Giving something back to the profession

*Dental Tribune* speaks to Mike Volk Sales and Marketing director at The Dental Directory on celebrating the 40-year-old business

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**DT:** So how will The Dental Directory be celebrating the 40 year landmark?

**MV:** What’s interesting is that if we go back 40 years, the chairman Gordon Mills, who started the business thought that to celebrate 40 years we would run our largest ever promotional campaign – The Value + campaign. So, from September onwards we will be carrying promotions on 1000’s of everyday, essential product lines; it will be our biggest ever promotional push and we’re doing it because of these economic times. We’re trying to help our customers; we appreciate that fewer people are going to the dentist and that both private and NHS dentistry are suffering. Also, dentists are facing unprecedented increases in regulatory costs, so we thought we’d help our customers and offer them even better value and that’s why we’ve put out these promotional offers.

**DT:** What kinds of lines are you looking at?

**MV:** Oh everything, from anaesthetics to composites, to rotary hand instruments right across the board, it’s our top moving line. We’re taking between 17 and 30 per cent off our retail prices, depending on the product, so it’s going to be a big push from us to help our customers in these difficult times. We’re doing special flyers and advertising and our 28-strong dealer reps, is that they don’t have to think of exclusive promotions, but more important we offer a rebate to the managing committee to further the aims and objectives, which are often of a charitable nature, of each group. We also support the provision of education using bursaries; an example of one is the bursary we provided for the MSc in Restorative and Aesthetic dentistry delivered by the University of Manchester and Smile-on. In the last three to four years we’ve put back into the profession more than £1m and in various ways, including a new Dental Chair in primary dental care at the University of Warwick Medical School.

We do support the profession; however I’m surprised that a lot of the larger multinational companies, whether they be dealers or manufacturers, don’t support the profession more and instead leave it to smaller, family owned businesses.

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