

Blog Exchange On DentalTown.com 12/15/08 Subject: "NOBEL.....Worth it?"

Quote: (depdoc)

If you want to use the Nobel system, look at Implant Direct. They have the same thing (with interchangeable parts), slightly better design and vastly lower cost. Implant Direct is a great company to become involved with. You have many different options and a great savings over other companies. The quality of their product equals or exceeds other major manufacturers.

Quote: (catiga)

Do some more research before you buy into Nobel. There are some solid companies out there that are much more affordable.

Implant companies need to be more realistic with their pricing. 300 - 400 dollars per implant, plus parts.

Come on.

Quote: (brockthomas)

Well am a Implants Direct guy and have nothing but good results. The implants are \$150 and that includes the healing cap, healing cap extension, transfer and stock abutment. Several implant options. Everything on line

Quote: (Niznick)

Thank you for the vote of confidence. After re-reading this thread of comments, it must be exceedingly confusing to a new dentist to select an implant system. Very few dentists will disparage the system they are using because they pride themselves on being smart enough to pick a winner. People disparaging one system or another have probably used that system and switched to something else so they again want to think they made a smart move and extol the virtues of the new system they bought. SO WHAT IS THE ANSWER - Nobel, Straumann, MIS, Zimmer, Megagen, Osstem, BioHorizons, Imtek and Astra were all mentioned including Implant Direct. My suggestion is to study each company's website go through a checklist of important factors to make an intelligent decision:

1. Does the company offer a broad product line of tapered screw implants that includes narrow one-stage, two-stage and one-piece implants, along with a full line of abutments that include Straight snappy, straight and angled contoured abutments, overdenture and screw-receiving abutments, cast gold abutments, temporary abutments etc.
 - Any company can make a single two-staged screw implant with a few abutments.
 - Nobel does not make one-stage implants but it has one-piece implants
 - Straumann just started to sell two-stage implants but does not have any one-piece abutments.
 - Astra does not make a tapered implant nor does it make a one-piece or one-stage implant.
 - Imtek as a 2-stage tapered screw implant plus mini-implants.
 - Korean Implants like Osstem and Megagen will never convert an OS or Periodontist because of their unconventional designs and lack of prosthetic cross-compatibility.
 - MIS offers one-and two-stage tapered Screw-Implants and are made in Israel, a market that companies must compete on price first and quality second.

2. What is the company's reputation for quality... if the company is selling on price alone, it is not competing for quality with the major implant companies with established reputations for quality.

3. Does the company offer good customer support, an easy way to order the products and can they assure you that they have the production capacity to avoid back-orders.

4. Is their system organized with color coded labels, transfers platforms etc. and easily understood technical manuals and instruction videos.

5. Does their implant packaging simplify implant insertion and their abutments simplify prosthetic procedures.

6 Value and Convenience: Does the company charge for every screw or do they include cover screws in the implant packaging. Nobel, Astra and Straumann do not include the cover screws... add another \$40+ to the cost of the \$350 implant. Zimmer includes a cover screw and provides the implant on a fixture mount that is a transfer. BioHorizons includes the cover screw and a fixture mount that can be used as an abutment on some of its implants. Implant Direct offers All-in-one packaging that includes the cover screw, 2mm healing collar, transfer and abutment.

7. Cost: Implant Direct is creating a price-point shift in the implant industry by focusing on internet sales with a well trained staff of 30+ customer service people to facilitate the orders when necessary. Implant Direct does not pay opinion leaders to promote its products, nor does it give free implants to Universities or have a hundred outside salespeople running around or provide volume discounts or have the largest booth at trade shows. We offer everyday low prices whether you buy 1 or 1000. This works to the advantage of the GPs just getting started and those doing under 200 implants a year or those dentists just buying abutments because these low volume users have no leverage with the high priced companies to negotiate discounts, nor do they want to tie up their cash in inventory to take advantage of an end-of-quarter 100 implant volume discount that these companies push on their customers.

8. Implant Direct has many innovative implant options that even the largest companies do not offer, like one-piece implants with screw-receiving abutments for restoration of edentulous jaws and all of our implants combine mini-threads with double lead threads for faster insertion with less bone loss.

