

3Shape CAD/CAM in a major Dental Lab

It was the technicians' choice



Glidewell Laboratories is a major full-service Dental Lab and acknowledged leader in its field. The company specializes in crown and bridge, ceramic, removable full and partial dentures, implant, and full-cast restorations. Glidewell was established in 1970 by Jim Glidewell, CDT.

Glidewell's success derives from its ability to provide products and services that meet today's demand for both high quality and lower cost. This goal is realized by Glidewell's continuing dedication to the application of cutting-edge dental CAD/CAM technologies.

Today, 3Shape scanners and design software are the favorite tools in Glidewell's product and service departments. With 3Shape, Glidewell has greatly increased productivity and is able to continually offer new restoration types and materials attracting new orders, enhancing customer-satisfaction, and opening new business areas.

Key selection criteria

- System that can grow with the business
- High accuracy for productive milling in any material
- High quality of manufactured restoration
- Fast and robust system for high productivity
- Intuitive CAD-design means minimum training requirements

The versatility and solution coverage offered by 3Shape systems has enabled Glidewell to grow and develop well ahead of its competition by continuously expanding the range of its products and services. Now all types of restorations and large orders are handled digitally each day, with over 50 of 3Shape's installations covering every Glidewell department need.

The Challenge

Glidewell's proclaimed ambition is to be a pioneer in the Digital Dentistry Revolution, and, to achieve this, they know they must work with the best systems. Investing in a single CAD/CAM brand was not the important issue for them. Glidewell simply wanted to use best-of-breed systems for each service they provided.

With a dampened mood in the economy, more and more small and mid-sized laboratories were looking for sources of digital technology services in order to remain competitive, and this opened new business opportunities for full-service labs like Glidewell. More than ever, it became imperative to have fast and productive systems that could provide attractive digital services and products of high quality.

Glidewell develops their own systems and methods for many applications, including abutments, implants, milling and special materials, and they required flexible and highly versatile software systems to support these. They needed a system that was not limited – a system that could grow with them, ensuring that they could continue bringing their in-house developed products to the market while broadening their range of services.

The Solution

Glidewell initiated a technology solution business plan whose goal was to become familiar with the market's flexible CAD/CAM systems. 3Shape was one of the first to present itself, but other brands were installed later, and Glidewell technicians soon became familiar with operating a wide range of systems.

Despite Glidewell's readiness to employ best-systems for different purposes, 3Shape accuracy, ease of use and efficiency continued to win preference in every department. Alternative 3D scanners and software systems were simply being pushed aside to make room for 3Shape.

Glidewell's dental technicians "at the bench" slowly but surely gravitated to 3Shape's solutions for most of their tasks.

Today, Glidewell Laboratories has over 50 3Shape DentalSystem™ and D700 series scanner installations spread throughout the full areas of Glidewell's many departments. In step with the ever-increasing integration of 3Shape into their workflows, Glidewell has instituted convenient on-line services for other Dental labs using 3Shape, enabling them to upload their 3Shape scans or design files direct to Glidewell for special processing and production with Glidewell's own materials.

Glidewell Laboratories

Full-service dental lab

Source: Greg Minzenmayer, Robin Bartolo, Rudy Ramirez



ROI Benefits for Glidewell Dental Studio

- Open new business areas such as BruxZir® full Zirconia and Inclusive® custom implant abutments
- Fast production times enable increased production volume
- High quality and accuracy brings more business
- Customer satisfaction and loyal returning customers
- Accuracy of designs enables profitable Zirconia services
- Customer satisfaction and loyal returning customers
- High ratio of daily production output per technician
- Large number of service options due to wide range of indications offered
- More business with online design upload-services.

About 3Shape A/S

3Shape creates 3D scanning and CAD/CAM software solutions. Award-winning technology that enables dental and hearing professionals to treat more people, more effectively and with improved care. A privately-owned company, 3Shape has over 780 employees with a product-development force of more than 275 professionals. Offices and service centers located in the Americas, Asia and Europe serve customers in more than 100 countries. Company headquarters are in Copenhagen, Denmark.
www.3shape.com

About Glidewell Laboratories

Glidewell Dental Lab is a privately owned corporation that has more than 40 years of history as a provider of high-quality restorations to dental practitioners nationwide. It has its own 73-person Research and Development team and is the most resourceful dental laboratory in the world. Its newly developed CAD/CAM processing capabilities are recognized as among the most advanced in the industry. To view Glidewell's large selection of clinical videos, CE courses and our products and services, visit www.glidewelldental.com.

The Results

It has become clear to Glidewell that their 3Shape solutions are a major factor in enhancing their business, and they credit this to the system's accuracy, consistency, predictability and reproducibility of output. Many incoming orders explicitly express the condition that they are to be executed using Glidewell's 3Shape systems.

The accuracy of the 3Shape system enabled Glidewell to introduce 2 highly successful products that are enjoying explosive market growth – BruxZir® full Zirconia restorations and Inclusive® Implant Abutment applications. No other CAD/CAM solution contained the powerful design capabilities necessary to morph the explicit full contour required. Designs made with 3Shape could be milled directly without flaws – thus opening windows to new productivity and profitability with Zirconia material.

“3Shape CAD/CAM opened new business opportunities”

BruxZir® Zirconia soon became the fastest growing product in the history of the laboratory, and today Glidewell is making 8000 BruxZir® restorations per week using 3Shape's technologies.

The flexibility of 3Shape as a system and a company fit perfectly with Glidewell's goal to help pioneer the growth of digital dentistry. Glidewell's technicians continuously communicate with 3Shape, giving feedback regarding their daily challenges, and often seeing direct solution answers in later 3Shape software releases.

“I think any lab that is considering getting into digital should get in quickly, and I would recommend buying 3Shape. We use it – we can buy any system we want and 3Shape is the one we choose.”

Rudy Ramirez, General Manager Fixed Prosthodontics, Glidewell

3Shape Solutions at Glidewell Laboratories

3D model and impression scanning

3Shape Dental System™ / D700, D710 3D Scanners

CAD Design

3Shape Dental System™ / DentalDesigner™, AbutmentDesigner™

Manufacturing Preparation

3Shape Dental System™