

# THE **LINK**

THE VOICE OF THE AMERICAN HAIR LOSS COUNCIL

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IN THIS ISSUE

## Never, Never Give Up!

One Client's Inspirational Story.

PAGE 20

## Things Your Sales Reps Wish You Knew

It would be funny if it weren't so true.

## 7 Tips for Online Leads

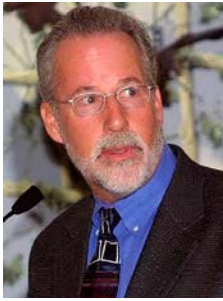
Generate more low-cost leads online!

**SAVE THE DATE!**

AMERICAN  
HAIR LOSS  
COUNCIL

2013 ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
**MAY 4-6, 2013**

SEE BACK COVER FOR DETAILS



# Hair Replacement Fashion & Innovation

## *The Italian way.*

CESARE RAGAZZI  
LABORATORIES

by: John Vincent

Do you know how to say “Luxurious, technologically advanced hair replacement systems in Italian”? Neither did I. Turns out, it is CesareRagazzi Laboratories™.

With Ferrari and Maserati motorcars, Prada and Gucci fashion, timeless art and romance, what country so quickly comes to mind? Italy, of course. But, what a revelation it is to me that after nearly 30 years in hair replacement, I would just now learn of a company that has a 90 percent recognition factor in their country.

I first learned of Cesare Ragazzi Laboratories (CRL) hair systems at the International Society of Hair Restoration Surgeons conference in the Bahamas this past September. According to CRL Chairman, Andrea Mandel-Mantello, by exhibiting to hair transplant surgeons and high-end hair replacement specialists; the company can progress with their plan to establish a presence in North and South America to work with quality affiliates.

For someone with a keen eye for hair systems, I was surprised to be introduced to the CEO of the company and an attractive female associate, without being aware they were wearing the CRL system. Their sophisticated approach was so subtle; I had actually walked past their booth several times before being directed to it by my colleague.

Mandel-Mantello elaborated on the company’s ambitions. I learned that they are a decades-old company manufacturing goods in Bologna, with more than 30 dealers throughout Italy and beyond. We discussed how their long history and brand recognition helps leverage exposure of their process and products worldwide.

My initial conversations led to an invitation to see the manufacturing process and centers. A couple of weeks later, my wife and I were on our way to Italy’s northern manufacturing hub to



John and his wife enjoying local cuisine

see both the production headquarters and their ‘tres chic’ flagship clinic firsthand. I was so enthusiastic about what CRL produces and the way they operate their clinics, the company asked me act as their “ambassador” to assist in their efforts to expand.

When we think of Italy, wonderful cars, high fashion and incomparable food and music come to mind. I wasn’t prepared, however, for the level of sophistication in CRL’s hair replacement process. It truly is a state-of-the-art production facility incorporating advanced technology to create what I can only describe as follicular works of art!

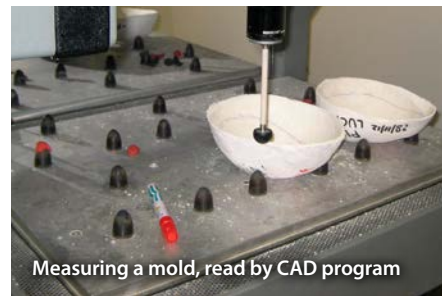
After being well fed and well lubricated with the local cuisine and liquid grape on the evening of our arrival, our hosts delivered us the next morning to CRL’s brand new manufacturing center completed last year. It is equipped with amazing production systems and machinery that would impress any engineer. But, it was the highly trained staff that really made the process ‘hum’. Mandel-Mantello describes CRL as what he believes to be the only completely vertically integrated hair system company in the world. I couldn’t dispute that. As an industry veteran, I’ve seen nothing like it.

It all starts with the hair. CRL uses only virgin human hair. The company matches the client’s natural color and wave from their extensive inventory of unprocessed, virgin human hair. Those of us with experience in this business know the pitfalls of using hair that has not had the cuticle removed. However, I watched as the their technician demonstrated a simple way of reversing tangling hair to keep it in the same direction up to the point that is put into the system. Frankly, I didn’t know that was possible.

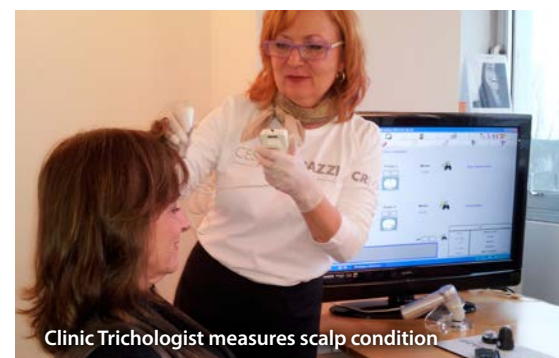
In a room that resembles something normally found in a high-tech medical research lab, we could see into a glass-walled room workers sanitizing an amazing piece of machinery that I learned was used to formulate a base material unique to CRL systems. Next, I watched as another machine “read” the inside dimension of a plaster-of-Paris cast of the client’s head. It automati-

cally sent the information to a CAD computer system. In turn, the information was relayed to a milling machine (effectively a 3D printer) that is capable of making 4 exact replicas of the client’s head.

