

Interview with Gerald Niznick DMD, MSD, President of Paragon Implant Company

Dr. Gerald Niznick, DMD, MSD, has a 41-year history in the implant industry, starting with Core-Vent in 1982. After selling Core-Vent in 2000 to Zimmer Dental (today part of ZimVie), he founded Implant Direct in 2004 and remained its president through 2013 when he sold to what is today Envista.

Dr. Niznick started Paragon Implant Company in early 2022 in the same Los Angeles factory that he built in 1994 and leased to Zimmer Dental and Implant Direct. The anticipated launch date for his new patented implant designs is July 2024. Dental Tribune sat down with Dr. Niznick to talk about his return to the dental industry and what the future looks like for him and Paragon.

Dr. Niznick, you just started a new company last year — Paragon. What motivated you to re-enter the dental implant market at the age of 80, and how active are you in the company?

In the 10 years since I sold Implant Direct and retired from the implant industry, I have seen a tremendous increase in the number of dentists placing implants. This has been accompanied by increased complications. While there seems to be a new implant launched by each manufacturer every year or two, none of these “innovations” have adequately addressed these complications. My goal in designing Paragon’s new products, covered by 4 pending patents, is to minimize the incidents of both mechanical and biological complications and bring a high quality implant system to the market at a very affordable price. Implant Direct was credited with creating the Value Segment of the implant industry. With the price of implants today varying from \$85 to \$585, Paragon’s GEN5 implant at \$100 will make implants more affordable for patients and more profitable for dentists.

As for my personal involvement in Paragon, I lead the company as President and CEO. By October 2023 I had rehired about 30 of my former Implant Direct employees for a total force of over 60. We took delivery of 24 CNC machines and have a state-of-the-art facility capable of lights out production of 1,000,000 implants a year.

Let’s talk about Paragon. What unique selling proposition do Paragon products offer that you think you will again become a major factor in the dental implant industry?

The biggest concern in implant dentistry today is the incidence of peri-implantitis. There are many articles and courses dedicated to its treatment but little attention given to implant designs to minimize this complication. The treatment includes decontaminating the exposed neck of the implant after smoothing the blasted surfaces and removing threads. Paragon’s implants are provided with a 2.5 mm anodized, smooth neck to reduce the incidence of peri-implantitis and to accommodate uneven ridges and bone remodeling that follows immediate insertion.

Is there anything you can tell us about the GEN5 Implant System

Paragon's new GEN5™ implant is basically the body I developed for Implant Direct's Legacy implants but with a 2.5 mm smooth, anodized neck replacing the micro-threads. In addition, each implant has an extra 1 mm added to the standard implant lengths and the smooth neck has score lines at 1, 2 and 2.5 mm to provide greater vertical flexibility in placement. This becomes very advantageous in deciding to place the implant 1-stage or 2-stage and when placing implants in uneven ridges or extraction sockets.

Paragon's GEN5+ implant takes vertical flexibility and prosthetic simplicity to a new level. It is the same implant as a GEN5 but has a 2 mm friction-fit Extender that converts to a standard MUA with the attachment of a prosthetic screw. Other abutments are available for the Extender including straight and angled contoured, overdenture, and Angled Screw Channel abutments.

Do you have other implant designs you can share with us?

The Paragon System will also include a 1-piece implant, which I call NizPlant™, with a dual function platform. It is compatible with Locator Attachments for overdentures and can be used to support a fixed restoration.

What kind of company does Paragon strive to be?

Paragon will provide a narrow product line that includes "just what the dentist needs" to be successful. All products will be made in my state of the art factory, the former home of Core-Vent, Zimmer Dental and Implant Direct, in Calabasas California. With lights-out manufacturing, a well educated inside sales force and internet sales, Paragon will be able to sell the highest quality, made in America, implants for \$100, the same amount that Core-Vent charged in 1986 for the Screw-Vent, which was the first conical connection implant.

For our readers who want to learn more about Paragon and its products, is there a way for them to do that?

Visit our booth at the AAID Exhibit Hall and ask about our risk free introductory offer.

And finally, what are your thoughts on the dental implant industry as a whole? Is there anything that surprised you after your time away?

What surprises me the most is the number of general dentists who have gained the knowledge and experience to build successful implant practices and are willing to invest in the marketing to educate patients to the advantages of implant dentistry.