9. A long history of designing and making successful implants. I founded Core-Vent in 1982 and from 1991-1997 Dentsply distributed these products that were, in 1990, the world's leading selling implant. I sold out to what is now Zimmer Dental in 2001, and the Tapered Screw-Vent, Advent and SwissPlus I developed in 1999 accounts for over 90% of Zimmer Dental's sales today. As for manufacturing capacity, you can view Implant Direct's factory in operation 24/6 on 5 web camera's at www.implantdirect.com NO OTHER IMPLANT COMPANY OFFERS SUCH TRANSPARENCY TO ITS PRODUCT FACILITIES. As for quality, Implant Direct is the Challenge Brand, with surgically and prosthetically compatible implants to Nobel, Zimmer and as of this Monday, to Straumann. We need to have quality as good or better - otherwise these competitors would be marketing their better quality, and they are not. No other company offers 3 free implants to customers of the 6 major implant companies to try without any purchase or obligation - we find that almost everyone who does, re-orders. Here is how to get educated:

View the Factory Tour Video

http://www.implantdirect.com/us/swf/tour/ID_Tour_2F/ID_Tour_2F.html

View all or part of this 1.5 hour video lecture that will educate you on Implant Direct and its competitors:

http://www.implantdirect.com/us/swf/tour/product_overview/Prod_Ovw_VideoPlaylistSeq_1a.html

Open an account to receive newsletters and to view our shopping cart with direct price

comparisons to the major competitors

<http://www.implantdirect.com/us/tutorial/v8/parts/01.html>

Read our October and December Newsletters for industry and case reports, new products and 5 free implant intro offer for Teeth-in-1Day restorations.

http://www.implantdirect.com/newsletter_0/products/value/value7.htm

http://www.implantdirect.com/newsletter_0/newsletter_16/newsletter_16_12_ar_3.htm

If any other company thinks this information is accurate or of value, then they should post links to their website to help education dentists trying to separate fact from marketing rhetoric. It boils down to Quality, Options, Price, Packaging, Prosthetics and Innovation.

Quote: (Implants Specialist)

I place and teach all Nobel and Straumann systems.

I like the idea that these 2 companies have by far the most extensive literature support for them and my referring dentists seem to be extremely happy restoring these cases.

However, my advice to you would be to consider which company is best represented in your region.

For example, if Company A is more inexpensive but has only 1 rep covering a large area, you'll find when you need that rep (and you will quite a bit in the beginning), the service just won't be there.

If Company B has 5 reps covering the same area and that Implant System is one of the reliable ones, then by far go with that. Having support when you need it is extremely important.

Hope this helps.

Cheers.

Dr. Anastasios (Tassos) Irinakis

Director of Graduate Periodontics & Implant Surgery, UBC

Certified Specialist in Periodontics

Clinical Associate Professor, UBC

Founder & Director of I.D.E.A.S. Institute for Dental Education & Advanced Surgeries

Hands-On Patient Based CE Courses (implants/bone grafts)

www.dentalideas.ca

Quote: (Niznick)

I see you teach at University of British Columbia Canada. Didn't Nobel donate \$5,000,000 to that school and name the teaching center after itself? Wonder where they got that money to donate. It wasn't selling \$150-\$200 implants. I see you are a Periodontist. What kind of support exactly are you looking for. You certainly do not need support in showing you how to place an implant if you are teaching them. If you are looking for support for your referring dentists to help them learn how to take a transfer impression or buy an abutment, you could just send them a link to one of these videos and using Implant Direct's products, you could also send them the free fixture-mount that comes with each implant and can be used as the transfer and final abutment so they do not need to order (and pay for) anything.

Straumann platform

http://www.implantdirect.com/us/pop-out/SwissPlant_TeamApproach_HiQ.htm

Nobel platform http://www.implantdirect.com/us/pop-out/ReActive_RestorativeProcedures_FixtureMount_HiQ.htm

Quote: (Implants Specialist)

Niznick,

I don't appreciate your response turning into something so personal and insinuating that the advice I gave you or my clinical choices for my patients is "tainted" or "influenced" by what the university I work for decided to do with donation money.