I observed technicians in a separate clean production room, while working



Measuring a mold, read by CAD program

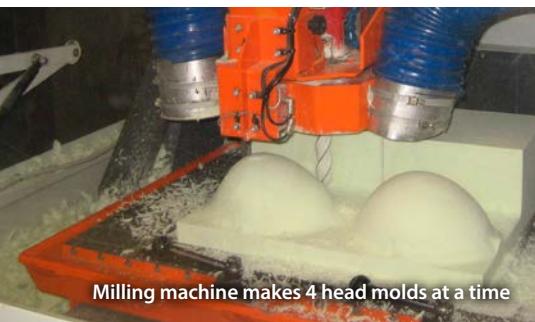


Clinic Trichologist measures scalp condition



Mixing base compound

with masks and ventilation equipment, build multiple layers of their proprietary coating to construct the base material formulated to match the client's own scalp. This resulted in a foundation into which hair would be implanted, one-at-a-time. A crew of expert artisans (a cross between a hair surgeon and an embroiderer) with well-lit magnification, precisely injected hair at a specific angle and density to re-create a natural head of hair in a human skin-like foundation.



Milling machine makes 4 head molds at a time

Company CEO, Stefano Ospitali, allowed me to observe how excess hair on the underside of the base is shaven and then secured with more of the proprietary base compound. The finished product has a smooth tapered edge to minimize detection.

The company headquarters contains a seminar classroom built to train new affiliates in its processes and practices. It is furnished in a manner that replicates what I later saw in the company's flagship clinic in Bologna. Mandel-Mantello states that CRL strives for uniformity of a superior experience for the customer; one that reinforces the customer's belief they are purchasing the finest hair products available.

At the clinic headquarters, the former

home of Bruno Magli shoes, the feeling of elegance and style was immediately apparent. The staff is dressed uniformly and fashionably. The clinic intentionally conveys a sense of being in a high-end med spa. In fact, we were in one. While I learned more of the business side of things, my wife was pampered with a complete hair and scalp treatment from the trichology staff members.

Initial consultations are held in a modern, European-style furnished room, free of clutter or distraction. Ospitali took me through a typical new client evaluation. Utilizing CRL instruments and proprietary software, a trained trichologist measures the condition of the scalp (oily or dry), its elasticity and the relative uniformity of the native hair's diameter. The results of the tests are fed into a computer system and displayed on a monitor for the client to see and discuss with the trichologist. The test results lead to a hair condition diagnosis and treatment prescription. Various treatment programs offered recommend a course for the client to follow to solve his or her hair loss problem, in addition to other hair and scalp conditions.

I learned that no matter what recommendations were provided from the consultation, no course of action, being trichology treatment or CRL system, is implemented until the client is seen by a CRL in-house dermatologist. Their physician performs a complete medical evaluation and patient workup. If the doctor agrees with the diagnosis for a

hair system, the client must wear a patch of the system base material and adhesive for several days to ensure that there is no adverse reaction. Once approved for a CRL system, a pattern and plaster mold is taken and the process begins. New clients often elect both a hair system and scalp treatment program.

Each CRL's client pays \$2,500 or more per system. New clients typically order multiple systems which are used on a rotation basis. I'm told the physician approval process, not accepting a client into a program until the doctor approves it, builds commitment in the mind of the new client?) This likely limits

buyer's remorse before delivery of the product.

I was able to watch a system delivery while there. Having witnessed hundreds, I was struck with the professional (there's that word again!) manner by which



Base compound applied to machined mold

this service is performed. CRL's own medical-grade hair and scalp preparation and adhesive compounds were used to apply the base material without removing any native hair. I couldn't help but notice that besides the trimming of the hair to blend with the client's own, the stylist mostly used her fingers and a cool hairdryer to complete the style. I attribute the naturalness of everything I saw to be a result of the technologically advanced base material, custom made for each client. The high-quality virgin hair, perfectly matched to the client's own color tone variety and density, as well as the implantation and natural cutting and styling method leads to a perfect blend between old and new.

**Want to get involved?** CRL plans an aggressive expansion program to gain affiliates for their product in the US and elsewhere. The company will be exhibiting its products and business opportunities at several events including The Orlando Live Surgery Workshop, held April 18-22, The American Hair Loss Council Conference in Fort Lauderdale, May 4-6 and the annual ISHRS meeting this fall in San Francisco.

CesareRagazzi Laboratories wishes to meet business owners one-on-one, to explain the opportunity to join their network of exclusive clinics. Week-long training programs are arranged for new affiliates and are held at the Bologna facility. **Please contact me at 805-597-3004 (clinic) or 407-257-4776 (cell).** Ciao! JV