WILL THE VIRTUAL PATIENT GAIN ACCEPTANCE?
AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. WILHELM SCHNEIDER

The provisions for this already exist. The smile could thus be used to perfect the smile design for CEREC applications.

Dr. Schneider, which developments from Sirona in the area of imaging systems mean that we can already talk about a “virtual patient”? The first step towards creating virtual patients was the connection between CAD/CAM and 3D x-rays. Using the unique process of integrated implantology, Sirona made it possible to integrate a virtually constructed dental restoration into a 3D x-ray image. And now another step has been taken towards this vision of virtual patients: the integrated FaceScanner in GALILEOS.

How long do you think it will take before the virtual patient is standard in every dental practice? It will happen quicker than many expect. Digital dentistry has rapidly advanced in recent years. The virtual patient will put diagnosis, patient consultation, and therapy on a whole new level. The first few steps towards a virtual patient have already provided greater confidence, better acceptance of therapy proposals, time savings, and greater pleasure when working in the practice.

At the moment the Galileos FaceScanner is mostly a tool to improve patient communication. Could it also be used for diagnostic purposes in future? By combining CBCT scans, CAD/CAM data, and facial scans, completely new opportunities will be available in future, and not just for diagnostics.

For example, this combination and visual display of the various data will enable therapy proposals to be comprehensively communicated and the consequences for patients can be simulated into a 3D x-ray image. And now another step has been taken towards this vision of virtual patients: the integrated FaceScanner in GALILEOS.

The creators of dental-users.com have many years of experience with the use of 3D simulation and planning, CAD/CAM applications, digital x-ray diagnostics, and dental computer applications of all sorts. Their many years of experience as authors, referees, developers, beta testers, technical advisers for colleagues and not least as enthusiastic users of dental high-tech in their own practices means that they know precisely where problems can develop and how and where the best help can be given.

DENTAL-USERS.COM
THE DENTAL E-LEARNING PORTAL

Modern dentistry and dental technology are developing rapidly. This gives rise to new workflows which are both a challenge and motivation for the entire dental team.

Dr. Elmar Frank, Dr. Sigrid Frank, and Gerhard Werling are tackling this subject and have created an internet portal for dental continuing education and professional development: www.dental-users.com is the latest development in the area of dental e-learning. The portal is aimed at dental practitioners, dental technicians, dental assistants and dentistry students – in short, the whole dental “family.” With modern e-learning methods, the portal explains how to handle high-tech dental systems using relevant examples across systems.

The dental-users.com portal not only offers video presentations but also short multimedia videos (typical length: few minutes) that give concrete solutions for problems. All content is based on established workflows and strategies for daily use of modern techniques that require clarification – for example, in the area of digital x-rays, laser application, computer-assisted diagnostics, and dental technology.

As well as the short videos and recorded presentations, dental-users.com also provides users with a discussion forum, calendar administration for dental events with booking options, relevant downloads, and online tests. Only persons who can demonstrate their involvement in dental medicine can register on the portal. The content accessed is automatically recorded and can be retrieved to provide evidence of professional development in the form of a CME points account statement according to the guidelines of the German Dental Association and the Germany Society for Dentistry and Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery.

dental-users.com has also created an iPhone or iPad app. This enables non-members to access some sample material as well as summaries with the opportunity to make online bookings for dental events such as courses, presentations or conferences.

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Dr. Wilhelm Schneider is the Marketing Director of the Sirona Imaging Systems division.