

Revitalising interest in dentistry

Doug Watt shares his journey into digital dentistry and how the digital workflow in general practice gives him total confidence in his restorative work

Doug Watt

Practice principal at Euston Place Dental Practice



When the first digital intraoral scanners came onto the market I was intrigued about what they had to offer. I was what you might call an 'early adopter' and eventually I decided to give 3shape Trios a try.

Despite being highly recommended by my laboratory technician, I didn't have any particular expectations about the Trios. However, a test case I did quickly changed all that, when the first restoration I received back from the lab was spot on – a perfect fit with no occlusal adjustment required.

A six-unit anterior rehabilitation case milled in zirconia certainly put Trios through its paces and, when similar cases followed, all of which fitted perfectly – it was enough to convince me to order the system for myself.

Trios was my first piece of digital equipment as a stand-alone unit. Despite the temptation to do otherwise, I would advise colleagues to take digitisation slowly, step-by-step.

This gives you the chance to become familiar with the scanning software first and then add more equipment once you have built up your confidence. This happens relatively quickly and will not slow up your integration of digital practices.



Treatment acceptance

My patients much prefer digital impressions over uncomfortable conventional impressions, they love the new technology and, of course, a digital scan presents much less of a cross infection risk than using impression trays.

Showing them the results of their initial scan, they are always amazed! I can show patients in no uncertain terms where problems are in their mouth and easily share digital scans, images and treatment plans so they can understand my treatment recommendations and ultimately increases treatment acceptance.

I have now moved on to chairside milling for my posterior restorations and I use Implant Studio software to produce my implant guides in-house. However, I still choose to send all anterior cases to my laboratory, as I believe the patient will get a better aesthetic result from an experienced technician.

Many laboratories have been doing digital dentistry for years, even back to the days of Procera. With this system, technicians scanned preparations in the lab before sending them to be milled in ceramic or titanium at Nobel Biocare's production facilities in Sweden.

This early system means that technicians are familiar with computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacturing (CAD/CAM) and I estimate that around 50% of UK labs are using CAD/CAM, compared to just 10% of clinicians.

Planning with confidence

The digital workflow has revolutionised my dentistry. The predictability is there, you know the occlusion is going to be right and there is far less occurrence of errors. I like to plan my cases in fine detail and the digital workflow makes this possible – everything is there ready on the computer before I even start treatment. It has done so much for my confidence as a clinician – everything is smooth, seamless and efficient.

The biggest surprises for me have been the level of predictability, how well the final restorations fit and the accuracy of the margins and contact points. It has, without question, revitalised my interest in dentistry. **D**

FOR MORE INFORMATION on 3shape Trios, contact Henry Schein's team of equipment specialists:
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 www.hsdequipment.co.uk

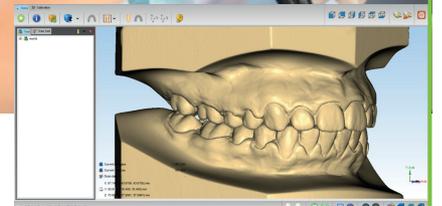


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