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Innovate, by trusting your Intuition?

Hopefully you have noticed the new picture. There was another one that I considered (the artisanal baker having some fun) but I thought about the potential mixed messages and or perceived assumptions, so I stuck with casual corporate shot for safety.

I do enjoy a good coffee or tea, but if we look at the art and science or the pros and cons maybe we should consider a barista achieving their best of the applications for great flavour and consistency. Trusting your intuition comes with your knowledge and experience, thereby allowing you to innovate with your chosen method. Just like a great barista.

Innovation in the coffee world at the moment seems to revolve around cold drip brew coffee. The equipment is specialised and simple (no power needed in most cases), with our expectations of knowing where the individual bean came from (maybe fair trade), who picked, roasted that bean or dried that tea leaf. Let's just remember, that most customers only care about what the coffee or tea tastes like, not what the recipe is or what equipment is used – that is the baristas job. How they choose to get there, is up to the barista knowledge so you can enjoy a great result. The analogy to what we do in dentistry is the same. Your recipe and equipment is your choice.

This brings us back to our current dental technology and a few alternatives or future potentials, which will be shown for the first time at the upcoming IDS in Cologne, Germany. IDS 2019 will be an interesting space again as to who is going to innovate the dental market. Some manufacturers will have to prove that they can emerge from what users perceive to be years of marginal improvements, or they risk joining the pack of rivals who can make similar equipment at a lower price.

We certainly have not hit the peak in dental technology with what is available. For years manufacturers routinely amazed the market with new advances in equipment, software applications and lately consumables. Though in the last couple of years I am only seeing more incremental equipment changes (it all generally works). Software applications have evolved like Dental Monitoring in orthodontics using AI which have added to our armoury of clinical choices of engaging with patients, specialist and GP's. I liken that to swiping our smartphones with a finger across your screen and using the same finger to scroll for music. You might now be just talking to a device instead these days?

The major players have seen their once sizable technology gap narrow with lower cost manufacturer's units. Think the 3D printing market with units that previously started at \$100K plus to now throwing one away for \$6K. Is there a difference



in quality? Well that depends on what you consider acceptable for clinical application. The industry is seeing further partnerships, strategic collaborations and growth by acquisition. Companies might only be looking for growth that might just satisfy shareholders and their share price return.

The digital denture is probably a case in point. It's a new application and frankly speaking, a huge growth area from a low base, that manufacturers are seriously focusing on now. By the way there are approximately 2.9 million people in Australia that either have or require a full denture or removable partial denture (RPD). Whilst some people think a digital denture involves using your finger (the digital part) we are seeing the material manufacturers like Kulzer, Ivoclar Vivadent, Merz, Vita, Shofu, Dentsply Sirona, GC Corporation offering their digital solutions (milled or printed). Manufacturers are either looking at going it alone, collaborating with an exciting equipment or material company, or growing by acquisition to add to their portfolio (Straumann Group). CAD and CAM software developers are developing the clinical applications related to materials and software strategies to support this effort.

My intuition tells me to look at the how the manufacturers are going to innovate their product whether that be their equipment or applications in orthodontics, fixed and removable prosthetics, along with implants. Are the manufacturers re-inventing the wheel with smoke and mirrors approach or providing a true vision to the future? Along with others I look forward to reporting back to you as to what was truly innovative.

I remain convinced, that by staying curious and open-minded, by showing a willingness to learn and move beyond your comfort zone, it will help improve the chances of understanding what it is you are trying to achieve with technology or maybe that great cup of coffee (cold drip) or tea we can share together.

Sometimes you need just need a helping hand to understand the basics in order to decide on the digital infrastructure best suited to your situation. That is why Digital Dentistry Consultancy (DDC) is here to help you with your big picture plan. DDC can engage with you at the level matching your needs when and where you require specific advice or support. I look forward to hearing from you or where possible meeting with you to form that long-term relationship.

Cheers

Geoff