



Digital Data Formats

Digital technologies are becoming increasingly important in dentistry today, and we can expect them to increase in importance even more in the future. The dream of a “virtual patient” software tool that allows for the visualization, planning, and guided execution of the treatment to obtain a predictable result has existed since the introduction of intraoral optical scanning devices and cone beam computed tomography. For this, a highly accurate combination of the different virtual data of a patient—ie, the facial and intraoral surface scans, the 3D radiograph, and the computer-aided design features with high accuracy—is needed, and is a goal of numerous research groups worldwide. Yet, the formats of these different data are highly differing, which impairs the accuracy needed in dentistry. Still, developments are ongoing, and future software may open up new possibilities.

The guest commentary in this issue addresses the topic of the present different file formats delivered by intraoral optical scanners and gives an outlook into future options. The next industrial developments should aim for standardized and open file formats to allow for the relevant benefit of these new technological options: to plan and treat patients worldwide as efficiently and as predictably as possible.

On behalf of the entire Editorial Board team,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Irena Sailer'.

Irena Sailer
Editor-in-Chief

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