



# Ueli Breitschmid – man on a mission

Authors — Bruno Affentranger and Angel Gonzalo

Better oral health for everyone – good health starts in the mouth. This is the goal Curaden has set itself. The Swiss company has the products, methods and knowledge to achieve better oral health. At the heart of it all is Ueli Breitschmid, owner and representative of the second generation of the family business and spiritus rector of the AVOLA movement. And he is driven by a very particular motivation.

## Ueli Breitschmid

**The Lucerne company Curaden has made a global name for itself with dental care solutions. Behind this success story stands the Swiss entrepreneur Ueli Breitschmid, who has elevated his father's work to the level of 'comprehensive oral health'.**

is about and how it works. I basically want to understand things.”

This may sound exhausting, but for Ueli Breitschmid it is a precondition for the company and its workforce to keep improving. The entrepreneur is consciously forging his own path: supported not just by his own agility or company history with almost seventy years of tradition, but above all through intelligent linking and knowledge transfer. This is unusual in an industry that has primarily focused on volume sales.

#### **Prevention first and foremost**

One vision has driven Ueli Breitschmid right from the start: he wants prevention to play a more important and larger role in the healthcare sector. The aim is to train specialists and dentists, but also doctors, nursing staff, behavioural economists and many others accordingly. In Ueli Breitschmid’s healthier world, there is little room for so-called “repair medicine”. Prevention is everything. This joined-up way of thinking is only just starting to catch on. Entire societies want to restructure their healthcare systems in such a way that prevention efforts no longer languish in single-digit percentage figures; ideally boosting their share to half of total healthcare expenditure. They are all a long way from achieving this. But Ueli Breitschmid is not one to back down.

#### **A network of interests – all serving each other**

It is no wonder that Ueli Breitschmid’s world brings together and intermeshes much more than we expect from conventional entrepreneurs. Together with his daughter Christine and an over 900-strong team, he has built up a net-

work of methods, products, brands and companies. These include mechanical, chemical and electrical products as well as knowledge transfer and corresponding motivation and support programs.

#### **Changing the world**

More surprising is the sense of mission that Ueli Breitschmid embodies and with which he continues to grow the business founded by his father. He strives to make the world a better place – by improving health. His approach is holistic. Knowledge transfer through dental training programs such as iTOP or his commitment to an interdisciplinary approach, as espoused by the AVOLA ASSOCIATION.

His world is not the finished article. Companies and ventures grow organically as opportunities allow. One thing leads to another. While in hindsight it may all seem like a grand plan, in reality it is a reflection of his life: random, full of contradictions, the result of persistent probing and a way of thinking that is reviewed and reformulated on a daily basis – a radical approach! Because belief alone is not enough for this entrepreneur: he wants to understand and, if in doubt, do everything differently to others. His curiosity spurs him on and pushes him further. He is troubled, for instance, by the question of why prevention still does not command the status in society that our health deserves. And it doesn’t stop with questioning alone: Ueli Breitschmid is a doer who encourages others to take action too. His motto is that we all have a lot more potential than we give ourselves credit for. We need to have ideas and follow them through. True to the saying: “I am what I think.” Ueli Breitschmid never stops thinking and taking action.

“I believe in a better world. And we can create it – it’s in our own hands,” says Ueli Breitschmid, owner of Curaden AG, which operates in more than ninety countries worldwide. So it comes as no surprise that the oral hygiene company sells more than just products and services: spreading the word on how to maintain a healthy mouth for life is just as important to Ueli Breitschmid. Because this is the crux of the matter: we all have it in our own hands to look after ourselves and our health. Ueli Breitschmid and many scientists around the world are convinced that systemic health begins in the mouth. After all, the mouth is the gateway to the body. Practising good oral hygiene benefits the microbiome and ultimately makes for a healthy person.

The well-connected entrepreneur is pursuing the vision of a healthier world. A world in which dedicated dental professionals, educated consumers and attractive, effective and safe products using simple methods work hand in hand to promote oral health. A world in which oral health makes a vital contribution to our happiness and well-being.

#### **Driven by an inquisitive mind**

Ueli Breitschmid’s approach to work and thinking has been very much his own since he joined the business at the end of the 1960s. He doubts and questions everything. Nothing is certain. Nothing is left unexamined. “There is no single truth,” he says. “That’s why I always want to know what something

“I believe in a better world. And we can create it – it’s in our own hands.”