Finnish dental technology manufacturer Planmeca has recently made a significant equity investment in the U.S.-based high-tech medical device company E4D Technologies. In this interview, vice president at the Planmeca Group and acting CEO for E4D Technologies Tuomas Lokki sheds light on this new venture.

Mr. Lokki, why did Planmeca choose to invest in E4D Technologies?

We believe in the tremendous possibilities and future growth of CAD/CAM dentistry. As dentistry will be completely digital in the future, we believe it is vital to invest in the development of new and efficient practices. E4D is a long-term leader in advancing modern CAD/CAM dentistry, so we knew that joining forces with this high-tech medical device company would be a valuable addition to our own leading expertise in 3-D imaging and software solutions. Its special expertise and innovative ideas provide a great foundation for future projects that will combine the know-how of both companies.

What advantages will this investment offer dental customers worldwide?

The new partnership with E4D Technologies will enable us to offer our customers the most modern CAD/CAM innovations. Our product distribution in more than 120 countries combined with the cutting-edge E4D innovations will increase global prod-
Our customers will also benefit from the innovative combination and seamless integration of Planmeca’s and E4D’s products and services.

How will this improve the daily workflow at clinics?
One great advantage is the integration of X-ray imaging and CAD/CAM into a single software platform, Planmeca Romexis. For the first time, customers will have the option of one software interface for both X-ray imaging and CAD/CAM work.

All patient data is also saved in the same database, and it can be shared immediately and easily through the clinic’s network or with the Planmeca Romexis Cloud service.

Furthermore, the restorations designed in the CAD module can easily be combined with the patient’s 3-D X-ray images for implant planning purposes, for example. For the patients, this means convenient same-day dentistry.

Can you also tell us about the brand new intra-oral scanner that you launched recently?
Our new Planmeca PlanScan intra-oral scanner is an ultra-fast, powder-free and open solution for 3-D digital impressions. Its advanced blue laser technology accurately captures hard and soft tissue of various translucencies, dental restorations, models and impressions.

It is the world’s first dental unit-integrated intra-oral scanner and can be used through a laptop as a standalone version. Together with our Planmeca Romexis software, the system supports an ideal digital treatment workflow.

How will both Planmeca and E4D benefit from this investment?
On the one hand, this investment strengthens Planmeca’s position in the fast-growing CAD/CAM business, and Planmeca benefits from E4D’s cutting-edge solutions and long-term CAD/CAM expertise. On the other hand, Planmeca’s extensive distribution network enables E4D Technologies to grow globally, and our leading dental-imaging solutions will be a valuable addition to the E4D CAD/CAM platform.

Has this venture created any new needs for your company?
Definitely, as we need to provide extensive CAD/CAM training for our distribution and customer network in more than 120 countries. Therefore, we have recently invested in new training, warehouse and production facilities alongside our Helsinki headquarters.

These new 10,000-square-meter facilities will help us address the growing need for training and education in this new field of dentistry.

We are thrilled to be able to take CAD/CAM to the next level. Our innovations will change the concept of same-day dentistry completely and facilitate the workflow of dental professionals worldwide.

KURARAY AMERICA’S CLEARFIL UNIVERSAL BOND

- Kuraray America introduces CLEARFIL Universal Bond, a single-component, light-cure bonding agent indicated for all direct and indirect restorations in combination with all etching techniques (total-etch, self-etch or selective-etch).

The bond is also indicated for the surface treatment of zirconia and silica-based glass ceramics (e.g., lithium disilicate).

According to the company, that makes the product truly “universal” without the need for a separate silane coupling agent.

CLEARFIL Universal Bond contains the “ORIGINAL MDP” adhesive monomer developed and introduced by Kuraray in 1983. Chairside time is faster for the dentist, because of its short application time, according to the company.

The product is available through all major dental dealers.

For more information on CLEARFIL Universal Bond, or any other Kuraray products, visit www.kuraraydental.com, call (800) 879-1676 or stop by the Kuraray America booth, No. 801, here at the Thomas P. Hinman Dental Meeting.

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