

Travel toothbrushes: Q&A with Sonisk's William Cowley



The Pulse toothbrush comes with a travel cap, available in a variety of colours to cater to individual preferences

[Sonisk](#), a UK-based healthcare brand, is aiming to put the best oral care technology within everyone's reach. Backed by Dragon's Den entrepreneur Touker Suleyman, the company is on a mission to bring minimal fuss and the ultimate care to oral hygiene with its unique, portable electric toothbrushes that the brand says has massive application in amenity kits for the onboard industry. Inspired by travel and designing products that suit modern life, Sonisk has set out to take on who it deems "the big guys in the oral care world" and the team is ready to move quickly and do things differently to disrupt the market.

Sonisk's Brand Manager, William Cowley, took a seat to answer some questions about the company's latest product.

Tell us a bit about Sonisk and its products

Sonisk is looking to revolutionize the travel oral care market. We launched back in March 2021 with our hero product: the Sonisk Pulse. It's a battery-powered, travel toothbrush. We're keen to design products that suit modern life and we're inspired by travel. We are also tired of the big oral care players dominating the market.

How would you describe Sonisk in three words?

Playful, affordable, disruptive.

What makes your products different and exciting?

When you go on holiday or on a trip, we find that people either take a manual toothbrush or a big bulky toothbrush with a charger, and they struggle to recharge them. We came up with a product that is compact, lightweight and suitable for travel. It runs at 31,000 revs per minute and comes with a neat travel cap which is available in eight different colours to suit every demographic.

We've gone from strength to strength, with Sonisk now available in WHSmith travel stores in airports and train stations, Boots stores, plus 400 Sainsbury's stores under the travel category.

We see a huge opportunity in the airline space. Airlines offer oral care amenity packs in First Class lounges with one-use toothbrushes or manual toothbrushes that will get used on a flight and then binned or won't be used.

We are also developing a range of toothpastes, mouthwash, breath sprays, tablets and powders, which will come to fruition in six months' time. We'll also be offering travel-size products within that.

How are you responding to sustainability and plastic use?

Our products are plastic, yet they are not single-use. We envisage that holiday makers or travellers will use our brushes on the flight, as well as take them home and use them, or use them whilst on holiday.

How has Sonisk aligned with the onboard aspect for the airlines?

We're being guided by serial entrepreneur Touker Suleyman, so we're led by the best. This year, one of our main strategies focuses is onboard inflight retail as well as First Class lounges. Exhibiting at World Travel Catering & Onboard Services Expo (WTCE) for us is to showcase our products and show airlines and inflight service providers what we have to offer in terms of a difference to what is already out there. And, it's a chance to show how much better our products are compared to what people normally take on holiday.

Our products provide additional marketing benefits for airlines as they can opt for branding on our toothbrushes. People brush their teeth twice a day, every day, so it's a chance for their brand to be visible *everywhere*.

What feedback have you had on adapting your product for onboard?

For airlines and lounges — we haven't had the conversation as to how we can *differentiate* our products to suit them just yet. But we can do specific colours for airlines if they want. For example, we sell directly to the Swiss army and do a specific camouflage toothbrush for them. We're flexible in what we can create, provided that it remains clearly a Sonisk product.

What trends are going on in the travel industry at the moment?

There's a huge focus on sustainability in the travel industry. Everyone is focusing on sustainability and moving away from single-use plastic. We take on board that our products are plastic, but we use rechargeable batteries in our products, so it's not a product that just gets thrown away. We've also considered how we deliver the product in terms of packaging. For example, if it's cardboard, we'd look to differ that packaging to a more travel-friendly version.

We're also developing a full leather bag to go with the toothbrush and a pack of mini toothpaste. This will create a mini amenity kit for either First Class passengers or onboard retail.

How are you responding to different onboard price points?

I explored what airlines offer in Business Class compared to what they offer in First Class, and there is a real step up between the two. The real additional benefit of stocking Sonisk is that passengers can take the toothbrush with them after the flight. Yes, airlines can supply a good quality toothbrush in First Class, but they will likely be single-use and left on the flight.

What are you looking forward to at WTCE? What are your objectives?

This is our first time exhibiting at WTCE, so it's going to be a jump into the deep end for us. But what a way to start — with a brand that is disrupting the oral care market! We're going to go in with a splash and have some fun.

We want to enjoy ourselves, meet as many people as possible in the industry and learn from our industry peers. We also want to be introduced to airlines that could be of interest to us as well as full-service providers that we can tap into. I think that could be an interesting revenue stream for us.

What show tactics are you bringing to WTCE?

We have already printed the top 35 airlines with a co-branded finish on some samples, which we will be exhibiting at the show. So, if any buyers from airlines pop in, I can just hand them a co-branded finish to show them.

What will visitors see on your stand?

There will be fireworks, there will be colour, there will be energy. We're really trying to make a mark and I don't think we're afraid to show that we're a young team, which is great. We're going to really try and make a splash.

Sonisk will be exhibiting on stand 1E97 at [WTCE](#) which takes place at the Hamburg Messe from June 6 to 8, 2023.