

STRAIGHT OUTTA LONDON

Interview with Kash Qureshi



Three years after taking over London-based dental laboratory Bremadent, Kash Qureshi has made it his own and is driving innovation on multiple fronts

Tell us a bit about Bremadent and how you came to be the owner? Bremadent is a full-service dental laboratory in London which was started in 1969. We service the whole of the London, UK and Europe with the help of digital dentistry. The laboratory manufactures over 3,000 cases a month in a quality controlled environment with every case quality checked three times before leaving the premises. We have dedicated managers for each department to make sure any issues are resolved quickly and smoothly through a single point of call. Our main services in digital dentistry, implants fixed and removable, prosthetics, crown and bridge, complex combination cases with precision attachments, orthodontics and vacuum-formed appliances.

I started as an apprentice at Bremadent in 2005 at 16 years old, working one day a week whilst at college to qualify as a dental technician. I was mentored by the previous owner John Gerrard, went on to manage the plaster room and soon became part of the management team looking after the prosthetics department.

In 2015 I qualified as the youngest Clinical Dental Technician in the UK and opened the 'Swissdent Denture Clinic' adjacent to the laboratory with private capital.

Upon opening the denture clinic, I then performed a management buyout acquisition for shares in Bremadent Premier (Bristol) LTD to acquire 100% shares progressively over a five-year period as managing director. The MBO completed three years ahead of schedule.

How have you found owning and running the laboratory and what changes have you made?

The first three months were the hardest, I had to cope with staff leaving, lots of clients retiring (as lots were the same generation



Picture: Bush Qureshi @omeo_photos

as John), rising costs from overheads and suppliers, also we had lots of equipment, IT and so on that needed either repairing or replacing - understandably John didn't have the will to sink money into that sort of thing as he was heading towards retirement. After those three months I remember John telling me that I'd just had 30 years' experience in three months as what I'd just dealt with was usually spread out over a number of years.

Since then I've invested heavily across all areas, lots into the digital side especially, networking, updating computers, we also needed a specific broadband line which was needed for sending big digital files, our regular internet wasn't capable of offering the upload speeds we needed. The internet has played a massive part in the lab's development. Previously the marketing was based on name recognition, but being called Bremadent (Bristol) meant anyone not working with us already thought that we were in Bristol! So part of the work has been rebranding it and making it clear we're based in London - now we're on page one of Google for London dental labs - our marketing, social



media activity has all played a role there.

We do a monthly newsletter detailing new products, other important info, changes to our service etc. That gets sent out to 400-plus clients plus anyone following us in social media. There's lots of competition out there and people don't look in the Yellow Pages like they used to, so being visible and active online is very important.

How has the work produced by the lab changed?

On the laboratory side the biggest changes I've introduced have been on the quality control side. I feel that's had a huge impact as we're now getting lots more word-of-mouth recommendations from dentists than we've ever had before. The QC process is now based on following guidelines and processes very closely and everything being recorded. We train all our technicians in-house on the PTC system which ensures consistent results and defines parameters in aesthetics, occlusion, function, fit, margins and contact areas which are checked with every case from impression to the final restoration. ▶



Bremadent in Walthamstow, London

How about your team and the equipment they use?

My team now is mainly people I've bought in myself and we've got a really good team here. Everyone's very consistent and have the passion needed to be good dental technicians. I've pretty much sussed the interview process now and am able to tell if someone's in it just for a job, or whether they'll be there through the ups and downs and dedicated to always doing their best work.

Investing in the equipment has been a very slow process, there was lots to do as a lot of the equipment had been there for 20 years. Recently we've moved into the digital side, which I found very complex. I decided to go with a 3shape scanner and software, it seemed to be the best commercial product and matched very well with our requirements. It's a fully open system as well which was important, it's really opened up doors for us, we can work with anyone - dentists and other partners - whatever they're using. We now have clients all over the UK and Europe, we're not just a London lab any more.

Using the software itself is much easier than it used to be, but it does still need a dental technician's experience and knowledge to get the best from it.

We have a Bremadent app available on Apple and Google devices and our next move in the digital side is further developing this, so dentists can use it to track their work, give feedback, manage invoices and pay us.

What services does Bremadent offer that make it stand out?

As a CDT I'm able to carry out a wide variety of work, either for clients or direct with patients, I'm accredited for Valplast flexible dentures and Swissdent Natural Looking Dentures. Being a clinical dental technician I have an understanding of the clinical aspect as well

as the technical aspect and can relate to situations within the clinic.

As a laboratory one of the things that I think make us stand out are our smile makeover cases, we've sent our staff over to the States for courses on this. We create full-mouth rehabilitations with either veneers, layered zirconia or full contour zirconia, or a combination, made with CAD/CAM. Usually I recommend 4-4 in Emax, with 5 onwards in zirconia, based purely on the strength and function properties and transitioning aesthetically towards the back.

A big focus right now for us is implant work, with more immediate loading cases, and delayed loading cases with our technicians working with dentists in their surgery. We make a lots of bars, including hybrid bars which combine metal with metal free connectors which is much better aesthetically.

We're also one of two labs to offer Kois Deprogrammers, something Bremadent has been doing for over 14 years. A Kois Deprogrammer is a removable, acrylic device that covers the palatal aspect of the maxilla and creates a single point of contact between the anterior bite platform on the upper central and the lower central incisor. Patients wear them for between a week and a month to relax the jaw muscles and solve occlusal problems prior to restoration work.

Something we've created recently is 'Tempaplant' - a new 3-in-1 implant solution exclusive to Bremadent Dental Laboratory for immediate temporary crowns. Tempaplant combines a temporary crown, location jig and surgical guide for immediate loading of an implant with a temporary. It offers accuracy and same-day treatment.

Tempaplant allows the dentist to remove a non restorable tooth and immediately place and load the implant with precision by the parameters defined by the manufactured Tempaplant. This makes it easier for the



A Valplast flexible one-tooth-denture

dentists while still being accurate and reducing the cost both for the dentist and ultimately for their patients too.

The Valplast flexible dentures are very good, especially the one-tooth dentures, which is more like a removable bridge which is much better for the patient to wear. Instead of sitting on the gums the flexible nature of the Valplast material means it can hook round the adjacent teeth while being very stable. Valplast is also used in our hybrid chrome dentures, where any visible hooks are made in Valplast instead of metal, which makes them more comfortable and highly aesthetic by eliminating the metal on show. ●



Bremadent's 3-in-1 'Tempaplant' (technical work done by Kash Qureshi, Ray Mason and Glen Weiner)

BREMADENT

Bremadent Dental Laboratory is a full-service commercial dental laboratory based in Walthamstow, London, which was established in 1969. It provides high quality craftsmanship along with a consistent service, excellent communication with technical support and punctual logistics.

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