That is very belittling to even go there.

My advice was purely based on the experience of what is going on here in BC and my referring dentists along with numerous friends in the community. It's unfortunate you felt you needed to attack my integrity just because the school I teach in accepted this donation. I worked extremely hard to get where I am. If you don't want someone's opinion you don't have to accept it in the future.

I never spoke against any other implant company...ever! (Unlike you do all the time) .You can search as much as you want on these postings and you will never see such a posting from me. I keep those kinds of opinions to myself. Therefore, don't suggest with an "attitude" that my views are biased due to an actual monetary donation to the university.

Quote: (Niznick)

I don't know why you would take it personally that I pointed out UBC took \$5,000,000 from Nobel. I only cited it to show that Nobel must have gotten that money from its customers from selling overpriced products. You have stated why you prefer Nobel and Straumann: most extensive literature (proving exactly what?), most number of salespeople (they are called sales-people not support-people), friends in your community use these systems (herd instinct). My posting addressed the issue that you thought so important in choosing a system... use the company that charges the most because they can afford to have a lot of salespeople running around convincing dentists to pay the high prices. They seem to have you convinced, but can you really say with all honesty that you use either Nobel or Straumann because they have the best designs, best strength, best surgical protocol, best prosthetic options, best packaging, best design options OR the best value for you, your referring dentists and their patients?

I DIDN'T THINK SO. Of course you are above being influenced by which company pays you to lecture, gives millions to the university you work at or allows you to justify high prices because of their perceived prestige and acceptance, both of which are created by their spending the money they get from soaking dentists using their system.

So lets talk a minute about "most extensive literature support" because this is all part of the same BS they use to sell their products for premium prices. What research did Nobel have on its NobelDirect with TiUnite to the top or its NobelPerfect with the scalloped margins when it came to the market? Albrektsson and the University of Gotthenberg sure documented some scary results with these two implants resulting in the Swedish Department of Health restricting their marketing and the FDA requiring new limitations on their indications for use. And what about NobelActive? Nobel cites a "study" by the three Israeli dentists who were smart enough to sell this implant to Nobel, but the study was not published in a peer review journal, only in a poster presentation at Nobel's global meeting in LV. Nobel cited the 98% claimed success from this obviously bias and unreliable report on Alpha Bio's Israeli implant and extrapolated it to their NobelActive implant. An obvious problem with this was that the two implants had different surfaces - Alpha Bio's was SLA and NobelActive is TiUnite. Look up Research on Nobel's website for NobelActive and they proudly announce two 5 year studies... "UNDERWAY." The first

year results they show had more bone loss and a lower success rate than the NobelReplace included on the study - but yet Nobel advertises NobelActive as the Implant of the Future. I guess this means that sometime in the future they may prove it works, but in the short term, more dentists are reporting failures with this implant than with Replace implant. Contact Loma Linda University if you do not believe me. Now Straumann does have the best researchers that money can buy... the ITI group cost them millions a year. When you want to justify charging \$50 more for an implant packaged in saline than you charge for the same implant dry, you need a lot of bull shit articles and paid opinion leaders to sell that story. And can they show any clinical advantage - No unless you are a mini-pig and you get to live a few weeks longer if you had the wet one.

Why don't you take a little time to learn what is really important in implant design, like the relationship between the taper of the implant and the dimensions of the drill, so that you can increase initial stability in soft bone to improve your chances with early loading. How about putting a vertical cutting groove in the implant, something both Replace and Straumann designs lack, so that you can eliminate the use of a bone tap again increasing initial stability. How about using stronger material than the pure titanium that can fracture on the 3.5mmD NobelReplace during insertion? How about Straumann offering a narrow diameter implant with an internal connection, instead of the 1.6mm high external octagon of their narrow implant? Don't underestimate the importance of the kind of technical support my response to your posting showed... videos, shopping cart etc.

In conclusion, I do not question your integrity, only your knowledge and judgment. Take a few drinks of wine and re-read this email to see what you can learn because there is much you do not seem to understand. You are not alone as many surgical specialists are vulnerable to the type of sales and peer pressure Nobel and Straumann can apply.

