The making of conventional dental impressions of tooth preparations using elastomeric materials is a task encountered routinely in today’s practice of dentistry. However, studies have evidenced that many of these conventional dental impressions that are sent to dental laboratories are unsatisfactory due to flaws such as voids and bubbles at critical regions of the impression. Moreover, distortion and expansion of gypsum, used in the making of stone dental casts, can further reduce the accuracy of this conventional dental restoration fabrication process. Because computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacturing (CAD/CAM) requires digital models, the interest in intraoral digital impression making has increased to circumvent the conventional production of stone casts using conventional impression materials.

Today, intraoral digital impression making of tooth preparations for the CAD/CAM-based fabrication of dental prostheses can be accomplished with a number of available systems now in the marketplace. Digital intraoral acquisition systems allow the dentist to capture the surface of the prepared teeth intraorally in three dimensions, enabling an almost completely digital workflow. CAD/CAM dentistry has transformed and revolutionized the way dentistry is practiced. Currently, all of the various chairside intraoral digital scanning devices are based on optical principles such as blue light-emitting diodes, blue laser technology, multiple single images that are stitched together, and continuous acquisition (streaming) of optical images. Differentiating factors include the need for the use of reflective powder to capture the image. The first chairside CAD/CAM system, CEREC (Sirona Dental Systems, Bensheim, Germany), was developed over 30 years ago at the University of Zurich.

The present study focuses on the accuracy of six currently available intraoral scanners in their ability to accurately scan a single molar abutment tooth in-vitro. Additionally, a brief overview of each scanning device is provided.

Materials and Methods

To investigate the accuracy of various intraoral scanning systems the following six scanners were studied: the iTero (Align Technology, San Jose, CA), the True Definition (3M ESPE, St. Paul, MN), the PlanScan (Planmeca/E4D Technologies, Richardson, TX), the CS 3500 (Carestream Health, Rochester, NY), the TRIOS (3Shape A/S, Copenhagen, Denmark), and the CEREC AC Omnicam (Sirona Dental Systems, Bensheim, Germany) (Table 1). An acrylic (self-curing denture acrylic, Lang Dental Manufacturing Co., Inc., Wheeling, IL) replica of a typodont (Fig. 1). The model was scanned with an industrial grade, highly accurate reference scanner (ATOS Blue Light Triple Scan III, 8 megapixel with a 100 mm lens set, GOM mbh, Braunschweig, Germany) in order to create a digital reference dataset. Additionally, the acrylic model with the embedded typodont teeth was scanned on three separate occasions by a single trained, experienced dentist (S.P.) with each of the six scanning systems.

Table 1. List of Evaluated Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scanning System</th>
<th>Manufacturer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iTero</td>
<td>Align Technology, San Jose, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True Definition</td>
<td>3M ESPE, St. Paul, MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PlanScan</td>
<td>Planmeca/E4D Technologies, Richardson, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 3500</td>
<td>Carestream Health, Rochester, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIOS</td>
<td>3Shape A/S, Copenhagen, Denmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEREC AC Omnicam</td>
<td>Sirona Dental Systems, Bensheim, Germany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A specific scan order was employed to avoid any

Figure 1: Reference model with the embedded artificial tooth.
contamination of the reference model due to the necessary application of a reflective powder, which is needed for the 3M True Definition Scanner. All of the datasets (STL file format) were loaded into three-dimensional (3D) evaluation software (Geomagic Qualify 2013, Morrisville, NC). After loading, the crown preparation was digitally isolated, and all areas not relevant to the present study were removed. The scanners were evaluated in terms of trueness and precision. For the trueness measurements, the digital datasets obtained from the scanners were superimposed (best-fit algorithm of the software) to the reference dataset, and 3D comparisons were performed (n=3/intraoral scanner). For the precision measurements, each dataset from a scanner was superimposed onto the other two obtained datasets for that specific scanner (n=3/intraoral scanner; 1 to 2, 1 to 3, 2 to 3), and evaluated for 3D deviations.

