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Ortho start-up
Interview with Singapore investor Nanostart

► Page 10



Filling materials
The best choice for posterior restorations

► Page 16



Borneo charity
Dentist helps to reforest orang-utan habitat

► Page 19

Health experts go cuckoo over mental patients

Daniel Zimmermann
DTI

HONG KONG/LEIPZIG, Germany: People with psychiatric disorders are more likely to suffer from dental diseases than people who are mentally stable, a new report from Australia suggests. Having reviewed over 20 studies from Europe, Asia and the US, researchers from the University of Queensland (UQ) found that patients diagnosed with severe mental illnesses had a three-fold higher risk of losing all their teeth.

Mental patients also had significantly more decayed, filled or missing teeth, the study shows. Levels of dental disease however were lower in countries or regions with water fluoridation.

The alarming figures were released on the same day that new findings from Germany revealed that almost 40 per cent of Europeans suffer from some kind of mental health problem. According to the study, treating disorders like anxiety, insomnia or depression costs the Union an estimated US\$394 billion a year, including costs for dental treatment.



According to a study, more attention should be given to the oral health status of mentally disabled. (DTI/Photo Refat Mamutov)

Besides their neglect of oral hygiene, mental patients often lack access to oral health care owing to dental phobia and treatment-related costs, UQ professor and lead researcher Steve Kisely said. He added that medication commonly used to treat disorders, such as antidepressants or mood stabilisers, can additionally reduce saliva flow, which can cause xerostomia and increase

plaque formation in these patients.

"Patients with severe mental illnesses like schizophrenia, dementia or bipolar disorders are most affected by bad oral health," he told *Dental Tribune Asia Pacific*.

Conversely, Kisely said that dental diseases can lead to mental disorders like social phobia

caused by the poor anaesthetic appearance of teeth or other symptoms, like bad breath.

He recommended including oral health check-lists in the standard assessment of psychiatric patients and increasing promotion of oral hygiene measures amongst this group. "They should be given advice on diet, smoking and brushing technique," he concluded. **DTI**

Australia sets up dental council

Dental experts have been gathered by the Australian coalition to form a new advisory body on oral health. The National Advisory Council on Dental Health, which includes the President of the Australian Dental Association, as well as heads of other national oral health organisations, is intended to develop strategies to improve the country's poor public dental care system.

The decision to set up the council follows an agreement on the improvement of public dental services signed by Labor and the Green party during last year's federal elections. Both coalition partners already clashed over the issue in early May, which resulted in additional funding of AU\$53 million (US\$56 million) for dental care by the government over the next four years.

Public dental services, especially in South Australia, are poor, with patients having to wait for months or even years to get a dentist appointment. **DTI**



Surveying damage caused by the earthquake/tsunami in Japan. In an exclusive interview, AmeriCares' Ella Gudwin talks about restoring dental care facilities. (DTI/PhotoAmeriCares/TammyAllen, USA) ► **TRENDS & APPLICATIONS**, page 14/15

Managing bone with Acteon

The Thailand subsidiary of French dental manufacturer Acteon has announced to hold a seminar and workshop on the issue of bone management next January in Bangkok, Thailand. The seminar will be joined by Drs Fred Bergmann and Surakit Visuttiwat-tanakorn as well as Profs. Fumihiko Watanabe and Lars Sennerby. **DTI**

New light on oral leucoplakia

Chemical luminescence can aid in the visualisation of oral leucoplakia, new research has found. Following oral examinations, researchers at King's College London Dental Institute evaluated the accuracy of chemiluminescence in detecting potentially malignant oral disorders using a commercially available detection kit. **DTI**

Fiji has eyes on people's oral health

A new oral health survey is being conducted by the Fiji Ministry of Health to re-evaluate the prevalence of dental diseases on the island. Over the next few weeks, dental checks will be conducted on and questionnaires distributed to 6,000 individuals from different parts of the country in collaboration with the Fiji National University in the capital Suva, the ministry said.

