‘Our products function like the pieces of a puzzle’

The increasing significance of digital dental technology was already on everyone’s lips long before IDS 2011. As the focus of this year’s show, digital technology is clearly going to reshape the world of dentistry by becoming part of day-to-day work at dental practices and laboratories.

Dental Tribune Online spoke to Jost Fischer, Chairman and CEO of Sirona, whose vision is to put digital dental technology in everyone’s mouth, literally.

With more than 1,000 m², Sirona had a strong presence at IDS 2011. What was your experience of this year’s show?

Mr Jost Fischer: IDS 2011 was absolutely fantastic! The spirit of the visitors, our staff and distribution partners was unbelievably high. It absolutely showed that the economy in Germany is doing well, which for us as market leader is always a very good sign.

You introduced a large number of new products at IDS. Which of these is your personal favourite?

I consider all of our products my favourite. Everything we do makes sense and is a vital contribution to Sirona’s success. At the end of the day, what is important to us is that our customers invest not only in a product or device, but also in their future.

We are an innovator in our industry and continuously strive to improve. Our systems are upgradeable, meaning that additional features and future technologies can be added on. Furthermore, every single one of our products integrates into the digital workflow of the dentist or laboratory technician. Sirona products function like the pieces of a puzzle. All our offerings fit into this concept.

What products were launched at IDS?

A major product we launched at IDS is the ORTHOPHOS XG 3D, a machine that can be used as a 3-D and a real 2-D machine. We think that the XG 3D is going to be the breakthrough in 3-D imaging in the general practitioner’s office.

Not only specialists, but also GPs will be able to take 3-D images.

We also introduced SINUS, a new treatment centre. SINUS is the star of our new efficiency class. This unit saves the dentist the most time. It is compact, very design oriented and, according to the feedback we have received thus far, very appealing to female dentists.

In our instrument division, we launched SIROBoost, a powerful turbine that allows for uninterrupted workflow.

In our CAD/CAM division, we gave visitors a preview of our new software CEREC 4.0, which will be launched this summer. It offers a new interface and additional features, more fun, creativity and ease of use. We have already received enthusiastic feedback on our preview model from the CEREC community and intend perfecting the software over the next few months.

And finally, as patient marketing is a very important aspect of dentistry today, we launched an integrated face scanner. Thanks to the integration of a 3-D scanner into GALILEOS, X-rays and surface anatomy scans can be taken simultaneously. The result is a lifelike depiction of the anatomical structures of the face, teeth and bones. This accurate image of the patient’s face assists the dentist in planning treatment and makes it easier for the patient to understand the treatment proposed.

Two Sirona products, inEos Blue desktop scanner and CEREC and inLab Biogeneric software, were named amongst the 2010 WOW! winners for 2010’s most innovative tools in the dental laboratory industry by the Journal of Dental Technology. Did these products still create a buzz at IDS?

Both products were very prominently exhibited at IDS 2011 and did not only receive the honours of this award, but also the approval of the market. InEos was developed for dental technicians and they love it! It is intuitive, and scanning with this device is fast, precise and efficient. It has met with great success and is a cornerstone of our lab offerings.

The CEREC Biogeneric software is the most intuitive software out there. It analyses the patient’s individual dentition as basis for the restoration, which will consequently have a perfect, natural fit. With it, we have eliminated the need for a tooth library. The method is extremely simple: with a single click of the mouse, the user is able to create crowns, veneers, inlays and onlays, as well as anatomically sized bridges.

What activities is Sirona involved in regarding giving back to the community?

We take our social responsibility very seriously. Giving back to the community is an important part of Sirona’s activities. We believe that we have a responsibility towards the needy and thus engage in corporate-wide and local activities. For example, we supported clinics in Peru, Tanzania and Ghana with equipment donations. Some of these activities are a joint effort between Sirona and our distribution partner Henry Schein, such as our support of the largest non-profit organisation SCO Family of Services in New York, for which Henry Schein and Sirona held a combined charity event.

We also set up a relief fund immediately after the catastrophe in Japan. The purpose of the fund was to provide support and aid to colleagues affected by the disaster. About 8,200 was collected through fundraising events at Sirona’s Bensheim and Salzburg locations, as well as at IDS. Sirona subsequently increased this donation to 20,000.

What is Sirona’s vision of dentistry of the future?

Certainly, we see digital dentistry, including CAD/CAM, becoming central to the dental office. We have worked hard to make this happen over the past years and are well on our way. If you were to fast-forward five years, you would most likely see CAD/CAM and digital dentistry in every office, certainly in the more developed countries. That’s what we believe in, and it would be a great reward for Sirona to be the top brand driving this development.