Statistical analyses
For descriptive analyses means, medians and standard deviations (SDs) were computed. Furthermore, boxplots are used for a graphical presentation of the data. Linear mixed models with random intercepts for each scanner were fitted to evaluate device effects response variables. Scheffe’s Method was applied for p-value adjustment due to several pairwise comparisons (multiple testing issue). All calculations were performed with the statistical software STATA 13 (StataCorp LP, College Station, TX).

Scanners

iTero
The iTero intraoral scanner utilizes parallel confocal imaging technology to capture a color 3D digital impression of the tooth surfaces, contours, and surrounding gingival tissues. The system captures up to 3.5 million data points per arch scan. The scanner has the ability to capture preparations for crowns, bridges, inlays, veneers and onlays. During scanning, a series of visual and verbal prompts are given, which help to guide the clinician through the scanning process. For each preparation, a facial, lingual, mesio-proximal, and disto-proximal view is recorded in approximately 15–20 seconds, after which the adjacent teeth are scanned from the occlusal, facial and lingual aspects. The iTero system is only used for digital impression making and does not come with a dedicated milling machine, although its open platform can integrate with design software and third-party milling units. If required, it is possible to obtain milled iTero CAD/CAM resin (polyurethane) models.6,9

3M True Definition
The 3M True Definition Scanner also offers an open platform and the ability to connect to a certified design software and chairside milling machine. The 3M system uses a blue LED light and a video imaging system to capture the data and create a virtual model. By moving the scanner over the tooth surfaces, the video feed develops the digital dental model. The clinical technique used with the 3M system requires proper isolation of the desired area to be captured, as well as a light dusting of the teeth with a titanium oxide reflective powder. Regardless of the need for powdering, this digital impression system has been previously shown to be very accurate.6,9 After scanning of the teeth and the creation of the virtual model, the acquired data is sent to 3M for processing and available for download in an open file format. If required, a physical dental model, based on stereolithographic manufacturing technology, can be obtained from the manufacturer.4,5

PlanScan
The Planmeca PlanScan (driven by E4D Technologies) system is designed to be used in a similar manner to Sirona’s CEREC systems, as it can be used as a digital impression system, as well as a chairside design and milling system. The PlanScan system uses blue light with real time laser video-streaming technology to capture the dental data, and is a powder-free system. The system captures both hard and soft intraoral tissues of various translucencies, dental restorations, as well as stone models and conventional impressions. Removable scanner tips, with built-in heated mirrors, allow no down time between patients, as well as a high level of disinfection. The Planmeca PlanCAD Design Center includes scanning software, design software, a mouse and a laptop. The digital models can be used to design inlays, onlays, crowns, bridges and veneers.

CS 3500
The CS 3500 intraoral scanner is one of the latest available powder-free intraoral scanners that enable dental professionals to scan patients’ teeth to create color 3D images. Similar to the CEREC BlueCam, it is a click-and-point system. Thus, it requires

Figure 2: Absolute mean deviations by intraoral scanner for the trueness measurements.
Figure 3: Absolute mean deviations by intraoral scanner for the precision measurements.
Comparing the results of the present study with the relatively few previously published papers on the accuracy of single-tooth digital
from the other four scanners. It is very likely that technology related differences lead to these deviations.

obtained datasets from the Sirona specific formats to the open format in order to perform the comparisons. It was not possible to identify any
the CEREC workflow is still a closed one, in other words, open STL files are not natively available. Therefore, it was necessary to convert the
Omnicam is based on video technology capturing a smooth model while hovering the wand above the teeth.

very short amount of time. Its wand needs to be hovered over the structures to be captured.

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Carestream. Rather than the current trend of using real-time video technology for capturing purposes, as with the True Definition Scanner, the

studies,

operator influence, only one experienced investigator, familiar with all the scanning devices, performed the scans. As identified in previous

