

ORAL ARTS DENTAL LABORATORIES

Delivering High-Tech Excellence Nationwide

From Mobile to the jungles of Vietnam to a state-of-the-art lab serving more than 2,500 dental practices nationwide – Thomas Winstead built Oral Arts Dental Laboratories into a thriving, high-tech, family-owned business with national reach that is defining the future.

More Than Just a Job

When Oral Arts Dental Laboratories founder Thomas Winstead was a 16-year-old student in Mobile looking for a job, he chose to make deliveries for a dental lab even though he could have earned more money in the short term at other jobs. Even then, he knew that he wanted a career, not just a job.

That high school choice ended up shaping the path of his life.



In the past, technicians crafted products mostly by hand using individual tools, as seen above. Now, the entire process from securing dental impressions to producing the end product has become high-tech, driven more and more by computers. Today, Oral Arts is in the top 1% of dental labs in the country.

Winstead enlisted in the National Guard and subsequently graduated from the Fort Sam Houston Medical Training Center in San Antonio, Texas. In the late 1960s, his National Guard unit served a tour in Vietnam where he was responsible for daily operations of the military dental clinic serving the troops— an invaluable training experience that further prepared him for his career.

Upon the advice of a dentist, who was his commanding officer, Winstead returned to Huntsville in 1969 following his military tour. He quickly secured an investor and opened Oral Arts Dental Laboratories in 1970.

Even as a very small operation, the new business maintained high standards for work quality and impeccable service. Each case met the condition of using the best possible materials to be as close to perfection as possible for the dental patient. This unwavering commitment to precision, and timely delivery earned the lab a sterling reputation for excellence and created growth for the business within the dental industry.

Through the years, Winstead continued to work toward his vision of becoming a world-class, high-tech facility with national influence – a vision that has become reality. Now with multiple locations, the company has grown to serve more than 2,500 dental practices throughout the United States, placing the lab in the top 1% of dental labs in the country.

More Than the Status Quo

From the very beginning, Oral Arts Dental Laboratories has led the industry by using the most current materials and technologies available. As a full-service dental lab, its capabilities include fabricating any kind of restoration or appliance that dentists need for patients – crowns, veneers, partials, full dentures, implants, orthodontic appliances, and mouth guards – and technology drives every product.

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For instance, instead of taking messy impressions of a patient's mouth, dentists can now use intra-oral digital scans, which are much easier and less invasive for the patient. The lab is able to generate the products with ten times more accuracy.

Technology also enables much faster production which, in turn, gets the patients what they need without an extended wait. Dentists can send in patient scans directly to the lab electronically, allowing the technicians to begin creating the product much sooner.

Advancements in lab technology also make mass production possible. Where crowns were once made



Oral Arts Dental Laboratories is more than just a company. It is a family-owned business dedicated to its employees, its customers, and its community serving more than 2,500 dental practices nationwide.

individually, technology makes it possible to custom design them on a computer and produce them twenty at a time on a milling machine or sixty at a time on a 3-D printer. They can be further customized following this process. This technology also reduces total production time and gets the product to the patients faster.

These upgrades, along with staying abreast of the latest in high-tech equipment, put the company at the forefront of the industry with the fastest in-lab turnaround times – cutting production time in half.

Additionally, the lab prides itself on delivering the most robust customer service available anywhere. Dentists know they can rely on the highest quality service for every patient, every time.



Thomas Winstead poses in front of the dental clinic where he served troops while he was in Vietnam. His time there would prove to be an invaluable training experience that further prepared him for what would become Oral Arts Dental Laboratories.



Pictured left to right is Matt Winstead, Derek Winstead, Tiffany Winstead Marshall and Thomas Winstead.

More Than Just a Lab

While the company has the distinction of being a national industry leader, it is far more than just a lab. The company also has a strong commitment to education on several fronts.

In the beginning, Winstead built the company presenting seminars. He was among the first dental technicians to do educational lectures to dentists on how to meet patient needs. His dedication to demonstrating advancements in dental technology was doubly important because it not only created confidence in the lab's capabilities, but it also showed the dentists how the lab could be a partner on problematic cases to solve the patient's dental needs.

The education connection extends even further and includes long-standing collaboration with the dental school at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. Professors, students, and dental lab technicians all benefit from sharing information and ideas through seminars, special programs, and on-site training.

Oral Arts Dental Laboratories is also more than just a company. It is a family-owned business that is dedicated to its employees, its customers, and its community.

Thomas Winstead turned his dedication to building a career into visionary high-tech gain for Huntsville and for thousands of dentists and patients each year.