

5 THINGS I CANNOT WORK WITHOUT!

With **Andrew C Wheeler**



Just five years ago, the list would have consisted of hand tools, but as in all things, time marches on. Now we find ourselves in the digital age, the lab has progressed to a point where it's the technology that I can't work without.

1. MY MEDIT T500 SCANNER

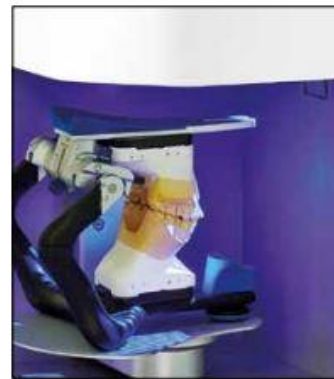
This is the stalwart of the lab. Even with the increase of intraoral scans there isn't a day that it doesn't get switched on. It has operated flawlessly for over two years as did the Medit blue before it. From simple crowns to the most complicated cases, its fast, accurate and simple to use. Its not just dental, plenty of broken household items have passed through it on the way to the printer!!

2. 3D PRINTERS

Many of us use these daily. Photocentric LC dental is the newest piece of kit in the lab and it joins the 3z Solid Works wax printer, which I've have been using for over 5 years. With a large print base it gives me room for growth as more clients move over to intra oral scanners. These machines have certainly taken over a large part of the workflow process and I'm sure we'll see further developments in the near future from this British company.

3. COMPUTERS

I have been using and building computers since the days of the BBC Micro. Like most laboratories I cannot imagine a dental lab without several computers humming away. They are the first to get switched on in the morning and last to be turned off. Thanks to the the use



of powerful laptops, I'm spending an increasing amount of time at home where I can design remotely and send to print which would have been unheard of, only a few years ago.

4. THE PROGRAMAT EP3010

Which works hard firing and pressing the Celtra Press we now use. The consistency of the furnace is so important, gone are the days of miss-presses! As the industry becomes challenging its vital that every process we employ works seamlessly.

5. CAD SOFTWARE

Digital equipment wouldn't have got off the ground without the software behind it. I've used and taught Exocad for many years and it has been invaluable in developing the digital side of the lab. Recently Blender4Dental has appeared on the market as a cost-effective alternative to other players in the market. I became an accredited instructor on it after seeing the potential that this software offers. We will certainly be seeing many more advances in the future, bring more competition into a narrow market.

It was a challenge to narrow down the list to just five and it would be remiss of me not to mention all the vital components that go into building a successful dental laboratory. The close working relationship with the suppliers, clients and people that make working in this field such a rewarding and challenging experience.

