

Laboratories and dental professionals working in partnership

Dental Tribune talks to Nicola Farnfield from Lifelike Dental Ceramics

Nicola Farnfield was new to the Dental industry when she joined Lifelike Dental Laboratory in Buckinghamshire four years ago. Having worked in the past as a Commercial Director of a blue chip Company for 15 years, Nicola thought that Customer relations would be similar in the dental market but soon discovered that wasn't the case. We put some questions to Nicola:-

When to communicate?

This sounds simple, but it is not. Trying to communicate with a dentist is like trying to communicate with a client who is always in a meeting and unavailable. Obviously the majority of dentists' time is spent in surgery so you need to establish when is the most convenient time to contact them if required. For some it may be at lunch time or for others it may be at the end of the day. It is important to establish this at the start of the relationship.

Equally, clinicians need to know that they can get in touch with their lab promptly. The way we overcome this at Lifelike Dental Ceramics, is all our clients have the mobile phone number of the technician that is dealing with the case. This means they can have direct contact with them and avoid going through switchboard if they are in a rush. Furthermore, we don't close at 5.30pm - we are available after this time for people to phone us.

How to Communicate?

Each dentist favours different methods of communication. So it is important for a lab to be flexible and to respond to all types of communication promptly. Some of our clients use email and take advantage of the flexibility of exchanging photos by iphone which is very efficient. Some prefer to text and others prefer telephone communication or face to face support.

Which is more important - Product or Service?

Well to us, the customer service we offer is as important as getting the right product. As we are a small lab we make the time to go the extra mile for clients, particularly when dealing with challenging cases. If a dentist is dealing with a complex case it can be quite time consuming, so they need to know they

have the support of a dedicated technician at their laboratory to support them.

How do you feel labs should respond to criticism?
It is important that feedback is

given - both positive and negative. At Lifelike Dental Ceramics we encourage feedback

because this way you always know if clients are happy (or

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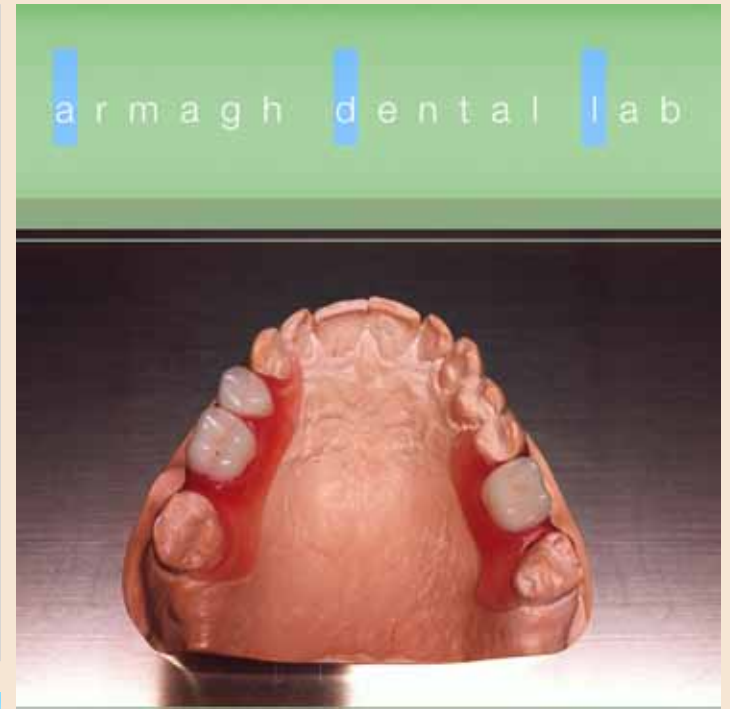
UK Dental labs were established in 1980 by Derek Phippen who has over 38 years of experience and expertise in all aspects of dental technology. Derek specialises in ceramics and offers a superior bespoke service to his clients. Ongoing professional development has ensured a service that remains at the cutting edge of the latest techniques and processes. With a dedicated team of registered technicians to provide you with a full laboratory service. We are committed to excellence in all we do, and to deliver the very best service available.

We pride ourselves on service, therefore lab to surgery communication is important, and vice versa. We provide friendly technical support. Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm, or out of hours on 07947807552. You can also email us through our website. www.ukdentallabs.com

We hope you like what you see, if you require further information please contact us, ask for Derek, Jan or Laura and we look forward to hearing from you.

