

Enhancing Productivity and Process

Puche Dental Lab, located in Torrance, California, has always been on the cutting edge of technology. Led by LJ Bignone, the lab faced increasing challenges as demand for their services grew, and in turn, looked for new ways to enhance productivity and digital workflow process. Manual finishing and polishing processes were consuming valuable technician hours, creating bottlenecks and driving up labor costs. Puche Dental Lab's technicians spent hours daily polishing a variety of restorations from zirconia crowns to flexible partials and dentures by hand.



Above: 3D printed denture, before and after

This time-intensive process led to:

- **INCONSISTENT RESULTS:** Variability in manual polishing sometimes required rework and refining.
- **LABOR INEFFICIENCIES:** Highly skilled technicians were tied up with repetitive tasks, leaving less time for quality control and higher, more revenue generating processes more business-critical to the lab's success.
- **SCALING CHALLENGES:** Adding staff to manage the workload was neither practical nor cost-effective.

To evolve the workflow and meet demand while maintaining quality, Bignone decided to implement the AutoFinish™. Since doing so, he has seen improved turnaround times and reduced cost. Bignone shares more on the implementation and the results.

If used properly, how can the technology improve internal remake trends?

When used correctly, the AutoFinish™ machine provides consistent, high-quality finishes on dental restorations, which directly impacts remake rates. By ensuring a uniform finish and precise polishing every time, the machine minimizes the variability that can occur in manual finishing processes. As a result, restorations meet the high standards clients expect on the first pass, reducing the chances of re-makes due to inconsistent finishes or other minor errors.





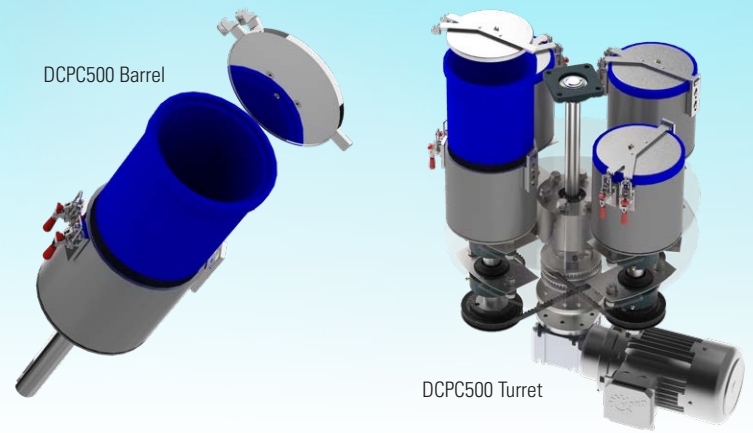
Above: Zirconia bridge, before and after

How does the technology assist a laboratory to incorporate lean manufacturing?

The AutoFinish™ machine aligns well with lean manufacturing principles by streamlining the finishing and polishing process. It reduces the time technicians spend on manual polishing, allowing them to focus on more value-added tasks. By standardizing this process, the machine minimizes waste—both in terms of time and materials—and supports a predictable workflow that aligns with lean objectives, ultimately increasing productivity and efficiency.

What is the training time?

Training on the AutoFinish™ machine was relatively quick. Once you get the details on which media to use with each restoration type it's simple to load the canisters and let the machine do its magic. The machine is designed with a user-friendly interface, so it's straightforward once you know which recipe to use.



What idea or challenge drove the development of the technology?

As a dental lab, our main goal is to have an efficient production process and to automate processes where we can. The AutoFinish™ allows us to replace a very manual and labor-intensive process with a piece of equipment that can essentially handle it with a push of a button. **JDT**

Autofinish is exclusively distributed by Zahn. To learn more call (800) 496-9500.

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