

# NEW KID ON THE BLOCK...

By Andrew Wheeler



Andrew, working alongside Blender4Dental, is an accredited instructor for Blender4Dental and currently runs course on the software.

For many years dental laboratories have had a few major players in the CAD market who have led the way in moving the industry towards a fully digital future.

I liken it to the Apple - Android debate, both are very capable platforms but tend to divide opinion even among close colleagues! Once you have nailed your colours to the mast there is little chance of changing, "better the devil you know".

Well now there is another player that has just entered the market and seems to be making quite a stir. So, what is blender4dental? It stems from a powerful piece of software with no relation to the dental industry. Twenty-six years ago, Ton Roosendaal launched a free and open source 3D creation suite used for creating animated films, visual effects, art, 3D printed models, motion graphics, interactive 3D applications and computer games. Scroll forward and a couple of enterprising guys, Michael and Wolfgang Teiniker saw the potential to use it for dental applications. In their hands they have developed add on dental modules into a useful alternative in the CAD market.

What can it do? Well, nearly as much as the big boys and is rapidly catching up in the other areas. It all begins with the model creator and growing from there. We can create any type of dental model from three file formats, STL, OBJ and PLY, in a straightforward, fast and logical way. Now don't get me wrong there is some learning involved and the software operates in a

very different way from what we are used too. To help you along there are clear and easy to follow videos on each module, it doesn't take long to get to grips with the 3d environment. As a bonus you can log your time as you work through the videos to collect CPD points.

From here other modules can be purchased. At present we have the ICP alignment tool, a special tray designer, logo module, implant guide and soft tissue options. Shortly there will be a splint and virtual articulator and there are plans for a crown and bridge and denture module. All of these can be used alone or in conjunction with each other to cover any situation you come across.

So why change? What makes this so attractive is the cost. At present all of the current modules mentioned will set you back £254.00 and with no annual subscription or update costs, it's too good to ignore. If you are starting out on the digital journey this is an excellent way to get on board. It is fully customizable, in a market where CAD tends to take away the individuality of our work blender4dental gives you a way of standing

apart from the crowd. There are numerous options to design your models in a creative way and with the addition of adding your logo onto models and trays, your laboratory can stand apart.

Both Michael and Wolfgang are very hands on and are open to any requests to change or add features, your feedback to them is very important. An example, recently someone asked about a bleaching tray function adding reservoirs to the teeth, this took them a couple of days to write the relevant code and add it to the model module!

There is plenty of space in the market for all players, but competition is healthy. The ones who will benefit from this will be the technicians, which in the current climate is surely good news.

**AW Precision Ceramics**  
E: [Precision\\_ceramics@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Precision_ceramics@yahoo.co.uk)  
W: [Blenderfordental.com](http://Blenderfordental.com)  
T: 01483 277 070

