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# The Right Track

The dental industry continues to aggressively convert to CAD/CAM technology. This is very exciting and promising for clinical and technical dentistry. Restorations that used to take many visits appear to need fewer ones, and the those that were problematic once appear to be easier.

In some ways this is true. But in other ways, it can be misleading. CAD/CAM technology, like other digital technologies, is wonderful advancement, that allows us to do things that we could not imagine before. However, along with the benefits, it brings its own challenges.

Technological advances are creating a major shift for the practices and techniques of dentists and laboratory technicians worldwide. These changes are here to stay and will continue to evolve at a faster rate than witnessed in previous decades. The introduction of digital images, Skype and FaceTime has allowed dentists and laboratory technicians to complete restorations in reduced time with excellent results. Computer implementation in clinical dentistry through scanning and correlating information is a concept that is transforming a dream into reality. Although some of the manual dexterity has been shifted to computerized knowledge and ability, the

final product still needs to be delivered to the expected excellence. Therefore, final restoration(s) will still require the traditional artistic final touch. This can be achieved through the CAD-CAM scanning, laboratory creation for metal or zirconia substructures and final prosthesis, porcelain customized layering, or even just staining and final polishing.

Knowledge on the principles of being an excellent laboratory technician does not vary through a manual or digitized product. Technicians must master tooth anatomy, contours, contacts, occlusion, shade, opacity, translucency and texture, with great attention to detail. Being involved in the dental revolution today is exciting, challenging, and stimulating; it is something that will never change the importance of communication between dentists and laboratory technicians. Laboratory technician's communication with the dentist should be seamless.

We should embrace the new technology, but we must not lose ourselves and let the technology rule us or dictate how we do our business.

You might be on the right track, but if you are not moving, you will get run over! Enjoy the ride! 