The last two surveys, done in 1998 and 2004, revealed that dental diseases like caries and periodontal disease plague the majority of Fijians, especially young children and adolescents. It also found that one in ten adults had decayed, missing or filled teeth. According to the ministry, the initial results of the new survey are expected to be released early next year. **DTI**



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Dr. Edgar Garcia Hurtado

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Serial robber, dentist rapist nabbed by Philippine police

PDA president calls for better security measures in dental clinics

Daniel Zimmermann
DTI

HONG KONG: Female dentists in the Philippines can breathe a sigh of relief, as the National Capital Region Police Office has reported that it has arrested a man who could be responsible for a series of robberies and sexual crimes targeting dental offices in the Metropolitan Manila area. Police representatives told reporters that the 32-year-old suspect was seized in early September in his home in Las Piñas City, 20 kilometres south of the capital.

The arrest is a succès d'estime for the Philippine National Police, which has recently been cast

in a poor light by reports posted on whistleblower website Wiki-Leaks, describing the agency as inefficient and corrupt. It also ends a manhunt lasting for months and involving intelligence operatives throughout the country, as well as the Philippine Dental Association (PDA), which it said was cooperating closely on the matter with the police.

The suspect, who spent five years in prison on robbery charges from 2004 to 2009, is accused of robbing over 20 dental offices and raping or sexually assaulting female dentists over the last 12 to 14 months. His modus operandi was to pose as a client requesting dental treatment and once having gained access to in-

timidate his victims with a semi-automatic handgun to make them compliant.

According to the police, he has confessed to 19 of the robberies, starting in May 2010, but has denied the charges of rape and sexual assault.

Another individual suspected to be involved in two of the crimes is also in custody, the police said.

PDA President Dr Roberto Tajonera, a dentist from Manila, appeared relieved, but said that better security measures need to be taken in dental clinics, such as the installation of CCTV cameras, to prevent further attacks on dentists. [DTI](#)

Fibre-optic sensor research honoured by AP dental student body

From news reports

BANGKOK, Thailand: Research from Singapore demonstrating the use of fibre-optic Bragg stack sensors to measure demineralisation of enamel has taken first place at this year's scientific research competition held at the 38th Asia Pacific Dental Students Association's (APDSA) annual congress in Thailand.

High-resistance fibre-optic sensors are commonly employed

in a wide range of industrial applications in order to measure temperature, strains, illumination and other physical quantities. In dentistry, they have been used to study contraction and setting expansion of composite materials, amongst other things, but not to sense the decrease of minerals in the outer layer of teeth. The team from the National University of Singapore hopes to utilise the novel technique for the early detection of tooth decay.

The APDSA research prize is awarded to outstanding research conducted by dental students throughout the Asia-Pacific region. This year, 14 teams from universities in Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan and South Korea took part in the annual contest.

Prizes were also given to students from Indonesia who had tested the effect of white tea on tumour cell viability and of mouthwash containing Curcuma xanthorrhiza on caries risk factors. [DTI](#)

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Dental students in India face new regulations

From news reports

NEW DEHLI, India: The Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare recently approved a revision of course regulations for Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) programmes, making it mandatory for dental undergraduates to participate in a paid, rotating one-year internship after four years of theoret-

ical training. The new regulations will first be applied to students who started their BDS in 2008/2009 and be implemented in dental schools around the country in Autumn.

Internships were temporarily dropped from BDS courses in 2007 after the Dental Council of India found out that many students, especially from private schools, had tried to fake certificates instead of actually doing hands-on training.

It also contributed to increased stress levels amongst dental students owing to the high number of subjects in the final year, according to a 2009 study.

Since then, BDS programmes have been five-year courses and consisted of theoretical modules only.

Reviving the scheme after four years follows international stan-

dards that require mandatory internships in dental education institutions worldwide, ministry officials said in a statement. They added that it will also provide for better opportunities for practical training and skill development.

It is estimated that India currently has the largest number of dental schools in the world. However, experts say that the country is putting too many dentists on the



market, making it difficult for BDS graduates to find a job. [DTI](#)

AD

Treatment of swallowing disorders

Daniel Zimmermann
DTI

HONG KONG: Magnetic brain stimulators could help stroke patients overcome life-threatening swallowing difficulties, Australian scientists have reported. In a clinical study conducted at the University of Adelaide (UA) in South Australia, researchers are currently investigating how the process of trans-cranial magnetic stimulation (TMS), a non-invasive electromagnetic stimulation of cerebral nerve cells, could help to regain control of mouth and throat muscles damaged by cerebrovascular accidents.

