

Vision, focus and IP, a powerful mix

Please allow me to share this inspiring story about a person with a vision, someone with incredible focus and persistence. It is about William Ankoné, a dentist in the city of Enschede, the same place where I hold my office. Besides his busy practice, William is developing some complementary businesses and innovations, closely related to the dental practice. In one of these innovations, I was blessed to play a part. The invention is branded under the name DentalColors and is not only a new technology, more an entire visionary concept on dental treatment, in which an entire range of products will be developed and launched.



The corporate identity of DentalColors [1]

For me, the story commences somewhere back in 2009, when in one of the meetings of a residential gentlemen's club, William asked me if I could help him protect an invention. Well, sometimes I still think I should have said no, but it is difficult to say no to someone like William. Since he was trying to save money, we traded my services for a relative modest fee and an entire kitchen. Yes a kitchen! I had none to fit in my new apartment and William had a spare kitchen left over. Was it a good deal? Well from a financial point probably not, but I would not have liked to miss the experience of knowing the inspiring thinking of this very unique dentist.

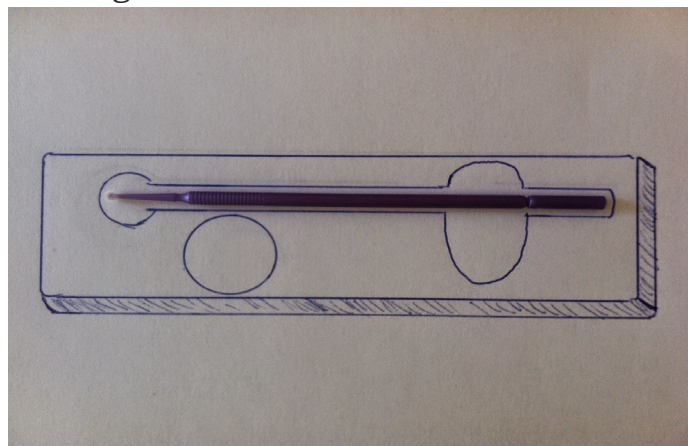
In his daily dental routine, William was frustrated about the impractical way of getting

indicator fluids from the bottle to the teeth he was working on. Especially the indicator fluids for caries were quite cumbersome. These fluids come in a bottle, need to be poured in a vial, known as a dappen dish, and a small brush is then used to dip in the vial in order to apply with the brush the indicator fluid to the tooth under examination. If caries is still detected, more dental material needs to be removed, after which the routine of dipping and application is re-



Dappen dish as offered by e.g. Australian Safety Wholesalers [2]

peated, until no caries is anymore detected. The dappen dish, as shown in the image above does not allow the brush to be left standing upright inside it, simply because its walls are too low. It also does not allow the brush to rest on the rim stable enough for it not to slide off. Thus as most dentists would immediately agree, it becomes messy pretty soon. An alternative comes in the form of syringes for single patient use only. Unfortunately that is not always the case, causing cross contamination risks.



A conceptual design of the DentalColors tray including an applicator brush.

In his search, William made some first prove of principle prototypes. These prototypes he showed me and they looked, honestly, as clumsy blocks. How could I know, I am not a dentist. At the rare chances I could have learned, I was mostly stifled from fear in the dentist chair, unable to study in detail the actions taken by the dentist working on me.

I must admit, at first I wasn't very convinced about the idea. Worse even, I wasn't very convinced about the persisting nature of William. The first patent application, well, after a dozen of versions, I stopped counting them. I think went through about twenty versions and drafts before it was good enough to obtain Williams approval. Never ever did a client research my patent drafts with such scrutiny. It was frustrating, time consuming and painstaking, but the result appeared to be great....



A 3D model of the DentalColors caries indicator tray [3]

This perfect patent application was filed and about 6 month later, early spring last year, we received the search report and written opinion. It was devastatingly destroying, and abandonment of the idea of protection appeared the most evident option. However, not to William, oh no. Giving up was simply no option, so we sat down, took all the documents we could possibly find including those cited in the search report and we made a claim chart. Quite an extensive claim chart it became. We spend a full Saturday combining features and checking the state of the art, until we had put in sufficient technical features that it would be highly impossible for any patent examiner to doubt the patentability.

References:

- [1] <http://www.dentalcolors.com/>
- [2] <http://www.australiansafetywholesalers.com/>
- [3] <http://www.3dworknet.com>

And there it was, after about another half year, a very positive opinion was issued by the dutch patent authorities. Since the patentability issue is off the table, now it is up to William to make this invention a success.



The first produced DentalColors PlaQ™ tray

Will this technology be successful?

Indeed, this technology is going to be extremely successful. The persistence, focus, and vision of William Ankoné will be unstoppable, and the concept of DentalColors will be in each and every dental practice, around the globe, sooner than we can imagine. This, because William understood and applied the powerful mix of vision, focus and IP.

Hendrik de Lange

This Article is also published on:
Octrooifabriek.blogspot.nl