Accuracy values for the various scanners were identified via the obtained datasets of the single tooth scans. To minimize the risk of any inter-
operator influence, only one experienced investigator, familiar with all the scanning devices, performed the scans. As identified in previous
studies,7 it is possible that technological aspects might have influenced the final accuracy of the datasets. The iTero scanner, for example, uses
parallel confocal imaging technology, with an array of incident red laser light beams to capture color images of dental hard tissues and the
surrounding soft tissues.4,5,10 It is important to maintain the scanning wand at a certain focal distance while scanning. 3M’s True Definition
Scanner utilizes video technology using a pulsating visible blue light.4,5 This device requires a reflective powder dusting of the surfaces to be
captured. However, this powdering process appears to not have influenced the accuracy of this device. The PlanScan uses blue laser
technology with wavelengths of 450 nm during its video rate scanning. Its wand has to be moved smoothly while hovering above the object to be
scanned, or supported by adjacent structures at a certain focal distance. One of the recently released intraoral scanners is the CS 3500 from
Carestream. Rather than the current trend of using real-time video technology for capturing purposes, as with the True Definition Scanner, the
PlanScan, the TRIOS, and the OmniCam, the CS 3500 is designed as a point-and-click system. Resting the scanning wand on adjacent
structures at a certain focal distance is important.4 The TRIOS intraoral scanner is based on confocal microscopy capturing multiple images in a
very short amount of time. Its wand needs to be hovered over the structures to be captured.4,5,11 This technology, in combination with the wand
design, seems to be beneficial for capturing high quality datasets with excellent trueness and precision values. The CEREC OmniCam is a
powder-free, full color scanning system. It utilizes active triangulation and emits light of different wavelengths to measure surfaces. The CEREC
Omnicam is based on video technology capturing a smooth model while hovering the wand above the teeth.5 As opposed to the other systems,
the CEREC workflow is still a closed one, in other words, open STL files are not natively available. Therefore, it was necessary to convert the
obtained datasets from the Sirona specific formats to the open format in order to perform the comparisons. It was not possible to identify any
reason why the trueness and precision values of the OmniCam and the PlanScan are significantly, however, still clinically acceptable, varied
from the other four scanners. It is very likely that technology related differences lead to these deviations.

Comparing the results of the present study with the relatively few previously published papers on the accuracy of single-tooth digital
impressions, revealed a significant increase in the accuracy found in the current study. Previous studies reported trueness values of 19.2 µm and 27.9 µm, and precision values of 10.8 µm,\textsuperscript{12,13} as compared in the present study, which determined trueness values as accurate as 6.9 µm and precision values as accurate as 4.5 µm. It is difficult to identify precisely why these deviations exist between the present study and those of the previously reported values. Possible explanations might include slightly different study designs (reference models, reference scanners), but more likely, recent improvements in the devices may be the primary reason for the more accurate datasets found in the present study.

Finally, one has to consider that the results of the present study were based on an in-vitro study design. In an in-vivo setting, the results might be different due to the presence of blood, saliva, and patient movements. Further, the obtained results on the accuracy of digital intraoral impression making does not provide any information about the quality of a fabricated restoration based on these digital datasets.

All scanners (except the OmniCam) evaluated in this project have an open architecture, which means that the acquired digital files can be transferred with an open connection that allows the laboratory to use virtually any CAD/CAM system for the fabrication of restorations. This increases the flexibility and versatility of the process.

CAD/CAM units with closed software programs use files that can only be transferred and used for specific devices. Different types of scanners have different attributes, as do the programs supporting digital impression making, however, all six studied scanners are designed to scan crowns, bridges, veneers, inlays, and onlays.

Conclusion

Within the limits of the present study, all of the six investigated scanners produced clinically acceptable results in terms of accuracy. The small observed differences might be related to technological aspects of each device. Further, additional deviations can be expected in the oral environment due to saliva, blood, and patient movements.

Gary D. Hack, DDS is Associate Professor, Director of Simulation, Department of Endodontics, Prosthodontics and Operative Dentistry, School of Dentistry, University of Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland.

Sebastian B. M. Patzelt, DMD, Dr med dent is Associate Professor and Managing Director, Director of Predoctoral Prosthodontics Course II, Department of Prosthetic Dentistry, Center for Dental Medicine, Medical Center–University of Freiburg, Germany.

Corresponding author
Gary D. Hack, DDS, Department of Endodontics, Prosthodontics and Operative Dentistry, School of Dentistry, University of Maryland. 650 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201. Ghack@umaryland.edu

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