According to UA speech pathologist and lead researcher Dr Sebastian Doeltgen, swallowing disorders affect more than 50 per cent of patients suffering from the effects of a stroke. If untreated, the condition can lead to severe health conditions like silent aspiration, dehydration or even pneumonia, which can be life threatening, especially for elderly patients. Common therapies to overcome the problem include physical exercises to improve the coordination of mouth and throat muscles.

The new therapy approach developed by Doeltgen and his team uses magnetic stimulation to create electric currents in the brain that could stimulate the nerve cells that the scientists believe control the complex process of swallowing. Similar techniques were successfully used by German researchers earlier this year to stimulate cerebral nerve cells in rats.

“When people have a stroke, the parts of their brain that control the muscles in the mouth and throat are often damaged and we have to find ways to reactivate these regions,” Doeltgen told *Dental Tribune Asia Pacific*. “Using TMS, we can assess to what degree different cortical motor networks are involved in swallowing motor control. This information will ultimately allow us to develop tailored swallowing rehabilitation approaches that target specific motor circuits.”

The initial results of the study, which has received governmental funding of AU\$500,000 (US\$313,000), are expected to be released in two to three years. [DTI](#)

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Dear reader,



Daniel Zimmermann
DTI

If you ever had to treat a patient with any kind of mental disorders, you may be aware of the fact that it can be quite a challenging task. Unfortunately, latest reports from clinicians are suggesting that most mental disorders are on the rise among almost all age groups; from common forms like depression, anxiety or dementia, to closely related conditions like burnout.

As different as these conditions might be on the first look, they all seem to be connected to deterioration of oral health. Therefore, patients suffering from these illnesses do not only increasingly require dentists to follow treatment protocols that are significantly different to that commonly used for patients who fall into the classification of being "normal" but also pose a heavy burden to many dental health care systems around the globe.

Precaution measures like additional training in dental schools or through postgraduate education will have to be taken to make sure that dental professionals will have the skills and, more importantly, the mind-set to be able to cope with this challenges in the long-run. **DTI**

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Zimmermann
Group Editor
Dental Tribune International

"Congrats, your treatment was a complete success."



Care for mentally disabled



Dr Kuan-Yu Chu
Taiwan

Many studies have shown that people with mental illnesses have poorer oral hygiene and oral health than the general population. They also have a lower utilisation of dental care than other disabled people. Amongst them, the most frequently observed component of the DMFT index is missing teeth. This finding indicates insufficient preventive and conservative dentistry in the community and long-term care units, and a growing need for prosthetic treatment aimed at people with mental disabilities. The high prevalence of dental diseases also creates an urgent need for dental treatments for the mentally ill.

Most individuals with mental disabilities are on medication for long periods, which frequently leads to increased risk of dental diseases and to more difficult dental procedures. However, according to the results of an oral health survey by the National Yang-Ming University here in Taipei for in-patients with mental disorders, an important modifiable factor associated with the filling rate of the DMFT index is prolonged stay in long-term care institutions.

The results demonstrated that long-term care institutions and dental clinics in the community might have limited capability or willingness to offer essential oral health services to people with mental disabilities. Thus, accessibility to quality care, preventive oral health programmes and a proper budget are the three principle issues for enhancing the oral health of people with mental disabilities.

When conducting comprehensive assessments, psychologists should take dental problems into consideration and design effective health care plans for people with mental disabilities. The present integration of general and oral health programmes is inadequate. Better cooperation amongst medical and dental professionals for long-term care could better meet the dental needs of the mentally ill. Financial support from the government could facilitate the above-mentioned reforms, and break the economic barrier to prosthetic treatments for people with mental disabilities. **DTI**

Contact Info

Dr Kuan-Yu Chu works at the Department of Dentistry, Tao-Yuan General Hospital, Department of Health, Taiwan. He can be contacted at kyc0321@yahoo.com.

