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.

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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.

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 CAD/CAM opened new business opportunities”

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™