Regards,
Jerry Niznick

Quote: (Implants Specialist)

Oh my dearest Jerry.

It's always a pleasure watching you ride your "high horse" and questioning other people's knowledge and judgment (as per your last e-mail).

It's funny how you feel you need to pummel other professionals, specialists and committed educators, that although don't use your system, never spoke against it or any other system really.

It's unfortunate to watch someone who's been financially so successful and sold his company for hundreds of millions and has a remarkable story behind him, to fall to that level.

Just because I refused your offer to fly me with your private jet to a meeting together and I refused to switch to your system, does not mean in any way that I have anything against your system. I appreciated the fact that you approached me in September but I do not appreciate your personal attack when you don't even know me beyond that brief approach of yours a few months ago.

Even after all you're questioning of my knowledge and judgment, I still have nothing to say against your system.

Nor will you ever hear me slam any implant system for that matter.

If you don't agree with my views then state your opinion in a respectful manner, without insinuating (or outright accusing) someone you know nothing about. This

website is about sharing our experiences and offering advice when asked; not for insinuations or accusations.
You can do better than that.

Quote: (Niznick)

First time a paid opinion leader for Nobel ever called me "dearest." I must really have them worried.

Although your response refers 3 times to my approaching you with offers to fly you in my jet and solicitations to switch to my system, I had to call my Canadian office to find out who you were. Only after several minutes of conversation did I put two and two together. You were the young dentist doing the NobelActive infomercial at the AAP Corporate Forum. Right after that lecture, I bumped into you for no more than 1 minute as you were walking into the hotel and I did offer to discuss with you the advantages of ReActive to NobelActive. You told me to call you but I never really gave it or you another thought, and when I read your blog, I did not relate it you.

The topic of this thread is "NOBEL - worth it!"

Your comments were that it is because they have extensive research, a large sales force, a lot of your peers use it and your referring dentists seem happy. This is coming from a guy who probably got paid thousands of dollars for a half hour talk at Nobel's Corporate forum before the AAP meeting and was founder and director of I.D.E.A.S. Inc. that advertises on its home page 2 day NobelActive training programs for \$2950 + 5% tax. And you took offense that I questioned your affiliation with UBC because it took \$5M from Nobel. Your financial bias for Nobel apparently is a lot stronger than merely teaching at a University that was the beneficiary of Nobel's sales at such a high price that they could afford to give away about \$18M in 2007-2008 to buy influence at universities around the world. So maybe it is you who should get off of your high horse as you have suggested I do, and stop trying to mislead the readers into thinking that your advocacy for Nobel is purely untainted by commercialism. At least when dentists read my comments they can judge them based on their merits knowing that I have a financial interest in an implant company. You bought up my financial success in the implant industry but that has not dampened my enthusiasm for bringing new and better products to the market. One of my key inventions was the lead-in bevel/internal hex connection (US Pat. # 4,960,381) on the NobelActive now that the patent expired October, 2007. There are no patents on the NobelActive so the only thing that is stopping me from cloning it and undercutting Nobel's \$399 US price (without a cover screw) by making the NizActive at \$150 including the cover screw and a fixture mount/transfer/abutment is that I think it is the worst design to come along in 25 years, and I have stated that publicly in an interview <http://www.implantdirect.com/pdf/MedTechInterview.pdf> and explained in detail http://www.implantdirect.com/us/documents/pdf/compare/nobel/scala_letter.pdf to Mr. Scala, president of Nobel Biocare, why I felt this way. After that letter, and the posting of a slide series on my web under the heading "Critical Analysis of NobelActive Implant"

http://www.implantdirect.com/us/ppt/NobelActive_Internal_and_External.ppt

Nobel canceled its launch of the NobelActive External.... at least they got it half right. The marketplace will have a far greater influence on the future of this implant than any of my reports because any implant that the company has to recommend "for experienced users" in its journal advertisements, is an implant that is technique sensitive and will therefore be more likely to run into problems. And these problems are showing up and starting to be reported, just like the problems that came to surface on NobelDirect and NobelActive that resulted in the FDA requiring Nobel publish a change in their indications for use.