To the Editor

Re: "Many errors are related to violation of the biological width" (*Dental Tribune Asia Pacific* Vol. 9, No. 7+8, page 6)

Indeed education in dental schools could be improved. But, today this is only possible by extending the study period because the programme is already full. Problems with ceramic crowns are a concern, as well as occlusion, a subject neglected for years. The simple interrelation of occlusal form with chewing force is not respected. Implant-supported crowns are much more sensitive to errors and today overloads on the supra-structures are common, mainly in fixed prostheses. With the scientific crash of gnathology in the '70s, today few people want to expose themselves by talking about occlusion. As much as gnathological theories were treated like a doctrine, we shall not make the same error today by neglecting the importance of occlusion. ■

M. Bossard, 05 Aug. 2011

Re: "Editorial: Goodbye amalgam?" (*Dental Tribune Asia Pacific* Vol. 9, No. 1+3, page 4)

I would really like to see this "comprehensive research from South Africa" giving proof that glass-ionomer crowns are going to outdo amalgam crowns in molars for a patient who cannot afford ceramic or gold restorations. What nonsense! ■

Wajih Jinnah, 19 Aug. 2011

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Da Silva assumes presidency of World Dental Federation

Javier M. de Pison
DT Latin America

MEXICO CITY, Mexico: The FDI World Dental Federation is the United Nations of Dentistry, remarked one of the speakers at the opening ceremony of the 99th FDI Annual World Dental Congress in Mexico City. Proof of this is the intense lobbying, discussions and negotiations that take place amongst delegations and committees representing all the national dental associations in the world.

The chair of the organising committee, Dr Víctor Guerrero Reynoso, said that he was very proud because 98 different countries were represented at the congress, which “means it is a truly global event”. For his part, the President of the Mexican Dental Association, Dr Jaime Edelson, said that “the dentists are an integral part of the health system of every country” and demanded “an end to the separation between oral health and general health.”

He added that it was a moment to feel proud to be a dentist and especially Mexican. “It’s also time to share and learn from more than 90 foreign dentists who have come to bring their knowledge and experiences” to the FDI congress.

Ayub Safar, President of Mexican Dental Trade Association, agreed that it was a historic moment to be part of the FDI World Congress in Mexico. Safar thanked the foreign and domestic industry for supporting “this commercial and scientific event”, which he described as a great opportunity to update knowledge and to benefit the Mexican population.

One of the most emotional moments of the ceremony was when outgoing President, Dr Roberto Vianna, passed the presidency of the federation to Dr Orlando Monteiro da Silva of Portugal, who will serve in this capacity for two years. Vianna said that his serving in office has given him great satisfaction and that he envisions a bright future for the profession.

Monteiro da Silva said that when he first attended an FDI World Dental Congress in Paris in 2000 “I was far from imagining that 11 years later I would be president of the federation. The president’s job is to lead, strengthen, and update the policy strategy to address new developments at social, political, economic and technological levels.” Monteiro da Silva added that for decades the profession “Or dental medicina, as it should be called, had limited its scope to a restorative approach. Today, everyone agrees on the need to embrace the medical field, especially because some areas related with traditional dentistry, such as education, prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, demand it.”

The new FDI President justified the above by saying that, on the one hand, we are seeing an increasing number of invasive dental treatments and, on other hand, there is a need to help people achieve optimal dental health. Other reasons cited were the ageing population in some countries, the growing number of medically compromised patients and awareness of the importance of patient safety. Finally, he men-

tioned the relationship between non-communicable diseases, such as cancer, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and diabetes, and dental caries and periodontal disease, which affect over 90 % of people worldwide.

Monteiro da Silva concluded by saying that one of his goals is to achieve a better integration of the Portuguese-speaking communities worldwide in FDI.

