brown. "But it was like the Sound of Music set up there. Beautiful."

The team searched and searched until a whistle pierced the stillness of the mountain air. "Mike got visual of the payload box and blew the whistle. And we started screaming, we ran over and it's in the middle of a hill of loose shale," Brown says.

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Return to the Wild

After a few hours of searching, the team resigned to leaving without the curing light, but their spirits were nonetheless boosted from finding the payload. "We were all beat at the end of that day, but when we started charging the GoPros in the car and started seeing the footage, it was really exciting," says Brown.

The video investigation got underway immediately, with all five cameras providing clues to the potential whereabouts of the missing VALO Grand curing light. The footage became Ultradent's version of the Zapruder film.

"We started to dig into the videos, seeing the footage, and started deducing that where the VALO light went down was not the final resting place of the payload box," says Simmons. "We put everything in slow motion, all angles from the cameras, sifting around. We saw the VALO light detach right when the payload touched down."

Frame by frame, the footage was examined and the team developed theories for where the VALO curing light came to rest. "They didn't know exactly where it was, but they knew they needed to go back to the landing zone to find it. There was basically a 75-yard section of steep embankment, a 200-foot cliff, and 300–400 yards of very steep shale that we needed to search," Simmons says.

"No VALO light left behind, right?"

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CSI – Crash Site Investigation

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Return to the Wild

Powered by dedication and persistence (a desire to spend additional days in the woods instead of the office) the search party—now including Ultradent's Kate Loypa—returned to the trailhead once more and began their journey toward Dead Horse Lake and the landing zone for the payload. They reached the campsite and bedded down to prepare for another day of sifting the shale-covered slopes. Brown even managed to pack a sleeping bag this time.

"I had a metal detector, and we were really concerned that we were going to have to scan all this shale with it," Brown says.

Search number two got underway at sunrise, with the team determined to track down the missing VALO curing light more than 17 weeks after it was launched.
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"When I saw photos of it I didn’t realize how large it is," says Loyola of the landing zone. "You see these boulders on the top of the mountain and think they aren’t so big then you get up to them and they’re the size of a school bus."

The hunt was physically taxing but it soon provided hope—they found batteries that had been inside the payload box, but still no VALO curing light. "We also found a bell from a goat that’s probably long since been dead. A relic, it’ll be in the Smithsonian later," Brown recalls, smiling.

After several hours of searching with only batteries and a goat’s bell to show for their efforts, the team threw in the towel for the day without securing the VALO Grand curing light. They returned to camp to spend another night at Dead Horse Lake with one final day of searching ahead of them.

Spotting the VALO Curing Light

The next morning it was déjà vu at 12k feet as the crew hiked to the landing zone for the third time. When the batteries were found, the team had been searching the lower "bowl" section of the landing zone. Now they had to canvas the upper rim and slope. "When you’re down in the lower part of the valley and you’re looking at the upper shelf, you don’t realize how steep it is," Simmons says, eyes wide.

"The enormity of it was so weird. When you’d look at it, you’d get this vertigo type feeling like from a Hitchcock movie," says Brown. "It was so steep, we were thinking, can you even walk on that? Should we have brought rope to harness in?" It took 40 minutes just to hike to the top, Simmons sighs. "We went to the very end of the cliff face and started to zig, zag back and forth and it was, horrible."

Fortunately for the crew, they soon caught their biggest break yet. "Probably 15 minutes after we hiked up, I look down and 20–25 feet away from me, I see this metallic signature. I don’t see the VALO light, I see Dan Fischer’s signature," Simmons says with a visible glow. He enthusiastically blew his whistle and the crew scampered over to his location. Brown grabbed the VALO Grand curing light and as soon as he put batteries in, it gave off a BEEP, signaling it still worked. That seemingly innocuous BEEP cascaded unfiltered elation over the search crew as pride in the curing light’s durability flooded through them.

"I was yelling so loud, somebody else came over from a different mountain range thinking I was hurt. Full throated bellows," Brown recounts, visibly relieved by the successful mission.