CAD/CAM for dental manufacturing is growing at a rapid pace. The laboratory profession discovered early on what clinicians have been slower to recognize—CAD/CAM works. It is faster, more economical, predictable, consistent, and as accurate as lab restorations, all with a high return on investment.

Dentaltown spoke with Jukka Kanerva, Planmeca’s president of CAD/CAM division, and got his take on the evolution of digital dentistry.

Chairside CAD/CAM technology has changed the dental industry

Digital dentistry and digital impressions are becoming the standard of care. Global dentistry, in the sense that you are not tied to a certain place and time, gives dental professionals the ability to easily share data at a rate faster than ever before.

This improves patient communication and patient care, which helps practices and labs increase profitability and enhanced communication. Interoperability of digital technologies and the possibilities of networked open solutions are critical for sharing data between practices and labs. This open architecture and modularity provides the clinician the flexibility to grow at their own pace, a true plug-and-play technology that ultimately allows the dentist to scale up.

Changes shifting the dental workflow

3D scanning enables dentists and technicians to plan better and follow up with the changes over time. The creation of a virtual patient file is the foundation of the new digital workflow. The unique combination of Planmeca’s CBCT and CAD/CAM can also be used for diagnostic purposes other than planning restorative treatments, implant cases and surgical guides. For example, the digital impression replaces traditional gypsum models and can be used for orthodontic treatment planning and analysis, as well as for designing custom orthodontic appliances.

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by Jukka Kanerva
Jukka Kanerva is president, Planmeca CAD/CAM Division.

Image courtesy of Planmeca.
The future of digital and restorative integration

There are some revolutionary software solutions such as Planmeca’s Romexis software, which brings together all the devices at a dental clinic, from CAD/CAM to imaging devices and digital dental units. Consequently, all patient images ranging from digital intraoral scans to CBCT images are stored in one centralized database, and can be easily accessed and visualized through the same easy-to-use interface anywhere in the practice or even mobile anywhere in the world. At Planmeca, we are very proud of our Romexis software suite, which is a terrific set of tools for all the digital imaging needs that a practice might have.

How Planmeca CAD/CAM solutions can change and improve workflows

The Planmeca FIT open CAD/CAM system (Planmeca PlanScan, PlanCAD design software, and PlanMill 40) streamlines the workflow with real scalable networking capabilities.

Also, Planmeca’s full range of open CAD/CAM solutions for dentists and dental technicians includes the first dental unit integrated intraoral scanner, PlanScan. PlanScan’s unique integration with the Planmeca dental units guarantees a smooth workflow, as real-time scanning data is now immediately available from the chairside tablet device.

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Scanning can also be controlled from the dental unit’s wireless foot control for hands-free operation. PlanScan integrates with our Planmeca Romexis software platform—the first software in the world which integrates CAD/CAM and digital imaging. This means that all patient images and scans are conveniently available through one user interface.

Additionally, with Planmeca’s networking capabilities, the scan data is stored on the office’s server, right with the rest of the patient’s data.

In closing, digital scanning with an intraoral scanner dramatically enhances patient care, communication between the laboratory technician and the dentist, as well as the collaboration with dental specialists to improve treatment consistency and accuracy.