The newly appointed Secretary of Health of Mexico, Salomon Chertorivski, opened the congress as his first official act. Chertorivski said that as he entered the Centro Banamex he met the dentist who treated him as a child. He went on to describe a series of measures that met with broad support amongst the practitioners attending. The Health Secretary said that he will implement steps to reduce red tape eligibility

for dental care now demanded by the Mexican social security system. He added that Mexico agrees with the proposal of Dr Margaret Chan, director-general of the World Health Organization, who stated that oral health is a neglected area of international health. Therefore, “Mexico adheres to the FDI initiative to obtain official recognition by WHO of dental diseases as non-communicable diseases.” [DT](#)

AD



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British researchers develop method for filling without drilling

From news reports

LEEDS, UK: The thought of the dentist's drill puts many people off visiting their dentist, even if they only need a check-up and not treatment. Researchers at the University of Leeds have announced that they have discovered a pain-

free way of tackling dental decay that reverses the damage of acid attack and rebuilds teeth as new. The pioneering treatment promises to transform the approach to filling teeth forever.

Tooth decay begins when acid produced by bacteria in plaque

dissolves the minerals in the teeth, causing microscopic holes or "pores" to form. As the process of decay progresses, these micro-pores increase in size and number. Eventually, the damaged tooth may have to be drilled and filled to prevent toothache, or even extracted.

The researchers have developed a revolutionary new way to treat the first signs of tooth decay by arming dentists with a peptide-based fluid that is painted onto the tooth's surface. This peptide technology is based on knowledge of how the tooth forms in the first place and stimulates regeneration of the tooth.


"This may sound too good to be true, but we are essentially helping acid-damaged teeth to regenerate themselves. It is a totally natural non-surgical repair process and is entirely pain-free too," said Prof Jennifer Kirkham from the Leeds Dental Institute, who led the development of the new technique.

The "magic" fluid was designed by Dr. Amalia Aggeli and other researchers in the School of Chemistry. It contains a peptide known as P 11-4 that assembles into fibres under certain conditions. In practice, this means that when applied to the tooth, the fluid seeps into the micro-pores caused by acid attack and then spontaneously forms a gel. This gel then provides a scaffold or framework that attracts calcium and regenerates the tooth's minerals from within, providing a natural and pain-free repair.

The researchers tested the technique on a small group of adults whose dentist had spotted initial signs of tooth decay. According to the scientists, the results of this initial trial suggest that P 11-4 can indeed reverse the damage and regenerate the tooth tissue.

"The results of our tests so far are extremely promising," said Prof Paul Brunton, who oversees the patient testing at the Leeds Dental Institute. "If these results can be repeated on a larger patient group, then I have no doubt whatsoever that in two to three years' time this technique will be available for dentists to use in their daily practice."

According to Brunton, the main reason that people do not see a dentist regularly is fear. "If we can offer a treatment that is completely non-invasive, that doesn't involve a mechanical drill, then we can change that perceived link between dental treatment and pain. This really is more than filling without drilling, this is a novel approach that enables the patients to keep their natural teeth," he said.

The study is being funded by Swiss company credentis AG, which has licensed the technology. 

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Dental surgeries should think pink, UK designers say

From news reports

LONDON, UK: When refurbishing their premises, dentists who want relaxed patients should think about how their customers want to feel when they visit the dentist. According to a design team from London, a mid to light pink helps to relax the muscles and is an ideal colour for a dental surgery.

Feelings experienced when entering a new environment can in part be attributed to colour. Colour is light that travels in waves from the sun and the energy from light is absorbed through the eyes. It stimulates the pituitary and pineal glands, which in turn control some of the body’s systems, including hormonal changes. Research suggests that pink is a calming colour and so is regularly used in rooms where a tranquil effect is desired, for example, in hospitals, rehabilitation centres and even prisons.

However, according to commercial interior designers at Lima Europe, dental practices should avoid cerise and hot pinks, as these could add to an increased heart rate, respiration and brain-wave activity. “Light colours such as white and cream or pale pastel shades evoke feelings of freshness and tend to have a calming, relaxing nature, especially lighter greens and warm yellows,” Alíz Ördög, a designer at Lima Europe, told *Dental Tribune Online*. “Red in rooms appears brash, can increase one’s heart rate and could possibly be even more alarming to some patients, as it has obvious connotations of blood. Orange is also stimulating rather than calming so unless used as an accent colour to evoke a fun element of the brand these colours would be best avoided for dental surgeries, as they would most likely make the majority of patients feel uneasy or giddy. Black would be a difficult colour to work with for practical reasons, it absorbs light and can hide dirt. In terms of patient experience, it can also feel oppressive.”

