

Jordco—Establishing an “Endoring” Tradition

Jordco, Inc., was established in 1979 by James Johnsen, DMD, and Hal Oien, DMD, while attending the Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU) School of Dentistry in Portland, Oregon. Jordco is an acronym for Johnsen Oien Research and Development Company. It not only incorporates the names of the founders, but also includes the basic commitment to continue the research and development of dental products that make procedures easier, safer, and more productive.

During their junior year of clinical training in endodontics, it became apparent to Drs. Johnsen and Oien that the handling of sharp and contaminated dental files was dangerous and lacked organization. From their experiences working in the undergraduate endodontic clinics, the concept of Jordco's flagship product, the original Endoring® (Figure 1) was formed. The original Endoring® was designed on a napkin, and the early prototypes were constructed with pink denture wax and cast from copper pennies. Early design engineering was often done at the kitchen table, and prototypes were built and tested in the dental school student simulation laboratory.

After developing the initial concept and prototypes, it became apparent that Drs. Johnsen and Oien would need assistance in getting the Endoring® into production. The late Paul Klein, DMD, a clinical professor of orthodontics at OHSU was also an inventor, pioneer in orthodontic elastics, and an inspiring mentor. Dr. Klein directed them to a local plastic injection-molding company to help refine their design and manufacture the Endoring®.

Drs. Johnsen and Oien established a marketing relationship with Almore International, a locally owned dental supply company, to market and distribute the Endoring®. In 1980, the Endoring® was introduced to the dental profession, and it was soon recognized by dentists throughout the world as a simple and elegant solution for managing endodontic files and minimizing accidental IM sticks caused by passing files between dentists and their assistants.

The Endoring's unique and practical design finally allowed the dentist to manage, clean, measure, and control endodontic files at chairside under direct operator control. It also eliminated the need to pass dangerous sharp instruments to and from the assistant. As a result, the Endoring's first marketing theme was “Meet Your New Assistant” and the original Endoring® was launched.

After successfully launching the Endoring® and graduating from dental school, Drs. Johnsen and Oien began their individual private practices. As practicing dentists, both founders identified many procedures that could be improved to increase safety and meet evolving infection-control guidelines. Their challenge was to develop better instruments and products to meet the needs that confronted all dentists.

While the majority of Jordco's product line is devoted to endodontics, several products serve the general dental professional as well. One example is the Pure Buff® (Figure 2) polishing system. Introduced more than 20 years ago, the Pure Buff® was one of the first dental devices targeted at infection control at a time when the profession was beginning to embrace improved infection control as a standard of care. The single-use Pure Buff® polishing wheel was designed to reduce cross contamination associated with the dental “rag wheel” used to polish acrylic appliances in the dental office. Time-consuming pre-disinfection of appliances was no longer necessary after each single or multiple chairside adjustment.



Figure 1: The original Endoring® was introduced in 1980



Figure 2: The Pure Buff® polishing system was one of the first dental products targeted at infection control

Throughout its history, Jordco has continued to introduce new innovative products and improved several existing products. As part of Jordco's mission, the founders recognized the importance of modifying existing products as dental procedures evolved in complexity and scope.

The Endoring® II (Figure 3) was introduced in response to changes in the delivery of dental care, customer input, and to further improve safety and performance for the end user. A major enhancement during the Endoring® II design was the addition of the laser-etched metal ruler. The laser-etched metal ruler with precise half millimeter markings was designed to work seamlessly with the Endoring® II and can also be used with the original Endoring®. The Endoring® Ruler is highly accurate and allows the user to easily read and precisely set working lengths in the operating field.

Reusable and disposable Gelwell® cups were developed as an optional and detachable system to conveniently hold lubricating gels on the side of the Endoring® II. Jordco's Endogel® was developed as an improved lubricating gel to compliment the Gelwells®. Endogel's proprietary formula is highly water soluble and has become the ideal lubricating gel used by dental practitioners worldwide.

One new addition to the Endoring® family, the Endoring® FileCaddy® (Figure 4), has transformed root canal therapy by further enhancing safety and efficiency. The FileCaddy® allows for the organization of endodontic instruments in a specially designed

case, which eliminates the spilling and loss of expensive files in the dental office. Rotary and hand files are easily loaded into the FileCaddy®. With the lid snapped closed, the FileCaddy® can be steam autoclaved without the use of a bag or wrap. At chairside, and with one hand, the assistant can remove only those files that will actually be used in the procedure, eliminating unnecessary steam autoclaving of unused files.

During its 32-year history, Jordco has evolved into a world-class dental products innovator and manufacturer by embracing the latest science, production technology, and commitment to quality. Almost 20 years ago, the founders assumed all domestic and international marketing responsibility for their entire product line while further expanding their research and development program. This consolidation allowed Jordco to open an FDA-



Figure 3: The Endoring® II was introduced in response to changes in endodontic delivery systems including microscopes

registered assembly and distribution center located in Beaverton, Oregon (Figure 5). All of Jordco's products are developed and manufactured in the United States. All of Jordco's manufacturing partners are located in the United States, and all share a common dedication to quality in every Jordco part produced.

Consolidation also allowed Jordco to establish a quality system compliant with the international standard ISO 13485 for medical devices. The Jordco Quality System is used to comply with biannual FDA inspections, FDA Premarket Notification 510 (k) approvals, and CE mark acceptance. The Jordco Quality System is the driving force behind the company's determination to develop, manufacture, package, and distribute world class



Figure 4: The Endoring® FileCaddy® has transformed root canal therapy by further enhancing safety, convenience and efficiency

products to the dental profession. The Jordco team of employees works passionately to fulfill the goal spelled out in the Jordco quality system:

"Jordco's vision is to provide the dental community with



Figure 5: During its 32-year history, Jordco has evolved into a world class dental products innovator and manufacturer

quality products that will simplify the delivery of care."

In addition to major changes in the Jordco business model, the founders also moved forward to connect to their professional roots with US and international dental schools. For more than 15 years, Jordco's Student Sample Program has supplied Endoring® II samples free of charge to most of the undergraduate and graduate endodontic programs in the United States. The same program is also provided to many schools in the United Kingdom, Canada, and one in Australia. Jordco participates in many continuing education events throughout the world and partners with a number of leading clinicians who use its products in their CE courses.



Figure 6: The Jordco System of products compliment each other and work in concert from diagnosis through all phases of treatment

Jordco continues to refine its product line and has recently introduced the Jordco System concept (Figure 6). This system works on the premise that Jordco products compliment each other and work in concert from diagnosis through all phases of treatment. One example is the Endoring® family of products that help diagnose, organize, and safely improve the delivery of root canal therapy. This family includes the Endoring® II, Gelwells®, Endogel®, e-Foam®, FileCaddy®, e-Ruler®, e-Dx®, and the new Jordco Mixing Stick.

New Jordco endodontic products are under development and will be released in the near future to further compliment the Jordco System. To learn more about Jordco products, visit its website and soon-to-open e-Store at www.jordco.com.

This information was provided by Jordco Inc. 

