

Behind quality and precision are committed employees

Quality management is particularly important in the area of medical technology. Constant improvements in processes at all levels of development and production guarantee flawless products.

Quality – made in Switzerland

You don't get quality just by using technology and machines; it is the excellent workmanship of the people involved that makes the difference. Our products are manufactured in Villeret in the Swiss Jura mountains. The people of this region, whose culture and mentality has been molded by the Swiss watch- and clock-making industry for almost 150 years, are renowned for their long tradition of mechanical precision. A very high proportion of the employees in Villeret are responsible for ensuring production quality and for final inspections.

Straumann's value chain

Producing the ITI® DENTAL IMPLANT SYSTEM involves handling of very small parts. When we talk about "tolerances" we are talking about hundredths or even thousandths of millimeters. Titanium, the basic material for our implants, also puts high demands on production.

Using this material in turning, drilling, milling, etc. results in significant wear to tools. As a result, the machines have to be constantly monitored during programmed operation to ensure strict compliance with the parameters specified. This means there has to be close interaction between human expertise and commitment and the technical "partner", the production machine.

Focusing on quality assurance

In 2002, we started to transfer the packing and final inspection of products from Waldenburg to Villeret. This process will be completed by the end of June 2003 at the latest.

We have also strengthened our subcontractors' responsibility and expertise in relation to their direct quality control. We regularly audit our suppliers who, although independent "third parties", are fully integrated into our internal quality system.



Straumann production facility in Villeret

New production organization in 2003

As long as Straumann continues to grow, 200 employees in Villeret will be producing our products on around 60 CNC machines towards the end of 2003. Preparations are currently underway for successively fitting out the additional spaces planned during the construction of the new production building.

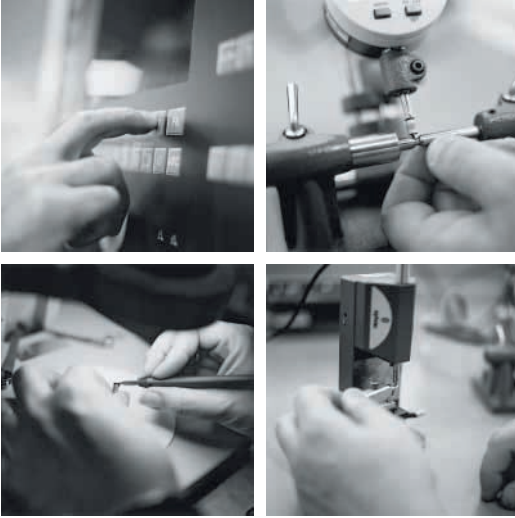
This year, we are planning a major reorganization of production. Up to now, our work was "linear" and "traditional", i. e., it took the form of specialized production; individual steps in the turning, grinding, milling and assembly processes were performed at specially equipped stations.

The restructuring in Villeret will involve introducing what are known as "production families". These production cells for implants, abutments, cutting tools, etc. are discrete, independent units, in which groups of operators are responsible for everything from the initial material to the finished product. Bundling know-how and responsibilities in these "families" increases the level of specialization and helps employees to identify with "their" product.

Number of employees increased again

Employee levels in the Straumann Group as a whole grew by 12% year-on-year to around 750. Our reputation as a modern employer helps us not just to find the right people for key positions but also to strengthen our longstanding workforce with new, highly qualified professionals.

In Switzerland, our employees can profit from attractive terms of employment. For us, however, it is much more important to be able to offer our employees attractive, future-oriented areas of activity. We want each employee to be able to develop further in specific areas and make a decisive contribution to the company's success.



The processing of titanium is extremely challenging.

Quality Management – an integrated system

To protect patients, the manufacture of medical devices is strictly controlled by official requirements. These are the European “Medical Device Directive: MDD 93/42/EEC” and the American requirements formulated in the “Food and Drug Administration/ Good Manufacturing Practice: FDA/GMP 21 CFR 820”. According to MDD 93/42/EEC, as a manufacturer we must ensure that the medical device has been developed, produced and packaged in line with the provisions of the European directive.

As a matter of principle, we fulfill all official requirements relating to the production of medical devices. The Straumann Quality Management system conforms to ISO 9001 and EN 46001, and is regularly reviewed by our “notified body” – Technischer Überwachungsverein (TÜV) Munich – and by the American Food and Drug Administration (FDA). We have passed all these tests without exception. We successfully passed the most recent TÜV audit in December 2002.

In 2003, we will obtain certification in line with the new ISO 9001:2000. Our process-oriented Quality Management manual, which is available to all employees in electronic form already conforms to the new standard. This was confirmed by TÜV Munich in its annual routine audit of our company.

Group-wide expansion of IT

In 2002, we successfully replaced the local SAP system in Straumann Germany with a group-wide solution as part of our multi-year SAP rollout project. SAP R/3 was also introduced at Straumann Austria, alongside the project in Freiburg/Breisgau. In addition, corresponding projects were implemented for Straumann Netherlands and Straumann France. Both subsidiaries have been using SAP R/3 since January 2003. Our Information Technology unit is expanding the group-wide intranet Lotus Notes and increasing its functionality.

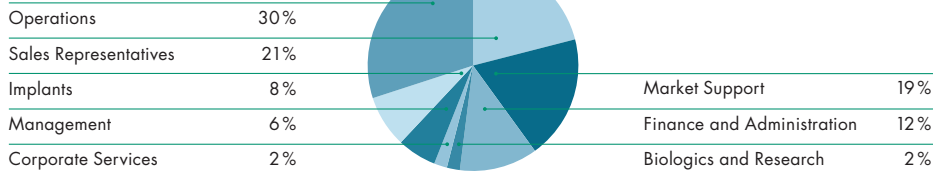
IT activities in 2003

2003 is the year in which IT, besides being active in other tasks, is in charge of the SAP rollouts at Straumann Canada, Straumann USA, Straumann Spain and Straumann United Kingdom. Working closely with the Implants Division, we are establishing PLM (Product Life Cycle Management) based on SAP R/3.

To support our customer relationships and services, we will introduce a CIS (Customer Information System) in 2003 based on Lotus Notes. This will enable sales employees to obtain sales data more readily so that they can react to customer requests even more quickly and flexibly.

This year, the Straumann IT unit is starting to prepare for our move to Basle with a number of projects. In this context, the IT infrastructure will be defined for 2005 and thereafter.

Employees according to function



Employees according to region

