

Morning Man

Sean Thorp, CDT, says his favorite time of the day is the morning: When he first steps into the laboratory knowing that he has the whole day ahead of him to do the job that he loves.

Thorp, who is certified in partial dentures, owns A Quality Dental Lab, Inc. in Post Falls, Idaho. About two years ago, he bought a removable laboratory in Spokane, Wash., so he could break into that market. Although Post Falls is only 20 minutes from Spokane, dentists there seemed to think it was as far away as New York, Thorp said. That changed once Thorp acquired the Spokane laboratory.

Recently, Thorp agreed to share his perspective of the dental laboratory industry with JDT readers.

Hottest thing in dental technology:

I would say the hottest thing in dental technology is CAD/CAM. We try to keep up with the technology. We have two Dentsply Cercon milling machines and the X-Rite Shade Vision System.

Coollest thing in my laboratory:

Me. (laughs) Actually, all the high technology we have. For example, we have a laser welder (LaserStar). Also, I like all the CAD/CAM machines because you have the ability to design your own prosthetics digitally.

Wish list: An updated open architecture CAD scanner. Digital impressions are the direction the industry is going and it would be nice to have that information go straight to our machine.

Favorite item on my bench: My wax carver. It's a No. 6 Thompson Carver.



Best continuing education course:

I'm in four different study clubs, plus I'm a district rep for the Washington State Dental Laboratory Association. The WSDLA has worked hard bringing good speakers in at the WSDLA Lab Forums for continuing education. But the one main place where I get my major continuing education credits from is the Inland Empire Perio Study Club. We have a mentor who comes from Seattle. There are 20 doctors in the study club and we are the laboratory support for the club. They do surgery, tissue grafts, implants and more. I get to watch the surgeries so when the doctors call me and say the patient had this done, I can communicate with them. Working alongside the doctors is one of the best ways to get education.

Most interesting part of my day:

Coming in early in the morning. I like coming to work. I like what I do. It's fun communicating with people. I'm on the phone most of the day with doctors. I just like the business.

Greatest ideas happen: I would say ideas come just by talking with doctors and my dad, learning from his experience.

My NADL membership means:

It shows that we're out there and are willing to deal with the politics of the industry to better the industry. Also, being a member of NADL has provided us access to companies that can save us money and help us in our business. **JDT**