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**João Paulo Martins** (United Kingdom) started to work during his summer holidays in a local dental laboratory to gain some pocket money when he was merely 16 years old. The addiction quickly kicked in, and he saw himself graduating in dental technology. At the beginning, he was working directly with his parents – who were both dentists – in a small, set-up dental lab inside of their practice. By 2013, he had decided to give more to career and moved to London where he worked with who he calls “the best dental technician I’ve ever met”. In 2020, amid the Covid-19 pandemic, he decided to accept an investor’s proposal to open a dental laboratory and it turned out a success. Since then, he had the opportunity to choose and work with raw materials, explore their qualities and he could expose his vision for high-quality dental appliances.

# Digitally Handcrafted: Predictability and aesthetics

By João Paulo Martins, United Kingdom

## Micro-layering, the right choice

In dental technology, evolution is at full speed and continues to present us with ever more powerful digital tools which are faster and more precise. It doesn’t necessarily follow, however, that this makes our work any less challenging or allow for minimal effort in achieving predictable aesthetics. Rather - it presents new tools, new materials, and new techniques to learn and apply.

Layering powders are to us technicians in our work as pollen is to honeybees in theirs - we rely on our materials to reproduce what we see in nature.

Today’s dental laboratories face a wide variety of challenges; each case is unique and requires an individual approach. In all-ceramic restorations a technician needs to look deeper, so as not to compromise function, whilst maintaining focus on what characterises the natural tooth and its optical properties to reproduce the most natural looking restoration.

I have found micro-layering using the Initial IQ ONE SQIN System (GC) enables me to achieve this – saving time on complicated build-ups and minimising the potential for chipping.

Initial ONE SQIN ceramics (GC) and Initial Lustre Pastes ONE (GC) work in symbiosis. They are made for each other – literally. In combination together with Initial Spectrum Stains (GC) they form the Initial IQ ONE SQIN System. In my opinion Initial ONE SQIN and GC Lustre Pastes form the most versatile ceramic system; whether by painting or micro-layering, they set high standards in modern dental technology.

The combination of this ceramics concept is so powerful it really opens doors for us to use our imagination.

Knowing and understanding the materials we use these days is essential. Material selection is most important and the first step in any dental laboratory in helping to understand what you can do in any stage of production, exploring the limits and enabling you to go further.

Here is an example of my simple straightforward way to achieve predictable aesthetics on an all-on-four zirconia bridge using the Initial IQ ONE SQIN System.



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