OK...enough said about our mutual financial interests dictating what we advocate. Why don't you address the real issues of "NOBEL - worth it?" Reps are nice, and I have two in Vancouver where you live. If I had 4 it would not make my system any better or worse. We have state-of-the-industry technical support through our website and through 35 technical support people I personally spend time training every week. Just call 888-NIZ-NICK. Research is also nice but with the designs and surfaces changing so rapidly, what system really has long-term credible prospective studies? Everyone knows that a titanium screw with a rough surface will osseointegrate and once that happens, the implant will have long-term survival if it doesn't fracture or the connection is not unstable. As I stated before, where is the research for

NobelActive? Oh yes, the 5 year studies will be out in 3 years. Sounds like NobelDirect - when the studies did come out the results were disappointing. Sounds like NobelPerfect except by 5 years no one was using it - or at least no one who had to buy it. You mention Straumann, and I agree they are far more research oriented than Nobel, but you are teaching Nobel and probably just mentioned Straumann to look objective.

So my dearest Tassos, you should pay for your own airline ticket and come to Los Angeles to visit Implant Direct's factory and learn why "IMPLANT DIRECT (is) worth it!

Quote: (Implants Specialist)

ha ha ha..

This is so funny. You made my day my fellow Canadian.

Its funny how your rep or whatever that person from your office is, insisted that you'd fly me on your jet out to meet you as long as I could just somehow make the time in my schedule. But I guess when we look back at things we recall them a certain way, eh? (Notice the Canadian "eh"?)

As for Straumann, I teach them on a graduate level in Canada and on an international level and actually I'm on my way to Asia establishing a Straumann implant grad program....but why would you care to know, eh? (Again that "eh"...just to remind you your roots).

The funniest thing is again you love to go nuts with anyone who doesn't support your system (noticed how I actually never spoke against it...just never supported it.....difference I guess in our characters, eh?)

It has been truly entertaining doing this with you. Not upset anymore. You put a smile on my face.

In any case, now I see where you get your "nickname" here in Canada. (Another smile on my face right now)

Good luck with your sales. Obviously you are doing extremely well and obviously you are an intelligent guy and use your time wisely.

So I'll do the same and bother with more interesting things than these replies.

Right on, Niz. I'll cheer you on in your quest. Cheers

ADDITIONAL REPSPONSE.

Quote: (Implants Specialist)

Oh there is nothing alleged about it.

But that's not a problem to me. I may not connect on a personal level with Jerry or like what he does or how he attacks people....but I can't deny he's a brilliant man who made a fortune (hundreds of millions) by using that mind and not by luck. So I have no problem with his jet. He deserves the success he got. Just don't know why he has to be so "difficult" some times. Cheers

Quote: (Niznick)

Why I am so difficult is that dentists deserve to know the truth so that they can make an informed decision about what is good for their patients and their practice. This industry is plagued with intentional misinformation put out by companies and their paid opinion leaders, including phony studies and testimonials. I have posted my analysis of many of these "studies" that started in 1984 for those who think I am just paranoid.

http://www.implantdirect.com/company/cl_navmain.html

here is one in particular that was false and misleading, written by Peter Moy, the next president of the Academy of Osseo integration and used against me by Nobel and Albrektsson. It purports to compare 100 consecutively placed Branemark Implants to 100 consecutively placed Core-Vent implants - the only problem was that 15 Branemark implants that should have been included were not and of these 11 failed. The study further biased the results by coming up with a criteria for failure that was subjective - called prospective failures, and then applying this phony criteria to Core-Vent's disadvantage.

<http://www.implantdirect.com/company/1987/moy1.html>

So when I see an "academic" like yourself pontificating as to which system a dentist should use, without disclosing this financial ties to the company or companies he is advocating, and while holding himself up to be unbiased and objective, I go off the deep end and spend my valuable time setting the record straight. Then I post my blogs on Implant Direct's website for future reference. I don't have any problem with you charging Nobel and Straumann as much as you can for your advocacy... the more they pay you the less they can price compete with me, but when you use the imprimatur of your academic credentials to promote the two highest priced products, without disclosing your financial relationship, and ask me to get off my high horse, you can expect me to come back with guns blazing.