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PreciDent 

Precident is a full service private laboratory, located in St George, Bristol. Every technician at Precident is highly skilled to ensure that we can deliver the highest quality of work to our clients. We are Bristol's premier implant laboratory - we are Straumann Platinum certified and familiar with all leading implant systems on the market. All our technicians are highly qualified and are registered at the General Dental Council. We strive to stay on top of technology and the changing Dental market by attending appropriate courses and lectures as often as we can. Precident also holds courses on Zirkon Zahn manual Zirconia milling.

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not) and without feedback we could not improve. The most difficult part of being a lab is that you do not see the patient's mouth and you have to rely on a model for interpretation, so it is critical you work as a team to get it right first time.

Should you meet the patients?

Of course – but only if the clinician wants you to. Sometimes a client may want chairside assistance with their patient for complex cases or other times they may want to send the patient to you for shade matching. I believe that if you offer this service to practices it is important to have a suitable and professional waiting room for patients. When we meet patients we feel we are representing our clinical colleagues and they trust us to do that.

How important is trust?

Extremely important! Dentists need to trust that their lab will advise them of the right product to use for the right situation. They also want assurance that the restoration you are

‘It is important that feedback is given - both positive and negative’

giving them is the one you say it is – for example we give all our dentists guarantee cards with our metal- free restorations, verifying the material and products authenticity. We also keep a recorded log of material numbers for metal restorations.

Dentists also rely on us to inform them of new products that come to the market that will add value to their particular type of business, sometimes they are too busy to research the market and rely on us from



Nicola & Andrew, Proprietor at Lifelike Dental Ceramics, research new products for clients

a technical point of view for suggestions.

How important is Reliability?

To us it is essential. We treat patients as if they are ours. This means at no time do we want a patient sitting in the chair with no restoration to fit. We go the extra mile for cases that need a speedy turnaround and because we have our own delivery and collection vehicle we can ensure that cases are

delivered on time.

Anything else you would like to add?

Yes, remember it takes time to build a working relationship and open communication is key, once you have established this the rest falls in to place. [BT](#)

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Working as a team is critical. Andrew & Scott at Lifelike Dental Ceramics

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Dr. Jason Smithson BDS (Lond), DipRestDent RCS (Eng)
Hands on seminars 'Direct Resin Artistry: Simple, Predictable, Easy' Anterior [6 hour verifiable CPD for each course]

3rd November 2010 / 10th November 2010 - (3pm to 6pm)



Fiona Stuart-Wilson & Tim Eldridge
CQC Registration and Compliance (Part 1) - Don't Bury Your Head [6 hour verifiable CPD]

13th November 2010 - (9am to 5pm)



Dr. Jason Smithson BDS (Lond), DipRestDent RCS (Eng)
Hands on seminars 'Direct Resin Artistry: Simple, Predictable, Easy' Posterior [6 hour verifiable CPD for each course]

15th November 2010 / 13th December 2010 / 17th January 2011 - (6pm to 9pm)



Dr. Emiliano Zanaboni DDS, PG Implant (NY),...
Three of the Best: Putting implants at the top of your treatment options [5.25 hour verifiable CPD] Seminar 1: from diagnosis to the final restoration

12th March 2011



Dr Pirooz Zia BDS, MScD & Dr Benjamin Watkins DDS
Endodontic course. Details to follow.

19th March 2011



Dr Massimiliano Di Giosia DDS Cert. Orofacial pain (USA)
Dental Management of Snoring and Obstructive Sleep Apnea. Details to follow.

2nd April 2011



Dr. Jason Smithson BDS (Lond), DipRestDent RCS (Eng)
Hands on seminars 'Direct Resin Artistry: Simple, Predictable, Easy' [6 hour verifiable CPD for each course]

19th, 20th & 21st May 2011 (9am to 5pm)



Prof. Giovanni Zucchelli DDS PhD
Soft Tissue Plastic Surgery in the Aesthetic Areas: A three day course [17 hours verifiable CPD] Day #2: May 20; Day #3: May 21 In-depth knowledge and understanding of gingival plastic surgery procedures

Spring 2011



Dr Marc Cooper DDS
Mastery Programme. Details to follow.



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