“However, it is not necessarily the case that these colours cannot be used, more the fact of how they are used. In small quantities, black in particular could be incorporated into various design schemes. Dental surgeries do not necessarily have to be, and I personally think should not be, just white; a sympathetic, well thought-out design scheme can feature most colours except bright pinks, reds and oranges,” the designer added.

When working closely with their clients, London interior designers Ördög and her colleague Zoltán Madosfalvi carefully discuss colour palettes and the feeling the particular space is intended to evoke. Zoltán explained: “Some of Lima’s business clients, such as dentists’, doctors’ and cosmetic surgeries, come to me wanting their reception area to reflect their brand identity whilst also creating a feel-

ing of cleanliness. However, it is extremely important to produce the correct atmosphere for the customer or client, which includes considering the psychology of colour; a consumer is not likely to return on the basis of liking a brand’s colour palette but may do so if he/she felt relaxed and safe in the environment. When a soothing affect is needed, a pink in a muted tone can be very successful, as can a restful green.”

According to Ördög, dentists are tending to move away from just the practical to more of the aesthetic. As design and style filter into all areas of life today, the environment in which they work can now reflect this. Also, because colour plays an important part of our overall experience when visiting a building or room, it can influence mood and our physical experience to some extent. The use of colour to improve clients’

experience, helping to make them feel at ease, is being given increasing attention because it can be viewed as an aspect of customer service.

When it comes to work-clothes, dentists should stick with white and not experiment with different colours. “White coats are universally known and accepted as garments worn by medical professionals or experts. They also

represent cleanliness and are synonymous with hygiene. It is probably not appropriate to change this, as the credibility of the dentist may be compromised,” Ördög told *Dental Tribune Online*. “However, in theory it would be great fun to see dentists in pale pink or sunshine yellow coats—perhaps this would help calm or cheer up patients and lighten the mood of children or those who really fear visits to the dentist.”

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New player to enter Indian dental laser market

From news reports

NEW DEHLLI, India/FRANKFURT/MAIN, Germany: It has been reported that New Dehli-based Unicorn Denmart, one of India's

largest distributors of dental products and services, has become an exclusive dealer for German dental laser company elexxion. The recent agreement includes the company's claros pico, a low-cost, mobile diode laser indicated for use in endodontics, as well as periodontic and soft-tissue laser surgery.



The agreement is elexxion's first step into Asia markets. Its claros pico laser received market approval in Europe in late 2010 and has since been distributed in countries like Germany, France and Spain. It will extend Unicorn's existing portfolio of

laser dentistry devices, which includes a mini diode laser system imported from Dilas Diode-laser in Germany. In addition to elexxion, the company stocks products from dental heavyweights such as Cefla Group, Vatech or NSK in India.

The claros pico diode laser (promotional picture) will soon be available to dentists in India. (DTI/Photo courtesy of elexxion AG, Germany)

Elexxion shares on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange in Germany reacted positively. **DT**

AD

Amann-Girrbach opens office in Singapore

Daniel Zimmermann
DTI

SINGAPORE: The city-state has become host for another prominent dental market player: CAD/CAM specialist AmannGirrbach has announced the opening of a new branch in the Singapore River Planning Area. With this step, the Austrian company, which also has a subsidiary in the US, intends to expand its business in the Asia-Pacific and Middle Eastern markets.

The new Singapore branch will support Amann's distribution partners in both regions through logistics and responsive customer service, the company said. It also announced plans for a help desk and company training centre to be established by the end of the year.



AmannGirrbach's new office as seen from the Coleman Bridge in central Singapore. (DTI/Photo courtesy of AmannGirrbach, Austria)

Prior to the establishment of the new office, the company operated through individual dealers in Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, Malaysia and other countries.

Founded through a merger of an Austrian and German company in 2004, AmannGirrbach manufactures laboratory instruments and CAD/CAM solutions. As one of a few providers worldwide, they offer a complete in-house milling solution for dental laboratories with their Ceramill product line.

Chairman Marco Ratz said that AmannGirrbach is currently experiencing average growth rates of 30 per cent per year in the combined Asian and Middle Eastern markets. The company makes €46 million in annual revenue, according to market sources. **DT**

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